

Knin

Written by:

Dallas Bossort

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The screenplay that follows is an academic approach to the medium, and therefore notes on lighting and costuming are included. I am aware that these clarifications would not appear in the screenplay for a commercial feature, and am willing to produce a document that meets these requirements upon request.

INT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

DEJAN (16), a well built mature looking young man, moves through the kitchen of a small farm house with a pair of worn leather boots in his hand. Careful not to make any noise, he exits the home.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Under moonlight, Dejan runs through a vast field of wheat now wearing his boots. A light breeze moves the grass in waves all around him. He crests a hill to find a small shack at the edge of a small lake. Dejan looks around cautiously, then walks up to the door and knocks lightly.

INT. SHACK - NIGHT

Dejan enters the shack dimly lit by a single lamp. Three men, all slightly older than Dejan, sit on piles of hay around a makeshift table playing cards; a pile of scythes leans against the far wall. STEFAN (17), a slender young man, greets Dejan with a nod and passes him a bottle of liquor.

DEJAN

Where's everyone else?

STEFAN

Curfew.

DEJAN

(smirking)

What curfew?

They all laugh quietly. Stefan deals the cards. Dejan takes a drink, then picks up his hand.

EXT. LAKESIDE - NIGHT

Dejan and Stefan walk beside the lake, stumbling a bit as they go. The shack stands in the distance behind them as Stefan puts a few coins in his pocket.

STEFAN

Too easy.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

We should have won twice
that.

STEFAN

Still, better than losing.

At the sound of a loud SPLASH ahead of them, Dejan and Stefan duck down behind a thick bush.

STEFAN

(quietly)
What was that?

Dejan peaks around the side of the bush. In the distance, three men are visible at the waters edge, each with a band around their right arm with a white "U" on it. They proceed to heave a large object into the water. Another loud splash follows.

DEJAN

We better get out of here.

STEFAN

Right.

The two young men move off quietly in the opposite direction.

INT. FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Dejan sneaks back into his house with his boots, now muddy, in his hand. He passes a door slightly ajar, and can see his mother and father sleeping soundly. He breathes a sigh of relief, then enters his room and climbs into bed.

INT. FARM HOUSE - EARLY MORNING

An egg is cracked into a well worn frying pan placed atop a wood burning stove. A strong woman wearing a plain dress, JASNA (34), prepares breakfast in a dimly lit kitchen. Wooden slatted walls fail to keep tiny rays of sunlight from entering the room at a low angle, and the floor creaks as Jasna moves about.

CONTINUED:

ANA (8), Jansa's daughter, wears a similar dress and helps by giving Jasna a handful of fresh herbs from the counter top. Jansa shows Ana how mix in the new ingredients before rising and approaching a closed door opposite the room from the stove.

JASNA
(softly)
Marko...
(she opens the door)
Breakfast.

Inside the room MARKO (38) sits on a bed with his shirt off, several scars on his side and back are illuminated by thin rays of light coming in through the walls of the bedroom. He looks up at Jasna and nods before pulling a clean, well worn shirt over his head. Jasna moves on to a second door.

JASNA
Dejan?

Jasna opens the door to find Dejan still sleeping.

JASNA
(prodding)
Wake up Dejan, breakfast
is almost ready.

Dejan doesn't stir. Jasna returns to the kitchen and exchanges a look of frustration with Marko, who is now seated at a table in the center of the room.

Marko
(sternly)
Dejan.

Dejan cracks open an eye and is met with a bright ray of sunlight. He MOANS and rolls over.

JASNA (O.S.)
(frustrated, to Dejan)
You're breakfast is getting
cold.

CONTINUED:

JASNA
(concerned)
Marko...?

Marko enters the room with a bucket of water and dumps it on Dejan, soaking the entire bed.

MARKO
(very firmly)
Get up.

Dejan jumps up and gives his father a look of surprise before Marko exits the room. Dejan scrambles to dress as Marko joins Jasna and Ana at the table now set for breakfast. Jasna's look of concern is met by Marko, who cracks a feint smile; Ana sees this and begins to giggle. Dejan enters the kitchen and sits at the table, hushing Ana with a glance.

DEJAN
(upset)
I was getting up.

MARKO
It's the first day of the harvest; you and I are expected in the field.

DEJAN
(protesting)
They would wait for us.

JASNA
That's not the point Dejan.

MARKO
(holding up a piece of bread)
We have bread on our table every morning because we all do our part. Would you like to go without bread until the next cut?

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
(apologetically)
No sir.

MARKO
Alright then, finish up.

Marko finishes a glass of water and gets up to leave, kissing Jasna and Ana on their foreheads before walking out the door. Seeing this, Dejan stuffs one last bite of egg in his mouth and acknowledges the women who are still seated.

DEJAN
(mouth full)
Thank you.

Dejan rises quickly and runs after Marko. Ana waves good bye with the hand of a toy doll and Jasna rises to clean up the table.

TITLE CARD: "KNIN, YUGOSLAVIA
 JUNE 7, 1941"

EXT. FIELD - EARLY MORNING

Dejan runs to catch up with his father. They walk in silence on a dirt path between two large wheat fields with several cottages at the edge. Marko looks at Dejan, who is catching his breath, then out over the field. They continue walking as a light breeze brushes the golden wheat grass over the rolling hills like waves in the ocean. Marko's shirt hangs over one of his shoulders, beneath it his scars visible.

MARKO
Would your mother be happy
if she knew where you were
last night?

DEJAN
(caught off guard)
Uh...

CONTINUED:

MARKO

Don't bullshit me, I heard
you leave.

Dejan looks down at the ground.

DEJAN

I'm sorry father.

MARKO

Oh you'll be sorry. We've
got a long day of work
ahead of us.

(pause)

I know you don't think it
matters, but that curfew
is not to be ignored.

DEJAN

I can take care of myself.

Marko grabs Dejan firmly by the shoulder.

MARKO

(harsh, upset)

This is no time for
disobedience.

DEJAN

I was just...

MARKO

(cutting him off)

No excuses. You have to
trust me on this.

Dejan nods as they walk on in silence. They crest a hill to find several other men outside a small structure surrounded by a fence. In their preparing to begin harvesting the wheat, two men uncover scythes in the back of a large wooden cart while another, OLD MAN (56), attaches the harness at the front of the cart to an OX. The old man struggles with the stubborn animal. Dejan sees this and runs over to help.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

Here...

OLD MAN

(grunting)

Hold the harness steady...

(to the ox)

Come on now.

Dejan looks up at his father apologetically as he and the old man succeed in harnessing the large beast. Marko returns an approving grin as more men arrive on the scene. Marko walks to the back of the cart and begins to distribute the scythes.

EXT. FIELD - EARLY AFTERNOON

Work begins in seemingly endless fields of wheat atop rolling hills as the sun rises. Six older men work in front of the cart to cut the grain, the five younger men walk behind the moving cart bunching and stacking, and the oldest man tends to the ox. Marko leads the older men by instructing them on direction through the field.

Several of them have scars visible on their bare chests and backs similar to Marko's, and they comply with Marko's instructions. Dejan works beside Stefan who also wears long pants and a simple shirt. The other young men loading the grain appear a bit older than Dejan and Stefan. Marko looks back at Dejan, who is looking out at the cleared land. They're eyes meet and they exchange a look of satisfaction.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - NOON

Jansa sits facing the field in a home-made rocking chair mending an old shirt as Ana chases several chickens around the yard, her doll in hand. The chickens are much quicker than she, and Ana tires of the game quickly.

ANA

(stopping)

Momma, can you braid my hair?

CONTINUED:

JANSA
 (smiling, playful)
 Only if you catch me a
 chicken.

Ana pauses and looks back at the chickens, which are now foraging the ground for food.

ANA
 (defeated)
 They're too fast.

JANSA
 (laughing)
 Come here.

Jasna puts down the shirt as Ana runs over. Ana sits on the ground in front of Jasna smiling ear to ear with her doll in her lap. Jasna begins braiding Ana's hair and HUMMING a gentle tune, but hesitates at the sound of a VEHICLE'S ENGINE. Jasna begins HUMMING louder to cover up the sound; Ana doesn't notice. A large transport jeep with a white "U" painted on it appears, and is approaching the cottages. Jasna quickly, but nervously, finishes braiding Ana's hair before sending her inside.

JASNA
 (feigning calm)
 All done, now you go wash
 up for lunch.

Ana runs a hand over her haphazardly braided hair as she rises and looks at Jansa in protest.

JASNA
 (firm)
 Inside.

Jasna watches Ana run into the cottage, then stands. She raises a hand, shielding her eyes from the sunlight to get a better look.

EXT. HILL TOP - NOON

The men rest in the shade of a small oasis of trees in the middle of the field. Dejan finds a canteen in the front of the cart and takes a swig. Stefan sits on a rock close by with the older men behind him. Dejan whistles a sharp, quick note at Stefan to get his attention before tossing him the canteen to him.

Stefan tosses Dejan a piece of bread in return. They both appear fatigued from the morning's work.

STEFAN

(looking out)

Thanks. How much d'you
think we'll get done
today?

DEJAN

(indicating direction
with a nod)

Might make the first tree
line before dark.

STEFAN

(only half-joking)

I don't know if I can survive
a week of this.

Just as Dejan is about to reply, a MUFFLED EXPLOSION is heard faintly from the direction of the tree line Dejan indicated earlier. Some of the older men begin to stand up to get a better view but the trees are thick. ENGINE noises get louder as the men begin moving towards the sound. Dejan and Stefan rise to follow, but the men closest to the tree row stop cold; Dejan looks on confused.

Suddenly, three military jeeps, each with a white "U" painted on the sides and filled with armed men, wearing arm bands adorned with the same "U", emerge from the behind the brush. Four of the older men are shot and killed immediately as the Ustaše soldiers enter the field firing. The jeeps drive directly at the remaining men who scatter, attempting to find safety in the small patch of trees they once rested in, and having no way to defend themselves.

CONTINUED:

Dejan and Stefan run into the field, having more time to react. They lie down hidden in the tall grass that hasn't been cut yet, and watch through the swaying grain as the Ustaše slaughter their fellow workers. After chasing down most of the men, the jeeps circle around to search for survivors in the grass and the trees. Dejan spots Marko crouched behind a tree by himself. The only sound now is the ominous RUMBLE of the jeeps engines.

Dejan, Stefan, and Marko appear to be the only ones still alive. Marko spots a jeep headed in the direction of Dejan and Stefan; Dejan, who is looking at Marko, sees a tragic look come over his father's face. He turns and sees the jeep coming straight for them, then looks back at Marko. Marko's gaze shifts from the jeep to Dejan. While looking Dejan straight in the eyes, Marko pats the scars on his chest with a closed fist. He stands with a look of supreme determination. Dejan watches as his father begins to run out into the open.

The jeep changes its course and Dejan begins to scream, but Stefan covers his mouth with a hand. Marko is gunned down as the jeep overtakes him, but the boys remain safe. The jeeps move on, and the Ustaše soldiers inside yell wildly.

EXT. FIELD - AFTERNOON

Once the jeeps have disappeared, Dejan and Stefan run over to where Marko fell.

DEJAN
(frantically)
Marko! Marko!

STEFAN
(hysterically)
Father...!?!

Marko stumbles out of the golden wheat grass, staining it red with his blood. He falls into the open, atop the grain beaten down as a result of the jeep driving over it. Dejan rushes over to Marko, crouching by his dying father's side. He attempts to find where the blood is coming from frantically.

CONTINUED:

STEFAN	DEJAN
(hysterical)	(holding Marko)
Father...! Father...!	No! No!

Marko's cloudy eyes move from Dejan to Stefan. Their eyes meet and Marko shakes his head; Stefan stops calling out, falling to the ground in tears. Dejan tries to move Marko.

DEJAN
(demanding)
Stefan! Help me!

Stefan doesn't answer; he rolls around on the ground traumatized, ripping up hand full after hand full of grass. Dejan gets a grip on Marko's torso, but he is too heavy to move alone.

MARKO
(gargly)
Leave me.
(cough)
Jansa... Ana...

Marko looks in the direction of the cottages and reaches up to Dejan. A tear rolls down Dejan's cheek as a look of understanding comes over his face. Marko pulls Dejan's hand to his own chest, placing it on his scars now covered in blood.

MARKO
(passionately)
This is your land. Don't
let anyone take it from
you.
(pause, in pain)
Now GO!

Dejan pulls away slowly, taking one last look at his dying father before turning away to collect Stefan.

DEJAN
(pulling him)
Get up. Get up!

CONTINUED:

Dejan manages to get Stefan to his feet and the two sprint towards their cottages, barely visible in the distance. Dejan looks over his shoulder and sees Marko's lifeless body lying atop the golden wheat.

EXT. DIRT PATH - AFTERNOON

Dejan and Stefan run down the dirt road to where their cottages stand.

DEJAN
(as they run)
Go to your family.

Stefan chokes back more tears, then nods in understanding. They reach the yard of Dejan's home. Dejan runs towards his house, which stands with its door wide open, while Stefan continues on.

INT. DEJAN'S COTTAGE - AFTERNOON

Dejan bursts through the open door of his home. He searches frantically through all the rooms and out the back door. Everything inside the home has been ravaged; broken dishes, clothing, and books lie scattered about.

DEJAN
Ana! Mamma!

Jasna and Ana are gone; only Ana's doll remains on the floor of the kitchen. Dejan hesitates, struggling to comprehend, then collects himself. He gets a rifle and ammunition from his father's room.

INT. STEFAN'S COTTAGE - AFTERNOON

Stefan sits weeping on the ground with his head down and his dog, BO, in his arms. Dejan enters the room; Bo squirms free, runs to him, and begins licking the dried blood from his hand. Stefan lifts his head to reveal red eyes and teary cheeks.

DEJAN
(determined)
We've got to go after them.

CONTINUED:

STEFAN

(whiny)

Why...?

(pause, then frantic)

There're gone. They're
all gone.

DEJAN

They could still be alive!
We can't abandon them.

STEFAN

(hopeless rage)

What can we do?

DEJAN

Where's your rifle?

(pause, louder)

Where's your rifle!?

Stefan looks up in fear.

DEJAN

(defiantly)

And if we don't try...?

Dejan walks to the door to leave.

STEFAN

(choppy)

No. Dejan. I'm scared.

DEJAN

(looking back)

I know.

EXT. FIELD - LATE AFTERNOON

Dejan runs through the field in the direction that the jeeps went. The sun is now lower in the sky, and the wind has picked up. The grass once brushed by a breeze is now tossed around by the wind. After a short time Dejan is joined by Stefan, who sprints to catch up and now carries a rifle. They exchange a compassionate but fearful look as Bo runs wildly through the grass in front of them.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

They can't be far.

They sprint through a patch of trees, bounding over fallen timber.

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

The three Ustaše jeeps sit parked at a fork in the road as the transport jeep approaches from behind. The transport jeep has a canvas cover on the back; beneath it the faces of several women and children are visible. Jansa holds Ana tightly in her arms, their faces dirty and bruised.

A very well built and dirty USTAŠE OFFICER #1 (37) checks a map with red dots scattered all over it. Using a different language, he instructs USTAŠE OFFICER #2 (35), a slightly smaller but grittier looking man in one of the other jeeps to go left.

Ustaše Officer #2 and five other soldiers drive along the path for a brief time before arriving at a clearing; a large farm house and a barn are visible along the trees at the other side.

INT. LARGE FARM HOUSE - EVENING

A well dressed Mother (38), Father (44), Son #1 (20), Son #2 (18), Son #3 (15) Son #4 (14), and one Daughter, VESNA (18), a pretty girl wearing a nice dress, sit down to dinner when the Father hears the sound of an approaching ENGINE. He gets up, looks out a window, and sees the armed men led by Ustaše Officer #2 approaching in a jeep.

