

Janni Schenck

By

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1 EXT., WOODS, NIGHT

Silent SOLDIERS dig a big hole that looks like a mass grave in a dark field while others keep watch. Slowly we can see the men are wearing Nazi uniforms. At a command the soldiers get wooden crates from a military vehicle and place them in the hole. There are German military markings and serial numbers on the crates, the word 'Panzerfaust.'

A OFFICER opens one of the cases. Brand new guns glint in the moonlight. He checks off a list, closes the case again. The case is placed in the hole.

Soldiers pull wooden shutters into place in the hole. They pile earth onto the wood, then re-plant whole bushes and branches back over the disturbed earth.

The officer marks a map. The soldiers get back into their vehicle and drive quietly away in the dark, lights dimmed.

2 INT., ARMY TRUCK, NIGHT

The truck drives along deserted night-time rural roads. In the back young soldiers softly, tunefully sing a Hitler Youth song.

SOLDIERS

(sing)

I know you well, and love you as
I do my father and mother. I will
always be obedient to you as I am
to my father and mother. And when
I am bigger, I will help you, as
my father and mother do, And you
will be proud of me, as my father
and mother are.

OPENING CREDITS

3 EXT., CITY STREET, EVENING

The same army truck passes JANNI in Hitler Youth uniform in a small crowd of CHILDREN walking through the streets of a bombed German city. The group hold onto the few things they have as they are herded through the streets by other HITLER YOUTH.

Janni carries a small wooden box and a small accordion along with his other things. There is a cat inside the box, its leg bandaged.

4 EXT., RAILWAY STATION, EVENING

The group of children stop in the station. Janni takes a handkerchief out of his pocket and unwraps two radio valves. Satisfied, he wraps them again and puts them back in his pocket as the TICKET INSPECTOR arrives to find the GROUP LEADER.

TICKET INSPECTOR
Travelling on your own, son?

HITLER YOUTH LEADER
Evacuee. Show the inspector your ticket.

Janni silently hands the man his ticket.

TICKET INSPECTOR
Thank-you. You don't need a ticket for your cat.

Janni ignores the man's joke.

HITLER YOUTH LEADER
You'll be OK Janni. You like your aunt, don't you?

JANNI
Aunty Hannah? Yes, she's great!
She likes the same kind of music
Dad liked. And Mum.

TICKET INSPECTOR
Your mum and dad following on?

The Group Leader shakes his head silently.

JANNI
My mum's -

HITLER YOUTH LEADER
Bombed out.

JANNI
My dad - my dad's missing too.
And my cat hurt her leg when our
house was bombed.

The Ticket Inspector hurriedly stamps JANNI's travel pass. He points to the toilets on the station platform.

TICKET INSPECTOR
Sorry son. Here. Have a safe
journey. You play with radios?

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

No.

TICKET INSPECTOR

I thought that was radio valves
in your pocket you were looking
at.

JANNI

Yes.

TICKET INSPECTOR

I thought you said you didn't
play with radios.

JANNI

I make them work again.

TICKET INSPECTOR

Oh. Here's your ticket son. And
if I were you I'd use the
lavatory before you get on the
train. You don't know how long
it'll take to get there with the
terror bomber raids. And try to
take some water with you as well.
Put it in your canteen.

HITLER YOUTH MAN

Good luck Janni. You'll be
alright if you remember all
you've learned. I've written to
Herr Horst. He's the leader of
the Hitler Youth in Fall. They'll
welcome a boy like you. Apart
from your music! He's also going
to be your schoolmaster.

JANNI

Thank-you sir. Goodbye.

Janni walks off along the platform.

TICKET INSPECTOR

Go and get some water, son.
You've got fifteen minutes before
the train goes. It's a long way
to Fall, up in the mountains.
Nice and safe there though. Near
Switzerland.

Janni looks back and nods. He checks the cat-box is
secure. As he walks away he starts to sing, (Andrews
Sisters - Shoo, Shoo, Baby) unhappily, as if by reflex, as
if it's not something he can control.

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

Shhh-shoo baby, Do-dah do-day,
Shhh-shoo baby, Do-dah do-day
Shhh-shoo baby, shoo, shoo -

GROUP LEADER

Poor kid. His dad - you know.
Army. Somewhere.

TICKET INSPECTOR

I know. You see hundreds of them
through here.

HITLER YOUTH LEADER

What do you mean?

TICKET INSPECTOR

Kids on their own whose fathers
are fighting bravely for Germany.
What did you think I mean?

HITLER YOUTH LEADER

I thought you meant there were a
lot of evacuees. That kind of
talk is defeatist.

TICKET INSPECTOR

Tell you what. He'll find a
little mountain village like Fall
is a lot different to Hamburg.
That's all. You going anywhere?
Because if you're not I've got
tickets to collect. Heil Hitler.

GROUP LEADER

Heil Hitler.

The two men look at each other with distrust in their
eyes.

The Ticket Inspector sneers at his back as Group Leader
walks away. Then turns to deal with the queue of
passengers and refugees.

5 EXT., RAILWAY STATION, EVENING.

SFX: Andrews Sisters - Shoo, Shoo, Baby

Through the train window we see Janni sitting solemnly
alone in his seat on the train, making sure his cat in in
its box is still alive.

The steam engine pulls out of the station.

The train trundles slowly through the bombed city as the
light fades.

Night falls and hides the city.

6 INT., RAILWAY CARRIAGE, NIGHT

Cold in the half-dark of the blacked-out carriage Janni quietly talks to the other boys his age on the train. They smile as they recall their great times with the Hitler Youth, the songs, the camping, the joy of the open air, the sheer empowering excitement of being part of this huge organisation.

Janni's cat sleeps in the wooden box on his lap.

7 EXT., VILLAGE RAILWAY HALT, MORNING

SFX: The Waiter With The Water.

Janni gets off the train, puts the wooden cat box on the platform carefully and runs to hug (aunt, early 30s) HANNAH SCHENCK. He salutes OTTO and gives him a letter.

Hannah walks Janni to her house.

8 INT., AUNT HANNAH'S KITCHEN, MORNING.

Hannah and Janni open the door and walk into the kitchen. She sits him at the table.

HANNAH

Go in! Straight to the table. You must be hungry! Is that your cat in the box?

JANNI

Yes. Is - is that alright? She can stay with me, can't she? She's hurt her leg when - when we were bombed.

HANNAH

Well, I suppose. I'll have to make sure - yes it's fine. There is a dog next door. Is your cat afraid of dogs?

JANNI

She's not afraid of anything. She knows I'll look after her.

HANNAH

Well that's good. The dog won't chase her unless she runs away.

Janni lets his cat out of the wooden box, careful of its bandaged leg. Hannah gives Janni a saucer of milk.

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

She can't run until she's better anyway. Where should I put it?

HANNAH

Well, on the floor. Behind the door, where we won't knock it over.

JANNI

Here?

HANNAH

That's fine, Janni. We'll all be fine here, I think. Don't you?

JANNI

I think so, Aunty Hannah. Thank-you for saying you'll look after me.

Janni looks confused, then his face clears.

JANNI (cont'd)

Uncle Oskar! Is he still in Czechoslovakia?

Hannah turns away abruptly, her face showing her distress.

HANNAH

I - we - I think so. I think so, Janni. I haven't had a letter in weeks. You know how the post is now.

Hannah visibly makes the effort to pull herself together. She takes her apron off.

HANNAH

Is your little cat alright? What's her name?

JANNI

Gitta. I think so. Her name is Gitta.

HANNAH

Come on! Let's play some music. Oh...

JANNI

Can we?

HANNAH

Of course we can! It's not illegal, is it! The Nazis don't like it but where's the harm, hey

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HANNAH (cont'd)
 Janni? It's only music! It's just
 the radio hasn't been so good
 lately. I hope it doesn't break.

JANNI
 I can fix it if it does.

HANNAH
 Really? Do you do that?

JANNI
 Yes. I learned how at a club.

Hannah switches the radio on, fiddles with the dial. We
 can hear the static until she finds the station she wants.

SFX: Charlie & His Orchestra - "I'm Putting All My Eggs In
 One Basket."

JANNI (cont'd)
 Aunty Hannah!

HANNAH
 You have to be careful Janni!
 This is German swing, broadcast
 specially to England!

SFX: Segue into Charlie & His Orchestra - "Why'd Ya Make
 Me Fall In Love?"

Janni and Hannah gently Swing dance in the kitchen, Janni
 shy at first. But Hannah knows how to dance.

HANNAH (cont'd)
 I haven't danced for too long
 Janni!

The pair dance around the kitchen happily, watched by the
 cat.

HANNAH
 (sings softly) When I thought
 that war was blind, why did you
 make me change my mind, why d'you
 make me go to fight for
 you?.....Hey Frankie, why should
 I fight for you?

9

EXT., VILLAGE, DAY

Montage: The village changes through three seasons, the
 trees with leaves, the leaves falling, the cold snowy
 winter, the lights hardly visible, Christmas comes and
 going almost un-noticed, the little village in the
 mountains not prospering, time edging towards a dull
 Spring evening.

(CONTINUED)

There is light from one window, just a glimmer.

SFX: Swing music, louder than it should be.

10 INT., KITCHEN, EVENING

A teacup is smashed on the floor. Tea drips off the table. A ripped envelope lies on the table in front of Hannah sitting on her own, almost in the dark, still holding a telegram. She sits motionless in her chair, eyes open, staring at nothing.

SFX: Happy Swing music.

Hannah slowly becomes aware of the music. Suddenly she stands, throwing the chair backwards. The china of the teacup crunching under her feet. She stops, wondering what she stood on.

The cat springs to the corner of the room as Hannah rushes up the stairs.

11 INT., JANNI'S BEDROOM, EVENING

SFX: Django Reinhardt - Nagasaki.

The lights are down, the room is lit only by candles. Girls and boys are listening to a wind-up gramophone. There is a curtain over the door to make sure no light gets out - or in.

These kids are drinking, smoking, listening to Swing music. We can't tell how old they are. They're thin - they look like tall children. Two couples are kissing, one girl's jumper is rucked up.

It's dark, it's dangerous, it's a dirty kind of fun.

DJANGO

Back in Nagasaki where the
fellers chew tobaccy, And the
women wiggy waggy woo.

