

THE STANDING DAYS

Written by

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Blackness. Obscurity. Dissonance.

INT. GERMAN CAMP-DAY

Strands of daylight enter a small, dark room through a single window.

Dead US soldiers lie on the ground. Armed Germans fill the room. One soldier, WOUNDED AMERICAN, holds his bleeding gut.

An American medic, PODELSKI (24), takes in the view, shocked to see his friends lying dead around him.

The Germans show no sympathy. One lights a cigarette for another. Podelski shifts his attention to his enemies just in time for--

A German slamming a RIFLE into Podelski's face.

Again blackness.

EXT. FOREST-DAY

The camera follows a pair of sprinting army-issued boots. The boots belong to--

JAMES PRATT (23), a Private in the US Army. He keeps his head low as he runs. He knows he's in enemy territory. He stops to catch his breath and get his bearings. His face is angry. This is the last place he wants to be. He runs on.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING-DAY

Pratt enters a clearing where 15-20 US soldiers crouch in hiding. Pratt heads to the front where--

LT. BARNES (37) looks through binoculars next to McCoy (30). SGT (32) sits behind McCoy, eager to be included.

MCCOY

How many?

BARNES

At least 30.

BINOCULAR POV: At least 30 German soldiers fill a small complex-- two buildings surrounded by a trench. We focus on several oil drums at the rear of the complex.

SGT

We can take them.

MCCOY

That's ridiculous. We're to head to the front without delay. This is a *big* delay.

Barnes notices Pratt.

BARNES

What did you see, Pratt?

PRATT

It's clear. Nobody's following.

SGT

You sure about that? Something tells me you weren't looking real hard.

Pratt looks ready to strike at SGT.

BARNES

Knock it off, SGT. Fall back with the others, Pratt.

Pratt does as he's told.

SGT

Sir, I really don't think you should be trusting him with anymore assignments.

BARNES

Not now, SGT.

Barnes returns to his binoculars.

Pratt moves back with the men and kneels next to GOODMORE (35), a slightly chubby, simple-minded soldier.

GOODMORE

SGT being himself today?

PRATT

You mean a jackass? Absolutely.

Barnes lowers his binoculars, his mind made up.

BARNES

This isn't our problem. We'll avoid them and go east, 5 yards apart. Heads low and keep it quiet.

The guys jog through the woods about 50 yards away from the German camp. While they run a shout comes from the camp and--

BAM! The U.S medic falls without a sound, shot in the neck.

BARNES (CONT'D)
Down! Everybody down! Stay low!

The men don't need his reminder. They all fall face-first.

SGT
Bastards shot the medic!

SGT rises to his knees and returns fire at the Germans.
Several soldiers do the same.

McCoy crawls on his elbows to Barnes' side.

MCCOY
What do we do now, sir?

Barnes carefully rises to his knees and looks through his binoculars.

BINOCULAR POV: several Germans run for cover while firing at the Americans. TWO GERMANS run out the back of the complex AWAY from the battle.

BARNES
They must be sending for support.
We can't have them trailing us.

MCCOY
I suggest we flank them, sir.

Barnes' view through the binoculars focuses on the oil drums.

BARNES
SGT! Get over here!

SGT stops firing and slides to Barnes. The gunfire is deafening.

BARNES (CONT'D)
SGT, take a man around back. You'll see some oil drums. One of you draw the Germans towards them while the other places the explosives.

SGT couldn't be more thrilled.

SGT
Yes sir. I'll take Lewis.

SGT begins moving to get Lewis. Barnes grabs him.

BARNES
No. I want you to take Pratt.

SGT
Sir?

SGT's excitement leaves his face.

BARNES
You heard me. Move.

SGT waits a moment, hoping Barnes is joking, then obeys. Barnes looks at McCoy and both smile.

Pratt rises above the grass, fires a round at the camp, then ducks again. SGT grabs his jacket and tugs, gunfire surrounding them.

SGT
Let's go. Barnes wants us to flank 'em.

PRATT
Don't touch me. Flank them? Just the two of us?

SGT
For once, Pratt, just do what your superior tells you.

PRATT
But why just the two of us?

SGT
Damn it, Pratt, let's go.

SGT and PRATT leave the rest of their men.

EXT. GERMAN CAMP-DAY

We are BEHIND the Nazi complex. The 30 Nazis all take aim at the Americans and exchange fire. Some Germans shout orders to others. Occasionally one is hit by American fire.

Pratt and SGT creep through the tall grass to the rear of the camp, behind the Germans. They stop and evaluate.

SGT
Next to that building are the oil drums. You'll sneak down there and plant the explosives when I draw a few Krauts this direction.

SGT takes his pack off to remove the explosives. Pratt aims his gun at the Germans in case he and SGT are spotted.

SGT (CONT'D)
You gotta stop questioning every order you get.

SGT prepares the explosives.

PRATT
Superiors make mistakes, SGT. Blindly follow their every word and it could cost you your life.

SGT
What about Mattingly? 100 men dead because he *didn't* follow orders.

Pratt seems to take this comment personally, like it hurts him to be reminded of it. SGT shoves the explosives against Pratt's chest.

SGT (CONT'D)
Place it by the drums then blow it when the Krauts are close enough.

Pratt runs towards the complex. SGT watches him, frustrated.

EXT. GERMAN CAMP-DAY

Pratt sneaks into the trenches of the complex and places the explosives on the oil drums. The drums are surrounded by boxes of ammunition. He sets the wiring to blow the place when, from one of the buildings, he hears--

PODELSKI
Help me!

Podelski looks out a window at Pratt. Pratt freezes.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
My name's Podelski, Corporal Podelski. I was with the 31st. You gotta get me out of here.

Pratt looks at the explosives, conflicted. He grunts and leaves the explosives behind and runs to the window.

SGT watches from afar as Pratt leaves the oil drums and runs to the building. He cannot see Podelski, says to himself-

SGT
What now, Pratt?

Pratt runs to the window. Podelski peers out anxiously, his face bruised from the rifle hitting his face.

PODELSKI
I got a wounded guy in here.

PRATT
What are you, a medic?

PODELSKI
Yes, now are you gonna help me?

Pratt climbs through the window into-

INT. GERMAN CAMP-DAY

The back room, its floor covered with dead Americans (same room from opening scene). One soldier, Wounded American, holds his bleeding gut. He is barely awake.

PODELSKI
We gotta get some supplies so I can treat him. If we're gentle we should be able to hoist him out.

PRATT
Look, we gotta be quick about this. I just rigged those oil drums to blow. I can help you get him out the window then you gotta move him to cover as quick as you can.

PODELSKI
Right, grab his legs.

EXT. GERMAN CAMP-DAY

SGT watches as Pratt and Podelski lift Wounded American through the window. He grunts, upset at the delay.

Pratt lets Wounded American's legs fall to the ground.

PRATT
Alright, get him out of here. I've got a trigger-happy sergeant up there who's gonna draw these Germans to us any second now.

PODELSKI
Got it.

Podelski drags Wounded American out of the German camp. Pratt jumps to the oil drums and finishes his preparations. He then runs a wire away from the drums towards the tall grass.

As soon as Pratt is out of the complex SGT opens fire. Pratt can't believe he didn't wait. He sprints for cover.

It works. German soldiers turn and run towards SGT. One soldier drops by SGT's fire. Then another.

Pratt quickly attaches the explosives' wire to the DETONATOR. He waits a beat until several Germans are within ten feet of the drums and then--

BOOM! The entire complex explodes into a dark, orange flame. The explosion knock Pratt over. He stares at it in awe, shocked at what he's done. The flames lick higher and higher.

PRATT (V.O.)

What is my purpose, my role to play? Am I meant to kill?

SGT runs towards the flames, screaming for joy.

PRATT (V.O.)

Were these men meant to die? What about Mattingly's men? Were they meant to die?

SGT

Look at that! Blew the bastards sky-high!

Podelski approaches Pratt, his hands covered in Wounded American's blood.

PODELSKI

Private I'm gonna need supplies. This man's dying.

Pratt doesn't seem to hear him. He just stares at the flames.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Private! The supplies!

Barnes, McCoy and the other men approach the burning camp.

BARNES

SGT! Pratt! Well done!

Pratt still stares into the flames. Podelski takes things into his own hands.

PODELSKI

Sir, I'm Corporal Podelski. I'm a medic and I got a dying man over here. I need supplies right now.

BARNES

Alright, our medic was taken out but I'll see what I can do. Hey! Let's get Benson's gear over here!

Barnes couldn't be happier: they rescued a captured American and took out the enemy camp while only losing one man.

Four Germans stumble out of the destroyed camp. They are moving for their guns. Pratt runs towards them with his gun aimed.

PRATT

Hands up! Keep 'em up!

Three Germans raise their hands, one reaches for his gun. Pratt hits him with the rifle and the man stays back. Pratt stands behind the four Germans with his gun aimed at them. Columns of black smoke rise to the air behind Pratt.

SGT walks towards Pratt and the captured Germans.

SGT

Shoot them!

PRATT

What?

SGT

Shoot them, Pratt!

PRATT

No! They surrendered.

SGT

He was reaching for his gun, shoot him!

Barnes meanwhile walks towards Pratt.

BARNES

Pratt!

Pratt turns to argue with SGT.

PRATT

He was defending himself. You would have done the same.

With Pratt's attention on SGT, the German soldier tries again for his rifle, gets it, and turns it on Barnes.

BANG! Barnes drops, a bullet in his head.

SGT quickly shoots the German. Pratt is startled by all this and stares at the dead German and at Barnes.

SGT

Damn it, Pratt! I told you to shoot him!

Pratt stares at the bodies with the flames behind him.

GENERAL (O.S.)

Whose fault was it, McCoy?

CUT TO:

INT. DEBRIEFING TENT-DAY

GENERAL (50) stands with a host of military scribes. McCoy sits in front of them, very intimidated.

MCCOY

Sir?

GENERAL

Barnes' death. Whose fault was it?

McCoy is confused. Fault? It was an accident!

MCCOY

I believe it was an accident, sir.

GENERAL

Come on, McCoy. You know that won't fly in D.C. A lieutenant was shot by a prisoner. They're gonna want a neck to hang this on.

MCCOY

It's war, sir. Things happen.

GENERAL

Sounds to me like this Private Pratt is the one to blame. Would you agree?

McCoy can't bring himself to answer. He thinks over the situation.

EXT. U.S. FRONT-DAY

Mayhem. We are just a few hundred yards behind the lines - the front lines of a major battle. We can't see the action but we hear explosions, gunfire, and screams.

Vehicles and hundreds of men race back and forth from the battle. Medical tents are everywhere. Chaos.

Amid the chaos, Pratt and Goodmore stroll casually, hardened soldiers not excited by their surroundings.

GOODMORE

So they'd cover all my tuition in addition to the pay I'm already getting?

PRATT

Again, yes. The government pays your tuition expenses AND gives you a living stipend.

GOODMORE

And why are they doing this?

PRATT

They want soldiers to have a smoother readjustment after the war. The information's all in the pamphlet.

GOODMORE

I never got one.

PRATT

They gave them to us when we were separated from Mattingly's group. We'll find you another one.

GOODMORE

It's called the G.I. Act?

PRATT

G.I. Bill. Passed it a month ago.

GOODMORE

I'd better look into it. You gonna do it?

PRATT

I've only got 6 months left for my degree so I don't really need it. What would you study?

This conversation almost seems ridiculous given the setting. Men are carried on stretchers, bleeding profusely.

GOODMORE

I have no idea.

Goodmore sees a tent marked: SUPPLIES. He is now distracted.

GOODMORE (CONT'D)

Hey, I'll bet there's food here.

Pratt smirks at how quickly Goodmore's attention shifts.

The two look around to ensure nobody is watching, then step into the tent. A moment later they quickly step out with bags of food, trying not to look suspicious.

GOODMORE (CONT'D)

Holy shit, the jackpot.

PRATT

It's been months since I've had bacon. Even uncooked the smell is incredible!

An old, ANGRY GENERAL spots them. He quickly approaches, looking ready to kill.

ANGRY GENERAL

Soldiers!

Pratt and Goodmore realize he's yelling at them. They freeze. ANGRY GENERAL storms at them. He's a bomb waiting to explode.

Goodmore shuffles the food in his hands to salute. Pratt realizes he'd better do the same. He drops pouches of food while giving a sloppy salute.

ANGRY GENERAL (CONT'D)

Where are you taking those rations?

GOODMORE

Uh...

Goodmore looks to Pratt for rescue.

PRATT

They're for Lt. Barnes, sir. It seems that with all the chaos his squad was forgotten about, sir.

Goodmore is impressed with Pratt's quick maneuvering.

ANGRY GENERAL

Well he's not alone. Everything's a mess. The 29th had a whole company without ammo for three days marching along the front.

PRATT

Damn shame, sir.

ANGRY GENERAL

Look, we got guys bleeding all over the place back here. Just try to act a little more stressed, would ya? Less laughter.

PRATT

Yes, sir. More stressed.

Angry General nods and hustles away. Pratt and Goodmore break into laughter at their close call.

GOODMORE

Man, I guess I should go to college too.

They walk on, opening some pouches and shoving dried fruit into their mouths, laughing and talking. We can't make out what they're saying over the noise of the nearby battle.

They near a medic's station. Pratt is shoved from behind. He falls forward a few steps and turns around to see SGT, slightly drunk, glaring at him.

SGT

I'm not going down for this.

GOODMORE

What's your problem?

SGT

I'll be lieutenant soon because Barnes' death was your fault, Pratt. I won't take the fall.

PRATT

Nobody's asking you to take the fall.

SGT

They're gonna give me Barnes' position and then you'll get what's coming to you. This wasn't a singular event.

(MORE)

SGT (CONT'D)

I'm still not convinced you weren't responsible for what happened to Mattingly's company. Barnes' death resulted from a pattern of disobedience and insubordination.

GOODMORE

That's enough, SGT.

PRATT

You wanna talk about insubordination, SGT? Let's talk about Monte Cassino. You executed the four prisoners you were supposed to take to HQ for interrogation.

SGT

They were hiding weapons.

PRATT

Cleaning rods for their rifles, hardly hidden weapons. Truth is, you were alone with a gun in your hand and four tied-up Germans. They didn't stand a chance.

SGT has had enough. He grabs Pratt and throws him into a table of medical supplies. Goodmore launches at SGT but gets a fist to the face. Several soldiers around stop to watch.

SGT proudly stands over Goodmore but Pratt is already on his feet, leaving SGT no time to plan an attack. He dives into SGT and both fall hard to the ground. Pratt gets one hit to SGT's gut but the rest is a disordered wrestling match.

Pratt is ripped off SGT. It's McCoy.

MCCOY

Pratt! Pratt, knock it off!

McCoy holds Pratt away from SGT. Goodmore stands up.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Pratt, stop!

Pratt finally calms down. SGT gets on his feet. He wants the fight to continue but restrains himself.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

What the hell's going on?

PRATT

Forget it, McCoy.

MCCOY

SGT?

SGT

It was nothing.

MCCOY

I'm sick of you two. You're gonna be together for some time. You need to learn to deal with it.

Pratt and SGT just glare at each other. The crowd that had gathered to watch the fight slowly dissipates. McCoy holds a book in his hand.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

SGT, they want to debrief you.

SGT believes he's about to get promoted and smiles.

SGT

Here comes the promotion. Enjoy what time you've got left here, Pratt. I'll have you court-martialed by the end of the day.

SGT walks away, smug as ever. McCoy laughs.

PRATT

What's so funny?

MCCOY

He's not getting promoted.

GOODMORE

How do you know?

MCCOY

Because I told them that what happened yesterday was SGT's fault. I'm taking Barnes' place.

GOODMORE

What?

PRATT

That's great! Congratulations!

MCCOY

Thanks thanks. It's exciting, ya know, because I wanna stay military after the war, but it's pretty stressful.

GOODMORE

You'll be fine. So you're over the whole squad now?

MCCOY

No, actually. They're putting together a special group for a mission. I'll lead as lieutenant but I want you guys with me.

PRATT

Sure.

MCCOY

You'll be briefed at Intel in twenty so I'll say no more. Bad news is SGT has to be with us. Out of my hands. So, sorry, Pratt.

PRATT

I can handle it.

MCCOY

Alright, see you guys in twenty.

GOODMORE

Hey, did you finish your book?

McCoy nearly forgot about the book in his hands. He holds it up. It's Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

MCCOY

Oh, no I'm still in the second act. Now with this new promotion, I don't think I'll ever finish it.