FATHER

(sharp, to Mother)

You and Vesna, upstairs.

EXT. LARGE FARM HOUSE - EVENING

A single jeep pulls up to the large farm house standing alone in the forest. The six Ustaše soldiers jump out and approach the building. They are all dirty, and smile menacingly as they take positions facing the house.

CONTINUED:

USTASË #1 (25) lights a torch, enters the barn, and sets fire to a pile of hay before exiting.

USTASË OFFICER #2
(smug, with accent)
Come out. There is no
escape.

INT. LARGE FARM HOUSE - EVENING

The Mother and Vesna disappear up the stairs. The Father and sons are now all standing at the windows looking out.

FATHER
(calmly to Sons #3
and #4)
Go get the rifles.

Sons #3 and #4 run into a back room.

EXT. FOREST - EVENING

Dejan and Stefan continue to run through forests and meadows. At a short burst of GUNFIRE nearby, Dejan grabs Stefan's shirt and they stop cold. Bo disappears into the trees.

DEJAN
(stopping)
Do you hear that?

STEFAN
(severe paranoia)
Where'd it come from?

Stefan looks around disoriented; Dejan listens intently. The gunfire continues, providing the boys with a bearing. They exchange a look of recognition, change direction, and run on through the brush.

INT. LARGE FARM HOUSE - TWILIGHT

The men of the house defend it by firing at the soldiers through open windows. The Ustaše use stumps, fences, the jeep, and trees as cover while they fire back.

CONTINUED:

Firing with single shot rifles, the men of the house are at a disadvantage to the soldiers, who use automatic rifles.

FATHER
(confident, to sons)
Steady and straight. No
one gives up!

SON #1
(to Son #4)
Watch the back door!

SON #2
Got one!

SON #3
Me too!

More shooting back and forth; then, the Father gets shot in the chest and falls.

SON #2
(horrified)
Father!!

Son #2 runs over to cover the window; he finds his father dead and fires one shot out the window before being shot and killed himself.

EXT. EDGE OF FOREST - TWIGHLIGHT

Dejan and Stefan stop at the clearing where the battle is taking place. They can see that the four remaining soldiers have the house surrounded, and are approaching.

STEFAN
(shell shocked)
There're still people inside.

DEJAN
(quietly)
I'll go right, you go left.

Dejan gets up to move, Stefan hesitates.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
Come on Stefan, I need you.
(pointing)
See that tree?

STEFAN
(scared)
Yeah.

DEJAN
Shoot over the rock beside
it. You'll be safe from
there.

Stefan hesitates, looks back, then gets up and moves to the tree Dejan pointed out; Dejan moves in the opposite direction, going around the right side behind the Ustaše attack. Dejan drops to his belly behind a fallen tree, loads a bullet into the chamber, and fires at the closest Ustaše soldier. His first shot misses, but it goes unnoticed in the chaos of the battle. He adjusts his sights, reloads and fires again. USTAŠE #2 (27) falls.

The three remaining Ustaše advance on the farm house. Dejan looks for Stefan, as the soldiers are close to the tree he was supposed to fire from, but he is nowhere to be found. Sensing that something is wrong, Dejan runs back around the clearing to Stefan's spot. Stefan is hunched over with his rifle on the ground when Dejan arrives.

DEJAN
(concerned)
Are you alright?

Stefan rocks back and forth not speaking. Dejan sees that he is not hurt, but delirious and scared. Dejan pops his head over the edge of the rock and sees the three remaining soldiers, Ustaše Officer #2, USTAŠE #3 (30), and USTAŠE #4 (33) nearby before ducking back down.

DEJAN
(comforting)
Stay here
(looks up again)
I'll come back for you.

CONTINUED:

Dejan rises and places his rifle on top of the rock. He fires and misses once again. He adjusts and reloads while two soldiers enter the house. Dejan fires and kills USTAŠE #4 before he reaches the door way.

INT. LARGE FARM HOUSE - TWILIGHT

The two remaining Ustaše, Ustaše Officer #2 and Ustaše #3 begin to destroy furniture inside the house as they look for survivors. The Father and Sons #1, #2, and #3 all lie dead on the main floor.

Suddenly a door opens behind the rebels and Son #4 rushes SCREAMING into the main room with a rifle. He shoots Ustaše Officer #2 in the neck before Ustaše #3 shoots him. Ustaše #3 proceeds to go upstairs.

The Mother jumps out at him with a knife, but she misses as Ustaše #3 sidesteps the attack. She falls to the ground and he shoots her before kicking down a closed door. Vesna backs up into a corner as Ustaše #3 approaches her menacingly. He reaches out and grabs her as she attempts to escape.

VESNA
(sprawling)
No. No. Stop. Go away.

The soldier laughs, then throws his rifle to the ground. He removes his belt containing a side arm pistol then attacks Vesna, ripping at her clothes madly. She SCREAMS.

EXT. LARGE FARM HOUSE

Dejan hears the SCREAM, reloads and sprints up to the door. MUFFLED SCREAMS follow from above; he rushes up the stairs and bursts through the door. The soldier reels.

DEJAN
Stop! Don't move.

The soldier stands up, his pants still on. A sobbing Vesna curls up into a ball in the corner with her head down and most of her clothing shredded. The soldier laughs, smiling at Dejan with a mouth only half full of dark teeth.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

(edgy)

Where did you take my
family?

(proding with rifle)

Where are they?

The soldier begins to move closer, his smile becoming more menacing. Dejan takes a step back.

DEJAN

(prodding)

Stop!

(desperate)

Where have you taken them!

The soldier continues to advance and Dejan takes another step back. A SHOT rings out; the soldier crumples slowly. Dejan reels to find Vesna holding the soldier's smoking sidearm pistol. After a brief pause, Dejan rushes over to the fallen man as he dies.

DEJAN

(loosing hope)

Where are they...? Where
have you taken them...?

(pounding)

There gone, what did you
do with them...?

The soldier manages one last smile before expiring. Dejan brushes away blood and tears from his own face. He stares at the dead man with a look of bitter hatred and defeat, then he walks over to Vesna. Dejan tries to help her up but she lashes out at him.

DEJAN

(backing off)

It's ok, I'm not going
to hurt you.

Dejan finds a clean dress atop a dresser and tries to give it to Vesna. She looks up at him, traumatized and defensive.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
(calming)
It's ok now. You're safe.

Dejan hands her the dress once again, she accepts.

EXT. LARGE FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

It's now much darker, quiet, and still outside; Stefan realizes that the shooting has stopped, peeks over the rock, and sees that the battle has ended. He begins to approach the house, and is still looking quite scared. The burning barn lights the scene in an orange hue.

Dejan walks out the front door of the house; Vesna walks beside him with the new dress on and a blanket wrapped around her. Stefan is visible walking towards them in the clearing. The light from the burning barn dances on their faces.

DEJAN
(shouting)
Stefan, are you alright?

STEFAN
(scared)
Who is that?

Dejan stops and looks at Vesna, not knowing the answer to Stefan's question. She looks back at him from under the blanket.

VESNA
(soft, frail)
I am Vesna.

Dejan smiles at her, then looks back towards Stefan, who is now only a few yards away.

DEJAN
This is Vesna, Vesna this
is Stefan.

Stefan acknowledges Vesna with a nod.

CONTINUED:

STEFAN
(to Dejan, defiant)
We're going home now.

DEJAN
(passionately)
They're still out there.

STEFAN
(angry)
Men like this don't just
come from nowhere, Dejan.
Something is happening...
(looking at a dead
soldier with fear)
We need to go home, bury
the dead, and hide.

DEJAN
(looks to burning barn,
then back to Stefan)
I'm not giving up. I will
find them.

STEFAN
How do you think you're
going to do that? We have
no idea where they are, and
everyone that does is dead.

Stefan's emotions get the better of him. Vesna perks up.

VESNA
(still distraught)
I have an uncle, in Belgrade.
He could help.

DEJAN
(hopeful, to Stefan)
We can still find them.

STEFAN
(teary)
Maybe you, but not me.

CONTINUED:

Stefan begins to walk away in the direction the came from. Dejan grabs him by the shoulder but Stefan shrugs him off and keeps walking.

DEJAN

Stefan... Don't give up!
Your family needs you...
(pause, quietly
to himself)
I need you.

His eyes teary, Stefan keeps walking without looking back, leaving Dejan and Vesna standing in the clearing. Bo runs out from the trees and joins Stefan. Dejan glances from Vesna to Stefan, and back to Vesna.

DEJAN

(frustrated)
Is your uncle a good man?

Vesna nods. Dejan looks at the figure of Stefan as he disappears into the forest. He is tense, and torn between the hope Vesna has offered and his friendship with Stefan. Dejan looks up at the stars above the silhouettes of swaying trees, then down at Vesna.

DEJAN

(sighing)
Let's go to Belgrade.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Dejan and Vesna walk through the countryside following trails and roads lit by moonlight. He helps her over a creek bed and they continue on. They see a bright light in the distance and walk towards it, careful to stay hidden in the shadows.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

They reach a small village at the edge of another large wheat field, and find several of the homes on fire. Several dead bodies are visible lying on the ground. Vesna begins to cry.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
(comforting)
Cover your eyes.

Dejan takes Vesna by the hand and leads her along the edge of the burning village. She covers her face with her free hand as they walk within feet of the mangled bodies of mostly men, but some women and children, and a dead dog. Tears fall from Dejan's cheeks as he struggles to keep his eyes facing forward and not down. They reach the far side of the village and enter the forest once again before stopping.

DEJAN
(sniffle)
It's ok now.

Vesna lowers her hand and looks at Dejan with admiration.

VESNA
Thank you.

DEJAN
We should keep moving.

They continue on through the countryside. They cross another creek and come to a major road. Dejan hears a DISTANT GUNSHOT and the two crouch down off the road as the ENGINE of a jeep is heard faintly in the distance. A minute later, two jeeps full of Ustaše zoom by. The men inside appear drunk; cheering and shouting in a different language while firing into the air as they go. Dejan and Vesna sit perfectly still until they hear silence once again. They cross the road, go through a field, and enter another patch of trees at the base of a large hill.

DEJAN
Let's rest here. We'll
be safe until morning.

EXT. HILL - DAYBREAK

A ray of sunlight shines through the trees and onto Dejan's face; he rolls over. Vesna, who lies next to him, wakes at this disturbance and shakes Dejan.

CONTINUED:

He wakes up immediately, looking around at strange surroundings, then remembering the task at hand. The two emerge from the trees near the top of the hill with tired eyes. They find a set of rail road tracks and begin to follow them while staying in the trees to avoid being seen. They round a corner and spot a large group of soldiers guarding the tracks with two large machine guns.

Dejan and Vesna crouch behind a fallen tree and observe the soldiers without being seen. The soldiers are dressed differently than any they've seen to this point, and there are no jeeps present. Dejan looks at Vesna; she is looking at the men without fear.

DEJAN

Do you know any of those
men?

VESNA

I'm not sure.

DEJAN

(shaking his head)
We can't afford to take
chances, let's go around.

After backtracking past the corner they cross the railroad tracks safely and continue on through the forest. They crest the hill, see a city below, and stop to observe.

VESNA

(pointing)
My uncle lives over there,
near the large church.

EXT. CITY - MORNING

The two make their way down the hill to the edge of the city. It is very quiet, but Dejan remains cautious, gripping his rifle tightly. They stop at the side of a rock wall.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
(whispered close)
Careful, we're not safe
yet. I'll follow you.

Vesna nods and the two creep into the city, between a few houses, then past the large church. They stop at the door of a modest home. Vesna looks at Dejan, confirming that this is the place, then knocks on the door.

Vesna's uncle VICTOR (45), a surly man, opens the door holding a rifle and wearing sleeping attire. Vesna breaks down in tears and falls into his arms.

VICTOR
(shocked, relieved)
Vesna!
(pulling her)
Inside.
(choppy)
How did you...? Where did...?

He backs up into the home with Vesna in his arms without acknowledging Dejan.

INT. HOUSE - MORNING

Vesna's aunt, NADA (42), appears from another room with an apron over her night gown. Victor holds Vesna in his arms, unable to utter a complete sentence.

NADA
(concerned, relieved)
VESNA!

Nada rushes over and hugs the two of them tightly, kissing Vesna on her dirty forehead. Dejan steps into the home and Victor suddenly raises his rifle. The room becomes still.

VICTOR
(dead serious)
Who are you?

CONTINUED:

VESNA
(to Victor)
This is Dejan. He brought
me here.

DEJAN
(confident)
My name is Dejan Janik,
and I am from Knin.
My father and most of the
men from my village were
shot as we worked in the
fields yesterday. My
mother and sister have
been taken.

VESNA
He saved me.

Vesna looks at Dejan with admiration. Victor gives Dejan a questioning look; Dejan nods his head.

NADA
(leading Dejan)
Well come in, come in.
Warm yourself by the fire.
(comforting)
I'll get you something to
eat.

VICTOR
(to Vesna)
Where are your brothers?
Your ma and pa?

Vesna sniffles back a tear and shakes her head. Victor is taken aback.

VICTOR
(sighing, upset)
It's that bad out there...?

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

Who are they?

VICTOR

They call themselves the
Ustaše.

DEJAN

Do you know where they
could have taken my
family?

Nada returns with bread, fruit, and hot coffee.

VICTOR

It's hard to say.

(pause)

The majority of the
Dalmatian coast has
been taken by the Ustaše.
It's a miracle you made
it out of there. If
your family is still
alive, they would have
been taken to work at a
labor camp.

Dejan looks frustrated.

DEJAN

(quiet, confused)

Labor camps...?

VESNA

(to Victor)

Why is this happening?

VICTOR

(deep breath)

Intolerance... Power...

DEJAN

(upset)

Isn't anyone fighting back?

CONTINUED:

VICTOR

Aye. We've been defending Belgrade for weeks, but we still don't have the numbers to go on the offensive.

DEJAN

I want to fight.

(pause)

The Ustaše took my family and I will find them, no matter what it takes.

VICTOR

Well, you will have a good chance of finding your family if you join us.

DEJAN

Then that is what I must do.

VICTOR

Once you've had a chance to rest we will go see a man named Josef Tito. He is the leader of the resistance, a growing force known as the Partisans.

Dejan's eyes flash with a glimmer of hope as he looks up at Vesna. She returns a look of fearful admiration as she sips her coffee by the fire.

INT. HOUSE - MORNING

Victor walks up to a door that is ajar and pushes it open to reveal Dejan. Dejan is standing at a mirror now cleaned up and looking rested. A new sense of manhood is evident, as he gazes confidently at the reflection of himself.

VICTOR

Ready?

CONTINUED:

Dejan nods, takes one last look in the mirror, then grabs his rifle and exits the room. The two walk out the front door of the house, Victor leading.

LOWER THRID: "JUNE 18, 1941"

Vesna watches them leave from a second floor window with tears and indecision in her eyes. She gets up quickly, goes to Victor's room, and trades her clean dress for a pair of trousers and a shirt. She walks to the door in pursuit of the two men and is met by Nada.

VESNA
(to Nada)
Where did they go?

Nada can tell that Vesna intends to join the fight by her ill fitting attire.

NADA
(adamant)
No. You can't go too...
You're safe now and I'm
going to keep you safe.

Vesna approaches Nada, now face to face with her.

VESNA
(very serious)
I am going to do my part.

NADA
You're a woman Vesna.
War is no place for you.

VESNA
(defiant)
Where did they go?

NADA
No!

VESNA
(pleading)
You must let me...

CONTINUED:

They stand in silence for a few seconds.

NADA
(breaking down)
The South side of town
square, under the old
library.

Vesna kisses Nada on the cheek.

VESNA
(whispered)
Pray for me.

Nada looks up as if asking god for forgiveness.