JANNI

I love that!

As one record stops another starts. A BOY WITH A TRUMPET takes his shoes, then his socks off and stuffs them into the end of the trumpet to try to muffle the sound. The SWING KIDS look at him as if he's a god, all except HELGA who only has eyes for Janni.

HELGA

Love me, darling!

(CONTINUED)

GRETEL

Helga!

FRANZ

Swing, baby! Swing that thing!

Helga looks older than she is for a moment. Then loses her nerve.

HELGA

Dizzy!

JANNI

Are you OK?

HELGA

Gillespie, you idiot! The tune!
It's by Dizzy Gillespie! What did
you think I meant?

SFX: A woman's footsteps run heavily up the stairs
off-screen.

The door slams open.

Hannah stands in the doorway, frightened and angry. The kids jump away from each other. Hannah looks not much older than them. She switches the lights on. The kids look much younger than they did in the dark.

HANNAH

Janni! Stop this noise, all of
you! Now!

The kids go quiet, frozen. Hannah pulls the jazz record off the turntable and throws it on the floor. It breaks. Janni looks appalled at the waste. So is Hannah.

JANNI

But -

HANNAH

Oh Janni! I'm sorry. I'm -
(shouts) You know! You know what
they'll do if they catch you
playing this music? Do you know?
Well? Do you?

Hannah's escalating fear and anger silences the kids. They're ashamed, guilty, afraid, all at once.

HELGA

We - we're very sorry, Frau
Schenck.

(CONTINUED)

FRANZ

We are. We're very sorry.

HANNAH

Do you even know what you're sorry about?

FRANZ

The music, Frau Schenck -

HANNAH

The music that the Reichs-Gauleiter has expressly forbidden! The music that the Fuhrer hates! God in Heaven Janni, they'll send you to a camp if they hear this stuff! All of you! Are you completely stupid? Go home. All of you. And you, Helga!

The kids shuffle out of the room, mumbling good-byes and apologies, shame-faced, frightened.

Janni is left in the room with Hannah, in silence. He looks out of the window. GERMAN SOLDIERS in uniform stand below, lighting a cigarette. A GERMAN SOLDIER looks up and catches Janni's eye. Hannah rushes to the window, looks out. The soldier winks.

JANNI

Aunty Hannah, I'm really sorry.
We just -

HANNAH

Janni, don't you understand?

JANNI

But we used to listen to that music when -

HANNAH

When -

JANNI

When Dad -

HANNAH

When Ulrich - when my brother -
when your dad - before he went to
Russia -

Janni and Hannah fall silent as they look at a picture of a young man in German army uniform.

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

But my Dad -

HANNAH

But the Gauleiter - oh Janni, you
have to listen to me! Wait here.
Just wait here!

Hannah rushes out of the room and re-enters holding a newspaper. She roughly smooths it out on the table, grabs Janni, makes him come to the table and read it: A list of rules forbidding jazz music.

HANNAH (cont'd)

Read it out loud!

JANNI

But I -

HANNAH

Read it! So I know you can
understand it! Janni! Read it!

JANNI

One: Pieces in foxtrot rhythm -
so-called Swing - are not to
exceed 20% of the repertoires of
light orchestras and dance bands.
That's OK -

HANNAH

Read it!

JANNI

Two: In this so-called jazz type
repertoire, preference is to be
given to compositions in a major
key and to lyrics expressing joy
in life rather than Jewishly
gloomy lyrics. Django's lyrics
aren't gloomy!

Hannah brandishes a book of sheet music in Janni's face. There is a picture of Django Reinhardt on the cover.

HANNAH

He even looks Jewish! Read the
rest!

JANNI

Who wrote this?

Janni scans down the page to the bottom.

JANNI

SEGUE INTO BAR INTERIOR

12 INT., BOHEMIAN BAR, NIGHT

OSKAR BACHLER and other NAZI OFFICERS are drinking, in a good mood, talking shop in a happy, slightly BOHEMIAN CROWD, a mixture of Wermacht uniforms, seedy CIVILIANS, some very pretty YOUNG WOMEN. A WOMAN sings a folk song on the stage. The small BAND swing the music up a little, not too much. Bachler reads the newspaper out loud to his LIEUTENANT.

BACHLER

Reich Gauleiter for the Nazi Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia signed this day, 28 February, 1945. I don't believe this bollocks.

LIEUTENANT

Boss!

BACHLER

Can you? Can you believe it? Listen to this bit! Four: So-called jazz compositions may contain at most ten per cent syncopation; You couldn't make it up!

LIEUTENANT

What's a legato movement?

BACHLER

That, young lieutenant, is a very good question. But it misses the point. We're not banning Swing music outright. Let's be clear about that. But only 10% of any music can swing!

People are beginning to notice that Bachler has had a little too much to drink.

OSKAR

Ah, listen to this one! Four...

LIEUTENANT

You said four just now, boss. If anyone wrote this down -

BACHLER

Oh, someone did. Do you know what someone wrote down for me today? My house in Hamburg has been bombed and my wife is dead. That's what was in the letter I got this morning. So while I may, possibly, have already said

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BACHLER (cont'd)
'four,' it makes no difference.
And anyway I outrank you. Listen.
Strictly prohibited is the use of
instruments alien to the German
spirit, cowbells, flexatone,
brushes - You'd think he'd like
cowbells, wouldn't you?

LIEUTENANT
Boss, come on.

BACHLER
Enough cowbells in Austria, after
all.

LIEUTENANT
Heard this one, boss? Two
lesbians go to bed. One of them
says 'Ilse, I want to be frank
with you.' And the other one says
'It was your turn to be Frank
last night.'

Everyone laughs.

LIEUTENANT (cont'd)
There's this soldier on the front
line -

BACHLER
Who's on the front line and he's
visited by Hitler. And Hitler
says 'What do you wish for when
you're under artillery fire?' and
the soldier says "That you, my
Fuhrer, stand beside me!"

Several in the crowd laugh too loudly. One or two don't
laugh at all. The singer looks irritated. She winks at the
band slyly, reaches down and invites Bachler up onto the
stage.

SINGER
Another drink for our protector!
What's your name, sir?

Bachler looks very drunk now. He gets up on the stage and
downs a glass in one.

OSKAR
Captain Oskar Bachler.

SINGER
Let's have a big hand for Captain
Oskar Bachler!

The crowd whistles and cheers.

(CONTINUED)

SINGER (cont'd)

Well, we don't want to break any laws, do we, Captain Bachler? Do we?

CROWD

No!

SINGER

So me and the boys in the band, we had an idea. (Pause) After that, we wanted your protection.

SFX: Drum roll and cymbal clash.

SINGER

So, to make sure we abide by the rules - and you all know how we love the German rules here in Czechoslovakia -

Two soldiers exchange glances in the audience.

SINGER

- we thought we'd ask you what we should do.

OSKAR

I - well, what -

SINGER

Herr Captain, sing us the rules. The ones the Reichs-Gauleiter wrote for us.

BACHLER

I - well I -

SINGER

I'll help you! And then you can help me!

The singer whispers in Bachler's ear. He smiles. A BAND MEMBER hands him the newspaper. The band strikes up a slow swing rhythm. The lights dim except for the lights on the stage.

SINGER

Ladies and gentlemen, Damen und Herren, officers and men, in the name of the Reich, in the name of law and order, in the name of our protectors, we bring you...the Nazi Jazz Rules!

The crowd applaud. The music starts, a muted Swing riff, repeated.

(CONTINUED)

SINGER (cont'd)

(sings)

Eines: Pieces in foxtrot rhythm (so-called Swing) are not to exceed 20% of the repertoires of light orchestras and dance bands; come on Captain!

BACHLER & SINGER

(sing together)

Zwei: Preference is to be given to compositions in a major key and to lyrics expressing joy in life rather than Jewishly gloomy lyrics;

SINGER

(sings)

Drei: Preference is also to be given to brisk compositions over the so-called blues; however, the pace must not exceed a certain degree of allegro, commensurate with the Aryan sense of discipline and moderation. On no account will Negroid excesses in tempo be tolerated;

(stops singing)

Come on Captain, all of this is true, isn't it?

BACHLER

These are the rules!

SINGER

So let's hear them!

BACHLER & SINGER

(sing)

Vier: So-called jazz compositions may contain at most ten per cent syncopation; the remainder must be devoid of the hysterical rhythmic reverses characteristic of the barbarian races and conducive to dark instincts alien to the German people; Strictly prohibited is the use of instruments alien to the German spirit which turn the noble sound of wind and brass instruments into a Jewish-Freemasonic yowl. Also prohibited are drum breaks longer than half a bar; The double bass must be played solely with the bow; Plucking of the strings -

(CONTINUED)

The double BASS PLAYER twangs the strings of his bass.

SINGER

(sings)

Acht: Plucking of the strings is prohibited, since it is damaging to the instrument and detrimental to Aryan musicality;

The happy crowd laughs as the singer wags her finger at the BASS PLAYER who twangs the strings deliberately again.

SINGER (cont'd)

(sings) Strict care must be taken lest the string be allowed to patter on the bridge of the instrument, which is henceforth forbidden;

The bass player slaps the strings again.

SINGER

And !!!

BACHLER & SINGER

(sing)

All light orchestras and dance bands are advised to restrict the use of saxophones of all keys and to substitute for them the violin-cello, the viola or possibly a suitable folk instrument.

The SAX PLAYER runs a few bars.

SFX: Tune: Wir Fahren Gegen England.

The soldiers in the crowd join in at once, singing beerily.

SOLDIERS

(sing: Wir Fahren Gegen England)

Today we want to sing a little song, We would like to drink cool wine, where glasses should be clinked, for we must, we must be parted.

The soldiers sing louder for the chorus, smiling. One or two soldiers are stone-face throughout.

SOLDIERS (cont'd)

(sing)

Give me your hand, your white hand, Farewell, my darling,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOLDIERS (cont'd)
 farewell my darling, Farewell,
 farewell, For we sail, for we
 sail, For we sail to take on the
 English, the English.

The singer furiously wags her finger at them. Confused, the singing peters out then the violin and saxophone take up the tune, sugar-sweet. The singer beckons the soldiers to sing again, the words nonsensically opposed to the tone of the music now.