PRATT

I could tell ya how it ends.

MCCOY

Don't you dare.

PRATT

Sounds good, lieutenant.

Pratt laughs. McCoy shakes his head, not used to the title. Walks away. Pratt turns to Goodmore.

PRATT (CONT'D)

Your face okay?

GOODMORE

Feels okay. How's it look?

PRATT
(Winces) Same as always.

INT. INTEL TENT-DAY

Pratt and Goodmore enter the tent to see several men already waiting--

RHODES (22) and GUPPY (31) stand by each other, obviously been together for some time. Rhodes is goofy, a comic-book nerd. Guppy is the opposite: quiet, focused, serious but not a jerk. Guppy is physically a monster, his shirt barely keeping his muscles covered.

SCHMIDT (19) and Podelski. We've already met Podelski, the medic Pratt rescued. Schmidt is the youngest and greenest of the group. Only been in a couple of fire-fights, this is his first mission. He's painfully naive. The men are putting their bags together.

Schmidt opens his bag and takes out shirts, pants, underwear, much more clothing than a soldier is issued. The guys stare.

RHODES
Why are you carrying so much weight?

SCHMIDT
What's that?

GUPPY
The clothes, Schmidt. Why?

SCHMIDT
Oh, well my mom she's sort of, I don't know, kinda thinks the army's full of real rough guys, guys who steal your underwear, ya know, so, I mean I totally trust you guys I just thought it would be good to have some extras.

Guppy picks a shirt up. "**PVT SCHMIDT**" is stenciled on the inside collar. He picks up pants, also "**PVT SCHMIDT.**"

GUPPY
You mark all your stuff?

SCHMIDT
No, I mean I know you guys won't steal it or anything, it's just in case we get confused ya know? Just a way to keep stuff separated.

RHODES

Good thinking, Schmidt. Guppy here was just talking about your shirts. Better keep an eye on them.

SCHMIDT

You're kidding, right?

Schmidt is concerned. The guys all get a kick out of it.

Podelski is surprised to see Pratt.

PODELSKI

Hey, Pratt, right? Listen, thanks again for yesterday.

PRATT

Sure. Sorry about your friend. I heard he didn't make it.

PODELSKI

Oh, I never really met him. He had been shot up before they captured me.

PRATT

Right. So what are you doing here?

RHODES

You two know each other?

PODELSKI

Pratt's group rescued me yesterday.

SCHMIDT

You were a prisoner? Holy shit, what was it like?

Everyone looks at Schmidt, the annoying new kid.

PODELSKI

About what you'd expect.

SCHMIDT

Man, I can't imagine. Man...

McCoy and SGT enter the tent. Everyone salutes except Pratt and Goodmore; they've forgotten that he's in charge now.

MCCOY

At ease.

SGT is quite pissed off; he's just learned that he didn't get the promotion.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

We don't have much time. Wheel's up at 1200- we're on the truck at 1200- so I'll make this fast, no questions.

McCoy suddenly realizes Podelski is present.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Podelski? What're you doing here?

PODELSKI

Private Rush, the medic assigned to this mission, was injured. Intel asked me to join along. I didn't have a unit anymore so might as well stick me somewhere. Here's the paperwork.

Podelski produces papers from his bag, hands them to McCoy.

MCCOY

Fine fine, I don't have time to worry about it. I guess Podelski's joining us now. This is Guppy and Rhodes from 8th division and Schmidt from the 76th. Pratt, Goodmore, SGT and myself are from the 29th.

While everyone listens to McCoy, Rhodes grabs an ammo bag from Schmidt's pile without him noticing. Schmidt hasn't marked this bag yet. Rhodes smiles, grabs a pen, and begins writing on the bag.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Our objective is to recover a German defector. He was a high-ranking military official who deserted and is seeking Allied protection. Some paratroopers found him last week but they've been pinned and can't move. The U.S. line is moving their way but they don't want the Germans pushed next to this defector. We're heading in to find the defector and the paratroopers. Only I know their location so we'll move fast and avoid all resistance. Questions?

RHODES

You said no questions.

A few guys smirk. McCoy doesn't appreciate it.

MCCOY

Right. Dismissed. 28 minutes.

McCoy hustles out. The men stay in place. Schmidt continues packing and notices that his ammo bag is missing. He sees it by Rhodes.

SCHMIDT

Oh, uh, I think that's my bag.

Rhodes opens the bag. The inside is now stenciled: "**PVT RHODES.**"

RHODES

Nope. This one's mine. See?

Schmidt looks confused and begins searching for "his" bag. SGT decides it's his turn to address the group.

SGT

As sergeant I'm second in command. Something happens to McCoy and I'm in charge.

GOODMORE

We know how it works.

SGT

So you'll do what I say. It's obvious McCoy's not entirely qualified for his job. But he *is* lieutenant so I'll follow him. But if anything happens, you all report to me.

PRATT

You going somewhere with this?

SGT

You've had problems with authority in the past, Pratt, so listen up.

PRATT

McCoy said dismissed. I don't have to listen to you.

Pratt & Goodmore walk out. Podelski, Guppy and Rhodes follow them. SGT and Schmidt remain, Schmidt confused.

SCHMIDT

So, wait, if you and McCoy disagree, it's his call, right?

He's being sincere. He wants to know how it works.

SGT

Yeah but unless McCoy says so, you stick with me, Schmidt. I'll take care of you, alright?

SCHMIDT

Thanks SGT. This will be my first mission so I'm kinda lost.

SGT

You'll be fine. Get your things.

Schmidt leaves. SGT stares at his feet.

EXT. U.S. FRONT-DAY

The guys walk towards the truck, all 8 of them (McCoy, SGT, Goodmore, Pratt, Podelski, Schmidt, Guppy and Rhodes).

SCHMIDT

How long will this take?

PRATT

You anxious, Schmidt?

SCHMIDT

No, I mean, I'm just saying, three days? More?

GUPPY

Kid, it takes as long as it takes.

Podelski and Pratt exchange a look, both amused by the kid.

SCHMIDT

Yeah, I mean I've been through some stuff, ya know? Pretty serious stuff. Like I've seen rough, really rough stuff. I saw this, uh, this German guy, I mean not a soldier but just a guy, and his head had been, like, hit or something and part of his brain-

PODELSKI

Schmidt, can I tell you about a friend of mine?

Schmidt doesn't realize he's been cut off.

SCHMIDT

Yeah, I'd love that!

PODELSKI

Back in Med school I had this roommate, Judson. He was always telling me stories about his friends from home, about how caring they were. His friends were always helping out at soup lines, homeless shelters, that kind of thing. They met some pretty crazy people, ya know? Lots of funny stories. But Judson never once mentioned himself in these stories. It was always "some friends" of his who did this stuff, not him. One day, a couple of his friends from home stayed with us, just visiting Judson. When Judson was gone I complimented these guys about being such good people. "We're jerks," they said. They said, "Judson is the only one of our friends who ever got involved with that kind of thing." So every story he was telling me was actually about him. He was the charitable one. But he was too good a guy to brag about it. Never used himself in a story.

SCHMIDT

Huh... so you're saying I shouldn't use myself when telling this story about the dead German?

PODELSKI

I'm just saying I really respect Judson's approach to storytelling.

SCHMIDT

Right... interesting.

They arrive at the truck. The guys finish packing some stuff.

MCCOY

Alright, everyone in the truck. And I've got some reading material.

GOODMORE

You're the only one who likes Shakespeare, Lt.

McCoy holds up a handful of letters. Mail. The rough and tough soldiers react like Jr. High girls. Rhodes rips the letters from McCoy and begins handing them out.

RHODES

Alright, Goodmore, Guppy, Pratt.
Schmidt...

Schmidt's letter is covered in stencils marked "PVT SCHMIDT." Rhodes hands out all the letters, nothing left for him. He stares at his empty hands.

RHODES (CONT'D)

You gotta be kidding.

MCCOY

Hey, maybe next war, Rhodes.
Alright, everyone in the truck.
Let's go.

Pratt looks at his letter. He's afraid to read it. Everyone else is thrilled about theirs.

INT. MILITARY TRUCK-DAY

All of the men climb into the truck. Rhodes is depressed. McCoy walks past him, taps his helmet. Rhodes looks up to see McCoy holding a letter for him. He snatches it and rips into it. McCoy smiles, pleased with his teasing. As the truck pulls away, the guys read their letters and talk excitedly about the news.

GUPPY

They sent this letter two months ago.

MCCOY

That's military operation for ya.

Podelski sits across from Pratt in the back of the truck.

PODELSKI

From your family?

PRATT

My mom.

Pratt just holds it. He doesn't want to open it.

GOODMORE

Oh, I don't believe it! My sister's engaged! To who? I didn't know she was dating!

Pratt slips his finger under the envelope seal and slowly opens it. He unfolds the letter like it's an aging book. The sound in the truck fades. The letter makes him anxious. He reads--

PRATT'S MOM (V.O.)

My son. You heard the news so I don't need to write the words. I doubt I could. My first thoughts when I heard were of you. Are you alright? Your hopes and dreams for him were higher than anyone's.

EXT. VISION WOODS-NIGHT

Pratt's vision. We see KEVIN (20) standing in the woods. Kevin wears an American uniform issued to soldiers in the Pacific Theater. Kevin is alone. He stares into the camera. He is young and happy.

PRATT'S MOM (V.O.)

You wished him happiness. You wished him peace.

A bullet rips through Kevin's chest. He falls into mud, alone. His dead eyes glare into camera.

PRATT'S MOM (V.O.)

You wanted his mind to be clear, free of doubt, free of guilt.

Kevin's body slowly slips into the mud.

INT. MILITARY TRUCK-DAY

Pratt continues reading. The sound of his fellow soldiers is still muted.

PRATT'S MOM (V.O.)

Your care for him was a light to me, a view of my purpose.

INT. 1934 HOUSE-EVENING

YOUNG PRATT reads out loud. YOUNG KEVIN lies on the floor listening intently. We do not hear the words. Young Pratt reads from *Ben-Hur*.

INT. MILITARY TRUCK-DAY

PRATT'S MOM (V.O.)
*I look forward to seeing you again.
 Be safe and know I miss you.*

Pratt lowers his letter. The sound of the truck and the soldiers returns.

GOODMORE
 Are you kidding? She's marrying
 Eric Wood? That 4-F turd! He'll be
 my brother-in-law?

McCoy sits at the other end of the truck. He eyes Schmidt.

MCCOY
 Why so bummed, Schmidt?

SCHMIDT
 My family's moving.

SGT
 So?

SCHMIDT
 They're moving to Idaho.

The guys wince.

RHODES
 Idaho. A car crash would have been
 better news.

SCHMIDT
 You been there? It's pretty, right?

RHODES
 Oh no. If I were you, I'd fake my
 death. Or actually kill myself.

Schmidt is greatly discouraged. Others keep talking. Podelski notices that Pratt is bothered.

PODELSKI
 Your family moving too?

Pratt puts his letter away.

PRATT
 No, just homesick I guess.

Podelski doesn't buy it but leaves him alone. As Pratt thinks on, the truck sounds fade again.

EXT. VISION WOODS-NIGHT

We see the same images of Kevin dying.

PRATT (V.O.)

*There cannot be meaning to this.
Why would you be taken and I
remain?*

Kevin's dead eyes.

PRATT (V.O.)

*Who determines the value of a
person? Your worth far exceeded
mine. And yet here I am, alive.*

EXT. CROSSING-DAY

The truck has reached its destination and the guys are out, except Pratt. As he nears the edge he looks at the rim of the truck, the threshold. He hesitates, then crosses it. The guys piece their bags together jovially.

GUPPY

It's too hot for these M40s.

PODELSKI

You'll want it tonight.

GUPPY

It's too much weight, ya know? It's like they want to keep us safe but this much shit just makes me an easier target.

RHODES

But like I was saying, I think this is the best time to live in. I mean, technology has never been better, and art is at its peak. We can cure almost any disease, travel anywhere we want, and talk to anybody on the planet with just a few telephone operators.

PODELSKI

Rhodes, every generation thinks they're at the pinnacle of advancement. "How could things get any better?" When the steam engine came around, people thought that was it. But we can see that they were wrong.

PRATT

And as far as art goes, we're far from being the pinnacle. Where are the Mozarts? The Shakespeares? The Raphaels? If you think we are at the peak of the arts then you haven't spent enough time in a history book.

RHODES

Well what about film?

GUPPY

Please. Give it twenty years and nobody'll be makin movies anymore.

PRATT

Well, I don't know about *that* but-

The truck pulls away, leaving them alone on the dirt road.

RHODES

Alright just forget it, Ok? You guys don't have to disagree-

SGT

Shut up, Rhodes. Everyone shut up.

SGT's abruptness gets everyone's attention.

SGT (CONT'D)

This isn't a training exercise, alright? We're in enemy territory now, so this artsy crap, this joking around, it's over. We stay focused or we die.

Everyone stares at SGT, thinking he's overdramatic but also realizing he has a point. Schmidt and Rhodes look a little scared. McCoy isn't sure how to react.

MCCOY

Yes, SGT's right. We gotta focus. HQ gave us a pretty safe route; we should be able to avoid trouble for the most part. But let's keep the chatter down. Eyes sharp.

McCoy feels uncomfortable. SGT did his (McCoy's) job!

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Uh, okay. Let's get moving.

McCoy begins walking. The guys fall in behind him. Podelski marches next to Pratt. He speaks softly.

PODELSKI

So apparently SGT thinks he should be in charge?

PRATT

He probably would be if it weren't for yesterday. To be fair, he's one hell of a soldier.

PODELSKI

But what good is that if your men hate you?

PRATT

At least he'd be effective.

PODELSKI

You don't think McCoy will be?

PRATT

We'll see.

EXT. WOODED ROAD-DAY

As the guys walk, we get the sense that they're entering a dangerous place. They walk in silence.

EXT. SMALL BRIDGE-DAY

As they walk on, McCoy holds his map to ensure he doesn't misguide his men.

EXT. A COUNTRY HOME NEAR THE DIRT ROAD-DAY

They pass a country home. Half the home has burned, smoke still rises. The men stare at the tragedy. Pratt looks down and sees bullet shells. They are in a war zone. It's real.

EXT. WOODS, STREAM-DAY

A small, cool stream. A canteen is lowered into it. Pratt fills it and takes a swig of the refreshing liquid. He's alone by the stream. He stands to return to the guys and sees a puddle of mud near him. This causes him to see--

Pratt's previous vision, Kevin's face lying in thick mud.

Back at the stream, Pratt isn't disturbed as much as he is curious. Why won't these visions leave him alone? Why can't he just forget about Kevin for now? As if answering his own question, he remembers--

EXT. HEADQUARTERS, RAIN (MEMORY)-DAY

A relaxed Army Headquarters (opposite to the battle front we saw earlier). Hundreds of soldiers lounging about. We focus on a row of MILITARY TRUCKS-full of soldiers preparing to move out. Pratt and Goodmore watch them attempt to quickly cover the vehicles from the heavy rain. Pratt comments-

PRATT

Military-issued gear: 30 pounds
dry, 40 wet.

Pratt's voice is distant in this vision. Goodmore smiles.

EXT. WOODS, STREAM-DAY

Pratt, remembering the soldiers in the rain, drains water from his canteen into the mud below him. The mud splashes.

EXT. HEADQUARTERS, RAIN (MEMORY)-DAY

Pratt remembers headquarters a little later in the day, though it is still raining hard. He sits against a tree in the midst of the U.S. Army. He holds a letter in his hand, both he and the letter soaked in the rain. The news of the letter shocks him, horrifies him.

EXT. WOODS, STREAM-DAY

Pratt stares at the mud, remembering. He sets his foot in the mud and watches it sink.

EXT. CLEARING-DAY

Schmidt, McCoy and the rest sit and eat. The squad is on a 5-minute break. Some chat quietly. Pratt enters, putting the lid on his freshly-filled canteen. He sits next to Podelski.

PODELSKI

You missed another impassioned
speech from SGT about why we need
to "shut the hell up."

PRATT

I was getting water. Sorry I missed that. So hey, I wanted to hear more about your friend Judson.

PODELSKI

Judson?

PRATT

The soup kitchen guy.

PODELSKI

Oh, right! Judson!

Pratt smiles.

PRATT

You don't have a friend named Judson. You did the charity work.

PODELSKI

What?

PRATT

That's what you were telling Schmidt, don't put yourself in your own glamorizing stories. Well, you didn't do it either. You did the charity work.

Podelski is embarrassed. Pratt's right.