INT. PARTISAN HEADQUATERS - MORNING

Dejan and Victor stand outside Tito's office at the Partisan Headquarters. It is dark and dingy, and the ceilings are low. PARTISAN #1 (29), a tall, clean cut soldier sets some files on a desk before walking towards them.

PARTISAN #1
(to Dejan)
He will see you now.

INT. TITO'S OFFICE - MORNING

Partisan #1 shows Dejan and Victor into an office, then leaves the room after opening the door for them. They stand up straight in front of a large desk while JOSEF TITO (42), a tall, stocky man, sits in a chair. Dejan holds his rifle in one hand as he looks from Tito, who is preoccupied with writing a letter, to Victor, who waits patiently. Tito looks up briefly to size Dejan up.

TITO
(continues writing)
What's your name?

DEJAN
Dejan Janik, from Knin.

CONTINUED:

TITO
(writing)
Knin, hmmm... and where is
your family?

DEJAN
My father was killed, my
mother and sister were
taken during the attack.

TITO
(looks up)
And now you want to find
them...?

Dejan nods his head.

VICTOR
He saved my niece from the
same group of rebels that
attacked his village and
brought her here on foot.

TITO
(to Dejan)
So you can shoot?

DEJAN
Aye.

TITO
Ever killed a man?

DEJAN
(hesistation)
Aye.

Just then a knock at the door draws the attention of all
three in the room.

TITO
Yes?

CONTINUED:

PARTISAN #1

(entering)

A woman to see you sir.
Says it's urgent.

TITO

Send her in...

Vesna enters the room to the surprise of Victor and Dejan. Tito is also surprised, but because she is so beautiful even despite the men's clothing she wears. Partisan #1 remains in the room.

VICTOR

(outraged)

What are you doing here?
Why are you dressed like
that?

VESNA

(to Tito)

I've come to fight.

Dejan is taken aback by this declaration by Vesna.

VICTOR

(adamant)

You will do no such thing.

TITO

(to Victor)

Now is not the time to be
rigid.

(pause, to Vesna)

Since the attack on
the city we have formed
several female squads.

(to all)

We need everyone we can
get.

VESNA

Victor, my family is gone.
I must do this.

CONTINUED:

Tito looks to Victor, his eyes pleading with him to consider allowing such a passionate young woman to contribute to the fight.

TITO

You're her uncle, its
your call.

Victor looks back and forth reluctantly. Vesna returns a pleading look. He shakes his head and gives Vesna a look of acceptance, letting out a heavy sigh.

VICTOR

(to Tito, strong)
Alright, we're all in.

Vesna catches herself beginning to smile. Dejan glances from Victor to Vesna with surprise. Vesna returns a compassionate look.

TITO

(finishing writing)
In two day's time there
will be a convoy sent to
establish a camp near the
coast. We have the
machines, but are still
waiting on the personnel.
Victor, you will drive one
of the ammunition trucks
there and join the fight
upon arrival.

(shifting)

Dejan, you will be leaving
For the coast at once, and
will be traveling on foot
with a small group of men
to clear the countryside
so the convoy can move in
safety.

(to Vesna)

You will also be joining
the fight, but with an all
female squad.

CONTINUED:

TITO

You will leave with the
convoy after completing
weapons training.

(approaching them)

Now, do you swear to
fight our enemy to the
death, never surrender, and
to protect those who are
unable to protect themselves?

DEJAN

Yes sir.

VESNA

I do.

VICTOR

Aye.

TITO

(standing tall)

You are now Partisans.
We fight Fascism, and
anyone who seeks to deny
us our freedom. Repeat
after me:

(loud)

Death to Fascism, freedom
to the people!

DEJAN, VESNA, AND VICTOR

(louder)

Death to Fascism, freedom
to the people!

Tito salutes them, they salute back, and Partisan #1 opens
the door to lead them out. Victor, Dejan, and Vesna
follow.

INT. PARTISAN HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

Dejan, Vesna, and Victor walk down a hallway and stop at a
door.

DEJAN

(to Victor)

Thank you...

VICTOR

Don't thank me...

CONTINUED:

Both Dejan and Victor look to Vesna. Dejan and Vesna embrace.

DEJAN
(whispered close)
Thank you.

Dejan steps back and shakes hands with Victor, giving him a nod of respect.

INT. PARTISAN ARMORY - EVENING

Twenty five men of between twenty and fifty years of age search through a room of tables covered in a hodge-podge assortment of military attire, weapons, and equipment. Dejan stands at a table looking through a pile of heavy coats, his rifle in hand. He selects one and puts it on. The majority of the men in the room are surrounding the rifle table, but Dejan walks past it, grabbing a canteen off an adjacent table. SRECKO (35), a soldier wearing a military cap, dressed in an old coat with a single star on each side of his collar, sees Dejan pass on the rifles. He looks at the old single shot rifle in Dejan's hand, and approaches him with a swagger of experience.

SRECKO
You think that single shot
is going to keep you alive
out there boy?

Dejan doesn't respond verbally, placing his free hand on the barrel of his rifle and holding it close to his chest as if defending it. Srecko laughs.

SRECKO
(to all)
Would somebody get this
child a real weapon.

BORIS (40), a large man with a weathered face and an old coat decorated with three stars on each side of his collar, tosses Boris a black automatic rifle with a large clip and a leather shoulder strap. Srecko pushes it against the much smaller single shot rifle Dejan still holds to his chest.

CONTINUED:

Dejan takes a step back, now holding both weapons. He sets down his single shot and inspects the new weapon. Srecko leans in menacingly.

SRECKO
(quietly)
Might keep you alive a
little longer.

Dejan accepts the advice and puts the gun's leather strap around his neck.

EXT. COUNTRY SIDE - AFTERNOON

A squad of eight men walks in a staggered two-by-two formation through the countryside. Dejan walks in the back and is noticeably younger than the rest of the men. His lack of experience also contrasts with the appearance of the other men, as he carries his new automatic weapon with tense arms, while the others are much more casual with the handling of their weapons. His eyes scan their surroundings, then the other men in his squad.

Beside Dejan walks IVAN (28), a quiet man of normal stature. In front of them, ANDREJ (25), the second youngest in the squad walks with confidence, and next to him, MILOS (30), a surly man with a full beard, walks with calculated steps as he surveys the land. Two more soldiers walk in front of them, PARTISAN #2 (31) and PARTISAN #3 (33), and the entire group is led by Boris and Srecko, the two most senior and most experienced men in the squad.

The four in the back wear large, cumbersome sacks on their backs. Partisan #3 carries a large machine gun and has an automatic rifle hanging from his shoulder, while Partisan #2 wears several chains of ammunition for it around his neck and shoulders in addition to his automatic rifle. The two officers at the front, Boris and his second in command, Srecko, only carry their own weapons. Boris has a compass around his neck.

At the front, Boris and Srecko quietly discuss Dejan's youth and inexperience. Dejan can see them discussing something passionately, but is too far behind to hear them.

CONTINUED:

SRECKO

I don't like him. Why did
he have to come with us?

(looking back)

Always getting the dregs.

BORIS

Give him a chance to
prove himself.

SRECKO

You mean his preference
for a single shot rifle
older than you over this...

(he pats his rifle)

...isn't enough. If you ask
me, he should have left the
fighting to the real men.

BORIS

He'll learn.

SRECKO

(clearly upset)

This is a matter of life
and death, and he's just a
fucking child.

(pause)

How can we rely on him to
hold in battle? I say we
send him back while we
still can.

BORIS

(convincingly)

We need him whether you
like it or not.

SRECKO

Well if he gets cut off
from us in battle, don't
expect me to put my life
on the line to bring him
back.

CONTINUED:

Boris looks out over the horizon, not disagreeing with Srecko's declaration. Dejan continues to survey the land.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP - NIGHT

The eight men huddle around a small fire eating dried meat and drinking water from their canteens. Boris, Srecko, Ivan, and Partisan #3 laugh and joke about their kills in the fight for Belgrade only weeks before. Boris removes a bottle of liquor from one of the packs and passes it around to the men.

SRECKO

(laughs to himself)

This is great. So the night the battle for Belgrade began was my wife's birthday. We finished dinner, put the kids to bed, so you know...it was time for me to take care of my duty as a husband, so to say.

(smirking)

Now, word was out that the Ustaše were planning an attack on the city, but no one expected it to come so soon, and everyone got caught a little off guard.

(emphasizing)

Myself included.

The men look on with their full attention, each smirking as they anticipate where Srecko is going with his story. Even Dejan, who is staring blankly into the fire, perks up a bit.

SRECKO

Now I, being the outstanding husband that I am, hear the first shots just as I'm giving my wife the present she really wanted..

(pause)

...and she won't let me stop.

CONTINUED:

The men let out a roar of laughter. Boris looks around at the men. Dejan looks up at Srecko blankly.

SRECKO
Hold on, hold on...
(smirk)
That's not even the best
part.

The men settle down a bit.

SRECKO
So there I am, listening
to the approaching gunfire
and trying my fucking
hardest to finish up and
get to the line before
the fighting's over.

Another round of laughter.

SRECKO
(takes a drink)
Long story short, she gets
pissed off, reaches across
the bed and hands me my
rifle.
(standing with rifle)
I must have fired a dozen
rounds into the air before
I finished up!

Srecko imitates firing off his rifle as he performs the act. The men laugh hysterically.

IVAN
(still laughing)
So did you make it to the
line?

SRECKO
Damn right I did, killed
6 of those bastards too.

CONTINUED:

SRECKO
(challenging)
How many did you get?

IVAN
Shit, I only got 4...

The men laugh once again, then become quiet. Dejan breaks the silence.

DEJAN
(fired up)
Is that all this is to
you? A fucking joke?

Srecko stands up quickly and moves towards Dejan. Dejan rises.

SRECKO
(to Dejan)
How 'bout you squirt?
How many men have you
killed?

The men listen intently. Dejan stares at Srecko as light from the fire dances across their faces.

SRECKO
What's the matter boy?
(menacingly)
You scared?

Dejan holds his ground, now face to face with Srecko.

BORIS
(firmly)
That'll do. Get some
sleep now men, we've got
another long day tomorrow.

The men follow this order and begin to get comfortable around the fire using brush, sacks, and a hillside to sleep on.

CONTINUED:

BORIS

Dejan.

DEJAN

Sir.

BORIS

You're on first watch.

Some of the men chuckle; Dejan nods his head, accepting this undesirable role. He walks to the top of the small hill beside the fire, sitting with his back to a log and his rifle across his lap. The fire burns down as the men fall asleep.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The full moon hangs high in the sky. Dejan sits a little lower against the log as the men below him sleep soundly, his eyes begin to fade.

All is quiet, and Dejan doses off. Then, a twig breaks somewhere behind Dejan, but he has fallen asleep, and doesn't hear it. Then another twig breaks, this time it is much louder and much closer. Dejan wakes just as the barrel of a rifle is pressed up against his cheek. The shadow of a MAN is visible on the ground next to Dejan.

MAN

(firm, quiet)

Stand. Slowly.

Dejan complies. He shakes with fear as he looks over to the men sleeping below who had depended on him to stay awake and protect them. The moonlight is broken up and tossed around, casting moving shadows off swaying tree branches.

MAN

Now walk.

The two walk away from the camp; Dejan is in front, not able to see the man's face.

CONTINUED:

MAN

Stop...

(pause)

Kneel.

Dejan hesitates for a tense moment, then a look of desperation flashes across his face. He turns around quickly and lunges at the man, but is met with the butt end of the man's rifle. He is hit in the side of the face and falls immediately. The man leans over his crumpled body, his shadow completely eclipsing Dejan as he comes to. Dejan begins to open his eyes and he looks up at the silhouette of the man.

MAN

(livid)

What the fuck was that?

DEJAN

(in pain)

Srecko?

SRECKO

Lucky for you boy.
Don't ever let me catch
you sleeping on your
watch again.

DEJAN

(defeated, nods)

Sir.

Dejan picks himself up and walks over to the hillside as Srecko watches him with disdainful eyes. Dejan lies down defeated as Srecko begins his watch.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING

The men walk in formation through a forest and across rolling hills until they reach a clearing. A bruise on Dejan's face is now visible. Boris and Srecko walk at the front and appear to be discussing something. Boris holds up a hand, and they stop at the base of a large hill.

CONTINUED:

BORIS
Dejan, Andrej, to the
front.

The two young men run up to the front and stand at attention. Boris gives the compass and map to Andrej.

BORIS
(to Andrej)
Here.

BORIS
(pointing)
Climb this hill and survey
the land for enemy units...

Andrej hangs the compass around his neck.

BORIS
(continuing)
...and get us a bearing of
South-West.
(to Dejan)
I want you to go and learn
how to use the compass...

Boris trails off as he notices the large bruise on Dejan's cheek. Dejan sees this hesitation but continues to look straight ahead.

DEJAN
It's nothing sir.

Boris looks at Srecko, who stands to his right as if he somehow knows it was him. Srecko responds with an unassuming look; the two officers turn back to Dejan and Andrej.

BORIS
Alright. Get going.

Dejan and Srecko exchange a look of understanding before he and Andrej begin to run up the hill.

EXT. HILLTOP - MORNING

The two reach the top of the hill and Andrej begins to look at the map and the compass. Dejan looks on intently as dark clouds gather above them.

ANDREJ

You ever used a compass
before?

DEJAN

No, just maps.

ANDREJ

Ok, well it's pretty
simple. The needle always
points North, so you can
line it up with North on
your map...

Andrej holds the compass on top of the map so that North on each navigation tool lines up perfectly.

ANDREJ

(continuing)
...like so. Now if you
look at your map, it will
match the landscape. See
that river?

DEJAN

Aye.

ANDREJ

(pointing to map)
It's right there.

Dejan looks from the map to the landscape and back again.

DEJAN

Got it.

ANDREJ

Ok. So you see that hill
beyond the river?

Dejan nods.

CONTINUED:

ANDREJ

That is going to be our mark. It's perfectly South-West of here, and we should be able to see it from everywhere in the valley. Once we reach that hill, we climb it and do this all over again.

DEJAN

Easy enough.

ANDREJ

Yep. There's not much to it, and it looks pretty calm down there so we should reach the hill by noon or so.

Dejan looks out across the landscape once again. After a brief pause he spots two jeeps adorned with the Ustaše "U" to the West that are headed in their direction, but still several miles away. Smoke begins to billow from behind the rebel's position as they drive away.

DEJAN

(pointing)

There.

Andrej spots the jeeps and immediately grabs Dejan and pulls him to the ground to avoid being spotted.

ANDREJ

Shit. Alright, they're headed this way.

(looking at map)

Must be this village... and this road here...

(tracing road)

Here. There's a bridge about a mile out. That's where we ambush those bastards.

CONTINUED:

ANDREJ
(pockets map)
Stay low.

The two crouch as they move across the top of the hill until they reach the side they came up, then they run down to the rest of the men.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - MORNING

Dejan and Andrej reach the group out of breath.

BORIS
What is it?

ANDREJ
(panting)
Two enemy jeeps approaching..
(swallows)
...from the West. There's
a bridge half a mile east
of here.

Andrej pulls out the map and points to the bridge.

ANDREJ
(composed)
I recommend we ambush at
the bridge sir.

The men look on with excitement, anticipating the battle to come. Boris looks over the map, tracing lines with a finger as he weighs his options.

BORIS
(looking up)
Alright men, get so you
can see the map.

The men gather around intently, griping their guns tightly.

BORIS
Andrej, Dejan, you will
Set up the .50-cal here..

CONTINUED:

BORIS
(pointing)
...on the hillside.

Andrej and Dejan nod.

BORIS
Srecko and I will be here...
(pointing)
...on the South side of the
bridge. Ivan and Milos,
you take the North side.
(looks up)
Find some cover and dig in.

Ivan and Milos nod.

BORIS
You two...
(to Partisan #2/#3)
...wait below the bridge
on the opposite side of
the river until both jeeps
have crossed, then come up
from behind them.