SINGER
 Altogether now!!

ALL
 (sing)
 We show our flag and it blows on
 the mast, It proclaims the power
 of our realm, For we no longer
 want to suffer, That the
 Englishman at us does laugh. If
 the news comes that I have
 fallen, That I sleep in Davy
 Jones' locker, Don't cry over me,
 my dear, just think: When he shed
 his blood, it was for the
 Fatherland.

Several MEN IN UNIFORM are looking uneasily at each other, several more hard-faced throughout in the cheering, jeering drunk crowd. The song ends.

Bachler is given another drink. An unsmiling SOLDIER points at him and a GESTAPO man steps forward as Bachler turns to drink some more.

GESTAPO
 Good evening Herr Captain. Your
 name?

BACHLER
 Well, whatever impression you
 might have got just now, not the
 Reichs-Gauleiter for Bohemia and
 Moravia. Although those were his
 exact words.

GESTAPO
 Those exact words.

BACHLER
 I know! Bloody ridiculous, isn't
 it?

The singer tugs Bachler's sleeve to warn him but he ignores her, smiling. She tugs his sleeve again then slowly moves away from the Gestapo man.

(CONTINUED)

GESTAPO

Would you like to reconsider that?

BACHLER

What, sing it again? Only if she....

Bachler looks around for the singer but she's gone. He looks slowly at the Gestapo man who makes a small gesture with his hand. Two heavy-looking SOLDIERS make their way through the crowd towards him.

GESTAPO

I take it you are familiar with the concept of orders, Herr Captain?

BACHLER

I am an officer of the Reich. Of course I am. I have sworn an oath.

GESTAPO

Perhaps you'd like to repeat it?

BACHLER

I swear by God this sacred oath that to the Leader of the German empire and people, Adolph Hitler, supreme commander of the armed forces, I shall render unconditional obedience and that as a brave soldier I shall at all times be prepared to give my life for this oath.

GESTAPO

Somewhat lacking.

BACHLER

That is the Wehrmacht oath.

GESTAPO

Presumably you are also familiar with standing orders?

BACHLER

Yes. I am a Wehrmacht officer. I get orders. I obey them always. I issue them.

GESTAPO

Good.

Bachler looks blank.

(CONTINUED)

BACHLER

There are standing orders every day.

GESTAPO

Let me familiarise you.

The Gestapo man takes a paper from his pocket and reads aloud

GESTAPO (cont'd)

For the last time our deadly enemies the Jewish Bolsheviks have launched their massive forces to the attack. Their aim is to reduce Germany to ruins and to exterminate our people. Many of you soldiers in the East already know the fate which threatens, above all, German women, girls, and children. While the old men and children will be murdered, the women and girls will be reduced to barrack-room whores.

The Gestapo man nods. Two of his GESTAPO TROOPS standing each side of the singer grab her and rush her out of the bar.

GESTAPO (cont'd)

Clearly this will be an easier transition for some than for others.

GESTAPO resumes reading.

GESTAPO (cont'd)

Gaps in our infantry have been made good. Our front is being strengthened by emergency units, newly raised units, and by the Volkssturm. Whoever fails in his duty at this moment behaves as a traitor to our people. Above all, be on your guard against the few treacherous officers and soldiers who, in order to preserve their pitiful lives, fight against us in Russian pay, perhaps even wearing German uniform. Anyone ordering you to retreat will, unless you know him well personally, be immediately arrested and, if necessary, killed on the spot, no matter what rank he may hold. If every

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GESTAPO (cont'd)
soldier does his duty in the days
and weeks which lie ahead, the
last assault of Asia will
crumple, just as the invasion by
our enemies in the West will
finally fail, in spite of
everything.

Bachler nods seriously at each point of this recitation.
The Gestapo man hands Bachler the paper.

GESTAPO (cont'd)
Read the rest of it.

BACHLER
Berlin remains German, Vienna
will be German again, and Europe
will never be Russian. Form
yourselves into a sworn
brotherhood, to defend, not the
empty conception of a Fatherland,
but your homes, your wives, your
children, and, with them, our
future. At this moment, when Fate
has removed from the earth the
greatest war criminal of all
time, the turning-point of this
war will be decided - I am fully
familiar with the standing order
of the day.

GESTAPO
- and soldiers who, in order to
preserve their pitiful lives,
fight against us in Russian pay,
perhaps even wearing German
uniform. Anyone ordering you to
retreat will, unless you know him
well personally, be immediately
arrested and, if necessary,
killed on the spot, no matter
what rank he may hold.

BACHLER
I simply sang the rules the
Reichs-Gauleiter wrote.

GESTAPO
You made fun of the orders of the
Reichs-Gauleiter, consorting with
Jews.

BACHLER
Nobody here is Jewish!

GESTAPO

Then how can they know how to play Jewish jazz music? Answer me!

Bachler looks very worried.

BACHLER

I've never given an order to retreat in my life. I'm an accountant. I'm in the Pay Corps!

GESTAPO

You sympathise with Jews. You sing Jewish jazz music. Everyone in this bar heard you. I should shoot you on the spot.

BACHLER

All I...

GESTAPO

People's Court. They can decide.

BACHLER

Herr....

GESTAPO

Shut up! You will appear before the People's Court in night session.

BACHLER

For what?

GESTAPO

Conspiracy to commit treason and undermining the war effort. I never like to predict the future but in your case I feel confident. You will be executed tomorrow morning. Take him out.

GESTAPO MEN rush Bachler and bundle him out of the bar. The Gestapo officer looks around. Everyone avoids his eye.

He leaves the bar slowly.

Nobody is singing now.

13 INT., VILLAGE HALL, EVENING

A small, shabby, rural meeting room, evening. A small committee are meeting at a long wooden table, the hall lit by oil lamps. All the MEN are over 50, some of them a lot older.

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN

So, resolved by vote. The churchyard gates will be painted when the war is won, funds to be allocated at that time. Let it be minuted, Frau Hess, please. Onto the final item on the agenda. Der Sturmer and the news-stand. As you know, the official newspaper, Der Sturmer is available in the village every morning from the news-stand.

OTTO

I can't see that this is a matter for the Gemeinde, Mr Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

In itself I agree with you, Herr Horst. However if I may finish? There is a requirement that a slogan in support of the Party is to be painted on the news-stand. The slogan must reflect the sympathies of the Nazi Party towards the Jewish problem. So it does become a local government matter that affects us.

BRAUN

Here, here.

CHAIRMAN

As you know, the slogan has worn thin and needs repainting. Frankly, it looks rubbish. As the head of the Gemeinde I have to tell you that we have some discretion in the slogan we agree on, so long as it is sufficiently anti-Jewish. I have a list of suggestions.

CHAIRMAN picks up a list of slogans on an official-looking document and reads aloud:

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)

One: The Jewish problem must be resolved for all time. Two: Jewish morality corrupts German youth. Three: One people, one Reich, no Jews....

OTTO

Mr Chairman...

(CONTINUED)

BRAUN
Mr Chairman.....

CHAIRMAN
Otto?

OTTO
We only have - I mean. Frau
Borchardt isn't....

BRAUN
I think the leader of our Hitler
Youth troop means to say he
thinks the Fuhrer got it wrong.

OTTO
My son is - was a sergeant in the
SS! My boy gave his life for the
fatherland at Stalingrad! More
than anyone in this room did!

CHAIRMAN
Herr Horst, nobody doubts your
commitment to the Party.

Otto fingers the Nazi Party badge in his lapel. Most
people in the room are wearing one.

OTTO
They had better not doubt it.
I've worn this badge since 1933,
the day the Fuhrer was elected.
Nobody is more committed to the
Party than I am.

BRAUN
The thing is, are we being
sufficiently anti-Semitic in this
village, Herr Horst?

OTTO
I fought at Verdun with a Jew. He
was called Braun, too.

CHAIRMAN
Otto...

Braun shakes his head.

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)
I think Herr Braun was referring
to Frau Borchardt. The doctor.

JOHAN
The only doctor in this village.
The doctor who rents my spare
room for her surgery.

(CONTINUED)

BRAUN

Your tenant who is a Jew.

JOHAN

My tenant is our doctor. The doctor who delivered your children and those of every woman in this village.

CHAIRMAN

Nobody said anything against Frau Borchardt.

BRAUN

The Jew.

OTTO

Get this straight. If we annoy Frau Borchardt - no.

CHAIRMAN

Herr Horst -

OTTO

No, let's get this out on the table, right now. You know what we can do, don't you? We can get rid of every Jew in this village. One letter. That's all it will take. One letter. Then we don't have a doctor. Then when you break a leg or your daughter gets measles or God forbid, your wife gets ill -

BRAUN

I was just saying -

CHAIRMAN

As Chairman I'd be grateful if remarks in this meeting were addressed through the Chair. This is a fully convened meeting of the Gemeinde, not a bar-room brawl.

BRAUN

Mr Chairman.

OTTO

Mr Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

I think the position is this. We are obliged to follow the Party edict to resolve the Jewish problem, in this village the same

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)
as anywhere in the rest of the Reich. We have one doctor. We are obliged to report the presence of Jews in the village. When that happens if our doctor is a Jew we will have no option. And we will not have a doctor.

OTTO
Agreed.

JOHAN
Agreed.

CHAIRMAN
Thank-you Herr Horst. It seems to me that we need a slogan which reflects the ethos of the Party. And we need to keep our doctor.

There is silence for a moment as everyone looks at each other.

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)
As Chairman, let me propose a slogan for the news-stand. 'This village has been free of Jews for a thousand years.'

BRAUN
But Frau Doctor Borchardt -

CHAIRMAN
- is a Jewess. Not a Jew.

There is a stunned silence for a moment, then small smiles break out on several faces. The Chairman maintains an impassive, magisterial face, refusing to catch anyone's eye.

OTTO
Seconded.

BRAUN
Well - that's true. Agreed.

CHAIRMAN
Any objections?

Everyone shakes their head, very satisfied with this solution.

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)
Carried without objection. Let that slogan be painted on the news-stand as agreed. Funds for
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)
one pot of paint to be granted
from Gemeinde funds. The rent for
the news-stand space to be
increased by the price of one pot
of paint. Now in conclusion there
is something we need to agree on.

