

Den of Iniquity

Story by
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Screenplay by
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and
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Logline

A Marine Corps veteran unjustly dismissed from a Catholic seminary after reporting being sexually assaulted teams up with an attractive Jewish lawyer to uncover a trail of sex trafficking and murder that threatens a cardinal's aspirations of becoming the first American pope.

*Inspired by real life events,
and dedicated to the memories of
Marine Corps Veteran, Mark Brooks,
and Father Joseph Moreno,
Den of Iniquity is a composite
of personal stories of
tragedy, resilience, and courage.*

Spotlight, Sound of Freedom, and Den of Iniquity Similar yet Different

Spotlight

Award winning story of *The Boston Globe's* investigative reporting of sex abuse within the Boston Archdiocese.

Sound of Freedom

True story of Tim Ballard, a former U.S. government agent, who devotes his life to combating the sex trafficking of children.

Den of Iniquity

Real life inspired story about the sexual predation of Catholic seminarians and the Catholic Church's involvement in the sex trafficking of illegal immigrants.

Comparables & Budget

Spotlight (2015)

Michael Keaton, Mark Ruffalo, Rachel McAdams

Budget: \$20M

Gross: \$98M



Sound of Freedom (2023)

Jim Caviezel, Mira Sorvino,

Bill Camp

Budget: \$14.6M

Gross: \$250M and rising



Audience

- A four-quadrant movie with appeal to men and women over and under 25 years of age including Hispanic viewers in the U.S., Central and South America.
- In the U.S., one in three women and one in seven men experience some form of sexual violence in their lives – most of which goes unreported.
- While 82% of sex abuse victims under 18 in the U.S. are female, over 80% of victims in the Catholic Church are males.
- Almost half of the US Bishops' Conference budget is taxpayer – funded owing to income from the Church's trafficking of illegal immigrants.
- *Den of Iniquity* will appeal to an international audience given the worldwide nature of the Catholic Church which is involved in a global sex abuse crisis.

Three Main Characters

Mark Rockford

Former Marine Corps Officer – Afghanistan War Veteran –
Navy Cross recipient – sexually assaulted Catholic seminarian

Rachel Goodman

Former Navy JAG officer –
family law attorney specializing in abuse cases –
looking for “Mr. Right”

Cardinal Edwin McCoy

U.S. Catholic cardinal – ambitious –
aspires to be first American pope

ACT I

- Marine Corps Captain Mark Rockford miraculously survives injuries he sustained in Afghanistan where he was awarded a Navy Cross for heroism under fire.
- Inspired by Chaplain Jim Pilarski, Mark enters a Catholic seminary to study for the priesthood.
- The seminary rector, Father Peter Martin, and Cardinal Edwin McCoy, interact with seminarians, including Rockford, whom they invite to clean up an archdiocesan beach house.
- Detectives Dan McCabe and Francesca Garcia are called to a murder scene of a teenage girl while KLCA-TV news reporter, Juan Flores, passes out his card to pedestrians, including Tomás Alvarez.
- Cardinal McCoy and his Secretary, Monsignor Renato Marziano, learn of the pope's heart attack.
- After Rockford stays overnight with Martin in a beach house, he awakes to discovered that Martin drugged and sodomized him which he reports to Pilarski.
- Tomás returns home late at night to his wife, Maria, and their loving son, Sebastian.
- After Tomás goes to confession to Padre Enrique, his body is found which McCabe and Garcia are called in to investigate.
- After McCoy and Marziano discuss Rockford's allegation that Martin drugged and sodomized him, they insist that Rockford be evaluated for alcohol or drug addiction.
- Padre Enrique conducts Tomás' graveside service with Maria, Sebastian, and Tomás' older brother, Miguel, an enforcer for the Sinaloa drug cartel.
- McCabe and Garcia pay Maria a visit who insists that her husband did not OD on drugs.
- While Mark is staying with Pilarski over Christmas break, he opens a letter signed by McCoy dismissing him from the seminary.
- Pilarski refers Mark to former Navy JAG, attorney Rachel Goodman, who defends a woman accused of murdering her husband and wins the case when the jury finds her "not guilty."

ACT II

- Mark visits Rachel at her office where she offers to represent him *pro bono*.
- Maria and Sebastian visit Tomás' grave with its very simple metal marker.
- McCoy, Marziano, and Reynolds discuss offering Mark a confidential settlement.
- Mark decides to turn down their confidential settlement offer and Rachel files suit on the grounds of wrongful termination.
- Rachel and Mark are contacted by Juan who was propositioned as a seminarian by Martin and is willing to sign an affidavit in support of their case.
- Miguel anonymously drops off money which Padre Enrique delivers to Maria.
- Mark, strongly attracted to Rachel, discourages her at dinner from using a dating app.
- Reynolds petitions the court to dismiss Jeff's lawsuit on jurisdictional grounds.
- Jeff and Rachel have an educational, enjoyable, and bonding visit with Dr. Rich Doyle and Father Jim Pilarski.
- The pope dies and McCoy is considered a prime contender for the papacy.
- The judge dismisses the lawsuit on jurisdictional grounds and not wanting to try a case where the pope may be a defendant.
- Rachel, Mark, and Padre Enrique watch McCoy's press conference during which Juan asks McCoy an embarrassing question about the lawsuit.
- Juan gets suspended after Vance, his station manager, gets a threatening call from McCoy.
- McCoy celebrates the judge's ruling and paybacks Marziano for all he has done by nominating him to be made an auxiliary bishop.