Partisan #2 and #3 nod.

SRECKO
(to all)
Stay out of sight. No one
fires until Boris gives
the word.

BORIS
(pissed off)
The men in those jeeps
want our freedom. They've
attacked our city,
murdering our friends and
family like dogs. But no
more! Not TODAY!

EXT. ROAD - MORNING

The men run along the road through the trees to their designated posts under overcast skies. Partisan #3 gives the .50 caliber machine gun to Andrej, and Partisan #2 gives the chains of ammunition for the .50-cal. to Dejan.

Srecko and Boris crouch behind a downed tree along the river bank on the South side of the bridge. Ivan and Milos take a similar position along the Northern bank, and Partisan #2 and #3 wade across the shallow river and wait on the far bank, hidden from sight under the bridge.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

Dejan and Andrej set up the large machine gun atop a rock outcropping on the side of the hill overlooking the bridge. They see the two groups to the North and South of the bridge establish their positions, then lose sight of them as they become still.

ANDREJ

You know how this thing works?

DEJAN

You better show me.

ANDREJ

I'm the gunner, you're going to feed me ammunition like this...

(loads the chain)

...and I'll take care of the rest. Get another chain ready when the one in the gun is almost spent. We're useless up here if we're not pinning those jeeps down. And keep you rifle close just in case we jam or run out of bullets.

DEJAN

Got it.

EXT. BRIDGE - MORNING

The groups of two wait in silence as the rumble of the jeep's ENGINES gets louder as they approach. The older men look confident, excited, and ready to attack.

Beads of sweat fall from Dejan's forehead; he looks nervous. The engine's RUMBLE louder. Boris looks around at each of the men's posts. Srecko grits his teeth. Ivan mouths an inaudible prayer. Partisan's #2 and #3 stand perfectly still in six inches of water hidden in shadows under the bridge. The jeeps appear, and are approaching the bridge slowly.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

ANDREJ

(quietly)

You ready?

Dejan holds the extra chains of ammunition, and has a hand on the one that has been loaded as a guide. He looks nervous but composed. His rifle stands against a rock beside him; he looks from it to the jeeps to Andrej and nods.

ANDREJ

We wait for Boris.

EXT. BRIDGE (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

The jeeps inch forward menacingly, their ENGINES RUMBLE. Suddenly, the jeeps stop short of the bridge.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

Dejan and Andrej look at one and other in surprise. From their vantage point they can see that the men in the jeeps are discussing something.

EXT. BRIDGE (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

They Ustaše soldiers point to the bridge repeatedly as they discuss something, and repeatedly reference a map. Six Ustaše are in each jeep.

EXT. BRIDGE (NORTH EAST BANK) - MORNING

Ivan and Milos see clearly from their position that the Ustaše are discussing whether or not to cross the bridge.

IVAN
(quietly)
What are you waiting for?

EXT. UNDER BRIDGE (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

Partisan #2 and #3 are hidden below the bridge and can hear the discussion, being the closest to the Ustaše, but the conversation is in another language.

PARTISAN #3
C'mon, Come on.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

Dejan and Andrej are both glistening with sweat, the tension builds. They can see that the Ustaše have come to an agreement, and the jeeps RUMBLE once again.

ANDREJ
Cross...

EXT. BRIDGE (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

The jeeps inch forward once again, but begin crossing the bridge one at a time.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

This move catches the Partisan squad off guard; Dejan and Andrej look to each other with blank faces.

ANDREJ
(quietly)
Fuck! They split up. Ok,
our priority is the first
jeep. Once we have it
pinned we move on to the
second.

DEJAN
Got it.

EXT. BRIDGE (SOUTH EAST BANK) - MORNING

Boris watches as the first jeep passes the half way point on the bridge. The second jeep is 20 yards behind, and appears to be waiting for the first to reach the far side.

SRECKO
(anxious)
On your command...

BORIS
Wait for the second.

Srecko watches the first jeep come to a stop on their side of the river to wait for the second. The second inches across, and Srecko gives Boris a frantic look.

BORIS
(ordering, firm)
Hold...

EXT. UNDER BRIDGE - MORNING

Partisan #2 and #3 begin to climb up to the road on the side of the river that the Ustaše came from, being cautious to stay out of sight until the battle begins.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

The tension peaks as the second jeep's front two wheels fall off the wooden bridge on the eastern bank. Andrej and Dejan hold the .50-cal. and extra ammunition respectively; their hands shake, glistening with sweat.

BORIS
(from below)
FIRE!

Gunfire erupts from all angles. The .50-cal. flashes brightly as it rains bullets down on the jeeps, lighting up the faces of Dejan and Andrej in an orange hue under the grey sky. Empty casings fly several feet into the air as they are ejected from the machine gun, raining down on Dejan and Andrej.

EXT. BRIDGE (SOUTH EAST BANK) - MORNING

The first jeep's engine is hit by Andrej with the .50-cal., and smoke begins to billow from its front end. Boris and Srecko see this and are able to shoot the men in the front of the jeep before they have a chance to react, but the 4 men in the back jump out and take cover behind the first jeep. The second jeep drives up, stopping beside the first to provide cover for the men now on the ground.

EXT. BRIDGE (NORTH EAST BANK) - MORNING

Ivan and Milos fire at the second jeep as it comes to a stop, killing one of the Ustaše in the front. They see a grenade thrown in their direction, and explode several feet short as they dive for cover.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

Dejan feeds a second chain of bullets into the .50 cal. as the first grenade explodes below. He looks up as the machine gun resumes firing and can see that Ivan and Milos are alright, having resumed firing back. A series of 3 grenades is hurled towards Boris and Srecko as one Ustaše falls.

ANDREJ

Got one!

The three grenades appear to hit very close to Srecko and Boris' position from the hillside vantage point.

EXT. BRIDGE (SOUTH EAST BANK) - MORNING

Srecko scrambles through a cloud of dust and falling dirt. He finds his rifle half covered in earth, then pulls himself around the back side of a tree for cover as the dust clears and bullets zoom by overhead.

SRECKO

Boris...? You alright?

BORIS

(in serious pain)

I'm hit.

(loud moan)

CONTINUED:

SRECKO
 (frantic)
 I'm coming.

EXT. BRIDGE (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

Partisan #2 and #3 crouch at the far side of the bridge, using the railings as cover as they fire from behind the jeeps at the exposed Ustaše.

Partisan #2 and #3 hit three of the Ustaše before being discovered, and are immediately pinned down by gunfire.

EXT. BRIDGE (NORTH EAST SIDE) - MORNING

Ivan and Milos maneuver around a series of trees as they move along the river bank to get a clear shot at the remaining Ustaše, who are now shielded on their side by the second jeep. They resume firing from behind a log and hit one of them.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

The machine gun jams.

ANDREJ
 JAM!

Andrej drops the machine gun and picks up his rifle, which is sitting close by. Dejan does the same, and they resume firing.

ANDREJ
 Small bursts! Conserve
 ammo!

They see three of the Ustaše begin to move towards Srecko and Boris' position. Another grenade is thrown in that direction, and another cloud of dust appears.

DEJAN
 They're going for Boris
 and Srecko!

EXT. BRIDGE (SOUTH EAST BANK) - MORNING

Srecko is lying on the ground behind a rock as he fires over it at the approaching Ustaše. Boris sits upright behind him, bloody and twisted with pain. His rifle is across his lap, and his left arm is limp, bloodied, and mangled.

SRECKO

(confident)

Hold on Boris, I'm gunna
get you out of this.

Srecko hits the Ustaše closest to him, and another behind him falls as well.

Srecko looks to his left, where the bullet appears to have come from on account of the blood spatter, and sees Partisan #3 on the East bank. Srecko looks back at the Ustaše as they begin to fire at both he and Partisan #3 once again.

EXT. BRIDGE (WEST BANK) - MORNING

Partisan #3 dives for cover as the Ustaše discover his new spot, and counter.

PARTISAN #3

I need ammo!

Partisan #2 removes a new clip from his coat and tosses it over to Partisan #3. They both begin to fire again, but Partisan #2 is hit in the shoulder and falls.

EXT. BRIDGE (NORTH EAST BANK) - MORNING

Ivan and Milos continue to fire from their new location.

MILOS

Cover me!

IVAN

GO!

Milos runs towards the jeeps as Ivan lays down a blanket of cover fire. He stops at the rear tire of the second jeep and signals for Ivan to follow.

CONTINUED:

Ivan rises from their old post, and is shot as he runs. A Ustaše soldier runs past Milos, towards where Ivan fell, and Milos shoots him in the back.

EXT. HILLSIDE - MORNING

Dejan and Andrej continue to fire from above with their automatic rifles. Dejan reloads.

ANDREJ

Boris and Srecko are in
trouble down there.

Dejan looks up and sees the remaining Ustaše headed South along the Eastern river bank. He can see the reddish flashes of rifle fire through the dust clouds within the trees. The Ustaše are in pursuit.

DEJAN

Let's go!

Dejan gets up and begins to run full speed down the hill in the direction of Boris and Srecko.

ANDREJ

(frantic)

NO...! WAIT...!

Andrej runs down the hill after Dejan, but is slower and more cautious, pausing to look out and fire from behind trees as he descends.

EXT. SOUTH EAST RIVER BANK - MORNING

Srecko pulls Boris behind a large rock and resumes firing back at the advancing Ustaše.

SRECKO

AMMO...!

A pale Boris weakly tosses him a mag with his right arm, wincing with pain in the process.

EXT. BRIDGE - MORNING

Partisan #3 runs across the bridge, seeing that the fighting has shifted South, in the trees, and out of his range. As he reaches the East side Milos jumps out from behind the second jeep with his gun pointed straight at him.

PARTISAN #3
DON'T SHOOT!

Milos' face lights up as lowers his rifle quickly.

MILOS
Let's move!

They begin to move towards the advancing Ustaše.

EXT. SOUTH EAST RIVER BANK - MORNING

Dejan runs through the trees along the river bank as bullets zip by him, hitting the ground at his feet and the trees around him. He spots Srecko between him and the Ustaše, hesitates, then runs to Srecko, diving in behind the rock just as a hail of gun fire flies overhead. Srecko looks at him with surprise, then resumes firing.

SRECKO
(frantic, yelling)
Take the two on the left.

Dejan pops up from behind the rock and begins to fire. Srecko shoots at the two remaining Ustaše to their right.

DEJAN
Got one!

SRECKO
Keep shooting!

Srecko takes a bullet in the arm and falls back behind the rock. He is hurt, and becomes useless in the fight. He tries to lift his rifle with a single hand, but is unable to use his other arm to aim. Dejan continues alone as bullets fly back and forth, kicking up dirt and tree bark as they miss their targets on both sides.

CONTINUED:

The three Ustaše fire from behind trees, moving forward through the forest slowly. Srecko attempts to return the Ustaše fire, but misses by a large margin as he sprays bullets with only one hand on his weapon. Dejan picks up the slack and hits his mark; one by one the Ustaše fall. Dejan stops shooting, and all is calm for a brief second. The last remaining Ustaše pops out from behind a tree and is shot by Dejan with a single bullet. Silence.

ANDREJ (O.S.)

Dejan!

DEJAN

Here!

SRECKO

(exhausted, in pain)

Partisans! Regroup on me.

Andrej appears from the East and jumps behind the rock with Srecko and Dejan. He doesn't see Boris, who sits up against the opposite side of a tree behind them.

ANDREJ

Srecko! What happened?

Are you hit?

SRECKO

(angry)

I'm fine...

Andrej sees that Srecko's eyes are fixed on a tree behind which Boris' bloody left side is visible. Milos and Partisan #2 appear from the North side.

DEJAN

(concerned)

Boris.

The five remaining Partisan's, Dejan, Srecko, Milos, Partisan #3, and Andrej, walk around to the other side of the tree and find Boris' body stiff, bloody, and pale. The men stare at their leader in silence.

CONTINUED:

The first to move is Srecko; he wipes the blood off of the stars on Boris' collar using his arm that wasn't hit in the battle.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (SUPPLY TRUCK) - EVENING

Victor, dressed in a Partisan coat and hat, drives a truck along a dirt road through the countryside, and is bounced around as the jeep moves over uneven ground. Two jeeps drive in front of him, and another four behind. The jeep in the lead has a large .50-caliber machine gun mounted above it and six men inside; it is followed by two supply trucks and four personnel carriers with open tops. Three of the personnel carriers are all men, and the fourth is a mix of men and women.

EXT. BRIDGE - MORNING

The convoy passes a bridge with two burned out jeeps smoldering on the East side. The men and women in the transports peer out at what looks like the scene of a vicious battle. They pass three piles of dirt with the rifles of Boris, Ivan, and Partisan #3 sticking out of them and Partisan style hats hanging on top. The convoy slows as it passes the graves; the men and women observe with compassionate faces. Many salute the graves as they pass, others bow their heads. They cross the bridge and continue on.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (OPEN TOP TRANSPORT TRUCK) - MORNING

Vesna, dressed as a Partisan soldier, rides in this fourth truck with her all women's unit holding a rifle and looking out over the landscape. The jeep's ENGINES grow quiet as the convoy slows once again at the edge of a clearing. Vesna can't see exactly why they have slowed this time, but notices smoke winding slowly into the sky ahead of them.

EXT. BURNED OUT VILLAGE - MORNING

The convoy inches past what appears to have once been a village of twenty to thirty people. All that remains of several cottages are blackened frames and smoldering ashes.

CONTINUED:

Several mounds of dirt functioning as makeshift graves appear near the road: twelve are large enough for grown men or women, while the three at the end of the row are small enough for a child. No rifles or caps hang on these graves.

In a pen behind them, the lifeless bodies of several sheep lie slaughtered and covered by flies. The men and women in the last transport truck including Vensa look upon the scene with disgust. Several of the Partisans shake their heads or turn away. The jeeps pick up speed once again as their ENGINES get louder.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP AT KNIN - EARLY EVENING

Approximately thirty men rest under trees and on rocks, Dejan and some of the men from his group sit around a small fire passing around pieces of dried meat. Some of the other men look over maps while others clean their weapons. Andrej gets up from the fire and approaches a man bent over a .50-cal. machine gun. Partisan #3 is attempting to remove a jammed round stuck in the chamber of the gun. Milos sits next to him.

ANDREJ

(to Partisan #3)

Any luck?

PARTISAN #3

(struggling)

Almost...

ANDREJ

(to Milos)

Did you see Dejan when that thing jammed on us.

MILOS

(casually)

I was pinned down by the jeeps... couldn't see a thing.

CONTINUED:

ANDREJ

(admiration)

He was in the battle so fast... I couldn't even keep up with him... Probably saved Srecko's life.

PARTISAN #3

(struggling)

Yeah...?

Partisan #3 looks up from the weapon. Milos and Andrej look at each other, Milos nods nonchalantly, agreeing with Andrej.

Partisan #3

Srecko couldn't have been happy about that... saved by the boy...?

Milos begins to laugh and Andrej cracks a smile. They look over to where Dejan sits.

MILOS

(loud)

Dejan... How many did you get at the bridge?

DEJAN

(humbly)

Four or five...? I'm not sure.

Milos looks back to Andrej and Partisan #3 with respect for what Dejan accomplished. Partisan #3 pries at the jammed round with another, unspent round and the jammed round finally ejects under the pressure. Milos hears it pop, catches it in mid air, and looks back to Partisan #3 with surprise. Behind Partisan #3, an approaching convoy becomes visible in the distance. The men begin to rise as they notice it coming.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP AT KNIN (WESTSIDE) - LATE EVENING

Dejan walks among men and women setting up tents and distributing food, water, weapons, and ammunition. He recognizes Victor working in the back of one of the jeeps handing out new rifles and ammunition and approaches. Victor hands a man a box of ammunition, glances up, and sees Dejan. They salute, then embrace.