There is a tense silence in the room.

CHAIRMAN (cont'd)
As you all know, the American
forces of barbarism are thirty
kilometres away.

OTTO
Mr Chairman, I heard today it was
twenty kilometres.

BRAUN
Who from?

OTTO
Herr Koch, in his capacity as
Hauptmann of the Green Police.

BRAUN
Order Police!

OTTO
They wear green uniforms. Orpo,
Green, it makes no difference. He
knows better than anyone else how
far away the Americans are.

BRAUN
So?

CHAIRMAN
So the question is, while
obviously we shall obey all of
the Führer's orders as best we
can, what are we going to do when
the Americans arrive?

BRAUN
Fight to the last man, of course!

The older men around the table look at each other.

FLEISCHER
If I may, Mr Chairman? Germany
stopped fighting in the last war.
Our economy collapsed.

(CONTINUED)

OLD MAN

We were stabbed in the back. All
of our boys fighting -

OTTO

Mr Chairman, I was there. We had
nothing left to fight with.

BRAUN

I was there too. We still fought
on until the Jews betrayed us.

OTTO

What Jews? The Jews we fought
alongside? Private Himelfarb?
Private Friedenthal?

Otto and Braun stare angrily at each other.

14 EXT., WWI TRENCH, EARLY MORNING

Himelfarb touches a religious icon at his neck. The scared
young WWI SOLDIERS wait in the trench.

A whistle blows in the distance.

SFX: Metallic clanging.

A man hammers on a metal triangle suspended on a tree and
a fog of gas appears as the men try to put on gas masks.

Each man is panicking, some don't put their masks on in
time and choke, vomiting, tearing at their faces. Those
who have donned their masks can hardly see anything.

SFX: Very loud breathing. Machine gun and rifle fire.

Men choke on the gas, appearing and disappearing in the
clouds of gas like swimmers in a nightmare.

YOUNG BRAUN struggles with his gas-mask. AMERICAN WWI
SOLDIERS pour over the top of the trench in gas-masks. The
GERMAN SOLDIERS defend the trench with bayonets - the
whole trench is awash with gas, blood, bodies, men
standing on top of their fallen comrades in a brutal
hand-to-hand fight.

Himelfarb drags YOUNG BRAUN out of the fight as he is
about to be bayoneted by an AMERICAN WWI SOLDIER.

15 INT., VILLAGE MEETING HALL, EVENING

Otto looks directly at Braun.

OTTO

Lasker? You remember him? He stabbed you in the back? I remember he stabbed somebody. It wasn't you.

BRAUN

None of this is relevant to the future of our village. We have to fight.

CHAIRMAN

That's all very well. We've sent our sons to fight and die for the Fatherland.

FLEISCHER

Mr Chairman, I can tell you ten families in this village now whose sons have fallen defending the Reich.

BRAUN

Which is why we must fight - otherwise they died for nothing. What are we supposed to do, just put our hands up? Say "come on, Americans, come on Tommis, take everything you want?" Like the last time we did that? When they even took the machines from the factories? I remember. You do too. Mr Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

Herr Horst, the Hitler Youth - how prepared are they to fight? Exactly?

OTTO

They're prepared. But we don't have weapons.

BRAUN

Even we in the Volkssturm have weapons.

OTTO

We have ten rifles to defend the village. We have five rounds for those rifles, each. As you know.

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN

Why haven't we been sent any ammunition?

BRAUN

Because of traitors, sabotaging our supplies.

OTTO

Because the Reichs-Fuhrer decided that our boys at the front had more need of ammunition and up-to-date weapons than a few boys and old men like us, in this little village.

CHAIRMAN

As a general question - to get opinions, not as a recommendation - what do you think would happen if when the Americans come, we surrender? If the village surrenders?

BRAUN

Then we stand condemned as traitors. If the SS even hear talk like that - anyone recommending that kind of defeatism should be shot.

OTTO

Instead of all of us being shot by the Americans.

OLD MAN

It will be like Nemmersdorf. They raped women, then nailed them through the hands. Then they killed them.

CHAIRMAN

That was the Russians.

OLD MAN

Why do you think it will be different with the Americans?

The other MEN in the meeting murmur agreement.

BRAUN

We have ten rifles. We can make taking this village an expensive task.

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN

And it'll be expensive rebuilding the village when they flatten it. I've heard - we've all heard what happens. One shot from us, one bullet from one rifle and they use artillery until they see the white flags.

BRAUN

Mundfunk! Just rumours spread by defeatists.

OLD MAN

Herr Braun, you know it isn't. I can tell you four villages the Amis have destroyed.

BRAUN

This is defeatism! And it doesn't matter what has happened elsewhere. The SS will shoot anyone who puts a bedsheet outside their windows.

OTTO

So we have a choice who shoots us.

BRAUN

We have the choice of dying with honour or dying as cowards.

FLEISCHER

Mr Chairman -

Braun stares directly at Fleischer.

CHAIRMAN

Herr Fleischer? Is there something you'd like to say about this?

Fleischer slowly shakes his head.

FLEISCHER

No - no, Mr Chairman.

CHAIRMAN

Well, perhaps the Americans will pass us by.

BRAUN

Mr Chairman, this is about survival. Last year 1st SS Panzer Army were surrounded near Kiev. 28,000 men on foot. Soviet tanks drove into them.

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN

Go on.

BRAUN

They drove into them. The Russians killed 20,000 of our soldiers in three hours. Anyone left was butchered by the Cossacks. So, who wants to talk about surrendering? Anyone?

CHAIRMAN

The battle plan is still that the Hitler Youth and the Volkssturm gather in the square to face the Amis?

OTTO

That's what we've agreed.

BRAUN

It's the most easily defended point.

OTTO

It's a shambles.

BRAUN

Herr Horst!

OTTO

It was the shambles. Where the animals were slaughtered.

FLEISCHER

It was - that's true enough.

CHAIRMAN

As a defensive position it's a trap for anyone there. All the roads lead into it.

OLD MAN

- and you can't see out of it.

Everyone in the room falls silent.

BRAUN

No -

CHAIRMAN

So, unless anyone has anything else?

All shake their heads.

(CONTINUED)

CHAIRMAN

Well, that concludes the business for the evening. I declare this meeting of the Gemeinde council closed. Goodnight everyone.

ALL

Goodnight, Mr Chairman.

BRAUN

Heil Hitler!

ALL

(mumbled) Heil Hitler.

The men in the room put on their coats and hats and walk out of the meeting room into the darkening evening. We can hear singing as t

The HITLER YOUTH march singing into the hall. Otto stays to lead the HITLER YOUTH meeting. One of the HITLER YOUTH kids has a black eye as the roll-call begins. Several of the boys look as if they have been very recently beaten up.

16 INT., PEOPLE'S COURT, MORNING

Bachler, the singer and other PRISONERS are lead by armed POLICE into a dim hall. They stand together in a make-shift court dock in front of a JUDGE, DEFENCE LAWYER and PROSECUTING LAWYER. The judge looks wearily around the courtroom, the lawyers both nod, the judge bangs his gavel and nods towards the prosecuting lawyer.

JUDGE

And the next case, if you'd be so kind?

PROSECUTING LAWYER

Your Honour, I beg permission to bring the cases of Rosa Aschenbrenner, Walter Auerbach, Sophie Scholl, Hermann Axen, and Captain Oskar Bachler.

POLICE

Answer to the court.

The prisoners mumble their names, scared. They know that they aren't going to get out of this.

JUDGE

The charges -

The judge looks tired and bored.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE (cont'd)

The charges against you today are
that you did jointly and
severally betray the Reich;

He can't find the trial papers for a moment or two.

JUDGE (cont'd)

That you did spread sedition;
that you did undermine confidence
in the general population; that
you did knowingly conspire to
commit treason and to undermine
the war effort. How do you plead?

PRISONERS

Not guilty.

PROSECUTING LAWYER

Silence!

JUDGE

You were all arrested in the Café
Seeterassen. A song was sung
there. A special song, if that is
not too strong a word for it.

The prisoners stand silent.

JUDGE (cont'd)

I asked if you were all arrested
in the Café Seeterassen and not
one of you has the courage to
answer! Not one! Because of the
filthy music played there. You
ought to be ashamed to even know
where this bar is but you, you
slut, you work there!

The judge is working himself up into a frenzy, pointing at
the singer.

JUDGE (cont'd)

(shouts) You work there! I said
do you work there? Answer me!

The singer is weeping, desperate but she knows how this is
going to end. SINGER

Yes, your Honour.

JUDGE (cont'd)

The same as you say to everyone
who goes into that bar.

The lawyers and police dutifully snigger at the judge's
joke.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE (cont'd)

You disgust me. All of you. Swing music is Jewish-American, a music of depravity, of moral cowardice and decay. And you not only tolerate it by going to this bar. No, that's not enough for you. You sing it! You sang the express prohibition against singing this filthy Negro music!

The judge seems really angry. It's hard to tell whether he's just faking it or not.

DEFENCE LAWYER

With respect your Honour, only the Captain and the singer -

The defence lawyer fumbles with his papers.

DEFENCE LAWYER (cont'd)

Excuse me your Honour - the singer Helga Bauer actually sang in the club.

JUDGE

And? Your point is?

DEFENCE LAWYER

She and Captain Bachler were the ring-leaders. There are strict rules for the performance of the so-called Swing music. There may be no more than ten percent syncopation.

JUDGE

Perhaps you could enlighten the court as to what syncopation is?

DEFENCE LAWYER

Your Honour, in healthy music the beat is regular and rhythmic. In Jewish-Freemasonic music, if I may call it that for the purposes of explaining -

The judge nods.

DEFENCE LAWYER (cont'd)

Your Honour - in a syncopated rhythm the music proceeds by stressing the notes off the beat. For example, you could not march to it.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE

I don't follow you.

DEFENCE LAWYER

If I may give an example, your Honour?

The judge nods wearily.

DEFENCE LAWYER (cont'd)

(Sings)

Deutsch LAND, Deutsch LAND, ub-ER
al-LES..

JUDGE

Thank-you, that's enough. You would literally be marching on the wrong foot?

DEFENCE LAWYER

Your Honour. Everything about it would be wrong.