PODELSKI

That obvious, huh?

PRATT

Yeah, kinda. Did you go to college?

PODELSKI

I did, yeah. Med school.

PRATT

Hence the medic.

PODELSKI

Well, yes but I was studying to be an optometrist and now I'm sewing up torn limbs.

PRATT

I know what you mean. I've almost got a degree in world history and now I'm taking part in it.

PODELSKI
Where'd you go to school?

PRATT
University of Oregon. You?

PODELSKI
IU, Indiana.

Pratt laughs.

PRATT
You're a Hoosier?

PODELSKI
Hey, you're a duck.

They laugh.

A few yards away, McCoy looks at several maps, not confident.

SGT
We'd better get moving, sir.

MCCOY
I need another minute, here.

SGT
Sir, are you lost?

MCCOY
I just need to take another look.

McCoy notices SGT's critical glare.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
Don't just sit there, make yourself
useful. Make sure ammo's evenly
distributed.

SGT
Evenly distributed? Just let me
look at the maps.

McCoy picks the maps up and stands, stubborn.

MCCOY
I'm going over here. Check that
ammo, SGT.

SGT is frustrated. He could be doing a much better job. He turns to the group.

SGT
Gather round. Ammo check.

The men look confused.

GUPPY
Ammo check?

SGT
That's right, Guppy. Get your ass
over here.

The men all move in close together.

SGT (CONT'D)
Alright, put all your ammo at your
feet, everything you got.

The men unwillingly begin taking ammo out of packs and laying
it on the ground. Pratt and Podelski keep close together.

PODELSKI
We're wasting time.

PRATT
So what?

Schmidt struggles getting an ammo box out of his bag. Rhodes
holds Schmidt's pack and jerks on the box, freeing it.

SCHMIDT
Hey thanks. Hey, I gotta tell ya
this story. This friend of mine,
not me but a friend of mine, he saw
this guy, this German guy-

Rhodes looks to the other men for rescue from Schmidt.

SCHMIDT (CONT'D)
-not like a soldier just a German
guy and his head had been hit or
something and my friend, not me, my
friend could see this guy's brain-

Pratt and Podelski smile, knowing that Podelski's lesson has
gotten through. But Rhodes can't handle it.

RHODES
Enough, Schmidt! God, it's a
terrible story, just shut up!

Schmidt is embarrassed and silenced.

GOODMORE
Take it easy, Rhodes.

RHODES
I'm sorry, it's just only been a
few hours and I can't take it.

Everyone is silent, watching Guppy and Schmidt.

SCHMIDT
Sorry, I was just trying to get to
know-

BANG! Blood sprays from SCHMIDT's left shoulder. Everyone
jumps. Schmidt hits the ground.

BANG! Another gunshot rings out but doesn't hit anyone.

SGT
Down, everybody down!

McCoy, who had wandered a few yards away from the group,
takes charge.

MCCOY
Take cover! Return fire!

The men are all low, taking cover behind trees and bushes.
Confusion. Their ammo is still lying in the open.

GOODMORE
Where did it come from?

SGT
That way!

SGT points. Guppy runs to the ammo, which lies in the open.
He grabs ammo and throws it to other soldiers. They quickly
load their guns. BANG! Another shot is fired and dirt flies
up near Guppy. He grabs one last ammo clip and runs for
cover. The men begin a response volley.

Podelski, Pratt and Rhodes drag Schmidt to some trees.
Podelski tears Schmidt's shirt open.

SCHMIDT
Am I dead? Am I dead? I'm dead!

Podelski pulls from his bag A 1 MINUTE SANDGLASS.

PODELSKI

You see this? This is one minute.
Hold it and flip when each minute's
up. You make it past three minutes
and you're still awake, you live.

Schmidt takes the glass while Podelski works on his shoulder.

SGT moves up next to McCoy. We see GERMAN SNIPER run from the trees about 40 yards away.

MCCOY

There he is, there he is!

The men all spot him and fire. Nobody can hit him. Guppy stands, takes aim, and-

BOOM! Guppy's shot rips through Sniper's head.

The soldiers relax. Relieved. Except Schmidt.

SCHMIDT

I'm dead! Oh, am I gonna die?

PODELSKI

Shut up! You're not gonna die. How about that sand? You at three yet?

SCHMIDT

It's only been one minute!

PODELSKI

Keep your eye on it.

McCoy runs towards Podelski and Schmidt.

MCCOY

Podelski, how is he?

Before Podelski answers we hear-- GERMAN VOICES from the road bend where the sniper was. Lots of German voices. It must be more than 20, though they are not yet visible. McCoy freezes. SGT raises his gun, ready to fire as soon as he sees them.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Nobody fire! Nobody fire!

He is panicking. Every soldier is quiet and looking at him for leadership, even Schmidt. The voices get closer.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

(whispers)

Find cover!

RHODES

What?

MCCOY

Hide! Everybody hide!

The men begin seeking cover.

PODELSKI

Pratt! Help me with him!

Pratt and Podelski carefully drag Schmidt down a slope into bushes. The rest of the men hide as best they can.

20 Germans come into view. They stop to examine dead Sniper. They get quiet and fall into formation, scanning the woods, approaching McCoy and the group.

Pratt, Podelski and Schmidt lie in a bush. Schmidt is trying to keep quiet but he breathes quickly and lets out grunts due to his wound. He still watches the sand fall.

The Germans are getting closer. As they get nearer, Guppy looks from his hiding place to the clearing to see several ammo boxes and clips still lying in the open.

McCoy notices his maps still in the open. He crawls from his hiding place towards them. A German steps in front of the map, facing away from McCoy. McCoy retreats, narrowly escaping the German's vision as the German spins around. German looks down and sees the map. He picks it up and signals to his leader. They discuss the maps with McCoy just a few feet away.

Another German spots the ammo and informs his superior. They take all the ammo.

Germans are everywhere. Rhodes has to quietly sneak from one tree to another to avoid detection.

Schmidt winces and inhales sharply. Podelski slaps his own hand over Schmidt's mouth. He motions for him to shut up.

Two Germans quietly discuss the maps they've found. They point in several directions.

Schmidt watches as the last grains of sand fall. He nudges Podelski and holds up 3 fingers. Podelski smiles, his hand still covering Schmidt's mouth.

A German barks an order at his men. They all quickly make their way back to the road in formation and out of sight. McCoy moves from his hiding place to Schmidt's side.

MCCOY

How is he?

SCHMIDT

Not good, sir! I'm dying!

PODELSKI

Hey, you're not dying! You made it to three minutes, didn't ya? You're not dying! Pratt, hold this rag against his shoulder please.

Pratt does so. Podelski and McCoy step away for privacy.

MCCOY

How is he?

PODELSKI

I don't know. Hard to tell. I need to work on him but not here. I can't have more Jerrys showing up when I'm in the middle of surgery.

MCCOY

Alright. Can you move him?

PODELSKI

If it's to a safe place for the night, I can move him.

MCCOY

Alright, we'll find something.

McCoy walks to the rest of the guys.

GUPPY

They took most of our ammo, sir.

MCCOY

I know.

GOODMORE

They got your maps, McCoy.

MCCOY

I know.

SGT is pissed. He walks at McCoy's side.

SGT

Ammo check behind enemy lines?
Nobody had fired a shot yet.

MCCOY

SGT, we need to find a place for Podelski to work on Schmidt.

SGT

And your maps. You should have been studying them in the truck instead of reading letters.

MCCOY

Just get the men ready.

All the men watch them.

SGT

I told you it was time to move out. Your incompetence-

MCCOY

Dammit, SGT! I'm your superior and you'll do what I say. Get the men ready to move out.

SGT is silenced. McCoy picks up his gear.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Standard formation. Pratt, Podelski, Goodmore: Carry Schmidt. Keep him quiet. There might be more of them around.

He walks to the road, more angry with himself than with SGT.

PODELSKI

Alright, I'll get his left arm. Keep him level.

They pick Schmidt up to move him. He lets out a short scream.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD-DAY

They move as quickly as they can. Three men carry Schmidt using a make-shift stretcher. Everyone is on edge.

McCoy, who's in front, stops suddenly and raises his hand. He's heard something. The men all freeze, weapons ready, terrified. Silence for a moment and then-

DISTANT VOICES from around a bend in the road. The men look around for somewhere to hide. Nothing. No trees, no bushes, just grass fields on either side.

RHODES

What do we do?

McCoy panics. What *can* they do? They're in the open, the voices are getting closer. He has to do *something*.

MCCOY

Spread out. Attack positions.
Prepare to fire.

RHODES

Lieutenant-

GUPPY

We've got a wounded man here.

GOODMORE

Sir, who knows how many-

MCCOY

You have any better suggestions?

The men are terrified. Schmidt looks at Podelski and Pratt, guilty that he's a hinderance.

PODELSKI

It's okay, you'll be alright.

MCCOY

Get in position.

The men cover both sides of the road, some on one knee, others lying flat. McCoy moves to the front position, closest to the voices.

The men wait and listen. The voices are subdued and focused. Is it German? Can't tell.

Pratt aims at the bend in the road, waiting for the worst.

The voices suddenly stop and distant running is heard. McCoy suddenly stands up and lowers his weapon. He smiles. He turns to his men and motions for them to lower their weapons.

Pratt looks to Podelski. Is he crazy? The men, confused, stand but don't quite lower their weapons yet.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Come here!

The men, still unsure, move towards McCoy. As they do, they see the source of the voices around the bend-

Over 30 American soldiers approach. Americans! Most of the men couldn't be happier. Rhodes didn't appreciate the stress.

RHODES
You gotta be kidding me.

The group's leader comes forward and steps aside with McCoy.

PETERSON
Captain Peterson, 63rd Infantry.

MCCOY
Lt. McCoy, 29th. What are you guys doing so far up?

PETERSON
Recon party. You?

MCCOY
Paratrooper detail. We're looking for some 82nd guys, they'd have a German with them?

PETERSON
We haven't seen any Allies back here. Hell, we haven't seen any Germans yet.

McCoy points to Schmidt.

MCCOY
They're out here. We encountered them about an hour ago. They're headed south.

While these two talk in private, McCoy's men stand awkwardly by Peterson's. Nobody has anything to say. One would expect them to chat wildly, but the mood doesn't call for it. It's almost as if they don't trust each other.

Suddenly one of Peterson's men steps forward-

TOM STANTON
Rick? Rick Rhodes?

Rhodes looks up and recognizes Tom.

Goodmore and Guppy smirk to themselves, mocking the name.

GOODMORE
Ricky Rhodes?

Rhodes and Tom shake hands, old friends.

RHODES

Tom Stanton, you clinking,
clanking, clattering collection of
caligenous junk!

TOM STANTON

(booming voice)

Do not arouse the wrath of the
great and powerful Oz!

Tom and Rhodes burst into laughter.

SGT

What the hell? Shut up! You forget
where we are?

RHODES

Sorry, SGT. This is Stanton, we
were in Film Club together back in
high school.

SGT

Cute. Nobody gives a shit.

GOODMORE

Lighten up, SGT. You'd be excited
too if you saw a friend out here.

PRATT

He doesn't have any, Goodmore.

McCoy's men all laugh and even a few of Peterson's join in.
SGT is pissed and too embarrassed to lash out against Pratt
in front of so many men. Meanwhile...

Peterson and McCoy.

MCCOY

You look familiar. I think we were
at Adair together.

PETERSON

That's right, I remember you. You
were with Hogald and those guys.

MCCOY

Yeah, yeah. That guy's a hoot. But
wait you said you're with the 63rd.

PETERSON

I was with the 70th then got
reassigned. Listen, is there
anything you need from us? We gotta
get back by noonday tomorrow.

MCCOY

This guy's got a bullet in him.
Could you take him back with you?

PETERSON

Sorry. We were explicitly ordered
not to interfere with other
missions outside of hostile
situations.

MCCOY

I figured. Then we need a place to
work on him. Someplace safe.

PETERSON

There's a farmhouse with an
adjacent barn about a mile that
way. Looks abandoned. Most of the
locals are long gone.

MCCOY

Great. Hey, one more thing. I lost
my maps. I know where I need to go
but without a map...

PETERSON

Sure. We just gotta get back to the
front tomorrow so you can have the
rest of mine.

Peterson looks through his maps case and hands a couple of
maps to McCoy. McCoy looks to see who's watching. Sure
enough, SGT is glaring right at him.

PETERSON (CONT'D)

Those cover as far as Limburg.
Should give you what you need.

MCCOY

Thanks. If anyone asks about it at
the Front just tell them I was
issued the wrong ones.

Peterson smiles.

PETERSON

Sure thing.

MCCOY

It's just, I was just promoted and
don't really wanna mess this up,
right? I wanna stay military post-
war.

PETERSON

Don't worry, I won't say anything.

MCCOY

Thanks. And thanks for the maps.
Good luck.

PETERSON

You too. It was good seeing ya.
Maybe we'll meet on the front.

MCCOY

Yeah, who knows?

Peterson returns to his men.

PETERSON

Alright, let's move out.

Peterson's men begin marching onward. Stanton and Rhodes have been catching up.

RHODES

Looks like you're taking off.

TOM STANTON

Good to see you, Rick. I can't believe it! Who knew when we watched Pinocchio we'd end up here.

RHODES

I know, crazy! Take care, Tom.

Peterson's men march away. McCoy is back to business.

MCCOY

Podelski, I've got your safe place for the night. Let's go.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

Through binoculars, we see a farm house with an adjoining barn. The homestead is surrounded by woods. McCoy uses the binoculars, SGT at his side. The whole squad is lying on a ridge, studying the homestead.

Outside the house FARM BOY and FARM DAD work together. Farm Boy (15) is tall and lanky, awkward. Farm Dad (42) is slightly overweight, a possible reason for his not being in the French military.

FARM MOM (39) exits the house and brings her husband a tool for his task.

MCCOY
Damn. I thought it'd be abandoned.

SGT
We can't stay here.

MCCOY
We have no choice.

SGT
What if they're German supporters?

MCCOY
Podelski needs a safe place-

SGT
Why is this a safe place?

McCoy ignores him and turns to the rest of the men, quietly.

MCCOY
Pratt, Goodmore. Go down there.

Pratt and Goodmore look at each other.

GOODMORE
Sir?

MCCOY
Go down there, tell them we need help, that we wanna spend the night in the barn.

PRATT
...They speak French...

MCCOY
Figure it out, Pratt. Go.

Pratt and Goodmore reluctantly stand. Pratt puts his rifle on the ground. Goodmore does the same. They walk down the ridge towards the family.

On the ridge, Rhodes moves over to Podelski and Schmidt.

RHODES
Hey Schmidt. You OK?

Schmidt is shaking and breathing hard.

PODELSKI
He's got some kinda fever.

RHODES
Sorry I got pissed at ya.

PODELSKI
When did you get pissed at me?

RHODES
Not you, him.

PODELSKI
Oh! Well, now's probably not the
best time to talk with him.

Podelski isn't being rude, just honest.

RHODES
Right...

He's embarrassed. He crawls back to his place on the ridge.

Pratt and Goodmore walk towards the farm family.

GOODMORE
Why is Podelski safer here than if
he worked on him in the woods?

PRATT
Not our job to question, Goodmore.
We just blindly obey our superior's
every order.

The sarcasm in his voice almost over the top. The family all notice the two men. Farm Wife jumps a little but sees they have no guns. Pratt and Goodmore hold their hands open. No threat. Farm Family stares at them.

PRATT (CONT'D)
This isn't good.

Farm Dad and Farm Wife quietly and quickly discuss the approaching soldiers. Neither of them is upset. Farm Boy inserts his opinion.

GOODMORE
Bonjour. Do you speak English?

Farm Dad steps towards the men, looking defensive. He stands, broad shoulders right in front of Pratt and Goodmore. They nervously wait his next move-

Farm Dad slaps both men on the shoulders and lets out a boisterous guffaw. He's thrilled! He hugs Pratt and Goodmore. They couldn't be more shocked! Farm Wife and her son smile.

INT. BARN-DAY

The doors of the barn open. Farm Dad and Farm Wife carry in several blankets and lay them on the ground. Farm Boy and the soldiers follow. Farm Boy motions to soldiers and tells them where to sleep. Guppy walks by SGT.

GUPPY

You think we can trust them?

SGT

No I don't. But it seems McCoy's made up his mind.

Podelski helps Schmidt to a blanket near the barn doors. Schmidt is out of it.

PODELSKI

You've lost blood. And you're still in shock so just rest for a minute while I get what you need.