VICTOR
You need anything?

Dejan just shakes his head.

VICTOR
I overheard some men
speaking about you, and
what you did at that
bridge.

Dejan perks up.

DEJAN
What'd you hear?

VICTOR
They said you showed
no fear. That you ran
into the heart of the
battle and saved an
officer.

DEJAN
(humbly)
Aye.

VICTOR
Your father would be
proud.

Dejan looks up at the stars.

DEJAN
(reserved)
No, when I find my
mother and sister, then
he'll be proud.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
 (still looking up)
 Is Vesna here?

VICTOR
 (looking up too)
 Should be on the East side
 of the camp with her unit.
 You know, we're both here
 because of you...

DEJAN
 (nods)
 I appreciate that.

Dejan offers a compassionate look before turning to walk away.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP AT KNIN (EASTSIDE) - LATE EVENING

Dejan walks along the edge of camp as the moon illuminates the clearing in which the camp has been setup. Roughly twenty tents and one hundred fifty soldiers are present. Dejan looks over the growing army he has become a part of. He reaches a women's unit sitting around a fire and spots Vesna staring into the flames, which illuminate her face with flashes of orange and yellow light. He sits beside her and she looks up.

VESNA
 (hugging him)
 Dejan.

DEJAN
 (looking into fire)
 You finding any answers
 in there?

Vesna shakes her head as the flames dance on her face, illuminating a look of estrangement. Dejan looks back to her.

DEJAN
 You're looking well, like
 a soldier.

CONTINUED:

VESNA
Do you believe they're still
alive?

DEJAN
(pause)
I have to...

Vesna nods and thinks in silence for a second.

VESNA
I do.

Srecko appears behind them with a stern look on his face
and his arm in a sling.

SRECKO
(firm)
Dejan Janik.

Dejan stands and turns immediately. Vesna looks up at the
officer, Srecko's shoulder has been wrapped in cloth, but
dried blood is still visible on his coat, and through the
bandage.

DEJAN
Sir.

SRECKO
(stern)
Come with me.

Srecko turns and begins to walk between two tents. Dejan
looks at Vesna not sure what to make of his superiors
orders.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP AT KNIN (CENTER) - LATE EVENING

Srecko stops between two tents and waits for Dejan to catch
up. Dejan walks up and stands at attention.

SRECKO
Now that we are alone I
need to tell you a few
things.

CONTINUED:

Dejan nods.

SRECKO

What you did at the bridge
was reckless. You abandoned
a post you were ordered to
hold.

Dejan looks at Srecko with a confused look, knowing that if
he hadn't left his post Srecko would surely have died.

SRECKO

Now, just over that hill...
(pointing to the South)
...lies a Ustaše prison
camp. I need to know
that I can trust you to
follow orders when we
attack it tomorrow.

DEJAN

Sir, you have my word.

SRECKO

Good.
(pause)
You will not be fighting
with us tomorrow.

Immediately Dejan gets very upset and lashes out at Srecko.

DEJAN

(breaking)
No! You have to let me
fight. I have to find
my family.

SRECKO

Let me finish.

DEJAN

(frustrated)
I saved your life at that
bridge! Please! Don't do
this.

CONTINUED:

SRECKO

(angry, snappy)

I know full well that you
saved my life, you don't
have to remind me of that.

Dejan backs down, forcing the frustration and anger to fester inside him, only manifesting now in his twisted facial expression. He stares at Srecko.

SRECKO

(snappy)

Now let me finish.

(clamer)

What you did at that bridge
was reckless. You showed
complete disregard for your
commanding officer, but it
was also very brave, and
showed what you're capable
in battle.

Dejan stands still, holding his tongue.

SRECKO

I've recommended that
you join an elite group
that will be leading the
attack tomorrow by taking
out a strategic position
at the center of the camp.

Dejan's face lights up.

SRECKO

I may not like you, but
I know a soldier when I
see one.

Dejan cracks a smile and looks a bit embarrassed for his initial reaction.

DEJAN

Thank you sir.

CONTINUED:

SRECKO

Don't make me regret it.

Dejan nods.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Josif Tito stands over a table with a map stretched out across it, illuminated by a single lantern. Seven other men surround the table and Dejan enters the tent. Tito sees Dejan enter, acknowledges him with a familiar look, and begins to speak.

TITO

Alright men, as you know we are approximately one mile from the Ustaše camp at Knin. Our scouts have put close to one hundred armed men in the camp, and between fifty and sixty prisoners.

The men around the table look on intently.

TITO

You have all been selected to lead the attack by taking this tower...

(pointing to map)

...at the center of the camp. You will make your approach tomorrow morning. Once you take the tower, flash its spotlight towards this hill to the North...

(pointing)

...where we will have the remainder of our soldiers ready to attack. Once you have signaled, you are to stay in the tower and shoot any Ustaše exiting the surrounding buildings.

CONTINUED:

TITO
(looking up)
Any questions?

The men look around at each other. DMITIR (31), a well built bearded man with two stars on each side of his collar speaks up.

DMITRI
Where do we enter the camp?

TITO
Here..
(pointing)
If you approach from the East you will face the least resistance.
(tracing with finger)
You will have to crawl through this field, using the grass as cover from the forest to the edge of the camp. Cut through the fence and make your way to the tower. Once inside, you must not be discovered.

Tito looks around at the faces of the men. They all look at the map, internalizing the layout of the camp, then up at Tito.

TITO
Drago.

DRAGO (26), a wiry young man with a scar on his cheek, produces a box and places it on the table. Tito opens it and hands each of the men a dagger in a leather sheath.

TITO
Get a few hours of sleep.
We attack at dawn!

EXT. HILLTOP - EARLY MORNING

The eight man group lies on their bellies on the brim of a grassy hill. Through grass and small bushes Dejan can see the prisoner camp about five-hundred yards south of their position. Dejan now wears the cap of an officer.

LOWER THIRD: "JULY 29, 1941"

A large gate on the North side of the camp is closed and guarded by several Ustaše. There is a small clearing within the fences of the camp directly inside the gate, and behind that, several buildings crudely erected from wood and brick.

A large building at the western edge of the camp has a large chimney that billows smoke into the morning air. Beside it, the tower stands above the other buildings overlooking the open field and the camps surroundings.

Several combat jeeps, a few transport jeeps, and a large tractor are parked among the buildings. A group of rebels begin to gather around a platform at the edge of the clearing inside the camps walls.

DMITRI

Alright men, take a good look. We are going to follow this hillside to the tree line..

Dmitri points to the left; the men listen attentively.

DMITRI

We've got to be quick when we approach the fence.

The men look at the fence.

DMITRI

Once we leave the trees there won't be any cover. Dejan, Vladimir, you will be the first to cross the field.

CONTINUED:

Dejan and VLADIMIR (24), a young but strong looking man, exchange a steady look. Dmitri hands Vladimir a wire cutting tool.

DMITRI

Use these to cut a hole
while Dejan covers you,
then signal for us to
follow.

Vladimir pockets the tool and the men crawl back down the hill on the North side to avoid being visible from the camp. They run behind the hill; the grass and bushes turn to trees as the ground levels out.

EXT. USTAŠE CAMP - EARLY MORNING

The sun hangs low in the sky as the Ustaše continue to surround the wooden platform at the edge of the clearing. A group of prisoners watch the Ustaše gather through a series of barred windows along one side of the large building on the western side of the camp.

Mostly women and children, they appear to be malnourished and many have bruises and small cuts on their faces. A woman, PRISONER #1 (28), hushes her CHILD (5) as he begins to cry, then covers his mouth as tears stream down his cheeks. She has a look of the deepest helplessness and sadness on her face as she peers out the barred window.

PRISONER #2 (29) appears outside between two Ustaše; he is bruised, has his hands tied, and appears to be on the verge of collapse. USTAŠE #5 (32) proceeds to hit him with a club as they approach the platform. Prisoner #1, standing with her child, lets out a sob. The men reach the edge of the platform where several other Ustaše are now gathered.

USTAŠE #5

(harshly)

Get up...MOVE!

Prisoner #2 steps up onto the platform and stumbles. He is lifted to stand on a small bench; he looks up and his face to face with a noose.

CONTINUED:

He looks past the crowd of Ustaše and sees Prisoner #1 and the child. EXECUTIONER (47) stands beside the man and reads from a piece of paper.

EXECUTIONER

This man stands condemned
by the Ustaše!

Cheers from the crowd are cut short.

EXECUTIONER

He was captured at Belgrade,
and is guilty of resisting
the new order. For this,
he has been sentenced to
death!

Louder cheers erupt. The noose is placed around Prisoner #2's neck and tightened, the rope on his hands cut. His gaze is still fixed on the woman and child who stand among other prisoners at the window. The crowd settles.

EXECUTIONER

(to Prisoner #2)

Do you have any last words?

Prisoner #2 looks down the row of windows at which several other prisoners stand watching. The Executioner stands ready to kick the bench out from under Prisoner #2's feet. Prisoner #2's gaze falls once again on the eyes of the woman and child. He clenches his fists and raises his hands high into the air.

PRISONER #2

Death to Fascism, Freedom to
the People!

The Executioner kicks the bench out from under him and his body snaps. The woman screams and turns away, covering her child's eyes firmly.

EXT. FOREST EDGE - MORNING

Dejan and Vladimir begin to crawl out of the trees and away from the other six men. They move cautiously through the tall grass. The tower looms ominously above the camp. Dejan looks ahead and can see it visibly above the top of the grass they are using for cover. Four Ustaše are visible walking around inside, each with a rifle. In addition, large machine guns are mounted on each side of the building.

The ground in front of Dejan and Vladimir drops off without warning as they crawl, and the two nearly fall into a large pit. They regain their footing and look into the pit, horrified by what they see. Hundreds of bodies haphazardly covered with dirt and mud lie twisted at the bottom of a ten foot hole that stretches over one hundred yards in length, and twenty feet in width. The two soldiers stare down in disbelief for several long seconds. Anger builds in Dejan; he grits his teeth and begins to rise.

VLADIMIR

(holding Dejan back)

Put it out of your mind.

Once we take that tower

you can do all the killing

you want.

Dejan nods, takes a deep breath, and refocuses. The two proceed around the pit with a new sense of urgency.

EXT. FENCE - MORNING

They reach the fence; Vladimir begins to cut a hole through the razor wire with the tool Dmitri gave him. Dejan looks back to the trees and spots Dmitri, barely visible beside a large tree. Dejan looks around the camp, then up to the tower.

He waits for the guards in the tower, his only threat, to gather on the other side. Once they do this he signals the men in the forest with a sweeping wave of his hand. He looks back and forth between the tower and the other men as they enter the clearing.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP - MORNING

The men and women assemble into their respective groups. Victor and Vesna pass each other as they walk through the tents to where the group is amassing. They embrace.

VICTOR
(whispered close)
Generations of men and
women will remember what
we do today.

Vesna sheds a tear, kisses him on the cheek, then turns to join her group. Once assembled, the remainder of the Partisan army, roughly one hundred fifty men and women, begin to march south towards the prison camp.

EXT. EAST SIDE OF CAMP - MORNING

Dmitri and the remainder of the group join Vladimir and Dejan at the fence.

A hole has been cut big enough for one of them to enter at a time. The wind has begun to blow, and the grass behind them moves in waves.

DMITRI
Follow my lead.
(pointing)
We will work from building
to building. Keep out of
sight. No guns until we
have the tower.

Dmitri pulls out his dagger and looks around. He sees that the camp is still, and that the Ustaše soldiers in the tower are busy inspecting one of the machine guns. He moves through the fence and runs quickly to the edge of the first building. The remainder of the group follows. They move from building to building through the camp.

EXT. USTAŠE CAMP - MORNING

Dejan follows close behind Dmitri with Vladimir at his side. Dmitri moves ahead to the next building just as USTAŠE #6 (28), a skinny, inexperienced looking man, appears in a doorway he just passed by.

CONTINUED:

Dejan and Vladimir crouch low against the side of the building to avoid being seen. The Ustaše turns in the direction of Dmitri, who has his back turned and is unaware the enemy soldier has exited the building. The Ustaše raises his rifle and is about to shoot when Vladimir appears behind him and slits his throat with his dagger.

The Ustaše falls silently to the ground in the arms of Vladimir as Dejan peers into an empty room, then closes the door. Dmitri glances back and sees what must have happened. He nods at Vladimir and Dejan gratefully. Some of the other Partisans with them pass by as they drag the body, offering looks of respect and relief. They hide the body behind some barrels and continue on.

Dmitri stops at the edge of a building to wait for the rest of the men to regroup on him. He gives the men behind him a hand motion to approach. Dmitri motions for Dejan to take the guard at the back, and for Vladimir to take the one in the front.

Dejan and Vladimir depart immediately. Dejan runs around the building, stopping only briefly to check around the corners before continuing on. He stops at the last corner and can see the guard he is to kill standing only fifteen feet from him. He draws his dagger and waits, glancing back and forth between the men in the tower and the rebel on the ground.

USTAŠE GUARD #1 (29) looks around, then produces a cigarette from his pocket. He attempts to light it with a match, but the slight breeze puts it out before he can light up. He turns his back, trying to use the building for shelter and attempts to light another. Dejan hesitates, gripping the dagger tightly.

He looks up at the tower as beads of sweat roll down his face, the coast is clear. Dejan runs up from behind the guard and slits his throat. As he sets the body on the ground quietly, Vladimir rounds the building with USTAŠE GUARD #2 (23) dragging behind him.

INT. TOWER (1st Floor) - MORNING

Dejan and Vladimir enter the building, see that there are no more guards in the first room cautiously, and stash the bodies there.

Dmitri and the others enter the room at the base of the tower. Dmitri points at Dejan and Vladimir, motioning for them to stay put. He then points at the other five men, motions for them to follow, and begins to climb the stairs with dagger in hand. The six men climb slowly and quietly as Dejan and Vladimir stand watch at the two doorways on opposite sides of the tower's ground floor.

EXT. HILL - MORNING

Josif Tito stands at the front of the Partisan Army. He looks through at the scouts atop the hill waiting for the light of the tower to be flashed, then back at the men and women who stand ready to fight.

Vesna stands among a group of women. She holds her rifle close to her chest; her hands clenched tightly, and a look of determination in her eyes. Victor stands among a group of men closer to the front, he looks straight ahead with a supreme sense of purpose.

Tito sees the scout waving wildly. A flashing light is faintly visible in the distance behind him. He turns to the soldiers.

TITO

We've taken the tower!

The soldiers look around at one and other, exchanging looks of relief and excitement. Victor looks back at Vesna; she returns a confident smile. The Partisans become quiet, once again, as Tito raises a hand.

TITO

Today we fight together
with honor and remember
those we've loved and lost.

(pause)

Wait until we have the
camp secured before
freeing the prisoners.

CONTINUED:

TITO
(pause, raising rifle)
Death to Fascism, Freedom
to the People!

The Partisan army moves forward quickly, up and over the hill.

INT. TOWER (1st Floor) - MORNING

Dejan and Vladimir reposition a table and various other pieces of furniture as cover at the base of the staircase. Once completed, they sit and wait in their makeshift bunker. The chatter of gunfire begins in the direction of the gate, growing into a deafening roar in seconds. The machine guns atop the tower begin to fire, and the falling cartridges can be seen and heard raining down on the ground through a window beside them. Several Ustaše begin to rush the tower. Dejan and Vladimir shoot them as they appear in the doorways on either side of the room with relative ease.

EXT. GATE (EAST SIDE) - MORNING

Waves of Partisans storm the gate of the camp. The prisoners in the large building on the western side of the camp see the attack begin, cheer, and take cover. Several holes are cut in the razor wire and the men and women begin to enter the large clearing within the fences. Ustaše fire at them from open windows and doorways, others from behind vehicles and buildings. The machine guns in the tower rip through the sides of the smaller buildings.