JUDGE

I can quite see that.

The judge looks approvingly at the defence lawyer.

PROSECUTING LAWYER

If I may, your Honour? The State submits that although there were undoubtedly ring-leaders all of the accused are severally guilty by association.

JUDGE

I concur.

DEFENCE LAWYER

I submit there is nothing in their defence to mitigate this crime, Your Honour.

JUDGE

Examination concluded. Prisoners in the dock, the evidence is clear. You were all willingly present in the Café Seeterassen. Nobody forced you to be there. While Swing music is not in itself illegal, the amount of it sang in this depraved place was illegal. Your guilt is compounded in the most astonishing way by the fact that you knowingly got on the stage to insult the German nation. You knowingly mocked the edict of the - of the -

(CONTINUED)

DEFENCE LAWYER

The Reichs-Gauleiter, your Honour.

JUDGE

I am grateful - of the Reichs-Gauleiter of Bohemia and Moravia and his express prohibition of this disgusting caterwauling. Some sickening crimes come before us in this court. But rarely do I see such a craven hymn to the Jewish race that serving officers of the Reich...

The judge nods wearily.

JUDGE

That you all, all of you - not one of you made the slightest effort to stop this disgusting spectacle. You made any attempt to leave the bar. You knew what was happening. You approved of what was happening when these traitors to the Reich began this dirge, this hymn to the Jews.

Outside a siren starts up and an airplane passes overhead, low and fast.

JUDGE

Has the Prosecution anything to add?

PROSECUTING LAWYER

No, your honour.

JUDGE

The defence?

DEFENCE LAWYER

No, your honour.

The judge rubs his eyes.

JUDGE

Then by the power invested in me by the Fuhrer, as appointed judge in the People's Court, this day 19th April 1945 I find the accused guilty of all charges. The sentence is death, to be carried out -

The judge pauses and consults with the COURT CLERK.

(CONTINUED)

COURT CLERK

Tomorrow morning, your Honour.
The gallows has broken. It should
be repaired by then, I have been
assured.

JUDGE

The sentence to be carried out
tomorrow morning. Heil Hitler!

DEFENCE LAWYER

Heil!

PROSECUTING LAWYER

Heil Hitler!

The prisoners are ushered out by the police. They have no belts so they have to hold their trousers up. The women look unkempt, crying. Some of the men are weeping as they walk away.

17 EXT., VILLAGE STREET, MORNING

A normal Spring morning, except there are no young men anywhere. An elderly POSTMAN gets off his bicycle in the village square. He sees a MAN by the Der Stürmer news-stand and walks over to give him a letter. Above the wooden news-stand are painted freshly-painted words: 'This community has been free of Jews for a thousand years.'

CHILDREN walk up the lane to the school. The boys all wear leather satchels like a backpack, with a smaller leather satchel around their necks in front, as well as shorts under their coats. Some of the older boys wear an armband. We can't see what it is as they file into the school house.

18 INT., SCHOOLROOM, MORNING

The village are all lined up obediently in class, joined in prayer.

CLASS

Amen. Hädchen falten, Köpfchen
senken, und an Adolph Hitler
denken.

The elder boys wear Hitler Youth armbands. OTTO wears a Nazi Party armband. The picture of Hitler behind OTTO comes into focus. Half the CHILDREN move over to one side of the classroom. Boys and girls are mixed. All the CHILDREN sit down and get their books out.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO
Elspet, please?

ELSPET stands up behind her desk.

ELSPET
Once thirteen is thirteen, two
thirteens are twenty-six, three
thirteens are thirty-nine, four
thirteens are fifty-two..

OTTO walks along the rows of desks on his side of the classroom, handing out exercise books. Some of them he gives back, some he drops on the desks of the children.

OTTO
Necker, quite good. Sturmman, you
need to concentrate more. You can
do much better if you just put
your mind to it. Gropthaus, what
is there I can possibly say?

CLASS
(Laughter)

19 EXT, VILLAGE SQUARE, MORNING

Otto's wife KLARA walks back from the village shop carrying a small bag of groceries. She stops to exchange a few words with the policeman, HERR KOCH.

KLARA
Good morning, Herr Koch.

KOCH
Good morning, Frau Horst. A word,
please.

KLARA
Yes?

Klara and Koch look over at the Schenck house as the village goes about its normal business.

20 INT., SCHOOLROOM, DAY

Elspet's lesson continues, dully, repetitively. Otto glances out of the window. Klara waves at him. Suddenly something is happening out in the street. Otto can see people talking urgently, pointing.

21 EXT., VILLAGE STREET, DAY

A NEIGHBOUR puts her hands to her face as Koch bangs on the door of the Schenck house. As the door opens he pushes it open and forces his way in. Seconds later Koch comes out of the house with a wind-up gramophone and a small stack of 78rpm records. Hannah runs into the street protesting as Koch holds up the records.

Koch puts the gramophone on the steps of the war memorial and winds it up. He picks one of the records at random and puts it on the gramophone.

SFX: Cole Porter - Begin The Beguine.

KOCH

...because you can't play this.
That's why. You know this
perfectly well.

HANNAH

That is my private property.

KOCH

This is Negro music. Jazz music.
American music. It's illegal. If
I did what I ought to do I'd
arrest you for it.

HANNAH

Don't be so ridiculous. It isn't
illegal. It's on the radio.

KOCH

Hannah, just be quiet. You can't
play this. You're not allowed. I
have to stop it. I don't have any
choice.

Koch takes the record off the gramophone and snaps it in half.

HANNAH

You can't do that!

KOCH

Hannah, be quiet. Or I'm going to
have to arrest you.

HANNAH

Those are my things!

KOCH

These are not your things.
Enemies of the Reich planted them
in your house. Jews, probably. I
saw it myself.

(CONTINUED)

Koch draws his pistol and smashes the gramophone with the gun butt.

HANNAH

You're smashing my gramophone!
How dare you! Stop!

KOCH

Hannah, I'm warning you. Go home
before you talk yourself into
trouble. And take this litter
with you.

22 INT., SCHOOLROOM, MORNING

OTTO

Elspet, would you take my class
for a minute, please?

ELSPET

Yes, Herr Schenck.

OTTO

Just put the two classes
together. I won't be long. Times
tables, everyone! Carry on!

Otto leaves the room. Elspet moves the class together and leads the whole class in reciting multiplication tables.

23 EXT., VILLAGE STREET, DAY

Otto shuts the schoolhouse door and walks over to where Hannah and Koch are watched by a small crowd. Hannah is close to tears.

HANNAH

Look what you've done! My brother
gave me this gramophone before he
went to Stalingrad! So people
like you could sit here picking
on women while men like him fight
to keep your fat arse safe!

KOCH

Frau Schenck...

OTTO

Good morning, Frau Schenck.

HANNAH

Good morning, Herr Horst. Will
you stop Herr Koch and his
nonsense? Look! He's smashed my
gramophone!

(CONTINUED)

KOCH

Otto, get her indoors, please?
This didn't happen. I think Jews
planted this illegal music in
Frau Schenck's house. If you see
what I mean?

OTTO

Ah - yes. Yes, I think I saw that
happen. Last night. They were
even playing their filthy Negro
music in the barn.

KOCH

You heard it?

OTTO

Oh yes. I thought at the time it
must be wandering Jews behind it.
I think I saw them but they got
away.

SFX: Allied fighter aircraft engines in the distance,
getting closer.

People in the street look up nervously at the sky. Some
duck into the nearest doorway.

KOCH

Get out of the street! Everyone!
Out of the street! American
Terror Fliers! Out of the street!
Get under cover! Move!

There are small shapes of airplanes in the sky. The sound
of their engines gets louder.

24 INT. AIRCRAFT COCKPIT TWO, MORNING

The airplane cockpit is cramped but the sky is empty.

PILOT ABLE-BAKER FOUR (V/O)

There's movement down in the
village street Able Baker Three.
Near the church.

The very young PILOT checks all around him, sees the other
US airplane and grins. He thumbs his microphone button.

PILOT ABLE BAKER THREE

Able-Baker Four. Cover me topside
and follow me on in.

PILOT ABLE-BAKER FOUR

Four, roger roger. Out.

The two aircraft break and dive onto the village.

(CONTINUED)

SFX: The sound of the engines builds powerfully.

The pilots flick the covers off the gun-buttons on the control columns. The village grows bigger in their gun sights.

25 VILLAGE AGAIN - EXTERIOR, MORNING

Back in the street Otto moves to take Hannah by the arm but she shakes him off angrily and moves towards her own front door.

HANNAH

You don't even believe your own stupid lies! The pair of you! You should be ashamed!

OTTO

Frau Schenck -

KOCH

Frau Schenck, shut up before I arrest you! Get under cover! Now! Everybody!

SFX: The aero engine noise grows and their superchargers start to whistle.

The two MUSTANG aircraft dive down on the village street. Otto, Koch and Hannah disappear into doorways as the two planes race along the length of the street, shooting at random.

They climb away to look for another target.

Some of the houses are damaged and people emerge from doorways, pick themselves up from the street where they have thrown themselves flat. A horse is down, neighing in distress.

Almost out of shot we see someone take a sledgehammer to the horse's head. The neighing stops abruptly.

The sound of the engines fades but it does not go away as people emerge back onto the street again. Koch walks to Hannah's and stops about to knock on the door.

He changes his mind and walks towards Otto, glancing up worried towards the sound of the aircraft.

KOCH (cont'd)

I think the Americans are really close now.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO
Have you heard anything?

KOCH
No. That's why I think they're really close. The phone line is down. We're supposed to get a phone call at the police station every morning. This morning - nothing.

OTTO
The telephone exchange?

KOCH
In Nordstemmen.

OTTO
But that's only..

KOCH
Ten kilometres. If they're already there then they'll be here today.

OTTO
Unless we can hold them.

Koch looks puzzled. Otto avoids his stare.

In the background the aircraft accelerate into a dive in the distance. There is a sound of machine gun fire from the aircraft and smoke rises from behind trees in the distance. Two more aircraft can just be seen in the sky now, getting closer, their engines getting louder.

SFX: The sound of the engines is constant now.