EXT. SIDE OF BARN-DAY

Pratt pours water from his canteen, washes his hands of Schmidt's dried blood. Farm Boy walks out of the barn to return to the house. He sees Pratt and stares at the blood on his hands. He walks to the house, shocked by the blood. Pratt watches him go then continues washing.

INT. FARM HOUSE, KITCHEN-EVENING

Farm Dad goes through drawers, collecting rags and other supplies. He speaks in calm French to PODELSKI who is taking supplies from him. Goodmore watches with amusement. Farm Dad is telling some kind of story.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

I don't understand you. I don't understand you!

Farm Dad continues speaking calmly with an occasional chuckle while telling his story.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

(makes scissor motions)

Scissors! I just need scissors!

Farm Dad hands him the last rag and continues speaking.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

I need scissors and I don't speak French at all! Not one word!

GOODMORE

Bonjour.

Podelski gives Goodmore a dirty look. Goodmore is enjoying the language barrier.

PODELSKI

Alright one word. I know one word.

Farm Dad uses his hands while telling an exciting story. Podelski rambles gibberish back to him.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

You don't understand a word I'm saying!

Farm Dad smiles at Podelski and shrugs. He hands Podelski a pair of scissors, closes the drawers, and leaves. Podelski sighs and follows. Goodmore can't keep himself from laughing.

EXT. WOODS AROUND FARMHOUSE-EVENING

Rhodes, who is on perimeter duty, paces, agitated. He finally gives in and sets his rifle against a tree. A quick survey that nobody is watching and his pants are off. He squats against the tree to pooh. Just as he starts he hears footsteps approaching. He looks to see-

Farm Mom carrying bread and water to him.

RHODES

Shit- uh, no thank you! No, go away! Don't come over here!

Farm Mom doesn't understand and says something back to him. Rhodes can't just stop-he's in the middle of his business.

RHODES (CONT'D)

No, don't-don't come over here!

Farm Mom walks right around the trees to see his business.

RHODES (CONT'D)

Don't-oh, OK.

Rhodes stands fast and covers himself. Farm Mom is incredibly embarrassed and begins stammering in French. She sets the bread on the nearby ground, looking anywhere but at Rhodes.

RHODES (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah that's fine. Thank you.
Merci. Thank you.

Farm Mom walks away still mumbling in French. Rhodes watches her go, feeling guilty for making her uncomfortable. He debates what to do then drops his pants and squats anew.

INT. BARN-EVENING

SGT, McCoy, Pratt, and Guppy look over McCoy's new maps.

SGT

So we head east past Dunton.

MCCOY

No, we'll have to cross this bridge here. If we pass Dunton that leads us to Wervik. The Germans took Wervik two weeks ago. It's too dangerous.

GUPPY

Why did Peterson give you all these maps? You only need the one.

SGT

And what are all these markings on this one?

McCoy studies the markings. Uh-oh...

MCCOY

I think he gave us the wrong maps. He gave us the ones he'll need to get back to the line.

The three look at the markings on the maps.

SGT

Well, that's great. So now they're lost because of you.

MCCOY

Not because of me. They can figure it out, right? Anyway we cross this bridge tomorrow and then follow the tracks northeast towards-

McCoy suddenly notices that Farm Boy is watching them over their shoulders, STUDYING THE MAP.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Uh, can we get him out of here?
Pratt!

Pratt is eating a few yards away.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
Would you distract him, please?

Pratt reluctantly leaves his food and walks towards Farm Boy.

PRATT
Come here. I wanna show you
something.

Pratt signals for Farm Boy to follow him outside the barn.

MCCOY
Anyway, after the bridge we follow
the tracks towards Staden.

SGT
And the paratroopers are in Staden?

MCCOY
No but in that general area.

SGT
Where, exactly?

MCCOY
That's for me to know. Classified.

SGT
What if you're killed? I think I
should know the location of the
defector in case something happens
to you.

MCCOY
If something happens to me then you
turn around and take the men back
to the line. Nobody else is to know
their location.

EXT. BARN-EVENING

Pratt walks with Farm Boy to distract him from the maps.

PRATT
Do you speak any English?

FARM BOY
Little.

PRATT
How old are you? Age?

FARM BOY
I... am... ten five?

PRATT
Fifteen?

FARM BOY
Fifteen, yes. I am fifteen. You?

PRATT
I'm 23.

FARM BOY
You... like Belgium?

PRATT
Yes, it's beautiful.

Pratt smiles at Farm Boy. Farm Boy smiles and touches the US flag patch on Pratt's sleeve. Pratt laughs.

PRATT (CONT'D)
You want that? I don't really want it anymore.

Pratt rips off and HANDS IT to Farm Boy. The young man is thrilled.

PRATT (CONT'D)
Enjoy it, kid.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-EVENING

The sun sets on the homestead. The leaves of the surrounding trees refract the sunlight. Farm Mom walks into the barn. Rhodes and SGT are on watch outside the barn.

INT. BARN-EVENING

Farm Mom carries blankets into the barn. She walks near Rhodes. Rhodes looks away, embarrassed by their earlier encounter. Farm Mom also looks away.

She hands the blankets to McCoy then exits the barn. McCoy takes the blankets to Podelski who is working over Schmidt.

Podelski heats a pair of TWEEZERS over a candle.

SCHMIDT
You can get it out, right?

Podelski rubs the tweezers with a rag.

PODELSKI
I can get it. And it shouldn't hurt
too bad. How is it right now?

SCHMIDT
I can't move my arm. And I can't
stop shaking.

McCoy sits next to Podelski.

MCCOY
How you doing, Schmidt?

SCHMIDT
I'm cold, sir.

MCCOY
Take this.

McCoy covers Schmidt's shaking legs with the blanket.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
He'll be okay?

PODELSKI
Should be. Once I stop the
bleeding, he'll just need sleep.

McCoy nudges Podelski and motions for them to step aside.
They do so.

MCCOY
How bad is it?

PODELSKI
It's bad. The bullet hit bone and
shattered it. Plus it's close to
his heart.

MCCOY
But he'll live?

PODELSKI
I think so. But he won't be
carrying gear or moving anywhere.

MCCOY
What am I supposed to do with him?

PODELSKI
Sir?

MCCOY

We'll have to either go back or send you and someone else to take him back.

PODELSKI

Could we leave him with the locals for now?

MCCOY

I'm not gonna force them to take care of him. They've done enough.

PODELSKI

So we're sending him back?

MCCOY

Let me worry about it. Just take care of him.

This worries Podelski. They walk back to Schmidt. Podelski squeezes the tweezers with a smile and puts one hand on Schmidt's shoulder.

SCHMIDT

Wait, you're just gonna-AAAHH!

Podelski pulls the tweezers from the wound pinching a bloody bullet. He examines it in front of his face.

PODELSKI

That was easier than I thought.

Schmidt groans as Podelski bandages him up.

MCCOY

You need anything, Schmidt?

SCHMIDT

A clean shirt.

MCCOY

In your bag?

SCHMIDT

Yeah, in the main pocket.

McCoy gets a shirt out of the bag.

MCCOY

You sure this one's yours?

He holds the shirt which has "**PVT SCHMIDT**" stenciled on the inside of the collar. He throws it to Podelski.

INT. BARN-EVENING

Pratt and Goodmore eat BREAD and MREs. Guppy has his shirt off. His bicep is covered in scars. He holds a KNIFE and slowly places the tip of the blade on his skin next to the other scars. Pratt and Goodmore watch.

GOODMORE
What are you doing?

GUPPY
Every one of these is a dead
German. Don't wanna forget 'em.

He presses the blade into the skin and cuts down about half an inch. Pratt and Goodmore wince.

PRATT
Well, I suppose it's effective.

EXT. BARN-EVENING

Rhodes and SGT sit on watch. The sun is almost down.

RHODES
So where are you from SGT?

SGT
Don't wanna talk about it.

RHODES
What, you got bad memories?

SGT
If we talk, you'll get attached to me. Then, if a situation arises and it's saving me or finishing the mission, you'll be tempted to save me. So I don't wanna talk about it.

RHODES
Well I'm from LA. Not like Hollywood, but east side.

SGT
Hey. I don't wanna talk at all.

RHODES
Well I want you to be attached to me, just in case it comes down to saving *me* or finishing the mission. I worked at the post office and there was this lady there-

SGT sighs.

INT. BARN-EVENING

Pratt sits next to Podelski. Schmidt is asleep.

PRATT
How is he?

PODELSKI
So so. However...

Podelski touches Schmidt's chest.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
Just a couple inches to the left,
he'd be done. Couple feet to the
right, who knows where you'd be.

PRATT
Could have been anyone.

PODELSKI
Yeah, I guess you're right.

This ties into something already on Pratt's mind.

PRATT
Let me ask ya something. You ever
hear about this company, under a
guy named Mattingly, went missing a
couple weeks ago?

PODELSKI
Don't think so.

PRATT
They were assigned to head straight
through the front to establish a
flanking position. Intel supposedly
found a safe route for them but
they didn't take that route and now
they're all dead.

PODELSKI
What about it?

PRATT
It's just random. Meaningless.

PODELSKI
A company of men die and it's
meaningless?

PRATT

It's random. Like Schmidt. Why did he get shot and not me? Random. People died every day before the war. People will die every day after the war. What's the difference?

PODELSKI

People dying in accidents is different. Here they're being methodically killed by an enemy.

PRATT

And if you'd been born a German then I'd be the enemy.

PODELSKI

Ah, so you're one of those, sees the Germans as nothing but a different uniform.

PRATT

Well aren't they? Maybe a handful of German politicians are at fault but the guys we kill, they're just doing what they're told. Like us. Do you feel guilty for killing?

PODELSKI

No.

PRATT

You sure?

PODELSKI

Mostly it's survival or instinct. You got guys like SGT who see it as their duty to kill as many Germans as they can. I personally don't feel that way but if it's right for them then who I am to judge?

PRATT

Right for them?

PODELSKI

Each person has their own truth.

PRATT

But we're talking about killing people.

PODELSKI

Then who's right? If someone has to be right, then which side is it? Americans or Germans? Japanese? Christians? Jews?

PRATT

You can't just say that whatever a person believes is fine, let him believe it. I could believe that it's absolutely wrong for a person to cut his own fingernails.

PODELSKI

And if you believe that then it *is* wrong for you to cut your own fingernails.

PRATT

But if each person is inventing his own morality then morality can't exist.

PODELSKI

Is that what you believe? No morality?

PRATT

I just can't see how somebody could claim to know a moral truth.

PODELSKI

So nobody can be punished for any of their actions because they're not wrong?

PRATT

Not confidently, no.

PODELSKI

That's a tough thing to believe.

PRATT

I'm just being honest with myself.

PODELSKI

You ever talk about this stuff with Goodmore or McCoy?

PRATT

You have to gauge people before you open up to them and I can tell this wouldn't go over well with them.

PODELSKI
Why did you talk to me about it?

PRATT
I can tell we think alike.

PODELSKI
We just disagreed.

PRATT
We think *alike*, Podelski, not *the same*.

Podelski smiles. Pratt stands, points to Schmidt.

PRATT (CONT'D)
Don't stay up all night worrying about him.

PODELSKI
Got it.

Pratt walks away.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LAKE-DAY (DREAM)

Kevin swims in a serene mountain lake. The images are visceral, dream-like. Water glides over Kevin's back, smooth glass. He raises his head for breath. He inhales deep-

INT. BARN-MORNING

Pratt's eye opens from sleep. Reality sets in, he sits up. The barn is empty. He stands and walks outside-

EXT. BARN-MORNING

The soldiers stand around a body. Farm Family watches from the house. Pratt approaches. Who is it?

Schmidt lies dead on the ground, calm. Podelski buttons up Schmidt's jacket. All are silent.

PRATT
I thought he was doing OK.

MCCOY
He didn't wake anyone up. He must have died in his sleep.

Podelski finishes with the jacket. McCoy walks into the barn.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Podelski, you and two others take him into the woods and bury him. Several hundred yards away from the farm.

PODELSKI

Yes, sir.

INT. BARN-MORNING

The men follow him. McCoy picks up Schmidt's bag and pulls out several pieces of clothing all marked "**PVT SCHMIDT.**"

MCCOY

Anyone want these clothes?

The men cringe at the thought of wearing a dead guy's stuff.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Didn't think so. Bury this too.

He throws the bag at Podelski. Podelski motions for Pratt and Rhodes to join him.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Everyone else, clean up. We scared the shit out of these people, the least we can do is leave the place better than we found it.

EXT. MEADOW (BURIAL GROUND)-DAY

Pratt, Rhodes and Podelski carry Schmidt's stiff body through the trees. The mood is solemn.

PODELSKI

This is good. Let's do it here.

They gently set the body down, the men breathing heavily. They remove shovels off their bags.

RHODES

At least none of us has to escort him back to the line.

Rhodes thrusts his shovel into the dirt. Podelski and Pratt look at him, bothered by his comment. Rhodes stops digging.

RHODES (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. He was a nice kid.

He thrusts his shovel into the dirt again, then stops.

RHODES (CONT'D)
I was being a jerk to him when-

PODELSKI
Rhodes. It's alright. We know.

Rhodes looks at them, guilt in his face. He begins digging again. Pratt and Podelski join him.

PRATT (V.O.)
*If death is random, its effect
merely an illusion, how then does
this reverence impose itself on us?*

Pratt thrusts his shovel into the dirt.

PRATT (V.O.)
*He's just another dead kid. Does
every death require such respect?*

EXT. BARN-DAY

The three men return from burial duty. The rest of the group is finishing preparations to depart. They join the group. Nobody speaks.

As the group of soldiers slowly walk towards the woods, Farm Family watches them leave. Pratt looks at the Family one last time and notices that Farm Boy holds his US flag patch.

Pratt turns from Farm Family. The group enters the woods.

EXT. WOODED ROAD-DAY

McCoy holds his hand up. The soldiers stop.

MCCOY
Five minutes.

Everyone takes their bags off. Guppy and SGT step into the trees to relieve themselves.

PODELSKI
I'm joining them.

He takes his pack off and STEPS INTO THE TREES.

Pratt sits by Goodmore. Goodmore takes his jacket off and rubs his forearm. It's bruised.

PRATT
When did that happen?

GOODMORE
Oh, it was stupid. When Schmidt was
shot I jerked and smacked a tree.

Pratt smiles. Goodmore's mood returns to bleak.

GOODMORE (CONT'D)
Was it weird?

Pratt knows what he's talking about-

We see a quick shot of dirt dropping on Schmidt's face.

PRATT
My first time burying someone. When
the dirt covered his face... That
was weird. You know he's dead but
you worry about him breathing.

Goodmore imagines the sight.

GOODMORE
Instinct, I guess.

PRATT
Right.

Pratt has a quick flash of Kevin's dead face in the mud, same
image he's seen before. He wonders how long he'll be haunted.
Faces in dirt, faces in mud. That's what war brings.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRIDGE-DAY

We follow two pairs of feet as they sprint through the woods.
They stop. It's Pratt and Rhodes. From a covered position
they see-

A RAILROAD BRIDGE spanning a RAGING RIVER. On the near side
of the bridge are several dead US soldiers. They stare then
run back to-

McCoy and the rest.

PRATT
You'll wanna see this.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRIDGE-DAY

McCoy stands over American bodies. There must be over 20, 30 of them scattered around the bridge. He rolls one body over. It's Peterson. He had a feeling it would be.

RHODES

Tom!

Rhodes has found his friend, dead on the railroad tracks.

GOODMORE

Why did they come this way? The front is the opposite direction.

SGT

They came this way because they didn't have their maps. This is your fault, McCoy.

MCCOY

Shut up, SGT.

McCoy's too distracted by the bloody scene to honor SGT's taunts. None of the bodies are alive, all shot down. Pratt stares at the bodies.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

There might be survivors.

GUPPY

Sir, nobody survived this.

MCCOY

Maybe across the bridge!

McCoy heads to the tracks. He's determined to find survivors.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Everyone with me!

Everybody falls behind him, not wanting to be left with the deceased. The men jog across the bridge, keeping their heads low. A distant shot is heard and-

SMACK! Rhodes is hit square in the chest. He's knocked off the bridge and falls at least 30 feet to the river below.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Move, get back! Get down!

On the far side of the river, 20 Germans emerge from the trees, leftovers from the fight with Peterson. They have a mounted machine gun and open heavy fire on the bridge.

Some Americans return fire, most drop, sheltered on their stomachs.