Victor runs across the field to the edge of one of the buildings and takes cover as a group of men follow him. He looks back at the army he is a part of. He sees Tito pinned down behind a jeep to his right; bullets bounce off the front and back of it as the Ustaše have targeted him.

TITO
(loud)
Get to the tower!

Victor hears this and rallies his group.

CONTINUED:

VICTOR
 (rising, shooting)
 To the tower...!

Victor runs around the corner of the building and shoots USTAŠE #7 (31) as he exits the building. His men follow to the next set of buildings, starting to spread out so as to cover themselves against an attack from either side, and behind. The tower is close.

EXT. GATE (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

Vesna and her group of women fire at men in the windows of the Ustaše buildings. One by one they move through the fence and take cover behind the platform upon which the man was hung only minutes before. His body still swings above the ground as bullets fly past it. Vesna enters the camp, takes cover behind the platform, then begins to fire around the side of it as other female soldiers fire over the top. The men's groups are visible in front of them and mostly to their left (East). They are advancing quickly, running past the bodies of the slain Ustaše. One of the women beside Vesna, PARTISAN OFFICER #2 (Female, 31), a brick of woman standing over six feet tall yells to the other women in the group.

PARTISAN OFFICER #2
 Work around to the right!
 (pointing at Venssa
 and the two women
 beside her)
 You, cover us, then follow
 once we reach the building.

Vesna and the other two women reload and take their positions atop the platform. The other five women make a dash for the building in which the prisoners are held. Errant bullets land at their feet causing puffs of dirt to fly up as they run. Vesna and the other three take full advantage of their automatic weapons, unloading on the closest buildings. Men in two of the windows fall, and the five women make it to the building safely. Partisan Officer #2 motions for the three to follow from the corner of the building, then fires around the corner with another woman to provide some cover fire.

CONTINUED:

VESNA

Now!

They three run towards the building. One of them is hit in the leg and falls after making it half way to the building. Vesna nearly trips over her as she is the last to leave the platform. She stops. The other women see this and lay down even more cover fire, as two additional women jump out from behind the building and unload.

VESNA

HELP!

The other woman that had been running sprints back. The two lift the wounded woman to safety as the rest of their group draws Ustaše fire, returning it in spades.

INT. TOWER (1st Floor) - MORNING

Dejan and Vladimir continue to pick off men as they enter the tower's first floor room. Vladimir runs out of ammo.

VLADIMIR

Clip... I'm out.

Dejan shoots another man as he runs in firing wildly, then tosses a clip to Vladimir. Just as he catches the clip, Vladimir is shot in the side by a Ustaše who entered the building on his side. Dejan quickly rises and kills the man, but Vladimir is down. Dejan rushes over to him while keeping an eye on both doors.

DEJAN

Talk to me...!

VLADIMIR

I'm alright...

(feeling side)

It went in and out.

A grenade rolls into the room and explodes on the opposite side. The two men duck behind the tables as bits of debris settle; dusty smoke fills the room.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

Upstairs, we can't hold
this room much longer.

Vladimir begins to climb the stairs backwards, dragging his rifle beside him. Dejan shoots another man who enters the room as he backs up the stairs after Vladimir. They reach the next platform and close the hatch behind them.

EXT. BUILDINGS (EAST SIDE) - MORNING

Victor looks up at the tower from behind a nearby building, then spots a Ustaše outside one of the doors, waiting for the smoke to clear. Victor takes aim and fires, the Ustaše falls. One of the machine guns spews out empty cartridges like a fountain, falling on a dead body like rain. A group of six Ustaše in a jeep round one of the buildings on the other side of the tower from Victor and his group's position.

VICTOR

Jeep! Cover the tower!

A wave of gunfire sends Victor reeling for cover. Three other men arrive at his side and begin to return fire at the jeep. It parks beside the tower; half of the men enter the tower, the other three use the jeep for cover and return fire in Victor's direction. Two of them are shot quickly, the third enters the tower. Victor and his group advance.

EXT. BUILDINGS (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

Two women continue to fire around the corner of the prisoner building, and Vesna and Partisan Officer #2 tend to the wounded woman. Vesna looks up as blood gushes from her leg and the woman lets out a DEEP SCREAM. She sees a second female unit take positions behind the platform and begin to move towards them. A MEDIC (24), wearing red bands on her sleeves, is visible in the group.

VESNA

Medic...!

CONTINUED:

The first few women from the second group arrive and take over the shooting around the corner of the building. The medic and two others sprint across, slide behind the cover of the building, and begin to attend to the wounded woman.

PARTISAN OFFICER #2

My unit, around the back
of the building..

Vesna, and several other female soldiers, rise and round the opposite corner as another small group of women cross the ground between the platform and the prisoner building.

The group Vesna is a part of runs between the western fence and the prisoner building. As Vesna runs, she looks past the bars on the windows and can see some men, but mostly women and children on the ground huddled against the far wall of the narrow building. Her eyes meet those of the woman who watched the man hang only minutes before the attack began as she grips her son tightly in her arms.

VESNA

(through a window
while in full stride)
You'll be alright, just stay
down.

Vesna continues on with her group as they reach the far end of the large building. They are now at the South-West corner of the camp. A group of Ustaše are using a large truck for cover as they fire back at a group of Partisan men who hide among the buildings. The women begin to pick them off from behind.

INT. TOWER (2nd Floor) - MORNING

Dejan and the rest of his group, now all together, fire out of the tower from all directions. Vladimir sits facing three Ustaše soldiers who are bruised and tied up, his rifle trained on them. One of the men on a machine gun is hit and falls back into the middle of the room.

CONTINUED:

DIMITRI
 (looking back)
 Shit! Somebody get on
 that .50.

Dejan jumps up and takes up a position behind the gun. A jeep with a .50 cal. machine gun mounted on it pulls around one of the buildings Dejan is facing. It approaches them firing wildly, tearing into the tower. Some of the men duck for cover, but Dejan steadies his machine gun and unloads as bullets fracture the brick, wood, and sandbags around him. The jeep is hit several times, then explodes. Ustaše fly through the air, then hit the ground as flaming debris covers the area.

A group of Ustaše on foot run out from behind the building the jeep had come from and attempt to pull their wounded men to safety. Dejan is joined once again by the men who ducked for cover a moment ago and they tear the Ustaše on the ground apart with multiple .50-calibur machine guns. Dejan's face flashes as his machine gun fires round after round.

EXT. BUILDINGS (EAST SIDE) - MORNING

Victor and his men can see the burning jeep from their position, and the dead Ustaše strewn about. The men behind him are entering and exiting the buildings around them.

PARITSAN #6 (Male, 30)
 (exiting building)
 Clear!

PARTISAN #7 (Male, 25)
 (closing door of
 adjacent building)
 CLEAR!

The machine guns in the tower fall silent; all is quiet. Victor rises.

DMITRI
 (from tower)
 Death to Fascism! Freedom
 to the People!

CONTINUED:

Cheers erupt all around the camp.

EXT. BUILDINGS (WEST SIDE) - MORNING

Vesna and the other women can hear the cheering from the direction of the tower.

VESNA

The prisoners!

They run around to the East side of the large building and find a group of men attempting to smash the chain that holds the door shut. It breaks; more cheering, crying from inside. Prisoners exit, and embrace the soldiers in tears.

INT. BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Victor rummages through some paperwork strewn haphazardly across a desk top inside one of the buildings. He finds a large log book in one of the drawers, opens it, and begins to flip through page after page with a look of disbelief.

INT. TOWER (2nd FLOOR) - AFTERNOON

Tito appears from the staircase as the men in Dejan's group question the Ustaše they captured. Dejan and all the other men except Milos stand at attention. Milos, whose back is to the staircase, continues to yell at the captured men.

MILOS

(vexed)

Did you think you could
get away with this!?!

Milos strikes the prisoner. Dmitri puts a calming hand on Milos, who turns to see Tito. Tito gives Milos a serious look, then turns to the prisoners.

TITO

Who gives you orders?

USTAŠE PRISONER #1 (36), a dirty, miserable looking man, laughs. Tito gets in his face.

CONTINUED:

TITO
(furious)
Give me a name!

The prisoner spits in Tito's face. Tito draws his side arm pistol and shoots the prisoner dead. Tito holsters his pistol and moves on to the second prisoner, USTAŠE PRISONER #2 (24), who has a bloody leg and a look of fear in his eyes.

TITO
Now you're going to tell
me what I want to know
or you'll end up like
your friend there.

Tito looks at the dead man on the ground beside them, then back at Ustaše Prisoner #2. Ustaše Prisoner #2 makes a quick fearful glance at the dead man, then faces Tito once again.

USTAŠE PRISONER #2
(fear)
I don't want to die.

TITO
Good.
(pause)
Who gives you orders, and
where will we find him?

Ustaše Prisoner #2 hesitates. Tito's reaches for his pistol once again, sliding it out of its holster slowly, menacingly. Ustaše Prisoner #2 watches in horror.

USTAŠE PRISONER #2
(choppy, shaking)
Zagreb, to the North. His
name is Vladko Maček.

TITO
Germans?

Ustaše Prisoner #2 nods. Tito accepts this.

CONTINUED:

TITO
Italians?

Ustaše Prisoner #2 nods again. Tito gives the men in the tower a serious look, then walks towards the stairs.

TITO
We leave at dawn.

The men in the room begin to converse with one and other. As Tito walks down the stairs, Victor appears in the stairwell with the logbook.

VICTOR
(to Tito)
Sir.

Tito returns a salute. Victor enters the second floor room of the tower.

VICTOR
(grimly)
Dejan...

Dejan turns away from Vladimir and Milos, meeting Victor in the middle of the room. The grim look on Victor's face brings a concerned look over Dejan's. Victor hands him the log book. Dejan accepts the book, scans the page, sees the names 'Jasna Janik' and 'Ana Janik' and looks up at Victor in disbelief. Victor shakes his head and the log book falls to the floor. Dejan looks furious. He turns to the prisoners and begins to beat USTAŠE PRISONER #3 (30), who has blood on his left shoulder and arm. Ustaše Prisoner #3 crumples into a ball as Dejan beats him savagely. Tears are visible on Dejan's cheeks. The men around him watch in sympathy.

DEJAN
(tiring with each
blow)
No.
(punch)
No.
(punch)
No.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
 (punch)
 No.
 (punch)

Victor puts a firm hand on Dejan's shoulder.

EXT. BUILDINGS - AFTERNOON

Dejan exits the tower in a fury, his head hung low, his face red with anger. Vesna appears in the road ahead of him with a look of excitement on her face having won the battle. As he gets closer she sees the look of pain on his face and rushes towards him concerned. Victor appears behind them, exiting the tower in pursuit of Dejan.

VESNA
 (as Dejan passes)
 What's happened?

Dejan doesn't respond. Vesna stands in wonder watching Dejan walking away briskly, then turns to Victor with a look of wonder. Victor shakes his head as he reaches her.

EXT. CLEARING OUTSIDE FENCE (EAST SIDE) - AFTERNOON

Dejan walks with the camp in the background, the long grass around him whips violently in the wind. His face is still twisted with anger and sadness. Vesna appears in the background, running after him. Dejan stops at the edge of the large pit full of bodies and looks down at the dirty, disfigured bodies only half covered in dirt. Vesna appears at his side. After several long seconds Dejan manages to speak.

DEJAN
 (choking back tears)
 I failed them.

Vesna looks down, then closes her eyes as a look of deep sorrow comes over her. She reaches for Dejan's hand, holding it tightly. Dejan turns to her.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
(looking up, breaking
down)
I tried, but I failed.

Vesna shakes her head, unable to speak as tears begin to appear on her face. She embraces Dejan and begins to cry with him.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NEXT MORNING

The Partisan army marches through the countryside in a row of small groups between eight and sixteen men or women strong. Dejan walks alone; he is visibly frustrated, angry, and reflective.

A soft breeze moves across fields of golden grass like waves. Dejan watches as the grass moves with an empty expression. The gusts blow up and over hilltops; Dejan's eyes move to the horizon where large clouds of grey smoke are visible in the distance.

Victor appears behind Dejan and approaches. He walks in stride with Dejan looking straight forward for several seconds before speaking. Dejan doesn't acknowledge his presence, and the two proceed across the countryside looking ahead.

VICTOR
It's not your fault.

Silence.

VICTOR
(matter of factly)
You took the tower almost
single-handedly, not to
mention all the prisoners
you helped save.

Silence.

CONTINUED:

VICTOR
They would be proud of you,
for what you've done.

DEJAN
(snapping)
What have I done?

VICTOR
(calmly)
Plenty. You saved Vesna
and have brought out the
best in her... You're
an inspiration for all
Partisans. The young
want to be you, and the
old want to fight beside
you.

Victor looks around at the other soldiers around them.
Dejan shakes his head.

VICTOR
(passionate)
More men and women join us
every day. Your name is
on their lips.

DEJAN
And for what...?
(pause, pointing ahead
with rifle)
They kill us so we kill
them.

VICTOR
We kill for freedom, and for
those who died defending
it before us.

DEJAN
(fed up)
What's the difference?

Victor turns and looks at Dejan, who doesn't react.

CONTINUED:

Dejan walks straight ahead, his thoughts somewhere else.

VICTOR

(frustrated, up close)
 We're at war. There are
 no second chances, not now.
 You're a Partisan soldier
 who fights for what he
 knows is right, and you're
 not alone.

Victor looks out over the Partisan army with a sense of pride. Dejan looks in the same direction, takes a deep, shaky breath, then looks ahead once again. Victor puts his hand firmly on Dejan's shoulder.

VICTOR

We're your family now.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP - NIGHT

LOWER THIRD: "SEPTEMBER 6, 1941"

Dejan walks towards a large tent surrounded by smaller tents. It is fall now, and Dejan wears a single star on each side of his collar in addition to his officer's cap. Men and a few women sit around fires, eating and keeping warm. Everyone notices Dejan walking by. Many straighten up, some salute, others look on with admiration. Dejan doesn't acknowledge them, his thoughts still elsewhere.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Dejan enters the tent to find his group from the concentration camp raid, Tito, and several older soldiers including Victor and Srecko surround a large table inside a tent lit dimly by hanging lanterns. Two maps lie flat on the table; one of the region, and the other of the city.

TITO

Tomorrow we will reach
 Zagreb. Scouts report
 battle preparations by
 the Ustaše...

CONTINUED:

TITO

(looks up)

...they know we're coming.

DMITRI

How many men are we up
against?

TITO

The Ustaše army is spread
thinly throughout this
region...

(tracing Croatia on
the regional map from
North to South)

...so it depends on support
from the Germans and
Italians. Reports put
them close to fifteen
hundred, minimum, to our
twelve hundred.

The men in the room look around at each other; some transfer weight from one foot to another, others breathe deep in unease. Dejan still looks distraught, watching with empty eyes.

TITO

(moving to second
map)

There will be machine gun
turrets here...

(pointing to map of
city)

...and here. They are our
first priority. Once
we've breached the line,
there will be pockets of
resistance throughout the
city. Clear the streets
before we free the
prisoners...here.

CONTINUED:

Tito points to a building at the center of the city. Dejan watches closely. His eyes fixed on the building containing the prisoners.

TITO

The larger forces at work
in this war are beginning
to take notice. The
Partisans are no longer
just a band of rebels.
We are an ARMY!

The men cheer loudly. Dejan continues to stare at the map.

EXT. ZAGREB (SOUTH WEST EDGE OF CITY) - MORNING

Soldiers run through muddy ground along a tree line at the edge of Zagreb in groups of ten to twenty. Machine guns CHATTER from two elevated pillboxes and rifle shots from a line of soldiers behind a small hill between them keeps the Partisans from exiting the trees and crossing the small clearing between them and the city.