ACT III

- Padre Enrique contacts Juan Flores to provide evidence pointing to Tomás being murdered following an orgy in the Cardinal's residence.
- Juan gets reinstated after Vance sees a copy of Tomás' declaration.
- Padre Enrique, Maria, and Sebastian are taken into protective company.
- Maria texts Miguel that McCoy is implicated in Tomás' murder.
- Police discover \$25,000 withdrawn from an archdiocesan account the day before Tomás' murder.
- Police obtain video of Marziano and Dominic D'Amico meeting before Tomás' murder.
- Martin admits to being at the orgy; confesses to assaulting Mark; and tells how McCoy groomed and seduced him as a seminarian when McCoy was his rector.
- D'Amico is arrested and confesses that Marziano paid him to murder Tomás.
- A judge issues a warrant for Marziano's arrest but will not issue one for McCoy who is scheduled to fly out the next morning for Rome.
- McCoy is kidnapped on his way to LAX while Martin, who was driving, is shot and killed.
- Marziano cops a plea and identifies McCoy up as an accessory after the fact.
- McCoy's head is delivered to the Holy See Press Office.
- Nigerian Cardinal Robert Abara is elected and takes the name Pope Cyprian.
- Mark proposes to Rachel.
- Montage: Magazine covers and newspaper headlines feature the story; D'Amico and Marziano are booked and their mug shots are taken; Rachel and Mark are married by Pilarski with full military honors; Juan receives a Pulitzer prize; and Maria and Sebastian visit Tomás' grave featuring a large tombstone being visited by numerous Hispanics bringing flowers and candles.
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Three Possible Actors



Ethan Peck, 39, has a family background that allows him to connect with Mark Rockford, a decorated Marine with combat experience and a Catholic seminarian. Ethan's father, Steve, was a Marine during the Vietnam War. His grandfather, Gregory Peck, played the role of a missionary priest in *The Keys of the Kingdom*, and the role of Monsignor Hugh O'Flaherty in *The Scarlet and the Black*. O'Flaherty was an Irish priest who worked in the Vatican during World War II and who saved thousands of Jews and escaped Allied POWs in Rome. Recent Credits: *The Honor List* (2018), *The Holiday Calendar* (2018), *The Midnight Sky* (2020).



Gal Gadot, 39, is around the age of Rachel Goodman, a Jewish Family Law Attorney in Santa Monica who grew up as a military brat and became a Navy JAG Corps officer. Familiar with both Jewish and military life, Gal served two years in the Israeli Defense Force after being crowned Miss Israel. She achieved global stardom for her role in portraying Diana Prince as Wonder Woman. Recent credits: *Wonder Woman 1984* (2020), *Zack Snyder's Justice League* (2021), *Red Notice* (2021).



Conleth Hill, 60, around the age of Cardinal Edwin McCoy, has the temperament and sophistication to portray the ambitious prelate who hopes to become the first American pope. His previous rolls might make him interested in acting in a production that exposes clerical sexual predation. Recent credits: *Here Are the Young Men* (2020), *Game of Thrones* (2011-2019), *To Olivia* (2021).

Target Buyers

Den of Iniquity addresses the sexual predation of seminarians and the sex trafficking of vulnerable adults just as *Spotlight* exposed the clerical sexual predation of minors and *Sound of Freedom* addressed the human trafficking of children. Participant Media and First Look Media funded *Spotlight* with a budget of \$20 million and brought in \$98.3 million. *Sound of Freedom*, financed by Mexican investors and distributed by *Angel Studios* with a budget of \$14.6 million, has (as of September 2023) brought in over \$181 million. Owing to the screenplay's subject matter, I would hope that with the right actors, a major studio might see it's potential and express interest in *Den of Iniquity*. As bishops like Oscar Zanchetta are being convicted of abusing seminarians; as more seminaries are being closed and rectors are being investigated for fostering cultures of sexual predation against both heterosexually and homosexually oriented candidates; as 35 U.S. dioceses and religious orders have filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection; as over \$5 billion dollars in settlements have been paid out since a series of abuse cases were uncovered in Boston in 2002; as the abuse crisis is causing a hemorrhage of Church membership and the closure of thousands of churches in the United States, Ireland, and Europe; and given the fact that over 150 Catholic bishops from 31 different countries around the world have been credibly accused of sexual wrongdoing with many more still awaiting prosecution for engaging in and covering up sex abuse, the international appeal of a film like *Den of Iniquity* to all four demographic quadrants is undeniable.