Shot-up German vehicles drive fast into the square. German soldiers pile out of the vehicles and abandon the most damaged ones, then re-group.

KOCH
Which unit are you?

SOLDIER
Doesn't matter. Which way are the Amis?

KOCH
We don't know. Are you here to hold the line?

SOLDIER
Out in front every one is holding out. Every one. Grenadiers, engineers, tank crews. All

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SOLDIER (cont'd)
holding their ground. Not a
single man is leaving his post.

KOCH
Well done!

SOLDIER
They are all dead.

SOLDIER 2
Any other military here?

KOCH
Just the Hitler Youth and the
Volkssturm.

SOLDIER
No SS?

Several soldiers exchange glances suspiciously, stopping
what they are doing.

KOCH
No, I thought -

SOLDIER
Where can we get something to
eat?

KOCH
There isn't much, but the bakery
has bread. Come this way. How
many of you are there?

Koch and the soldiers walk off towards the bakery.

26 EXT., PRISON YARD, MORNING

Light rain falls. There are occasional sounds of aircraft
engines in the distance, always the drone of heavy bombers
but now and again a lighter, faster, lower sound of
fighter aircraft.

The handcuffed prisoners are herded out at gunpoint by the
police to a spot in front of a brick wall. Another group
of prisoners stands waiting under a gallows pole, broken.

POLICE 1
So I said to him, because I can't
hang them without a gallows. I
told him.

POLICE 2
So how did they break it?

(CONTINUED)

POLICE 1

Too many of them at once. I said.
You can't hang a dozen people on
a pole made for four, I told
anyone who'd listen last week.
Does anyone listen?

POLICE 2

No - hold on.

COURT CLERK

Why aren't these prisoners being
hanged?

POLICE 1

Did you get the memo?

COURT CLERK

Isn't it fixed yet?

POLICE 1

Does it look like it's fixed?

POLICE 2

There's going to be trouble about
this.

POLICE 1

I know they change it sometimes -
did he specify the method? For
the executions?

COURT CLERK

I like the way you're thinking!
No, just death sentences. So you
have total discretion.

POLICE 2

So a firing squad would be
perfectly legal?

COURT CLERK

Perfectly legal. But hurry it up.
There's another five trials this
morning.

27

EXT., SKY MORNING

The MUSTANG aircraft emerges from thick cloud into blue
sky. Below a small town and the prison yard is the only
detail in a sea of white cloud. The aircraft peels off in
a dive towards it.

PILOT

Target of opportunity!

28 EXT., PRISON YARD, MORNING

Police give orders to soldiers. There's some discussion, some reorganising as the squad is chosen for the firing party in the drizzling rain.

Then the sudden sound of the approaching aircraft.

SOLDIER
Terror bombers!

OFFICER
In the name of the Fuhrer and the
People's Court the sentence of
death will be carried out this
day, 20th April -

The sound of the aircraft is intensifying, everyone looks upwards.

29 INT., AIRCRAFT COCKPIT, DAY

The view forward of the pilot is obscured by cloud. There are buildings visible on the ground, then cloud again. He turns the aircraft to find a cloud-free route out of this mess of fog.

30 EXT., PRISON YARD, MORNING

Everyone looks up at the cloudy sky. The sound of an airplane close by.

OFFICER
- 20th of April 1945.

The officer walks away from the prisoners by the wall, some weeping, most looking resigned to what will happen. Some of the police look away and light cigarettes as the soldiers prepare for the executions.

OFFICER (cont'd)
Firing party - present arms!
Firing party - ready! Aim!

Bachler and the prisoners close their eyes. some pray out loud.

There is a mind-shattering noise of gunfire and airplane engine.

Blood splashes all over Bachler. The singer's body explodes. Police and soldiers lose limbs, people are screaming as the aircraft blasts overhead out of nowhere, low, shooting at anything.

(CONTINUED)

The wall behind the prisoners falls down revealing an empty street, a woman's body and a child half-buried in the rubble, clouds of brick dust.

Bachler stands numb. There is no sound.

He wipes the singer's blood from his face as the sound of men screaming returns. He stumbles away, through the hole in the wall. Whistles blow and shouts ring out as he starts to walk, then to run, as fast as he can, breathless, sobbing, away from the prison yard.

He dodges around the first corner. A MAN ON A BICYCLE nearly runs into him. Bachler grabs the handlebars, shouts at the man. The sound is muzzy, a fuzz-tone obliterating almost all sounds.

The man lays down his bicycle and moves towards the prison wall. Bachler picks the bike up and pedals away in the opposite direction, shakily. As fast as he can.

31 EXT., VILLAGE STREET, EVENING

Outside Hannah's house the SWING KIDS disperse in ones and twos. One or two horse-drawn carts drive down the street. People sweep steps, closing up the few shabby shops, getting off the street before dark.

Otto and other men are making their way by different routes to the village hall. A MAN goes out of his house and a few seconds later a WOMAN lets ANOTHER MAN in the door, furtively looking around.

Janni walks along the street, whistling a Swing tune (Johnny Mercer - Accentuate The Positive). His clothes look too city for this country place, in his fedora and big chequered jacket and cravat, too hipster for the 1940s.

JANNI

(sings)

You've got to accentuate the
positive, Eliminate the negative
And latch on to the affirmative
Don't mess with Mister In-Between

As he passes Koch, Janni whistles the tune to the Horst Wessel, then a few steps on changes the tune back again. Koch shakes his head.

JANNI (cont'd)

Good evening Herr Koch.

KOCH

Janni.. You weren't singing that
filthy Negro music, were you?

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

Me Herr Koch? No Herr Koch.
Certainly not.

KOCH

Just make sure you don't.
Führer's orders.

JANNI

I wouldn't dream of it, Herr
Koch. Is Swing music illegal,
Herr Koch?

KOCH

No. It ought to be. The Fuhrer
doesn't like it. Get off home,
Janni. Say hello to your aunt
from me.

JANNI

Certainly Herr Koch. Anything
else I should tell her from you?

Janni grins and walks away faster. As soon as Koch is out
of sight he sings again.

JANNI (cont'd)

(sings)

You've got to spread joy up to
the maximum/Bring gloom down to
the minimum/Have faith or
pandemonium's/Liable to walk upon
the scene.

Janni turns the corner and comes face to face with a group
of uniformed HITLER YOUTH KIDS blocking the pavement. The
leader steps forward.

HITLER YOUTH BOY

You! Halt! You're in the Hitler
Youth!

JANNI

What about it?

Janni stops, slowly. Hands in his pockets. Still
whistling. Weighing up his chances.

HITLER YOUTH BOY

Are you singing Swing music?

JANNI

I'm not singing anything.

HITLER YOUTH BOY

Don't get clever. You were
singing that Jew whining noise!

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

I can only hear one whining noise
around here.

Janni runs. The Hitler Youth kids chase him through alleyways. One gets close and as JANNI turns a corner he stops and trips him, kicks him before runs again. They're close now.

Janni turns down a narrow alleyway. It's practically a footpath. He hears Swing music coming out of a window. He's out of breath and slowly realises the alley is a dead end. Trapped.

The Hitler Youth kids stop. Janni turns to face them. He picks up a broom handle lying in some garbage, along with a dustbin lid.

One of the Hitler Youth kids takes his knife out of its sheath. Another unties his belt and wraps it around his fist.

Janni whistles the same Swing music he can hear faintly in the alley, softly then louder. There is anti-Nazi graffiti chalked on a wall, the words "Eternal War On Hitler Youth."

A SWING KID pops his head out of an alley window. Then another. The faint music suddenly stops mid-track.

SFX: Boys whistling a Swing tune.

Doors open in the alley behind the Hitler Youth kids. Swing Kids emerge from behind piles of rubble and garbage, from sheds, with bicycle chains, pieces of wood, half bricks and walk as one towards the Hitler Youth kids.

It's a trap. Janni lead them to this.

Both sides fight viciously but the Swing Kids beat the Hitler Youth kids up badly. It's not clear whose side Janni is on in the massive fight.

The combatants run off.

Janni spits out a tooth. There is a pool of blood on the ground, but not from him.

FRANZ picks Janni up.

FRANZ

You'll have to get a gold tooth,
Janni!

JANNI

Lucky I'm not Jewish then!

(CONTINUED)

FRANZ

That was good work, Janni.

JANNI

It wasn't.

FRANZ

We beat them!

JANNI

I didn't do it for us. I'm in the Hitler Youth, remember?

FRANZ

So - so why did you help us?

JANNI

Because.

FRANZ

Because?

JANNI

Because they don't like Swing.

FRANZ

You lost a tooth for Swing music?

JANNI

The Gestapo hanged 12 Edelweiss Pirates in Cologne last year.

FRANZ

Well, they did kill the chief of the Gestapo, Janni!

The boys grin at each other.

JANNI

I don't know. I like it when we go camping with the Hitler Youth. And the singing. I like that. But - sometimes you feel like - like you can't breathe. You have to think one way and that's the only way. It's alright sometimes, like when we're making a fire or swimming races or something like that.

FRANZ

I won't do it. A lot of us won't do it, Janni.

JANNI

Maybe that's why I lead them here then.

(CONTINUED)

FRANZ

Did you try to set us up?

JANNI

No, stupid! Because I don't like people telling me what I can sing. Because I thought if I was part of it then they'd look after me. And they only do if you think their way, all the time. And I can't. I don't want to.

FRANZ

Your Dad's in Russia, isn't he?

JANNI

I - I don't think he's anywhere, any more.

FRANZ

Going home? I mean -

JANNI

I won't ever be going home to Hamburg. Our house was bombed out. My mum -

FRANZ

Yes. Sorry. I meant -

JANNI

It's alright. Aunty Hannah's. Not like this. Let's go to the barn.

FRANZ

Your Aunty Hannah -

JANNI

In your dreams!

The two boys brush each other down and walk slowly out of the alley. Janni tries to whistle but his missing tooth stops him.

FRANZ

You reckon we could fix up that old radio in the barn?

JANNI

We couldn't.

FRANZ

Oh!

JANNI

I could though!

(CONTINUED)

FRANZ & JANNI

(sing)

You got to ac (yes, yes)
-cent-tchu-ate the positive,
Eliminate (yes, yes) the
negative, And latch (yes, yes) on
to the affirmative. Don't mess
with Mister In-Between. No, don't
mess with Mister In-Between.