Pratt jumps behind a pillar of the bridge. He is the only one standing. He watches as bullets spray around his comrades. Bullets ricochet off the steel. He looks down to see Rhodes caught on a LOG in the river just at the base of a pillar. He is barely holding on as the river rages around him.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Rhodes!

Rhodes' voice is weak and barely audible. Gunshots erupt from the bridge, shells falling down towards Rhodes.

RHODES

I'll be okay...

MCCOY

Rhodes, if we throw you a rope can you hold on while we pull you up?

RHODES

Sure...

He is weak. The guys try to lift their heads off the bridge but it is too dangerous. McCoy pulls a rope from his bag.

MCCOY

Pratt! I'll throw you the rope, get it to him!

He throws it near Pratt. The rope is on the bridge. Pratt moves towards it but a bullet hits the bridge next to it. He retreats to his cover. Rhodes stirs on the log. He's awake. Pratt looks at him and makes his decision.

He shoulders his rifle, dives into the open and grabs the rope. A bullet rips into the wood near his hand. He jumps on the SIDE of the bridge and grabs the edge. He moves across, hand-over-hand. The others watch with wonder, especially SGT. The leader is screaming at his men, pointing to Pratt. They can't quite hit him but they know he's moving.

Pratt throws the rope down to Rhodes. The rope hits Rhodes in the head. No reaction. He is dead. His body slowly falls off the log and floats away. Pratt watches him go. McCoy looks through the bridge slats and sees the dead body.

The Germans can't hit the covered men. Their leader barks orders and they run under the bridge's supports.

McCoy sees them running.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Now's our chance. Everybody move
toward them! Grenades ready!

The men stand and run down the bridge. The Germans are still under the supports. When they reach the other side, the Germans begins shooting up at them. The Americans return fire from the bridge.

SGT, Podelski and Pratt jump off one side into the trees. McCoy, Guppy, and Goodmore head under the bridge, guns blazing. Two Germans re-assemble the machine-gun and open fire on the riverbank. The other five Germans move towards the Americans in the trees. They open fire.

Pratt, Podelski and SGT take cover behind a bridge support. Pratt watches as SGT exchanges volley with the Krauts. Podelski fires a couple rounds with his pistol. Pratt looks to the river and the sound of battle fades, replaced by soft splashing.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LAKE-DAY (DREAM)

Kevin swims in the lake. Pratt is behind him this time. They're racing.

Cut to them on the shore, breathing hard after the race.

KEVIN

I thought you had me.

PRATT

Come on, I gave you that lead.

KEVIN

You were trying your hardest and
you couldn't catch me.

They laugh. Pratt's vision is interrupted by-

EXT. BRIDGE-DAY

PODELSKI

Pratt, ammo!

Pratt looks at Podelski but doesn't move. He's been frozen for a few moments, lost in memory of Kevin. SGT sees that Pratt isn't responding and shakes his head.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Ammo!

Pratt snaps out of it finally and grabs a clip from his bag.

SGT

Grenade!

A German grenade hits the ground near Podelski. He runs but is blasted off his feet when BOOM! It explodes. Pratt covers his face.

Podelski stands and rubs his head, his helmet knocked off. He is dazed and dizzy from the blast. Two Germans run near him with their guns drawn. BAM BAM! Podelski shoots them casually, then lowers his gun and continues to massage his head as if they were never there.

Pratt runs to a tree for cover and fires.

EXT. RIVERBANK-DAY

McCoy and his men are still on the bank of the river, taking heavy fire from the machine-gun and infantry. Goodmore shoots one of the Germans.

MCCOY

We've got two on that machine-gun and two more in the woods. SGT needs to take out the infantry and we'll get the gun.

EXT. WOODS NEAR BRIDGE-DAY

PODELSKI

SGT! Pratt and I will distract them, you hit them.

SGT

You just hold Pratt's hand so he doesn't get scared.

PRATT

Hey!

Pratt stands to run at SGT but Podelski catches him and throws him back against a tree.

PODELSKI

The Germans, Pratt! Shoot the Germans!

Pratt opens rapid-fire against the Germans and charges them. The Germans, surprised, take cover behind the trees while trying to shoot at him. Podelski, joins him in shooting.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Move, SGT!

SGT breaks into a sprint towards the Germans. He shoots them both from behind. The three Americans now stand next to each other. Pratt, breathing heavy, glares at SGT for a moment.

PRATT

Let's go. McCoy needs our help with that gun.

EXT. RIVERBANK-DAY

Two Germans man the machine-gun on the bridge. A third provides additional rifle fire. They unload a seemingly endless spray of bullets into the bank of the river, forcing the Americans to stay low. McCoy, Goodmore and Guppy fire an occasional shot at the machine-gun. Pratt joins them.

MCCOY

Did you clear the forest?

PRATT

Yeah they're gone.

MCCOY

Then it's just this gun. Where are the others?

As if on cue, Podelski and SGT run under the bridge supports and join them.

GOODMORE

We shouldn't be so close! One grenade and we're-

MCCOY

If they still had grenades we'd be dead already.

PODELSKI

Then what do we do?

While McCoy thinks, a few more bullets whiz over their heads. They all duck.

SGT

Lieutenant!

MCCOY

I don't know! Why did you bring everybody down here? We're stuck!

SGT

We needed to regroup!

MCCOY

You should have flanked them!

PODELSKI

It doesn't matter now! We're here,
what do we do?

MCCOY

Fine. You and Guppy head down, use
the bridge for cover, draw their
fire. We'll attack from here.

Goodmore and Guppy sprint to the bridge. They both fire
several rounds for cover. The machine-gun turns to them but
the third German keeps the other soldiers pinned.

GUPPY

Now what?

Goodmore and Guppy are pinned at the bridge when-

A silhouetted soldier emerges behind the Germans on the
bridge. He is followed by another. Guppy and Goodmore watch
with wonder. The silhouetted men take aim and kill all three
unexpected Germans. They jump off the bridge.

GUPPY (CONT'D)

Who...

GOODMORE

I have no idea.

O'HARA and BENNETT, their rescuers, enter.

O'HARA

Hold your fire, we're Americans!

The guys all emerge, unsure.

MCCOY

Hold up, I'll talk to these guys.

McCoy runs to the new Americans.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Listen, thanks a lot.

McCoy shakes O'Hara's hand. O'Hara and Bennett both roughly
30 years old.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
I'm Lt. McCoy, First Division.

O'HARA
Staff Sgt O'Hara, this is Corporal
Bennett. We're on special
assignment with the 82nd.

MCCOY
82nd? You aware of an Op. Rockwell?

O'HARA
Yes, sir. I take it you were sent
out looking for us.

Pratt and the others watch uncomfortably.

MCCOY
Were you with the defector?

O'HARA
We were. We were sent to find the
support, switched out our uniforms
to blend in. Can't believe we
bumped into you guys.

MCCOY
Yeah, what are you doing here?

O'HARA
We were tailing the other guys
across the bridge but turned back
when we saw what happened. Then we
heard gunshots.

MCCOY
Well thanks for coming back. We'll
join forces, head back to the
defector together.

O'HARA
You know his location?

MCCOY
I do. Let's find a place for the
night. We've probably alerted some
Krauts in the area.

McCoy walks back to his men. They all look at O'Hara and
Bennett.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

This is O'Hara and Bennett. They're with the defector so they're joining us. Let's take what ammo we can and find cover for the night.

McCoy's men are relieved to have more men with them.

EXT. BRIDGE-DAY

The men search the corpses for ammo and goods. SGT stands on the riverbed, looking at the log where Rhodes died. It seems he *did* get attached to Rhodes.

Pratt notices SGT on the river and walks to his side.

PRATT

Sorry I froze over there.

SGT finishes thinking of Rhodes, then he's back to normal.

SGT

Was that fear or were you making some stance against authority?

SGT walks back to the bodies. Podelski watches the two.

PRATT

Two guys are dead already, SGT. Maybe we should set our issues aside for the time being.

SGT

Two guys are dead and you're freezing up. Get focused or you'll go down next.

Pratt's amazed. Then he gives up. He tried to make it work. Now, who gives a hell. The group, with O'Hara and Bennett added, walk down the tracks into the forest.

INT. FARMHOUSE-EVENING

Farm Mom frantically organizes the table. She's panicking. Farm Dad enters and begins to put things into place in a hurry. Farm Boy asks mom a quick question from the stairs. She motions for him to hurry up by her. He holds out the US flag patch from Pratt. Mom's eyes widen. She grabs it from him and shoves it in a drawer just as-

Two sharp knocks on the door. The family freezes. The door quickly opens and two Germans enter.

The family stands together, Dad in front. They slowly look through cabinets. One German walks close to the family. He stares at them and asks a soft question in German. He gets no response.

Farm Boy glances at the drawer to see a corner of the flag patch hanging out. He tugs his mom's dress and points. She inches toward the drawer to cover it. One German notices and moves towards her, roughly grabbing her arm.

Dad moves to protect his wife. The second German grabs him. Farm Boy runs at his dad but is struck in the face by a German. The German who holds Farm Mom shouts something in German and yanks her over. He sees the flag and rips it from the drawer. The second German who is holding Dad smiles when he sees it.

FARM MOM

No!

EXT. CAMPGROUND-NIGHT

The guys have stopped in a clearing. They've separated into small groups. O'Hara, McCoy and SGT stand together.

MCCOY

He doesn't speak any English?

O'HARA

No. He just followed us around, happy to be on the right side.

SGT

Does he really have good info?

O'HARA

Crucial. Locations and duties of every major German military leader, their plans for the next six months, when they're gonna consolidate resources. Everything.

MCCOY

Why does a guy like that decide to switch sides? They'll kill him if they get their hands on him.

SGT

Maybe it's a set-up. Germans give us false info and hit us from the inside.

O'HARA

He's legitimate.

SGT
How do you know?

O'HARA
They've killed his family already.

MCCOY
Does he know that.

O'Hara takes a bite of food and nods.

O'HARA
He's legitimate.

Elsewhere in the camp, Goodmore, Guppy and Bennett eat.

GOODMORE
How many guys died to get this guy?

BENNETT
Let's see... we lost three going
in, two coming out and two more a
couple days ago. Six, so far.

GUPPY
Your six and our two makes eight.

BENNETT
You lost two guys? The guy at the
river today, who else?

GOODMORE
Schmidt. He died last night. This
guy, he seems important?

BENNETT
Yeah, I guess. Tell ya the truth, I
think he's an ass. That or he's
playing dumb. He just smiles, ya
know? Just smiles all the time.

GOODMORE
That's bad?

BENNETT
Well, just annoying. Plus he's
European so his teeth ain't pretty.

Bennett points to his own teeth. They laugh.

SGT has wandered away from his group. He walks to where the
bags lie. He sees Pratt's, checks to see if anyone's
watching, then opens it. He shuffles through Pratt's things
then finds a yellow, military-issued paper. He freezes.

Several yard away, Podelski sits next to Pratt who is writing a letter.

PODELSKI

I had to crap just now and McCoy was ten feet away. Worst part of the military is not being alone.

Pratt smiles. He feels better when Podelski is around.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Girlfriend?

He points to the letter.

PRATT

Mother.

They smile.

PODELSKI

Why are you writing her now?

PRATT

Schmidt and Rhodes died, all those dead soldiers. Just felt like the right thing to do.

PODELSKI

Right for you or is it right for everyone? Do I sense some universal morality in you?

Pratt chuckles at their new "inside joke." Then serious.

PRATT

Sorry I froze today.

PODELSKI

Don't worry about it. Happens.

PRATT

That was the first time. I've seen tons of kids freeze up. I thought it meant I was tougher. Or maybe weaker, less human, ya know?

PODELSKI

I'm telling you, it's normal. If it happens again, then maybe something's up. But a one-time thing? Not a problem.

SGT sits by the two.

SGT
Something you wanna tell me, Pratt?

PRATT
About?

PODELSKI
SGT, let it go. It was a one-time thing. Everyone freezes up.

SGT
That's not what I'm talking about.

PODELSKI
Why did you come over here? Nobody wants to talk to you. Nobody listens to you. Everyone knows McCoy's in charge.

SGT
I'm not here for pleasantries, asshole. And I'm sorry if I broke up your alone time with the genius here. I'm sure it was enlightening.

PODELSKI
Just remember that if something happens to you, I'm the one taking care of you.

SGT
Now that scares me, Podelski. The last guy to get shot on this mission is dead. When Pratt was wetting himself who kept the Germans off him? Don't lecture me about taking care of these guys. You tuck them in at night and I'll protect them in the day.

PODELSKI
Why'd you come over here?

SGT reaches into his jacket and produces the yellow paper he stole from Pratt's bag. Pratt's eyes go wide.

SGT
You know what this is? This is a direct order from Intelligence, addressed to a Captain Mattingly, assigned to be delivered by a James Pratt, our little genius. Yet here it is.

Pratt stares at the letter, realizes what's about to happen, and stands sharply. He walks into the woods. SGT smiles and walks towards McCoy. Podelski, still unsure what's happening, follows Pratt.

SGT storms to McCoy. He doesn't care if he's interrupting.

SGT (CONT'D)
You need to see this.

He holds out the yellow paper. McCoy reads it, shocked.

MCCOY
Where'd you get this?

SGT
His bag.

O'Hara, who was speaking to McCoy, is totally lost.

MCCOY
Where is he?

Meanwhile, Podelski catches up with Pratt just outside camp.

PODELSKI
Stop! What is going on? What's on that paper?

Pratt stops and looks at him, worried.

PRATT
I'm done. I'm done.

PODELSKI
What? What's on the paper?

PRATT
Shit, I should have burned it. I'm done.

McCoy and SGT approach. The rest of the group trails behind them, curious to see what's happening. McCoy holds the paper.

MCCOY
Why's this in your bag?

PODELSKI
Hey, what's going on?

SGT is happy to explain.

SGT

A couple weeks back Intel gave the order for Captain Mattingly to take his men through enemy lines to a flanking position. But Intel learned that the route was compromised. They found a new route and Pratt was supposed to deliver *these* coordinates to Mattingly. We thought he did but then we got word that every man in that company was killed. Nobody could figure how they managed to still run into Germans. Until now.

MCCOY

You never delivered the coordinates.

Pratt is silent, scared for the first time.

GOODMORE

That's not true. I saw him leave with them.

PRATT

It is true, Goodmore. I never delivered it.

MCCOY

Why?

SGT

He was trying to prove a point about authority.

MCCOY

Shut up, SGT!

PRATT

The reason I didn't deliver is personal.

MCCOY

Personal? Pratt, over 100 men died.

PRATT

I know that. Believe me, I know how many men are dead because of me. But I didn't do it intentionally.

SGT

Then why didn't you deliver it?

MCCOY

What do you expect me to do, act like I never saw this?

PRATT

No, I know you have to turn me in.

MCCOY

You'll have to be court-martialed, Pratt. They're gonna hit you hard on this. This is serious stuff.

PRATT

I know that.

SGT

You'll be done with military.

Everyone listens, even O'Hara and Bennett.

PODELSKI

Why didn't you just deliver the paper?

GOODMORE

Wait, why was SGT going through Pratt's bag?

SGT

I wanna know why you still have it.

PRATT

It was in my bag because I planned on coming clean.

SGT

But you didn't.

MCCOY

Alright, everyone back off. Just me and Pratt. Back off.

The men walk back to camp. SGT smiles at Pratt and follows.

PRATT

Look, I know I'm done. I know I'm responsible for what happened.

MCCOY

Tell me why this happened.

PRATT

Something personal came up and I got distracted. I feel terrible.

MCCOY

I'm sure you do but you gotta tell me why you didn't deliver it.

PRATT

Would that protect me at all? You'll still have to report this so I'd rather keep it private for now.

MCCOY

Fair enough.

McCoy is really bothered by this.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Dammit. Get some sleep, I guess. We'll figure it out after we get the defector.

McCoy walks away. Pratt is left alone, several yards from camp. He sees-

EXT. HEADQUARTERS, RAINY (MEMORY)-DAY

Pratt again sees the rows of military trucks, soldiers ready to move out. We understand that it's Mattingly's company.

EXT. CAMPGROUND-NIGHT

Pratt takes a deep breath and then walks back to camp.

The soldiers are scattered on the ground, some sit while some lie down, trying to sleep. When Pratt walks through, they all go silent. Some stare at him, others are too awkward to look his direction. He grabs his bag and lies down.

EXT. WOODED ROAD-DAY

A morning mist covers the trees. Clouds block the sun.