DMIRTRI

(yelling back)
We've got to flank left.

Dejan and Vladimir nod and follow as .50-cal. rounds cut through the trees and bushes around them. The rest of the group that attacked the tower is close behind. A few of the Partisans are hit and fall before they are able to return fire.

EXT. ZAGREB (SOUTH EAST EDGE OF CITY) - MORNING

Across the clearing Victor's group is flanking right. The trees are closer to the pillbox on this side of the city, and several men lie prone or crouch behind trees and rocks as they shoot back at the pill box. Another group of Partisans join them and they begin to advance en mass.

A tank appears. It rounds a building behind the pillbox and turns its cannon towards the advancing Partisans.

CONTINUED:

VICTOR
HOWITZER!

The men scramble for cover as the tank fires towards them, several men are shot into the air as the tank's round hits the ground amongst them, creating a large crater in the earth.

VICTOR
MOVE!

The group runs to the right, attempting to spread out and get around the back of the tank.

EXT. ZAGREB - MORNING

A series of six men exit a building behind the western turret and run towards Dmitri, Dejan, and Vladimir. The three of them crouch behind a mound of dirt and shoot them one by one. Another group of Partisans and the rest of Dmitri's group catch up to the three; they take positions along the brim of the small hill. Many dead Ustaše lie at their feet.

DMITRI
(handing them
grenades)
Dejan, Vladimir...take the
turret...we'll cover you.

Dejan and Vladimir run up from the side of the pill box and each throw a grenade into the opening. They run back to the small hill and jump over its edge as the pillbox explodes in two simultaneous explosions behind them. Ustaše soldiers run through the streets towards the weakening side of their line. The Partisans along the brim kill them easily.

EXT. FOREST SOUTH OF ZAGREB - MORNING

The majority of the Partisan army waits in the forest. Six hundred men and three hundred women listen as the sounds of war cause the forest to tremble. Vesna looks anxious, listening intently with her rifle held tightly to her chest.

CONTINUED:

Her eyes are fixed on PARTISAN OFFICER #4 (Male, 37), a bearded man of average size, who turns back to address the group.

PARTISAN OFFICER #4

The turrets have been
destroyed!

The army of nearly one thousand men and women lets out a loud ROAR and begins to move towards the city. They run out of the forest like wasps from a nest, sprint across the clearing, and take up positions at the edge of the city using the buildings and landscape for cover.

EXT. ZAGREB - MORNING

Dmitri, Dejan, Vladimir, and a dozen other men move through the buildings calculatedly, picking off any Ustaše that appear. A jeep with a machine gun mounted on top of it rounds a building and begins firing at the group. They quickly take cover and return fire as the jeep approaches. Dmitri falls and Vladimir runs to him. Dejan sees this, then takes aim at the jeep's driver. He hits with his third shot and the jeep swerves hard to the right, hitting a building and exploding, propelling the Ustaše inside into the air.

VLADIMIR

(across the street
to Dejan)
Dmitri is dead!

DEJAN

We'll come back after
we get the prisoners.
(looking at the
other men)
LET'S GO!

The other men hesitate. Dejan runs forward, killing two men who shoot from a window. The remainder of his group sees that he is not going to stop. Hesitantly, they run after him.

CONTINUED:

A tank appears as Dejan rounds the corner of a building. It fires at him, but misses narrowly. He dives for cover as a blanket of debris falls around him and the rest of his men catch up. Vladimir looks at Dejan through the dust.

VLADIMIR

(angry)

DEJAN!

DEJAN

COVER ME!

Dejan emerges from the dust with a look of desperation in his eye. The men look to Vladimir.

VLADIMIR

FUCK! COVER HIM!

Flashes of gunfire are visible through the dust as Dejan sprints towards one of the tanks. He dives behind a burnt out cart and readies a grenade. The tank rolls forward slowly, Dejan waits for a second, then jumps up, runs towards the tank, and throws the grenade in through a spotter's hole in the side. Dejan dives back behind the cart as a hail of gunfire descends upon him. The tank explodes and all is dark once again under a cloud of smoke.

DEJAN

REGROUP ON ME!

Dejan waits for a few seconds. He looks back and sees that none of the men are following yet.

DEJAN

(frustrated, desperate)

LET'S GO! KEEP UP!

Dejan fires a few rounds at a rooftop. A man falls. He looks back once again but cannot see his men through the settling dust cloud.

Further behind, Vladimir looks anxious. The men around him look to him for instructions.

CONTINUED:

PARTISAN #8 (Male, 28)
He's too fast!

VLADIMIR
We can't abandon him.
You men...
(pointing to a
group of eight)
...cover us. We need to
settle him before he
gets himself killed.

Vladimir and five other Partisans begin to run forward as the remaining eight fire through the smoke and dust.

Dejan hears the gunfire from behind him, turns, and sees Vladimir and the others running to his position.

DEJAN
COME ON!

Dejan turns; a jeep with a machine gun appears. Before Dejan can shoot the man on the gun, five of the men including Vladimir are ripped apart by the Ustaše. Dejan is pinned down by the jeep and doesn't see what has happened until the jeep is eliminated by the other eight Partisans who have since advanced. The jeep explodes, Dejan picks his head up and sees Vladimir's lifeless body among several other dead Partisans.

DEJAN
VLADIMIR!

Dejan runs out and holds Vladimir in his arms. He looks up at the remaining men in his group. They appear scared and in shock.

DEJAN
(emotional)
SHIT!

He drops Vladimir's body and stands. He has the look of insanity and delusion in his eyes.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN
We've got to get to the
prisoners! NOW!

Tears begin to fall from one of the younger soldiers eyes as Dejan turns to continue his advance. PARTISAN #9 (Male, 30) speaks up.

PARTISAN #9
It's not safe yet!

Dejan turns back in a fury.

DEJAN
(grabbing him by the
collar, deranged)
It's not going to be safe.
Never.

Dejan pushes off from Partisan #9 and runs forward. The men follow reluctantly, guns raised in fear.

INT. PRISONER BUILDING - MORNING

Men, but mostly women and children lie on the floor as bullets hit the walls around them. Some are crying, some are praying, and others attempt to look out the windows. A man spots Dejan and his men at the edge of a building shooting at the Ustaše in the area.

EXT. PRISONER BUILDING - MORNING

Dejan and four of the remaining men sprint across a road to another building and begin to fire at guards who stand near the prisoner building.

DEJAN
CLEAR THE STREET!

INT. FACTORY BUILDING - MORNING

A group of thirty Ustaše and twenty German soldiers surround two machine guns placed behind sliding doors.

CONTINUED:

They wait quietly, looking to the GERMAN CAPTAIN (Male, 48) for orders. Through small windows in the sliding doors, the prisoner building is visible on the opposite side of a wide street.

GERMAN CAPTAIN
(quiet, firm)
Wait.

Through boarded up windows and cracks in the walls, the enemy soldiers watch as two of Dejan's men fall before the remaining Ustaše are cleared from the street. The Partisans stop shooting and the street becomes quiet despite the intermittent chatter of distance gunfire.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE PRISONER BUILDING - MORNING

Dejan looks around the quiet street. He scans the buildings, the windows, the door ways, and the front of the prisoner building. He looks back to his men and motions forward with his free arm. They emerge from the two buildings they were using for cover and enter the street.

Dejan motions for two of the men to move towards the locked double doors of the prisoner building. Men and women begin to appear at windows of the building.

WOMAN (29)
(desperate)
Help us...

MAN (27)
Get us out of here!

The two soldiers bash the chain and lock with the butt ends of their rifles but it won't budge.

PARTISAN #9
Back away from the door!

Four of the other Partisans take a knee in the street with their guns trained on the surrounding buildings. Partisan #9 waits a few seconds, aims his rifle at the lock, and fires. The chains falls, the doors are flung open, and the prisoners begin to filter out.

CONTINUED:

Dejan stands at the far corner of the prisoners building, watching the prisoners flee.

DEJAN
THIS WAY... HURRY!

Partisan #8 scans the buildings around them as the prisoners exit the building behind him and run towards Dejan. A look of supreme dread comes over his face at the sound of two simultaneous sliding doors opening.

EXT. ZAGREB (EAST SIDE OF CITY) - MORNING

Victor and his men walk through the streets with relative ease as they work their way to the center of the city. The deafening sounds of two machine guns erupt close by causing his men to scatter and find cover. Victor hugs the edge of a building with his back and collects himself. He looks around the corner.

VICTOR
(pointing to the
edge of a building)
THIS WAY!

He rounds the corner and his men follow. They run towards a large building at the end of the street and regroup. The sound of the machine guns is constant, and very close. Victor looks in through one of the windows as the last of his group arrives. Victor taps the man next to him, then motions to PARTISAN OFFICER #5 (Male, 42), a strong, scruffy man with the stars of an officer on his collar.

VICTOR
(quietly)
Inside!

The other men begin to look in through a series of broken windows. The backs of several Ustaše and German soldiers are visible through doorways and openings in the rooms on the first floor of the building. Partisan Officer #5 instructs the others on how to proceed. He points to Victor and the small group around him, then to a door on their side of the building.

CONTINUED:

Partisan Officer #5 turns to the men around him; they move towards another door further down the building. The two groups enter the building.

INT. FACTORY BUILDING - MORNING

The two Partisan groups take cover in the first rooms on the first floor of the building. The enemy soldiers are very close, but unaware of the Partisan presence. As the last of the men reach their posts, Partisan Officer #5 opens fire and the rest of the Partisans follow suit. The unsuspecting Ustaše and German soldiers caught in the crossfire fall quickly.

EXT. ZAGREB (SOUTH) - MORNING

A mixed group of Partisan soldiers, both men and women, jog through the empty streets. The sounds of a large battle straight ahead of them begin to fade as they get closer. Vesna and a PARTISAN #10 (Male, 25), an averaged sized man with blood on his arms, help a WOUNDED PARTISAN #1 (Male, 30) who has been shot in the leg to keep up with the group.

EXT. PRISONER BUILDING - MORNING

Dejan is pinned down and alone at the side of the prisoner building, using a mound of bricks for cover as the machine guns tear apart the building above and around him. His face is expressionless; he is in survival mode. The machine gun fire stops and Dejan picks his head up slowly. Victor's group appears in the building, shooting any wounded enemy soldiers still alive. Dejan stands and looks around at his fellow Partisans and the entire group of prisoners who now lay dead, littering the ground in front of the prisoner building. He drops his rifle in shock. The silence is deafening.

Vesna's group appears between two buildings at the opposite side of the prisoner building from Dejan. They stop dead as soon as they see mass loss of life that lies before them. Vesna catches up, looks on the scene in horror, then spots Dejan at the far side of the building. His expression is empty as he stares blankly at the dead.

CONTINUED:

Victor exits the building with a group of his men. They too freeze at the sight of so many dead. He sees Dejan fall to his knees and runs over to him.

VESNA
(from across the
street)
DEJAN!

Victor reaches Dejan as Vesna runs toward them in the background. Dejan falls limply into the arms of Victor, who notices blood on Dejan's side. Victor finds a bullet hole in Dejan's side as Vesna arrives horrified and concerned.

VESNA
MEDIC!

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP - EVENING

Dejan sits on a stump staring blankly into a fire as red, blue, yellow and orange flames dance on the logs and light up his face. PARTISAN #11 (Male, 34) approaches from behind him with a bowl of soup and a piece of bread.

PARTISAN #11
Sir...
(offering the food)
...you should eat sir.

Dejan doesn't react, continuing to stare blankly into the fire. The man places the food on the ground beside Dejan and moves on.

Vesna appears and sits next to Dejan.

VESNA
How are you doing?

Dejan doesn't respond.

VESNA
Your wound?

CONTINUED:

Dejan is in a trance. Vesna pulls his coat open and sees that he has been sufficiently bandaged up, but traces of blood are visible through the white cloth on his side. Vesna touches the wound lightly and Dejan gets up unexpectedly. The bowl of soup spills as he rises. Dejan starts to walk away from Vesna.

VESNA
(rising)
Dejan?

VESNA
(fearful)
Where are you going?

Dejan continues to walk away from the fire. Vesna runs after him, catching up among a group of tents. She grabs him by the shoulders and spins him around. His eyes are bloodshot and a tear falls over his cheek.

DEJAN
(choking on emotion)
No more...

VESNA
(desperate)
You couldn't have known
Dejan, it was a trap.

DEJAN
(firm)
I'm done... I'm going home.

Dejan walks off shaking his head, leaving Vesna standing confused and frustrated.

VESNA
(yelling passionately)
You can't give up now!
(pause)
We need you here Dejan!

Dejan keeps walking. He passes the edge of the camp and enters the forest.

CONTINUED:

Vesna watches him leave, then turns and runs through the camp, nearly knocking a man down as he exits a tent. Dejan begins to run away from the camp.

INT. OFFICERS TENT - EVENING

Tito is surrounded by a large group of officers, including Victor.

TITO

What happened at Zagreb
must be forgotten. We
will persevere..

Vesna bursts into the tent. Victor sees Vesna's look of desperation and immediately perks up.

TITO

What is it?

VESNA

He's gone.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Dejan sprints through the woods alone in a fury. Night has fallen over the wilderness; it seems to swallow him as darkness closes in around him. A full moon casts ominous shadows that move as the wind pushes the tree branches. Dejan begins to run. He jumps over downed trees and leaps across streams, kicking up dirt and leaves as he goes. Intermittent shadows and light flash across his face and upper body as he runs. He stumbles but catches his balance.

Dejan stops and looks up. The moon overhead shines brightly, and the stars speckle the sky. He is breathing heavily, but his eyes appear to flash with vivid color as they did when he was sitting beside the fire. Dejan continues to run, changing direction slightly.

INT. OFFICER'S TENT - NIGHT

Tito stands confused.

TITO

What?

VICTOR

(bowing his head)

Dejan...

TITO

(slamming his fist)

DAMMIT.

Vesna looks at the ground, shakes her head, and chokes back a tear.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

A wolf howls from the top of a hill. Dejan spots its silhouette against the moon as he enters a clearing. His eyes flicker and he begins to run faster.

After entering another forest, Dejan stops and leans up against a tree and begins to vomit. He stumbles ahead before he is completely done and trips, falling directly on his wounded side. He lets out a MOAN and twists with pain before picking himself up and continuing on.

Dejan's strength begins to fail him as he stumbles forward. His eyes are fixed on the horizon and glazed over. He appears to be in a trance. He falls down an unseen hill as he exits the forest. His body flails as it tumbles down, coming to a rest facedown at the bottom of the hill. Dejan doesn't get back up.

EXT. CLEARING - DAWN

The sun begins to rise over a clearing. A soft breeze blows through long golden wheat grass damp with dew. Dejan's body lies face down and motionless at the bottom of a hill at the edge of the field. One of his eyes is visible, but closed and covered with dirt.

CONTINUED:

The silence is broken by a HOWLING, followed by short, sharp BARKS. The sound is approaching. Dejan's eye flickers and he attempts to get up, but he can only muster the strength to roll over to his back. Dejan winces with pain as his wounded side hits the ground. The blue sky above him fades away.

FADE TO WHITE.

OVER WHITE: BARKING, DISTANT AT FIRST, THEN CLOSE

INT. MAKESHIFT SHELTER - DAY

Dejan's eyes open once again, but the blue sky is no longer above him. He can hear voices faintly in the distance. Dejan blinks and brings into focus a close grouping of sticks and branches covered in leaves about four feet above his head. A large tongue appears, and the face of a dog follows. It begins licking him profusely and Dejan closes his eyes and turns his head away a few inches.

STEFAN (O.S.)

(relieved)

Morning sunshine...

(pause)

You don't even know how lucky you got, us finding you. Hell, I almost left for dead, all dirty and bloody as you were... but Bo recognized you.

Bo runs towards the voice of Stefan, tail wagging. Dejan opens his eyes and attempts to sit up.