32 EXT., RURAL ROAD, LATE AFTERNOON

Bachler cycles through a ruined rural landscape, his hands close together. He is still wearing handcuffs.

SFX: Buzzing noise over every sound.

At a ruined house metal reinforcing bars poke upwards out of concrete. Bachler stops the bicycle. He uses the metal bars to lever apart the chain links joining the handcuffs.

There is no other traffic on the road.

He rides on, to a bigger road. He stops.

He listens hard, scanning the sky. A ragged column of WEHRMACHT SOLDIERS shambles towards him. Only a few have guns. They look hungry, some are injured.

BACHLER

Hey! What unit are you?

The column ignores him, keeps walking. ELSNER looks at Bachler, the only one who does.

BACHLER

(muttering) They won't know

- (aloud)

Which way is Bremen?

ELSNER

Which way are the Russians?

SOLDIER

Get down! Take cover!

A German jet fighter rockets along at tree-top level. Everyone dives into the ditches at either side of the road. Bachler is pressed up against the rest of the soldiers, all trying to hide.

SOLDIER (cont'd)

The Miracle Weapon!

(CONTINUED)

SOLDIER 2

One airplane. Big miracle.

A ragged cheer for the German aircraft. And a lot of angry shouting. A SCREAMING SOLDIER runs out into the road, shouting at the sky, shaking his fist at the departing jet.

SCREAMING SOLDIER

Where were you? Where were you,
Luftwaffe pretty boys? Where were
you when we were being chopped up
in Russia? Where were you when we
had to swim the Volga?

Elsner breaks cover and rugby-tackles the screaming soldier then pushes him to the side of the road, hugging him, pushing him on top of Bachler, lying on him to stop him from running away.

ELSNER

Help me hold him!

Bachler grabs the screaming soldier. It takes both of them to hold him.

BACHLER

Which way is Bremen?

ELSNER

I don't know. Family?

BACHLER

Yes.

ELSNER

Don't know. North, but where from
here I don't know. Which way are
the Russians?

BACHLER

I don't know. I told you!

ELSNER

I do. Everywhere that way.

BACHLER

The Americans? The British?

ELSNER

The way we're going.

SOLDIER

Joining up with the Amis is
better than a trip to Siberia.

(CONTINUED)

ELSNER

Surrendering to the Amis is
better than a trip to Siberia.

WEHRMACHT SOLDIER 2

You won't get to Siberia, mate.
They'll do what we did in Poland.

WEHRMACHT SOLDIER 2 mimes putting a pistol to the
screaming man's head. He cocks his thumb, drops it.

WEHRMACHT SOLDIER 2 (cont'd)

Bang! I did. Ivan will. The Amis
won't. Maybe. Best chance we got,
anyway.

The sound of the jet fades. Two Allied fighter airplanes
come into view, not gaining on the German jet - it's far
too fast for them.

The whole group ducks and keeps still.. As the aircraft
pass the screaming soldier tenses.

The airplanes turn slowly. Everyone watches them from the
ground, then they return, firing on the men hiding.

The screaming soldier flails about, trying to run, eyes
wide, screaming, his whole body stiff. Bachler and Elsner
hug him tighter.

The sound of the airplanes fades slowly away. The soldiers
slowly get up from the ditch. Everyone except the
screaming soldier. Bachler bends to take the pulse in his
throat. There isn't one. There are no apparent wounds on
the dead man. His eyes are wide open.

ELSNER

Shell-shock.

The group gathers what belongings they have and shamble
off in the direction the aircraft came from. Bachler looks
at the dead body.

ELSNER (cont'd)

Might as well, mate.

Bachler looks puzzled.

ELSNER (cont'd)

His coat. Take his coat for
Chrissake!

Bachler takes the long coat from the dead man and sees
there is no wound, no blood.

(CONTINUED)

ELSNER (cont'd)
He won't need a coat now, will
he?

Elsner studies Bachler.

ELSNER (cont'd)
Here. Swap.

Bachler looks confused. Elsner takes off his own coat and holds it out. An SS coat.

ELSNER (cont'd)
You're taller than me.

Bachler slowly takes his new coat off and exchanges it, puts on the SS coat. Elsner scrutinises the dead man, looking around carefully. He looks into the dead man's tattered back-pack. He pulls out a scarf and puts it on, pulls out half a loaf of bread and offers half of it to Bachler, who takes it gingerly.

ELSNER (cont'd)
Get used to it. You don't know
when you're going to eat again.
Not now it's like this.

BACHLER
But in Hildesheim -

ELSNER
Hildesheim's flat, mate. RAF
bombed it.

Elsner is still going through the dead man's pockets. He pulls out a letter and some photos, reads them.

ELSNER (cont'd)
You said Bremen. You're going to
Bremen.

BACHLER
Yes?

ELSNER
So was he. Make sure these get
there?

Bachler takes the letter and photos, looks at them.

BACHLER
Yes. When?

ELSNER
When what?

BACHLER

Hildesheim? When was Hildesheim
bombed?

ELSNER

Month ago. It's finished. We're
going home. All of us.

BACHLER

But the penalty -

WEHRMACHT SOLDIER 2 readies his gun and points it at
Bachler. The other soldiers look on.

WEHRMACHT SOLDIER 2

It's finished. This war - the
only thing is how you finish. You
can get off home. You can
surrender to the Amis. The
Russians can put a bullet in you.

ELSNER

Or the Gestapo.

WEHRMACHT SOLDIER 2

You know what? I reckon he's
Gestapo. Or Kettenhunde.

ELSNER

He's not Gestapo.

WEHRMACHT 1

Kettenhunde? Does he look like
he's hunting down deserters?

Wehrmacht soldier 2 considers Bachler standing before him.

ELSNER

He'd have his own coat if he was
Gestapo -

BACHLER

I wouldn't be wearing handcuffs
if I was Gestapo. Or Kettenhunde.

The soldier turns away as if he's forgotten what he was
going to do, shoulders his gun and starts walking. The
others follow, leaving Bachler standing with the dead man,
the wind flapping his coat in the empty roadway. Elsner
turns and shouts over his shoulder as he walks away.

ELSNER

When it's cloudy it's safe to be
on the road.

Bachler looks confused.

(CONTINUED)

ELSNER (cont'd)
When it's cloudy - the planes.
The Amis can't see you.

Bachler looks in the direction the airplanes disappeared.

BACHLER
But that one did.

ELSNER
It's not a perfect world!
Normally they can't see you.

BACHLER
Yes. OK. Thanks.

ELSNER
Why don't you know this?

BACHLER
I'm Pay Corps. At Sarstedt.

ELSNER
The base.

BACHLER
The base. Paying everyone's
wages. I'm an accountant.

ELSNER
Come on if you're coming!

ELSNER (cont'd)
Good luck -

BACHLER
Yes. Good luck.

The Elsner starts to salute, but thinks better of it
half-way through.

ELSNER
It's over now.

BACHLER
I think it is. Once we get home.

ELSNER
Yes. Once we get home.

BACHLER
What's your name?

ELSNER
Helmut Elsner.

BACHLER

Oskar Bachler.

Both men shake hands and fall silent. After a while Elsner turns without speaking and walks away. He does not look back. Bachler picks up the dead man's pack and walks to his bicycle. The wheel is bent. He leans the destroyed bicycle carefully against a telegraph pole at the side of the road, shoulders the backpack and walks away in a different direction in the empty grey landscape.

SFX Aircraft engines overhead, artillery in the distance as the wind picks up, gusting into the microphone.

33 INT., OTTO HORST'S HOUSE, NIGHT

Otto and Klara sit listening to the radio in front of the fire. He reads, she mends a pair of trousers. The room is tidy but shabby.

SFX: Faint jazz sounds over the sound of the radio news .

Otto looks up at the radio. Klara doesn't.

KLARA

Frau Schenck's barn. Again.

Otto goes to the window. He dims the oil light and opens the curtains just a little. Chinks of light shine from the barn across the street.

OTTO

Doesn't he know?

KLARA

He should. You've told all the children often enough. That Darkie music. It's against the law.

OTTO

Those kids.

KLARA

It's not those kids. It's the Schenck boy, Janni. He's a bad influence.

OTTO

It's too loud. Everyone will hear them.

KLARA

That boy runs wild without a father.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO

Well it's not as if he ran away
and left them, is it?

Otto pulls the curtain and puts the oil lamp up a little
as he and Klara look at the black and white picture of a
young man in Wehrmacht uniform on the mantelpiece.

OTTO (cont'd)

He gave the same - as our boy.

Klara stops sewing.

KLARA

Say his name, Otto. Willi. Our
son Willi.

OTTO

Our son, Willi. The war has come
to too many people in this
village.

KLARA

Otto -

OTTO

I know. Deutschland Über Alles.

Klara resumes her sewing.

KLARA

Of course.

The clock ticks. We can see the tidy, shabby room, the
solid furniture, as if it will be the same forever.

KLARA (cont'd)

You'd better go and stop that
noise before that boy gets
himself in trouble.

OTTO

Again.

KLARA

Go on.

Otto puts his jacket on and kisses his wife as he goes to
the door.

OTTO

Yes. (Pause) Yes. I'll go and
break up the party. Pack Frau
Schenck's boy off home to bed.

(CONTINUED)

KLARA

And Otto? Mind that's all you do
at Frau Schenck's!

Klara is smiling. Otto winks at her.

KLARA (cont'd)

Don't be too long. There's
something I'd like you to do
here. If you're not too tired
after your visit.

OTTO

I'll be right back.

Otto leaves the house.

34 EXT., VILLAGE STREET, NIGHT

It's a fine, clear Spring night. Otto walks across the
road and peers through the gaps in the planks of the barn
set back from the road.

35 INT., BARN, NIGHT

Peering through the chinks in the wood Otto can see Janni,
Franz and other BOYS play Swing music inside the barn.
They have socks stuffed in the horns, an accordion, a
tea-chest bass. It's still too loud. Other BOYS are
smoking and passing a 1940s pin-up magazine between them,
marvelling at the not-very-pornographic pictures of women
in swimsuits. Otto walks quietly to the door and slips
inside, creeps up in the shadows to where the boys are.