The group walks down the road. Pratt is in the back. Guppy and SGT whisper to each other and look over their shoulders at Pratt, talking about him. Podelski falls back by Pratt.

PODELSKI

How you doing?

PRATT

Everyone here thinks I killed 100 men on purpose. How are you?

PODELSKI

I don't think you did it on purpose. You've got your personal reasons why, but I know it wasn't intentional.

PRATT

I guess intent won't really matter in court.

PODELSKI

They'll kick ya out of the military, so what?

PRATT

I'll go to prison for this. I won't be able to finish school, won't be with my family.

Podelski thinks about the consequences.

PODELSKI

Were you really going to turn yourself in?

Pratt thinks it over.

PRATT

Probably not. Anyway, it doesn't matter now.

McCoy stops as the dirt road ends. They'll have to walk through a thick forest uphill.

MCCOY

Everyone spread out, 20 yards or more. Stay in earshot of each other. I don't want another surprise so keep your eyes peeled. According to the map there's less than a mile through here then we hit the road again. SGT!

He motions for SGT to step aside with him.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Stick close to Pratt would ya? I don't want him making a run for it.

O'Hara steps to McCoy's side.

O'HARA

I don't think this is a good idea.

MCCOY
Don't really have a choice.

O'HARA
I don't want this group losing more men. We'll need everyone to get the defector back.

MCCOY
No offense, O'Hara, but this is my show.

O'HARA
Bennett and I aren't under you.

MCCOY
But you'll do what I say.

The men all spread apart and enter the forest, climbing the hill. The morning mist is still thick on the trees, making it very difficult to see great distances.

SGT walks next to Pratt.

PRATT
Thought he said 20 yards.

SGT
He doesn't want you running.

PRATT
I'm not gonna run.

SGT
Damn right you're not gonna run.

Bennett and O'Hara stay relatively close to each other.

O'HARA
Stay close to me.

Bennett nods.

McCoy walks up the hill, his gun ready for action. He looks to his left and sees Guppy walking up the hill.

SGT stays next to Pratt.

PRATT
I feel like it's more dangerous, us by each other. Easier target.

SGT
Unlike you I follow orders.

We see shots of each man walking through the fog. The hill gets steeper and the men more spread out. The mood is eerie. McCoy looks where Guppy was and can't see him anymore. He walks on. Back to Pratt and SGT-

SGT (CONT'D)

So why *did* you do it? Send those guys to their death?

PRATT

Sounded fun.

SGT

I bet.

PRATT

Why'd you kill those prisoners?

SGT

I know who the enemy is.

PRATT

Who's the enemy, SGT?

SGT

See, I knew you were confused about that one.

PRATT

So some politicians in Washington who've probably never met a German tell you they're the enemy and that's why you killed them?

SGT

Absolutely. They're a threat to the American way of life.

PRATT

Maybe Hitler but the kids you killed, how were they a threat?

SGT

Don't lecture me, Pratt. You sent 100 Americans to their-

A sudden SCREAM is heard. It echoes through the trees. McCoy hears it.

MCCOY

Everyone gather together! Follow my voice!

GOODMORE (O.S.)

McCoy!

Goodmore's voice from afar. McCoy breaks into a run towards the voice. SGT and Pratt do the same, ready to fight.

EXT. ROCK CLIFFS-MORNING

McCoy arrives at a series of small cliffs to see-

Goodmore huddled over GUPPY'S BODY, blood splattered on the surrounding rocks.

MCCOY

What happened?

GOODMORE

I don't know, I just found him-

BENNETT

Is he dead?

SGT

Of course he's dead, dumbass.

Goodmore sits with his back to Guppy's body. McCoy checks for a pulse. He is certainly dead.

Podelski pushes through the soldiers.

PODELSKI

Get out of the way, out of the way!

He sits at McCoy's side and checks the pulse.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Did you move him, Goodmore?

GOODMORE

I found him like this.

PODELSKI

But this is how he landed?

GOODMORE

Yes.

Podelski sets his helmet on the rocks and opens his bag.

PODELSKI

(to McCoy)

Get them out of here, please.

MCCOY

Okay, set up a perimeter. SGT, get them moving.

SGT walks away, keeping his eyes on the body as he moves. Pratt gives the body one last look as he leaves with the others. Podelski and McCoy are alone with the body.

PODELSKI

What happened? Tell me what you know.

MCCOY

We heard him yell and Goodmore found him like this.

PODELSKI

I heard that but was there anything else? Did anyone see anything?

MCCOY

No.

EXT. FOREST (FOG)-MORNING

The guys spread out on watch.

Pratt and Bennett stand by each other.

BENNETT

This kind of stuff happen to you guys a lot?

PRATT

No, usually it's pretty boring. Then we started looking for you guys and all hell broke loose.

Goodmore and O'Hara walk together, Goodmore still shocked.

O'HARA

What's the matter? You've never seen a dead man before?

GOODMORE

One too many, actually. And not like that.

EXT. ROCK CLIFF-MORNING

Podelski and McCoy climb up the rocks. The bloody mess of Guppy lies behind them. They reach the top of the cliff and walk in different directions, looking for clues.

MCCOY

You think he would be able to avoid
this cliff. It's pretty obvious.

Podelski looks at the base of the cliff. He sees something.

PODELSKI

Look at this, sir!

The camera reveals blood on the ground. There are two sets of 5 scratches, two-foot long each, in the dirt. The scratches lead right over the edge cliff. Podelski bends over and lightly places his fingers in the scratches, revealing that they were made by fingers. McCoy crouches and touches the blood.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

This wasn't an accident.

The two look at each other. They stand.

Cut to them back at Guppy's body. McCoy picks up Guppy's limp hand. There is dirt under the fingernails.

MCCOY

He was dragged off the cliff.

PODELSKI

By who?

We hear SGT's voice from a distance.

SGT (O.S.)

Lieutenant! Get over here!

McCoy and Podelski look at each other and run at full speed.

EXT. FOREST (FOG)-MORNING

McCoy and Podelski run onto the scene: SGT is holding FARM BOY at gun-point. Farm Boy is in tears, screaming things in French. The others are all present.

SGT

Look who we found! Coincidence?

O'HARA
He pushed Guppy off the cliff!

MCCOY
Get that gun out of his face, SGT!

Farm Boy continues screaming in French. SGT lowers his gun.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
Let him go.

SGT
No! Don't you see? When we're at
their place, Schmidt dies. Now
Guppy and look who shows up!

MCCOY
Let him go!

McCoy raises his gun to SGT. SGT is surprised. He lets the
Boy go. Farm Boy falls to the ground. McCoy sees that his
shirt has lots of blood on it. Pratt moves towards him and
touches the blood.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
He's bleeding.

PRATT
Where's his wound?

MCCOY
Are you hurt?

The Boy rambles on in French. McCoy points to the blood.

FARM BOY
Papa... papa...

MCCOY
Your papa? This is his blood?

Farm Boy nods his head, points to the blood and through tears-

FARM BOY
Papa.

Farm Boy reaches into his pocket and pulls out-

The flag patch that Pratt gave him. It has blood on it.

PRATT
I gave him that!

Farm Boy tries to explain what happened, pointing to the flag and then to the blood on his shirt.

GOODMORE
His dad's blood is on the flag.

FARM BOY
S'il vous plait!

MCCOY
He wants us back at the house.

SGT
When did you learn French?

MCCOY
The flag. There was trouble.
Probably Krauts. His dad's in
trouble. He wants us to help.

SGT
We're not going back. It's a set-
up. We go back and they'll be
waiting for us.

MCCOY
The kid's not setting us up.

SGT
Then how'd he know where we are?

MCCOY
He saw us looking at the map.

O'HARA
Lieutenant, we need to stick to our
objective.

PODELSKI
None of us can understand him, none
of us really know what's going on
here.

PRATT
McCoy, we have to go back. They
helped us, now they need help.

SGT
Pratt, we have no idea why he's
here.

PRATT
Yes we do! They were attacked.
Let's go back.

O'HARA

Look, whatever happened to them is unfortunate but now isn't the time for us to backtrack for some locals.

SGT

He's right.

GOODMORE

He's not right. Aren't we here to liberate these people?

McCoy looks at Farm Boy who has stopped crying.

MCCOY

We're going back.

McCoy helps Farm Boy to his feet.

SGT

McCoy, I understand what you're doing and I respect you for it, I do. But you were given an assignment and you have to complete it despite all else.

McCoy begins walking with the boy, ignoring SGT.

SGT (CONT'D)

McCoy!

Everyone falls in behind McCoy. Close-up on SGT's face.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

We see ALL the guys lying on their stomachs. Farm Boy lies next to McCoy who looks through binoculars at the house. The front door is ajar. The Boy tries explaining things to McCoy. Doesn't work. McCoy points at Pratt, O'Hara, Bennett, and SGT and tells them to follow him. He hands his binoculars to Goodmore. The five of them run towards the house. Goodmore, Podelski and Farm Boy are left to watch.

McCoy and the other four reach the door. They approach it militaristically. McCoy leads the way into the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

McCoy walks into the house. It is quiet. He moves to the stairs. Three stairs lead up to the kitchen and several lead down to the dark cellar.

On the stairs leading up, a dead German lies head-first, face down. Blood drips off the steps. A trail of blood leads downstairs.

MCCOY

SGT, you and O'Hara check out the basement.

SGT and O'Hara move slowly into the basement. McCoy, Pratt, and Bennett move upstairs to the kitchen. FARM MOM sits in a chair with her back to the soldiers. They are terrified. Is she dead? On the floor next to the chair is a BLOODY KNIFE. McCoy moves slowly around her, frightened that she is dead.

As he moves around her, he sees her eyes wide open. She stares at the wall. Her gaze finally breaks and she looks at him. Dry tears are on her face, red eyes. Her hair is a tangled mess. Pratt and Bennett stand behind him.

PRATT

McCoy?

He motions for them to be quiet and looks at her. She slowly raises her hand and points out the window. McCoy follows her finger and sees the barn.

MCCOY

You two get out to the barn now.

Pratt and Bennett run out the door.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

Through the binoculars Goodmore sees Pratt and Bennett running from the house to the barn.

GOODMORE

What are they doing?

INT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

Farm Mom continues staring at the wall. McCoy sets his gun on the ground and slowly picks the knife up to set it on the table away from her.

Off camera sounds of men running up stairs and grunting. SGT and O'Hara come into the room and drop a DYING GERMAN on the ground. The German's bag falls off in the struggle. He has been stabbed several times but is barely alive, grunting.

Farm Mom turns around. Her eyes WIDEN when she sees that he is still alive. She grabs for the knife on the ground.

She screams, looking for the knife, then sees it on the counter and jumps for it. She grabs the knife but McCoy grabs her arm. She screams. He takes the knife from her hand.

MCCOY

O'Hara, hold her back!

O'Hara grabs her. She gives up and finally breaks into tears.

SGT

We found him in the basement. Looks like she didn't finish the job.

The German is breathing heavy. SGT aims his rifle at him.

O'Hara watches with one hand on Farm Mom. McCoy crouches next to the German. SGT grabs the German and shakes him.

SGT (CONT'D)

Why are you here?

McCoy grabs SGT and throws him off the German.

MCCOY

That's enough!

The German moans and groans. He is dying.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Why were you here? Why?

Farm Mom's crying has settled and she watches the events unfold. The German is gasping.

O'HARA

He's dying. Get info out of him!

Dying German looks at O'Hara.

MCCOY

How do I get info out of him?

Dying German looks at his bag which fell off in the struggle. SGT grabs the German's bag and opens a pocket, his hands covered in the German's blood.

SGT pulls out a piece of paper with writing on it. He is troubled. He hands it to McCoy and runs out the door. McCoy looks at the paper and sees: "Lieutenant McCoy- Dominic und Marie Laurent. 21 Route Cercueil."

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

SGT runs outside and looks at the house number: 21 Route Cercueil.

INT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

We see the paper again: 21 Route Cercueil. SGT runs back in.

MCCOY
Is it the same?

SGT nods. McCoy looks back at Farm Mom.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
Marie? Dominic?

She (Marie) nods her head. The German's breathing slows and his eyes glaze. He is dead.

O'HARA
What's on the paper?

MCCOY
They knew we'd be here. They were
looking for us.

As McCoy speaks, O'Hara's gaze is drawn off him to the door. McCoy looks back at the door to see-

Farm Dad (Dominic) stands in the doorway. He is badly beaten and can barely stand. His white shirt is covered in blood. His arm is around Farm Boy, who is crying with joy. Pratt, Bennett, Podelski and Goodmore stand behind them. Farm Mom looks up and instantly screams and runs to embrace him.

PRATT
He was in the barn, left for dead.

Farm Dad winces as his wife and son rub against him. She is so happy to see him but worried about his wounds. Pratt and the others look at the dead Germans then to the paper in McCoy's hands.

GOODMORE
What's on the paper?

McCoy looks at Farm Family.

MCCOY
Everybody outside now.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

All the troops assemble outside.

MCCOY

We're being followed, that's clear.
We're not moving until we get this
figured out. I need to know who's
doing this.

O'HARA

We have to get the defector.

MCCOY

If we head to the defector then we
lead the Krauts right to him. You
saw what they did to these people.
They knew we were here. They killed
Guppy. We aren't going anywhere
near the defector.

SGT

If we're being followed then
they'll just come here.

MCCOY

We'll be ready for them. Get a
perimeter set up. Everybody, out in
the woods.

The men break and begin to head to the woods. Farm Family
walks outside the house. McCoy and O'Hara stay together,
helping Farm Dad as he tries to remove his bloody shirt.

EXT. WOODS SURROUNDING FARMHOUSE-DAY

Goodmore walks through the woods on watch. SGT appears behind
him, almost sneaking. Goodmore hears him and turns.

GOODMORE

God, SGT, you scared me.

SGT

Sorry, Goodmore. Let me ask you
something. You were pretty close,
physically close I mean, to Guppy
when he fell right? I mean you were
on the scene pretty fast.

GOODMORE

Yeah we were only 20 or 30 yards
apart. I couldn't see him but we
were close.

SGT
And you didn't see anybody else?

GOODMORE
No.

SGT keeps approaching Goodmore.

GOODMORE (CONT'D)
Are you saying I killed him?

SGT
Well, it's a little suspicious,
isn't it? You being the last one to
see him alive, finding his body so
quickly.

GOODMORE
I heard him scream so I ran to him.
Don't come here accusing me.

SGT
A man under my command was
murdered.

GOODMORE
Your command?

SGT
And it doesn't make sense that it
was Germans. If they want us to
lead them to the defector why would
they slow us down? If they want us
dead why are we all still here?

GOODMORE
How am I supposed to know?

SGT
So it must have been one of our
own. You were the closest.

GOODMORE
This is ridiculous.

Goodmore begins walking away.

SGT
And something tells me you were
involved with Pratt not getting
that order to Mattingly.

GOODMORE

I had nothing to do with that either.

SGT

Oh come on. You two have been practically inseparable until Podelski came around. You must have known something about the order.

GOODMORE

I have no idea why he never-

SGT

Is that why you killed Guppy? You were afraid he'd start getting along with Pratt too? Podelski better watch his back.

GOODMORE

What the hell are you talking about?

SGT

You just couldn't stand that Pratt-

Goodmore shoves SGT hard into a tree and rams his forearm under SGT's chin. He grits his teeth.

GOODMORE

Go to hell.

He lets him go and walks away. SGT isn't about to let that slide. He catches up to Goodmore and quickly shoves him from behind. Goodmore stumbles over a log and crashes into a BOULDER, his HEAD crushing hard against the rock.

He lies motionless. Blood is splattered on the rock. SGT is frozen. He stares at the motionless body.

SGT

Goodmore...

SGT walks to Goodmore's side and kneels. He inspects the head and knows instantly that he's dead. He is horrified and stands up, breathing quickly. His mind can't comprehend what he's done. He hears something-

Pratt stands about 30 feet away, staring at Goodmore.

SGT (CONT'D)

Pratt. I didn't.

Pratt stares at Goodmore.

SGT (CONT'D)
Pratt, it was an accident.

Pratt takes a few steps towards SGT.

SGT (CONT'D)
I know how this looks but it was
accident.

PRATT
I heard yelling.

He is getting close to SGT. He looks away from the body and
up to SGT for the first time.

SGT
It was an accident. I'm sorry.

Pratt suddenly lashes out, grabs SGT and tries to throw him
to the ground. They both go down together. Pratt is in a
rampage. He gets one punch at SGT's face. SGT, defending
himself, throws Pratt off him. He stands.