DEJAN

(astonished, weak)

Stefan!

Stefan walks over to Dejan, who squints his eyes to put Stefan in focus. They embrace. Stefan reaches for a bottle of water and hands it to Dejan.

STEFAN

Drink.

CONTINUED:

Dejan sips weakly on the bottle, and then lies down once again. Stefan stands up.

STEFAN

Get some rest now, you'll
be safe here.

EXT. FOREST CAMP - EVENING

Stefan walks amidst several well camouflaged make shift shelters in a small camp as distance voices become clearer. Bo walks beside him as Stefan approaches a fire surrounded by half a dozen men and women dressed in dirty, tattered civilian clothing. Soup is served from a pot that rests atop the fire and distributed. Stefan stops near ALEXANDAR (28), a scruffy but frail man.

ALEXANDAR

How is he?

STEFAN

He'll live.

ALEXANDAR

You two were from Knin?

Stefan nods in quiet remembrance, takes two bowls of soup and walks away.

INT. MAKESHIFT SHELTER - EVENING

Stefan enters with the soups and Bo at his heels. Dejan sits up slowly and winces with pain. He looks at his side and sees that his bandages have been changed.

DEJAN

Where are we?

Stefan hands a bowl of soup to Dejan.

STEFAN

After you left I began
living in the forest.

CONTINUED:

STEFAN
(pause, ashamed)
I found others like
me who wanted to hide.

Stefan takes a bite and pauses again.

STEFAN
(curiously, sensitive)
Did you find them?

Dejan stares at Stefan with a stern, painful expression. He takes a final bite of his soup in silence. Stefan places a comforting hand on Dejan's shoulder, then places the empty bowl on the ground for Bo to lick.

DEJAN
You were right to stay,
to live your life
your own way.

Stefan stops to consider this statement.

STEFAN
This is no life.

DEJAN
(angry)
Why not?
(pause)
Killing accomplishes
nothing.

STEFAN
What about freedom?

DEJAN
What about it?

STEFAN
I accepted the world those
men brought upon me, but
you...
(pause)
...you fought back.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

(ashamed)

And how many more men and
women died because I did?

STEFAN

(shaking finger)

No.

(pause)

Rest now... Get your head
straight.

Stefan gets up to leave. Dejan shakes his head.

EXT. FOREST CAMP - MORNING

Dejan emerges from the makeshift shelter to a bright sun
burning through a light fog. He looks around at the camp
for the first time. Winter is beginning.

LOWER THIRD: "NOVEMBER 10, 1941"

Dejan moves through the camp wearing his Partisan uniform.
The peasants who live there stare at him with blank faces.

Bo BARKS from offscreen; Dejan spots Stefan speaking to
Alexandar and a few other men. Stefan sees him and
approaches.

STEFAN

Feeling better?

Dejan nods.

DEJAN

How many live here?

STEFAN

It fluxuates, but usually
about twenty of us..

Stefan hands Dejan some bread as they walk towards one of
the shelters.

CONTINUED:

STEFAN

We've heard that the war is turning.

DEJAN

It's the Partisans, they have a strong army now.

STEFAN

We know.

Stefan moves a blanket that covers the entrance to the shelter and produces several rifles. He attempts to give one to Dejan, but Dejan steps back.

DEJAN

What's that for?

Stefan gives him a long convincing stare.

STEFAN

(confidently)

Take it, we are going for a walk.

Dejan hesitates, then complies. Stefan takes one for himself before recovering the opening.

EXT. FOREST - EARLY AFTERNOON

Stefan and Dejan walk slowly through the forest as Bo runs through the brush nearby. Aside from the dog, the forest is peaceful and still.

STEFAN

I meant what I said earlier.

Dejan gives him a stern look, but sees that Stefan is dead serious.

DEJAN

Why? Why now?

CONTINUED:

STEFAN

You came here a broken man
Dejan, but even at your
worst, I could still see
the fight in you.

Dejan walks on in silence.

STEFAN

I don't know what happened
to you out there, but you
still have a passion in
your heart that will never
fade.

DEJAN

(cold)
You don't understand.

STEFAN

(raising voice)
And I don't claim to.
(calmly)
All I know is that I'm
ready to fight back.

DEJAN

(stopping, facing
Stefan)
So what do you want to do?
Fight death with more death?

STEFAN

I want my freedom back.

DEJAN

(looking around)
This is freedom!

STEFAN

No... You don't believe
that.

Dejan considers this, but changes the subject as Bo runs
past.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

Where are you taking me?

STEFAN

We're almost there.

INT. PARTISAN JEEP - AFTERNOON

Vesna rides with Victor, Srecko, Dmitri and Andrej. She looks sad, empty, and reflective. The men's faces are expressionless as the bumpy road tosses them around. Victor glances at Vesna, who sits to his immediate left. Seeing her sadness, he puts an arm around her and pulls her close. A single tear falls from her cheek.

EXT. EDGE OF FOREST - AFTERNOON

Stefan and Dejan reach a clearing.

STEFAN

A legend from this war
has reached us, even
here.

Dejan looks out at a familiar field. At the far side of the clearing he can see the row of cottages that he once called home. Dejan doesn't respond to Stefan.

STEFAN

It's about a boy who left
the country side to find
his family when the war
began.

Dejan sees the trees where their farming party had been gunned down. He turns to Stefan with a painful expression on his face.

STEFAN

A Partisan who fights with
a passion and strength
unmatched on the battlefield.
A soldier who looks like a
boy, but fights like a man.

CONTINUED:

Stefan looks at Dejan with a look of admiration. Dejan turns away.

DEJAN

I am none of those things.

STEFAN

I knew from the first time
I heard that it was you.

DEJAN

None of that matters Stefan.
They're all dead and I
couldn't stop it. Jasna,
Ana, all of them.

STEFAN

This isn't about them
anymore. It's about a
country and a people!

Dejan doesn't respond as they walk through the long, overgrown grass. His hand brushes the tops of the grain as he passes; a pensive look on his face.

EXT. BURIAL GROUND - AFTERNOON

Dejan and Stefan stand over the grave of Marko in the center of a makeshift burial ground.

STEFAN

I'll never forget that
day in the field. I
thank him every time
I come here.

Stefan walks away as a breeze blows his hair off of his face. Dejan kneels at the head of the grave. He begins to cry, but composes himself.

DEJAN

(emotional)
Forgive me father.
(pause, sob)
I was too late.

CONTINUED:

Dejan looks away with watery eyes. He sees Stefan looking out over the grassy field. Waves of air ripple through the field, and a light snow begins to fall.

DEJAN

We fight for our freedom,
for peace, but the only
result is more death.
We kill to survive... and
so do they. But when you
have nothing...

(pause, loud)

...what's the fucking
difference!?!

Stefan hears Dejan, now thirty yards behind him. He turns and begins to walk back towards his friend. Dejan has his head bowed and is silent. Stefan reaches him and puts a hand on his shoulder. Dejan takes a deep breath.

The sound of an ENGINE rumbles quietly in the distance. Dejan opens his eyes quickly; both men look towards the row of cottages, the direction of the sound. They exchange a look of alertness and run back into the trees, taking cover just as a jeep appears opposite the clearing from them.

Dejan and Stefan, who holds Bo close, breathe heavily behind two trees near one and other as the jeep circles in front of the cottages, then comes to a stop. Stefan peeks around his tree with his rifle raised.

STEFAN

(excitedly)

One jeep. Six men.

DEJAN

(calm, not looking)

Sit tight, they won't
see us.

The soldiers get out of the jeep, spread out, and appear to be searching the area. Stefan leans out from behind the tree further.

CONTINUED:

STEFAN
They're armed and looking
around...

DEJAN
(firm)
Sit down.

Stefan withdraws immediately. He gives Dejan an inexperienced and apologetic look.

DEJAN
Be still.
(pause)
Listen.

The two men sit in silence for a few seconds. Stefan appears to be concentrating hard, but gets impatient.

STEFAN
What are we listening
for?

DEJAN
Shhh.

Dejan strains his ear. Very faintly in the distance he hears a familiar voice.

VESNA (O.S.)
Dejan...

Stefan gives Dejan a sharp look, then turns back towards the jeep. Dejan takes a deep breath. Stefan looks on with curiosity.

EXT. VILLAGE - LATE AFTERNOON

Vesna walks away from the jeep calling out to Dejan. Srecko and Victor scan the tree lines while Dmitri and Andrej look around the buildings.

VESNA
Dejan!

CONTINUED:

VESNA
(pause, discouraged)
Dejan...!

Vesna turns to Srecko with a look of deep sadness. Srecko looks to the others, then shakes his head. All is still for a second, then, faintly in the distance, the sound of brittle grass CRUNCHING under footsteps is heard. Vesna picks up her head and runs out from behind the jeep to see Dejan and Stefan walking across the field towards them.

VESNA
(relieved)
DEJAN!

Vesna runs to meet Dejan in the field. They embrace as the men by the jeep cheer.

EXT. CAMP - EVENING

Stefan, Dejan, Vesna, Victor, Srecko, Andrej, and Dmitri sit around a fire in the woods. The jeep is illuminated in the background; Srecko and Andrej sit atop it. The others sit on logs as they pass around food and drink. The ground has a light layer of snow on it. Dejan stares into the fire.

DMITRI
(to Dejan)
Since you left us we
have won two decisive
battles to the North,
and our army has grown
quickly. But now, the
fighting has moved South.

VICTOR
We want you to join us
on the coast. It will
be the biggest battle
of the war... and one
we can win.

CONTINUED:

DEJAN

Hasn't enough blood been
shed?

ANDREJ

We have them on the run
Dejan. Don't give up now.

DEJAN

I'm not giving up.

VESNA

(biting)

Then what are you doing?

Dejan looks up at Vesna, she looks away in frustration.

DMITRI

This is war Dejan, people
are going to die.

DEJAN

Then what are we
accomplishing? How can
we justify the death that
we too are bringing upon
the country we have sworn
to set free?

DMITRI

You can't think like that.

Dmitri reaches down and picks up a handful of snowy earth.

DMITRI

(passionately)

This is what we fight for.
We are Partisans, and this
is our land. Anyone who
tries to take it is our
enemy, and we will fight
for it to the death.

CONTINUED:

VESNA

Help us win our freedom
back Dejan. We need you.

Dejan takes a deep breathe and rises, walking away from the fire. The others watch him leave not knowing what to do. Stefan gets up and walks after him.

EXT. FOREST EDGE - EVENING

Stefan catches up to Dejan as the trees turn to grassy feilds. The fire is still visible in the background, and the sun hangs low on the horizon in front of them.

STEFAN

Dejan.

Dejan stops.

STEFAN

Look at me. I shut myself
off from the world until
you came back and where has
it got me? You may feel
free our here, but I know...
Hiding is no way to live.

DEJAN

(acceptance)
I know.

STEFAN

I thought this was the best
thing to do once, but how
will things ever change if
we don't fight back.

(deep breath)

I want to go with you to
fight for all those who
died here in this field, and
everywhere, because that is
what we are supposed to do.

CONTINUED:

Dejan looks up. His eyes moist; he looks inspired.

STEFAN

Those men over there believe
in you, and that's not
something to walk away from.

Stefan kicks a rock loose from the earth around it.

STEFAN

This...

(pause)

This is the difference.
Our father's fought for
this land once, and now,
its our turn.

Dejan looks around and takes another deep breathe. He looks out at the grassy field, covered in a dusting of snow lit by the setting sun in pink and orange. A breeze makes the grass move in waves, shaking the snow off.

Dejan faces Stefan once again and nods in silence. Stefan puts his arm around Dejan and the two return to the fire.

EXT. CAMP - EVENING

Stefan and Dejan return. The men eagerly await a sign as Vesna and Dejan exchange a compassionate look.

DEJAN

(at ease)

When do we leave?

The men cheer; Vesna jumps up and embraces Dejan.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

Victor drives the jeep down a dirt road with the other six jammed into the back. Dejan and Vesna ride together in the very back, and Bo is visible running back and forth, through the trees and bushes behind them.

CONTINUED:

As they drive, Vesna looks longingly at Dejan as he looks out at the countryside. Dejan doesn't notice her stare. Vesna glances quickly around at the others in the jeep. Dejan begins to notice her acting odd and turns. After seeing that no one is watching, Vesna begins to get closer to Dejan, but suddenly they are broken up by a bump in the road.

Vesna reaches for Dejan's hand to stabilize herself, and then looks out once again, his hand in hers. Dejan resumes looking straight forward trying not to smile, but sees Victor smiling back at him in the jeeps rear view mirror.

EXT. COAST - DAY

The jeep pulls over a hill to reveal the blue water of the Adriatic Sea. The beauty of the water captivates the soldiers in the jeep as they turn to follow a road that runs parallel to the coast. Vesna caresses Dejan's hand, which she is still holding, to get his attention. He looks at her and returns a compassionate smile.

LOWER THIRD: "DECEMBER 3, 1941"

They drive over another hill and find the Partisan camp, a sprawling field of tents and smoldering fires. The camp is empty; Stefan doesn't understand this, and looks concerned. Dmitri sees Stefan's concern, smiles, and laughs.

DMITRI

(to all)

The battle has begun!

The men let out a cheer, and Stefan looks relieved, as they reach the far side of the camp. They pass the top of another small hill and the battlefield is revealed. The beach is full. An army of nearly fifteen thousand Partisan's has pushed a mixed Ustaše and Italian Army back to the shoreline. The enemy soldiers attempt to load into roughly sixty boats on the beach but the Partisan's are already upon them.

CONTINUED:

As Victor drives down the hill, two airplanes fly overhead, towards the boats. Dejan and Stefan look up with surprise, then back down to Srecko, who nods and chuckles confidently.

Srecko
(to Dejan)
Sure isn't a single shot
rifle now is it..

Dejan returns a smile and looks up again. The airplanes drop their payloads and take out two of the boats, which explode brilliantly in yellow and orange.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Dejan, Stefan, Vesna, and the rest of the men in the jeep jump out onto the beach and run forward to join the battle, running forward in force.

TITLE CARD: "Between 1940 and 1945
over 1,000,000 civilian men,
women, and children were
murdered systematically
in the Balkans."

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Srecko jumps behind a burnt out vehicle and begins to fire at fleeing Ustaše attempting to reach a Ustaše stronghold. Andrej helps a wounded man to safety, then joins Srecko. Dmitri throws a grenade at a group of Ustaše firing at him from behind a pile of mangled scrap metal near the Ustaše stronghold. It explodes and the enemy soldiers are thrown into the air. Inside a bunker, Victor tosses Stefan a clip and the two begin firing back at Ustaše soldiers attempting to reach the Ustaše strong hold. Dejan and Vesna fire from behind a large log, then run to a burnt out tank.

Nearby, a large explosion throws a huge cloud of smoke and debris into the air. Dejan and Vesna duck down, unhurt by the explosion. Dust covers them, and the sounds of war seem to fade. Under a blanket of dust, Dejan and Vesna stare into each other's eyes for a long second.

CONTINUED:

They exchange compassionate smiles, completely forgetting about the battle for the time being. They lean in, and share a long, passionate kiss.

The sounds of war come back; Dejan and Vesna jump up and run to the bunker with Victor and Stefan. They all begin to fire at the Ustaše stronghold together. Just as Dejan throws a grenade one of the airplanes flies over them, beginning to drop its payload on the Ustaše stronghold. The beach lights up with orange flames, and the Partisans cheer loudly behind the cover of the bunker. Dejan rises with a look of supreme accomplishment and looks around at the men and women fighting beside him, as falling bombs continue to explode in the background.

TITLE CARD: "This film is dedicated to
 those men and women who had
 the courage to fight such
 oppression under the Partisan
 battle cry, "Death to Fascism,
 Freedom to the People".

FADE TO BLACK.