SGT (CONT'D)
Pratt! Pratt, calm down!

Pratt stands and runs at SGT. SGT grabs him and throws him to
the ground again, defending himself.

SGT (CONT'D)
Pratt! Stop!

SGT pulls his KNIFE out and holds it to scare Pratt.

SGT (CONT'D)
Stop, Pratt!

Pratt doesn't notice the knife and runs at him regardless. He
tackles him and they both go down. The knife digs itself deep
into Pratt's RIGHT THIGH, blood instantly flowing out. Pratt
screams in pain. SGT is shocked again. He puts his hand on
the knife but isn't confident enough to pull it out. He sits
back, afraid he'll only do more damage.

Pratt grabs the knife and slowly pulls it out of his leg. It
is covered in his blood. He grunts and throws it aside. SGT
still can't believe it. Goodmore's body lies just behind
Pratt. SGT looks at both.

SGT (CONT'D)
Let me help you-

PRATT
Stay away from me!

SGT rips a section of his jacket off and hands it to Pratt.

SGT
Wrap it with this.

Pratt does so. SGT sits in amazement.

SGT (CONT'D)
Pratt I'm sorry. I didn't mean to.

PRATT
Stay the hell away from me, SGT. I
mean it. Stay away.

Pratt struggles to his feet and begins limping back towards the farm. SGT watches him go then moves to Goodmore's body.

EXT. WOODS-EVENING

Pratt limps through the woods, gritting his teeth in pain and anger.

EXT. WOODS-EVENING

SGT picks up Goodmore's body with a grunt and begins carrying him back towards camp in a different direction than Pratt.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-EVENING

McCoy sits against the side of the house. In his hand is the German's bloody piece of paper. He looks over the info: "Lieutenant McCoy- Dominic und Marie Laurent. 21 Route Cercueil." He stares at it for a moment then notices something new; at the bottom of the page, just where the paper is torn, is part of a page number.

He quickly searches his bag for something. He pulls out his *Julius Caesar* book and flips to the end. There are several numbered, blank pages at the back of the book for notes.

One page is missing. McCoy places the German's page into place. Sure enough, the paper the German had was taken from his own book. Just as his discovery weighs on him-

O'HARA
McCoy, get over here!

He sets his book in his bag and runs around the house to see SGT carrying Goodmore's body. Podelski and Bennett both come out of the woods having heard O'Hara's cry.

MCCOY
What happened?

SGT sets Goodmore's body down. Podelski looks at the head.

PODELSKI
What happened to him?

SGT catches his breath. He's also considering what to say.

SGT
He, uh. I found him like this.
Where's Pratt?

MCCOY
What do you mean you found him?

BENNETT
We haven't seen Pratt.

SGT
He hasn't come back yet?

Podelski looks at the head.

PODELSKI
He must have hit his head on a rock
or a log.

SGT is forming an idea.

SGT
I think Pratt did it, sir. I think
he killed Goodmore.

MCCOY
What?

PODELSKI
That's ridiculous.

SGT
When I found him Pratt was standing
over his body. He got scared and
said he'd come get help. Now he
hasn't shown up.

SGT keeps looking at the woods, hoping Pratt doesn't show up
now. He's hoping that he's made a run for it.

MCCOY
I find it hard to believe that he
killed Goodmore.

SGT

Think about it: First the thing with Mattingly. He probably tipped the Nazis off, killed Guppy, killed Goodmore, maybe Schmidt.

PODELSKI

Alright, that's enough.

MCCOY

SGT, that's very unlikely.

SGT

Alright then, where is he?

PODELSKI

Maybe you're the one behind all of it and you killed Pratt too.

SGT

And why would I do that?

PODELSKI

Bitter that you didn't get McCoy's position.

MCCOY

Alright, enough you two. Podelski, you take Bennett and O'Hara, try to find Pratt.

PODELSKI

Yes, sir.

The three walk away, Podelski steaming.

SGT and McCoy walk to the barn.

MCCOY

SGT, are you telling the truth? About Goodmore, about Pratt?

SGT

Yes, sir.

MCCOY

Then we need to be cautious. But in the mean time, I don't want you anywhere near Podelski. I've seen how you are with Pratt and him and it stops now.

SGT

To be fair, Podelski-

MCCOY

Just leave him alone, SGT. I've got enough to worry about and now Pratt's out in the middle of nowhere because of you.

The two stop outside the barn doors.

SGT

Because of me? Whose fault is it that we're not already with the defector? You lost your maps and three men. Your leadership killed them. This whole mission's a train-wreck because of you.

MCCOY

Look, I'm sorry I got the promotion but some things are out of my control here. Somebody in our group might be leaking information to the Germans and you're supposed to be helping me. Instead I'm constantly settling your differences with the other men. If we weren't stuck out here, I'd have you stripped down to corporal and peeling potatoes for the rest of the war.

SGT

Are you threatening me?

MCCOY

I'm telling you to watch yourself.

The two calm down and take deep breaths.

SGT

Where are the locals?

MCCOY

They're gone. Apparently they had a safer place to stay. We'll sleep in the barn tonight. As soon as Podelski and the other two get back, nobody leaves my sight.

McCoy enters the barn. SGT stands outside and looks back to Goodmore's body which has, for the time, been forgotten.

EXT. WOODS-EVENING

Pratt limps through the woods, holding his bloody thigh. He's lost. He turns around, trying to recognize anything.

PRATT
McCoy! Podelski!

No reply.

EXT. DIRT ROAD-EVENING

He comes to a bend in the road. A tipped jeep burns. Several dead Americans surround the car on the ground. He stops here to rest a minute. He sits and takes a canteen from a dead American. He pours water over his leg then drinks some. He sits back and relaxes. He thinks for a moment, remembering-

EXT. HEADQUARTERS, RAINY (MEMORY)-DAY

We see the same images from before, Mattingly's men loading into trucks. Pratt and Goodmore watch.

CUT TO McCoy and Pratt standing outside a tent at the same Headquarters. What we hear is almost washed out by the sound of rainfall. All very visceral and cerebral. McCoy hands Pratt the yellow paper to deliver to Mattingly.

MCCOY
They needed to change coordinates.
Their old ones weren't safe. They
want you to run this over there but
you need to hurry.

PRATT
Alright, I'll do it.

Pratt begins walking. On the way, he's stopped by another military runner.

MILITARY RUNNER
You're James Pratt, right? This is
for you.

He hands Pratt a letter. Pratt looks at the yellow paper and decides he has time to see what the letter is. He opens the letter and begins reading.

LETTER NARRATOR

Private James Pratt: We regret to inform you that your brother, Kevin Pratt, has been killed in action while fighting in Saipan. He served honorably for his country and fell valiantly. We are sorry for your loss and the loss of your family.

Pratt stares at the letter, rain still falling on him. He sits against a tree. Any thought of his delivery to Mattingly is out of his mind. He reads the letter again and again, trying to believe what he's reading, trying to cope.

Suddenly he remembers the yellow paper. He quickly stands and runs but it's too late. Mattingly's trucks are gone. He stands in the rain, looking down the road the trucks left on.

EXT. DIRT ROAD-EVENING

Pratt sits by the burning jeep and remembers. While he is deep in thought, we hear German voices coming down the road towards him. He looks from side to side, nowhere to hide.

We see five Germans come around the bend, chatting casually. They see Pratt lying the street with the other dead Americans. They begin to search the dead. One soldier rolls Pratt over, thinking he's dead. Pratt's wounded leg hits a tree in the process. He tries not to react.

They move on. Pratt's eye opens. One German in the back of the group turns back and Pratt is gone. He shouts at the other Germans. They run back. In the woods they see Pratt limping away. One German yells. Pratt freezes and puts his hands in the air.

INT. BARN-EVENING

All the men are in the barn. Nobody is talking. Everybody looks spooked. Podelski stands and walks to McCoy's side. McCoy holds the book.

PODELSKI

Have you figured anything out?

MCCOY

It was one of us. Page 112.

He hands Podelski *Julius Caesar*. Podelski sees the German's note sitting in its proper place, page 112.

PODELSKI
They took it from your book.

MCCOY
They knew where to look for us
because of *this* page, from *my* book.
It has to be one of us.

PODELSKI
Do you know who?

MCCOY
No. Whoever it was might already be
dead.

PODELSKI
Why would somebody betray us?

McCoy looks at the book for a long time, not paying attention
to Podelski.

MCCOY
We didn't even bury Guppy today.
He's still lying on those rocks.
And we can't bury Goodmore til the
morning.

PODELSKI
We can bury Guppy tomorrow too.

McCoy looks at his men.

MCCOY
Brutus, thou sleep'st. Awake!

Podelski looks confused. McCoy smiles and holds up his book.

MCCOY (CONT'D)
Shakespeare.

He closes the book and stands.

EXT. DIRT ROAD-NIGHT

The five Germans escort Pratt, their prisoner, down the road.
Pratt moves slowly because of his leg. A German hits Pratt,
ordering him to hurry. Pratt motions to his leg.

A middle-aged man in German uniform steps onto the road in
front of them. He begins asking them questions in German and
barks orders at them. Pratt is confused. The older man points
at something behind the group. As they turn to look, the
older man reveals a pistol and-

He shoots two of the Germans. An American soldier from the trees shoots the third German. The fourth raises his gun to shoot the older man but Pratt hits the gun upwards just as he fires. The German is shot by an American. The fifth German runs but is shot. PARATROOPER 1 and 2 emerge. They pat the German (DEFECTOR) on the back.

PRATT

Thank you. I think they were gonna kill me.

PARATROOPER 1

You're not far from death with that leg. Were you shot?

PRATT

No, stabbed.

PARATROOPER 2

Let's move off the road.

They help Pratt off the road.

PARATROOPER 1

Let me take a look at that.

PARATROOPER 2

What are you doing out here?

PRATT

We were sent out on operation...

Pratt looks at Defector-

PRATT (CONT'D)

Wait, is that the defector?

PARATROOPER 1

Sure is.

PRATT

Ha! We were sent to find you guys!

Pratt and Defector shake hands. Defector can't follow the language but is happy to have another American with him.

PARATROOPER 2

Where's your unit?

PRATT

Not sure. I got lost a few hours ago. But they're not far.

PARATROOPER 1

Well let's head back to our shelter
for the night. We'll find your boys
in the morning.

They help Pratt stand.

INT. BARN-NIGHT

SGT goes through McCoy's bag. He finds the yellow paper that
Pratt was to deliver. He stuffs it into his jacket.

McCoy enters the barn carrying blankets and drops them.
Podelski approaches McCoy.

PODELSKI

Sir, I've been thinking, why don't
O'Hara and I go look for Pratt.

MCCOY

No, I need everyone here. I'm
sorry, but he'll have to figure
something out.

McCoy walks to his bag and sits by it. He looks at all the
men in the barn. O'Hara takes his rifle apart to clean it.
Everybody is tense. The only sound heard is O'Hara's gun
being cleaned.

McCoy looks from man to man, searching for answers. He
watches SGT as he tries to sleep. McCoy looks at him for a
while. He moves on to Podelski who unfolds a blanket. ECU on
Podelski's hands.

Tension begins to build as McCoy looks for something, any
clue to what's been happening to his men. Bennett prepares
his jacket to be a pillow.

He watches O'Hara finish cleaning. O'Hara stands up. He turns
his head in such a way that we see the inside collar of his
shirt. Written on the collar is-

"PVT SCHMIDT." McCoy jerks up, eyes wide. What? O'Hara sits
back down and looks at McCoy. McCoy is shocked. Schmidt's
shirt? McCoy stands, grabs a shovel and runs out of the barn.

PODELSKI

What are you-

MCCOY

I'll be right back!

EXT. PARATROOPERS' STRUCTURE-NIGHT

Pratt, Defector, Paratrooper 1 & 2 sit under a small concrete structure. This is where they've been staying.

PARATROOPER 2
Let's sew your leg up a little.
We'll have to wash it too.

PRATT
Thank you.

PARATROOPER 2
You're dizzy.

PRATT
A little.

Paratrooper 2 has a small kit of medical supplies. He grabs hold of the pants and rips them a few more inches. He pours water on the wound. It is looking pretty bad.

PARATROOPER 1
When did you start looking for us?

PRATT
Four days ago. Oh! I can't believe I forgot; we have O'Hara and Bennett. They're with my group.

PARATROOPER 1
Who are they?

PRATT
O'Hara and Bennett. They left you guys a couple days ago. We met up with them.

PARATROOPER 2
I don't know who you're talking about.

PARATROOPER 1
Pratt, I've never heard of them.

Pratt thinks for a minute.

PRATT
They said they were with you. They said they were with the defector and went looking for help.

PARATROOPER 1
We're the only survivors from our
group.

EXT. MEADOW (BURIAL GROUND)-NIGHT

McCoy runs to Schmidt's grave and thrusts his shovel into the dirt.

INTERCUT PARATROOPERS' STRUCTURE/MEADOW (SCHMIDT'S BURIAL GROUND)-NIGHT

Pratt is shocked, his mind racing.

PRATT
So it's just you two?

PARATROOPER 2
Everyone else is dead.

McCoy's shovel rips into the dirt.

PARATROOPER 1
Let me show you.

Paratrooper 1 offers Pratt a hand. They stand and walk around the corner of the structure.

PARATROOPER 1 (CONT'D)
This is what's left of our group.

As they come around the corner we see several piles of dirt, graves. Pratt stares in amazement at the graves.

MATCH CUT TO:

McCoy stands by the now open grave of Schmidt. Schmidt's clothes are gone. Taken. Stolen McCoy breaths heavy from running and digging. He sees Schmidt's bag lying next to his nearly naked body, the bag that held his extra clothes. He remembers throwing the bag to Podelski.

He picks it up. It is empty. He remembers O'Hara wearing Schmidt's shirt. McCoy throws the bag to the ground and sits against a tree, catching his breath, taking in the discovery.

Pratt stares at the graves.

PRATT
No. Bennett and O'Hara, they said
they were with you.

PARATROOPER 2
You're looking at everybody who was
with us. It's just the two of us.

PARATROOPER 1
Then who are those guys with you?

PRATT
They knew the name of the
operation, they knew all about him.
Why would they lie?

Paratrooper 1 & 2 look at each other.

PARATROOPER 1
We were warned that Germans might
infiltrate our forces to stop the
defector.

PARATROOPER 2
To kill him.

PARATROOPER 1
These guys, could they actually be
working for the Germans?

Pratt thinks about it.

PRATT
That would explain a lot, actually.

PARATROOPER 1
If that's true then your men can't
get anywhere near us.

PRATT
Wait, wait, they can't be.

PARATROOPER 2
Why not?

PARATROOPER 1
If the Germans *did* infiltrate us
they'd be pretty smooth about it.
You'd never notice them unless-

PRATT
Unless I found you guys first.

It dawns on Pratt now: they must be infiltrators, spies.

PRATT (CONT'D)
Holy shit.

PARATROOPER 1

Pratt, how close are they?

PRATT

They could be here in a few hours, less. Probably leave first thing in the morning. You gotta get out of here before they show up.

PARATROOPER 2

And go where? We need to protect him above all else.

PRATT

The front line's only a few days behind us. Actually no, we back-tracked so they've gotta be less than a day's walk from here.

PARATROOPER 1

Then we should go right away.

PARATROOPER 2

In the middle of the night?

PARATROOPER 1

We can't risk his guys finding us. We need to leave now.

PRATT

You guys go ahead, I'm going back to my men.

PARATROOPER 1

No, come on Pratt. You're wounded, those guys are dangerous. You're going with us.

PRATT

I need to go back there. I've gotta make up for something I did.

PARATROOPER 1

Well what did you do?

Pratt thinks for a moment, decides not to get into it.

PRATT

Besides, I'd only slow you guys down and you need to get there as soon as possible, right?

Paratrooper 1 & 2 look at each other. 1 sighs.

PARATROOPER 1

Alright but give us the location of your guys. As soon as we reach the line, we'll send help your way.

PRATT

Won't argue with that. You have a map?

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE-MORNING

The sun rises over grassy hills. The sky is blood red.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-MORNING

McCoy sits in the trees watching the barn. Silence. He loads his pistol and stands. He runs to the barn and looks inside-

INT. BARN-MORNING

All of the men are asleep. Nobody moves. He moves to O'Hara's side, looks at his SHIRT and sees it again: **PVT SCHMIDT**. He thinks for a moment then sneaks past him into the barn to his bag.

He goes through his bag and pulls out several feet of rope. He moves to BENNETT and looks at his shirt. It too reads: **PVT SCHMIDT**. McCoy moves back to the door and hits O'Hara on the head with his pistol.

O'Hara stirs but McCoy covers his mouth and drags him out-

EXT. BARN-MORNING

To the side of the barn. He ties him to a post on the barn.

MCCOY

You shut your mouth!

INT. BARN-MORNING

He enters the barn again. Bennett is gone. McCoy freezes. Bennett emerges from behind the door.

BENNETT

Drop it.

McCoy turns to see Bennett aiming a rifle at him.

BENNETT (CONT'D)

Put it down!

SGT and Podelski have woken up from the yelling.

SGT

Hey! Put the gun down, Bennett!

BENNETT

Drop your gun, McCoy.

McCoy slowly puts the gun down. Podelski watches in stunned silence. SGT scans the barn-

SGT

Where are our guns?

McCoy and Podelski look around. The guns are gone. Bennett, using the gun, pushes McCoy outside.

EXT. BARN-MORNING

SGT and Podelski follow them outside. They see O'Hara tied up. The guns are leaned up against the house, over 100 feet away. As they walk around the corner towards O'Hara, McCoy thrusts himself against Bennett's rifle. The rifle fires and falls to the ground.

SGT grabs Bennett to hold him but Bennett gets free and pulls out a pistol. McCoy has the rifle aimed at Bennett and Bennett aims his pistol at McCoy.

PODELSKI

What is going on?

MCCOY

They're Germans! They're wearing Schmidt's clothes! I went to his grave, they stole his clothes!

O'Hara, tied up, laughs. McCoy keeps his gun on Bennett.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Shut up!

Bennett moves to O'Hara, his gun aimed at McCoy. He unties O'Hara, his accomplice. O'Hara rubs his wrists.

SGT eyes the guns against the house and slowly walks towards them. Bennett sees him.

BENNETT

Stop!

O'Hara grabs SGT from behind and throws him into the barn, showing a surprising force. SGT stands, ready to fight but O'Hara pulls a pistol from his belt and aims it at his head.

O'HARA

Pick the rope up, SGT.

SGT reluctantly does so. O'Hara ties SGT to the post. McCoy and Bennett still aim at each other.

MCCOY

What do you want?

BENNETT

Put your gun down.

MCCOY

No!

O'Hara finishes tying SGT. He bends over to pick his gun up but McCoy is fast: he grabs O'Hara, using him as a shield between Bennett. McCoy grinds the barrel of his gun against O'Hara's neck.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Tell me what the hell is going on!

BENNETT

You're not gonna shoot him.

McCoy aims the gun at O'Hara's SHOULDER and fires a round into it. O'Hara screams out in pain. McCoy puts the gun back to O'Hara's neck.

MCCOY

You don't know what I'll do. Now tell me why you did it, why you killed my men.

BENNETT

We didn't kill any of your men.

MCCOY

Bullshit! Tell me or he dies.

Bennett stares at McCoy, not convinced.

MCCOY (CONT'D)

Fine.

McCoy takes a step back from O'Hara, planning to shoot him in the head. Just before he does so-

BOOM! McCoy falls to the ground, shot in the knee.

We see the arm of the shooter. TRACK down the arm and turn to reveal-

PODELSKI. McCoy stares at him, he can't believe it.

Podelski picks up McCoy's gun and throws it to O'Hara who is still grunting about his shoulder.

PODELSKI
 (to O'Hara and Bennett)
 Make sure SGT doesn't try anything.
 (to McCoy)
 Get up.

McCoy still stares at Podelski in disbelief. Podelski grabs him and forces him to stand, even with his wounded knee. He shoves him against the post next to SGT.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
 Bennett, find more rope.

Bennett runs into the barn. O'Hara keeps his gun aimed at SGT. In the meantime, McCoy leans against the barn.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
 Where's the defector?

McCoy looks at his knee, avoiding eye contact. Podelski grabs him by the hair and forces him to look at him.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
 Where is he and how many men are
 with him?

McCoy stares at Podelski.

MCCOY
 So you're in charge. You led them
 to us. When Pratt found you at that
 complex, you weren't a prisoner.

FLASHBACK:

INT. GERMAN CAMP-DAY

Podelski is in the camp, same house as opening of film, dressed in American clothes with several Germans, including O'Hara and Bennett who are in German uniforms.

PODELSKI
 I'll get you uniforms by the time
 we meet up, stop worrying about it.

A German soldier runs in.

GERMAN SOLDIER (SUBTITLE)
They're here!

PODELSKI (SUBTITLE)
Shoot the medic.

Podelski picks up his medic's helmet. Through the window we see our Americans attempting to sneak around. A German shoots the medic.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
(to O'Hara and Bennett)
Get out. They'll find me in here.
You know where we're meeting. I'll
get you uniforms.

O'Hara nods. He and Bennett run out the back.

Podelski looks at several American prisoners on the floor. He shoots three, killing them. He shoots one, WOUNDED AMERICAN, in the gut, letting him barely live. He turns to a German-

PODELSKI (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)
Hit me.

GERMAN SOLDIER (SUBTITLE)
What?

PODELSKI (SUBTITLE)
Hit me in the face!

The soldier lifts his RIFLE and rams it into Podelski's face. He falls back against the wall. Moments later, Pratt bursts into the room.

EXT. BARN-PRESENT TIME

Podelski still holds McCoy's hair.

MCCOY
And you took my book.

FLASHBACK:

INT. BARN-MORNING

Podelski searches through McCoy's bag and pulls out *Julius Caesar*. ECU on page 112 as Podelski rips it out. Flashback continues:

EXT. WOODED ROAD-DAY

Same scene as before, after Schmidt's burial, when the guys take a 5 minute break. Guppy and SGT step into the trees to relieve themselves.

PODELSKI
I'm joining them.

Podelski walks into the woods behind Guppy and SGT. He quickly darts in a different direction. Flashback continues:

EXT. WOODS-DAY

Podelski, Bennett and O'Hara talk with the two Germans who later attack the Farm Family. Podelski finishes writing on the *Caesar* paper and hands it to O'Hara.

O'HARA
What if these locals see us?

PODELSKI
I don't care. Take care of it. Have these two scare them off.

Podelski points to the other Germans.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
And trust me, there's plenty of clothes for both of you. Now go.

O'Hara and Bennett motion for the two Germans to follow them. The four run off and Podelski returns to the Americans.

EXT. BARN-PRESENT TIME

Bennett brings rope and ties McCoy to a post next to SGT.

MCCOY
You killed Schmidt. You killed Guppy and led the Nazis here.

PODELSKI
You were gonna send me back with Schmidt. I had no choice.

FLASHBACK:

INT. BARN-NIGHT

Schmidt's eyes open, still in shock from his wound. Podelski sits at his side. Everyone else is asleep in the barn.

SCHMIDT
I can't sleep.

Podelski stares at him. He takes Schmidt's bloodied shirt and puts it over his face to muffle the screams and chokes him. Schmidt jerks and wiggles until his body goes limp.

Podelski sits back.

EXT. BARN-PRESENT TIME

MCCOY
Guppy?

PODELSKI
Bad timing on his part.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. ROCKY CLIFF-MORNING

Guppy walks through the fog. He hears voices and follows them. Standing near the edge of the cliff, he sees Podelski, O'Hara and Bennett. Bennett's shirt is off.

BENNETT
It's too small. Switch me.

O'HARA
This is ridiculous. If someone sees us-

Podelski sees Guppy and silences the other two.

PODELSKI
Guppy.

GUPPY
What are you guys doing?

Podelski walks to Guppy. Guppy sees "**PVT SCHMIDT**" on Bennett's shirt.

GUPPY (CONT'D)
Is that Schmidt's shirt? How did-

Podelski whips Guppy in the face with his pistol. Guppy falls to the ground, barely conscious. O'Hara and Bennett casually watch.

Guppy tries to get up but Podelski grabs his face and throws him hard to the ground. He grabs Guppy's legs and drags him to the cliff, Guppy's fingers ripping into the dirt and rock as he goes over.

Podelski looks at the body for a moment then motions to his men to move out.

PRESENT TIME:

SGT

Bastard.

Podelski moves to SGT and in one swift motion nearly gags him by sticking his pistol in SGT's mouth. SGT grunts.

PODELSKI

You know where the defector is? No?
Then you have nothing to say to me.

Podelski relaxes and pulls the gun out of SGT's mouth.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

I just need the defector.

MCCOY

I won't talk.

Podelski looks at SGT. A light bulb goes on in his head. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out his SANDGLASS. He tips it and the sand begins to fall.

PODELSKI

You see this? This is one minute.
If the sand falls and I don't know
where the defector is, SGT dies.

MCCOY

You don't have to hurt anyone else!

PODELSKI

You're right I don't, if you just
tell me what I need to know.

MCCOY

I can't do that.

PODELSKI

You'll learn that you *can* do it.

Sand falls. Time is running out.

MCCOY

Stop!

Podelski watches as the sand has nearly all fallen. He turns to SGT and smiles at him, then raises his pistol, waiting for the last grains to drop. Just before he pulls the trigger-

PRATT (O.S.)

Drop your gun now.

Podelski turns around to see PRATT aiming his rifle at him. Podelski smirks. O'Hara and Bennett whip their guns around, ready to shoot. Podelski signals for them to hold fire.

PODELSKI

Pratt! I'm glad you're here.

PRATT

Put your gun down!

PODELSKI

Alright, buddy, that's no problem.

Podelski drops his gun and puts his hands up. He walks towards Pratt.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Let me explain.

PRATT

Stop moving.

PODELSKI

Pratt, I put my gun down. Please lower yours.

PRATT

Why are they tied up?

Pratt didn't expect this: O'Hara and Bennett, sure, but not Podelski.

PODELSKI

I'll be straight-forward with you. Things got out of control. A German officer decided that his Führer just doesn't pay enough. He defected. His greed will bring the death of thousands. I've got to stop him. And McCoy's the only one who knows where to find him.

PRATT
No he's not. He doesn't know.

PODELSKI
What?

PRATT
I was just with the defector. I know where he is.

PODELSKI
Where is he?

PRATT
On his way to the front.

Podelski is nervous. Everything might be falling apart.

PODELSKI
And you know where they are?

PRATT
I do.

Podelski smiles, realizing that he's found his solution. He turns back to McCoy.

PODELSKI
Guess I won't need you anymore.

He swings his fist across McCoy's face, knocking him out cold. Pratt almost shoots.

PRATT
Hey!

PODELSKI
Pratt, he's the least of your worries. You need to tell me where the defector is.

PRATT
Why should I? You've been with the Germans the entire time. It was all a lie.

Podelski doesn't want to waste time but sees that he'll have to calm Pratt down.

PODELSKI
Not all of it. I *am* an American. My parents were German immigrants.
(MORE)

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

We were never really respected in the States so I decided to serve my real country. I'm a German with an American accent. That's why I'm here, that's why we're here, to stop the defector.

Pratt is breathing heavy, nervous.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Pratt, what was it you said, the Germans are just a different uniform?

PRATT

This is different. You lied to us, killed our men.

PODELSKI

Because I'm doing what's right. This defector, if he succeeds in giving his information to the Americans you know what will happen? Thousands of Germans will die. Thousands, Pratt. I don't want that. You don't either. Isn't it worth a few of your lives to prevent that from happening?

PRATT

You're assuming I care about the Germans, that their death means something to me, but I don't know them. Why should I care?

PODELSKI

Do you care about Mattingly's men? You didn't know any of them and they died. Wouldn't you do anything to take that back, to make up for that mistake - an honest mistake? Well this is your chance!

PRATT

I can't betray my men.

PODELSKI

Why not? Because it'd be dishonest?

PRATT

Yes.

PODELSKI

Since when did you believe in absolute morality? "Nobody can really be held accountable for their actions," that's what you said.

PRATT

This is different.

PODELSKI

It is not.

PRATT

You killed Guppy, Schmidt.

PODELSKI

Pratt I'm not the enemy here. Look at your leg. Who did that to you?
(points to SGT)
He's the enemy. Guys like him. He killed Goodmore and he tried to kill you. You have no loyalty to him. I'm on your side.

Pratt looks from SGT to Podelski.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Give me the rifle.

Podelski puts a hand on the rifle. Pratt isn't giving it up.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Pratt, it's for the greater good. Take me to the defector while there's still time. We can stop him just give me the rifle.

He grabs the rifle again and slowly pulls it from Pratt's grip. He sighs relief. He slings the rifle around his shoulder, exchanging it for his pistol.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

Thank you. You had me worried. But I knew you'd do the right thing.

He walks back towards McCoy. Pratt's face is troubled, questioning what he just did. Was it the "right thing?"

Podelski stops, another light bulb gone off.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)

I'm gonna do you a favor, Pratt.

He looks at SGT.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
Besides, we can't risk him getting
in the way now.

PRATT
Don't!

Podelski ignores him and raises his pistol to SGT. SGT
stares, frightened.

BAM! Podelski is shot in the leg and falls to his knees.
Pratt holds a smoking pistol.

Bennett acts to protect Podelski and quickly shoots Pratt in
the stomach. Pratt falls against the side of the house.

Podelski, though shot in the leg, is shocked and turns to
Bennett. He raises his pistol and shoots Bennett in the head.
Bennett falls dead. O'Hara is equally shocked. Podelski aims
his gun at O'Hara-

PODELSKI
Put your gun down!

O'Hara drops his gun but looks at Bennett's body. Podelski
looks to Pratt who is still alive, though only barely.

PODELSKI (CONT'D)
Why'd you do that, Pratt? He
deserves to die.

Podelski turns and aims his gun at SGT yet again. But then-

BAM! Pratt shoots Podelski in the chest. Podelski falls
forward but not down. O'Hara goes for his gun. Podelski, with
what strength he has, aims at O'Hara and shoots him in the
head before he can fire on Pratt. Podelski does this without
even looking at O'Hara.

Pratt is weak, nearly dead. Podelski falls forward on his
stomach. He seems dead until-

He tries to raise his gun again but can't summon the
strength. He groans and turns his head to Pratt.

Pratt stares at Podelski and quickly sees-

EXT. MOUNTAIN LAKE-DAY

The previous image of his brother Kevin, standing on the
shore. He is alone.

PRATT'S MOM (V.O.)
*You wanted his mind to be clear,
free of doubt, free of guilt.*

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

Pratt stares at Podelski. Podelski stops breathing, dead.

Pratt sighs in relief. He then raises his eyes to SGT. SGT stares at him, speechless.

EXT. MOUNTAIN LAKE-DAY

Kevin standing on the shore.

KEVIN (V.O.)
*I want your mind to be clear, free
of doubt, free of guilt.*

Kevin smiles.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

Pratt stares at SGT for a moment then he too dies.

SGT is alone. McCoy still unconscious at his side. O'Hara and Bennett dead. Podelski and Pratt dead. SGT struggles with the ropes around his wrists. He finally frees himself and moves to untie McCoy's ropes.

FADE TO:

EXT. WOODS-DAY

McCoy and SGT carry a wrapped body through the woods. McCoy limps with his wounded knee. Their funeral march is dream-like, reverent.

EXT. MEADOW (BURIAL GROUND)-DAY

The two lower Pratt's wrapped body into an open grave next to Schmidt's. They cover him with dirt.

We see them after the work is done, standing over the graves. After much reflection, SGT breaks the silence.

SGT
I didn't kill Goodmore. I
confronted him but his death was an
accident.

McCoy stares at the graves.

MCCOY
I know you're not the enemy, SGT.

McCoy begins limping back to the house.

SGT
You accomplished the mission.

McCoy stops walking.

SGT (CONT'D)
Nice work.

McCoy turns around.

MCCOY
Did the mission mean anything? How
could it when good men died and men
like you and me lived? You're not
the enemy but Pratt didn't save you
because you're the good guy. You're
not the good guy.

McCoy limps away, SGT stands at the graves and thinks.

EXT. FARMHOUSE-DAY

McCoy limps out of the woods to the farmhouse with SGT behind
him. They freeze when they see-

Trucks, jeeps, and dozens of American soldiers. Some soldiers
investigate the bodies of Podelski, Bennett, and O'Hara.
Others walk in and out of the house. McCoy smiles and limps
towards their rescuers.

SGT stays by the trees for a moment. He reaches into his
pocket and pulls out-

Pratt's yellow paper, evidence that Pratt is to blame for the
death of Mattingly's men. SGT thinks it over a moment and
then-

He rips the paper into pieces. He puts the pieces in his
pocket and walks down the hill behind McCoy.

FADE OUT.