FRANZ

We should wire up an amplifier.
Then we could play Swing records.
As loud as they're supposed to be
played at.

JANNI

On a wind-up gramophone?

FRANZ

Just the sound. You put a
microphone next to where the
sound comes out.

JANNI

Then you'd need an amplifier.

FRANZ

From a radio that doesn't work.
You could do it Janni.

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

I think I could, if I had an old
radio for parts.

FRANZ

I saw how to do it in a
magazine. I'll show you -

JANNI

You? I know how!

Otto steps out from his hiding place.

OTTO

Hands up!

The boys are terrified. They try to hide the magazines,
stand-up, try to pretend they weren't playing Swing. One
or two launch into another tune but it dies out in a few
notes.

Janni drops his cigarette. The boys stand in silence.

Smoke starts to curl up from the floor where the straw has
started to smoulder. Otto walks swiftly over to the
smoking straw and grinds it out with his foot. He grabs
Janni by his ear, hard.

OTTO (cont'd)

Looking at pictures of naked
women - normal. Smoking in the
barn. Stupid. Making prohibited
music so other people can hear
you. Illegal and stupid.

JANNI

Sir -

Otto twists Janni's ear harder. It's meant to hurt and it
does.

OTTO

Smoking in a hay barn? You might
have come from the city but you
were born with more sense than
this, Janni. Party's over. Tom,
Peter, Willy, Ulli. You all see
me tomorrow afternoon, after
school. This is not over and done
with. It will not happen again.
If you set light to the barn the
animals starve. Then you starve.
This is how life works. Home!
Now! Not you Janni.

Otto holds Janni by the ear until the other boys have
gone. Then he lets go.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO (cont'd)
Janni. Think. Just think before
you do things.

Janni holds back tears.

JANNI
Yes, sir.

OTTO
Janni - do you know what
Edelweiss Piraten means?

Janni shakes his head.

OTTO (cont'd)
I think you do. The kids who like
Swing music too much. Do you know
what happened to them in Cologne
last year?

Janni shakes his head again, frightened now.

OTTO (cont'd)
They hanged them Janni. The
Gestapo rounded them up and
hanged them.

JANNI
But sir, it's only music.

OTTO
Yes. It is. But that's not how
the Gestapo see it. Or Hitler, or
lots of people. It's the same as
the zoot suits, the lapels on
your coat, your long hair - it's
rebellion. It looks as if you're
opposing the Nazi Party. And that
is not sensible. At all. If they
rounded you up Janni (pause) if
that happened - how would your
aunt cope on her own?

Otto pauses to let this sink in.

OTTO (cont'd)
Pack all this stuff up and hide
it. You know you're not allowed
to make this type of music.
They'd make your aunt suffer as
well if they caught you. Now get
off home.

Janni moves to pick-up the magazine.

OTTO (cont'd)

Ah, not that. Confiscated. Unless you want your aunt to see it?

JANNI

No sir.

OTTO

Get on home, Janni. It's OK. But hide any records I haven't seen. And if you make that amplifier you were talking about don't play Swing on it where anyone can hear it. Do you think you could make one?

JANNI

If I had a radio to use some of the parts sir, yes. I've still got some valves I could use. I brought them with me.

OTTO

They can hear you across the street as it is without one. Just be sensible. For your aunt. (Pause) Have you - have you heard anything?

JANNI

No, sir.

OTTO

(pause)

Maybe there will be news. Keep hoping, Janni. Keep your father in your prayers.

JANNI

I do sir. Sir, my father sir. He could still be alive, couldn't he? He was only posted missing, not killed.

OTTO

He could be. It was - Stalingrad, wasn't it? There was a lot of - disruption. A lot of units got split up. I know that. Go on home now, Janni. And have more sense one day, hey?

JANNI

Yes sir.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO

Go on.

Janni slinks out of the barn, turns left towards home. As soon as he turns the corner he hides. Otto makes sure the straw is not smouldering.

He switches off the light before he opens the door. He looks over towards the Schenck house, then walks back to his own front door. He takes one last look at the barn and the Schenck house then goes inside.

Janni makes sure Otto has gone and the street is quiet, then walks away, singing "Elmer's Tune" quietly to himself.

36 EXT., ROADSIDE, EARLY EVENING

Bachler plods along the roads. Turning a corner onto a straight stretch of road he keeps under cover of the trees.

A shot-up car is in the ditch, near another stand of trees. Bachler checks for aircraft. There is no sound but the wind.

As he gets nearer the car he can see a UNIFORMED WOMAN and two MEN IN UNIFORM are lying inside. Bachler checks the sky again then runs forward to help. All three are very dead.

The car is smashed beyond repair.

SFX: Distant artillery fire.

There are flashes on the horizon visible against the coming night. Bachler senses he is being watched. He looks around, concentrating on the trees.

BACHLER

Hello?

The only sound is the wind and the distant guns.

BACHLER (cont'd)

If there's anybody there get on out here now and help.

Bachler looks in the destroyed car again. There's a gun lying there. He picks it up and makes sure it's loaded, cocks the weapon and holds it ready. Suddenly he sees a SOLDIER standing under a tree.

BACHLER (cont'd)

You! Over here, now!

(CONTINUED)

The soldier doesn't move. Bachler raises the gun to his shoulder and aims it at him.

BACHLER (cont'd)
Over here now! Get those legs
moving! That's an order!

The soldier stands exactly where he was, half visible in the darkening cold evening. Bachler looks around uncertain. He keeps the gun ready as he walks towards the soldier standing at the edge of the clump of trees. Bachler approaches the unmoving soldier, slowly realising that he's quite dead, tied to the tree, staring ahead with his eyes open.

Bachler turns away. Boots bump against his head. Two other DEAD SOLDIERS hang from the trees, each with a placard hung around his neck. Bachler reads the placards aloud.

BACHLER (cont'd)
I have been hanged here because I
am too cowardly to defend the
Reich.

Bachler reads the placard hanging on the other body.

BACHLER (cont'd)
I have been hanged because I did
not believe in the Fuhrer. I am a
deserter and for this reason I
shall not see this turning point
in history.

The wind blows. The night seems to close in. Bachler hesitates.

Then he checks the dead men's pockets. Nothing there.

He starts walking again, looking over his shoulder, up at the sky as he walks on into the night.

37 INT., RUINED HOUSE, DAYBREAK

Bachler lies curled up on a sofa, asleep, his coat over him, a cosy orange glow lighting him.

The room only has three walls and half a roof.

The orange light comes from wood still burning in the wreckage of a nearby house. Slowly the sky grows brighter.

An airplane streaks overhead and Bachler wakes up with a start. The shadow of the wings falls over him.

The sky is clear and blue. He lies still, eyes wide.

(CONTINUED)

As the sound of the airplane fades an army motorcycle rider passes in the street. The sound of that fades too as Bachler gets off the sofa and pulls his coat around him. He goes into the ruined kitchen and tries the tap.

He drinks, washes his face and looks for something, anything, to carry water in. An old bottle has to do. He fills it and puts it in his pack. He looks in the smashed cupboards for something to eat. He rummages through a drawer and finds a knife he uses to open a tin, eating off the knife.

He washes the knife under the tap, rummages through the drawer, puts a can opener, a fork in his pack. He goes to the cupboard and takes tins and puts them in his pack, along with a ball of string.

In the ruined hallway a coat lies in the rubble. Bachler picks it up then drops it. There is an arm in one of the sleeves. The rest of the body is the other side of the hallway.

Bachler leans against the wall. It collapses. The ceiling sags above him. Coughing in the dust he grabs his pack and leaves the house, walking on, anxiously watching the sky.

Several airplanes can be heard in the distance. One can be seen in the sky, too far away to see whose it is.

38 EXT., ROAD UNDERPASS, A BRIGHT CLEAR DAY

Bachler walks along the road.

SFX: Aeroplane engines diving and zooming and the sound of automatic gunfire.

Bachler runs into the trees at the side of the road. He tries to see what's happening.

One Allied airplane flies in a wide circle above, the other Allied plane dives on a road bridge down a hill.

SFX: Aircraft diving. A motorcycle engine starts up. The engine revs.

A German DESPATCH RIDER guns the motorcycle engine, races to the side of the bridge away from the aircraft putting the bridge between him. The airplane that starts shooting at him.

The despatch rider stops the bike at the other side of the bridge. The airplane climbs, turns, then comes back the other way.

The despatch rider waits, then races his motorcycle to the other side of the bridge. Huge bullets smash chunks of concrete into the air.

39 INT., AIRPLANE COCKPIT, DAY

MONTAGE: The airplane speed indicator, the PILOT's thumb on the gun button, the juddering of the horizon as the guns fire, a fixing screw rattling loose, dust, a discarded pencil flying up in the cockpit.

The airspeed indicator loses 50mph each time the guns go off. The aircraft's nose dips as the speed falls away as the guns fire.

The pilot catches the plane on the stick and opens the throttle wide before it falls out of the sky in a stall.

40 EXT., SKY, DAY

The airplane climbs away and turns one more time in the big, empty sky. The other airplane circles.

41 INT., AIRCRAFT COCKPIT, DAY

The pilot looks at the dials in front of him. He clicks his radio switch as he looks up and around.

PILOT 1

Echo Four, Echo Four I can't get a clear shot at him without stalling out. You have to go in slow because of the bridge, then you lose too much airspeed as soon as you touch the guns. You want him?

PILOT ECHO FOUR (V/O)

Low on fuel skipper. Really low.

PILOT 1

Looks like it's Jerry's lucky day. Plot a course home while I say goodbye to him.

42 EXT., UNDERPASS, DAY

The despatch rider sits on his motorcycle under the bridge, watching, ready to accelerate as the aircraft dives at him again. This time it comes in low and slow, making sure of its aim.

The motorcycle races to the safe side of the bridge away from the aircraft. This time there is no gunfire.

As the aircraft passes over the top of the bridge it waggles its wings in salute. The two aircraft form up on each other and turn for home low over the fields. As they go the despatch rider waves.

(CONTINUED)

The sound of the engines fades.

Otto breaks out of the cover of the trees. He runs down the embankment to the autobahn towards the despatch rider.

They talk. The rider shakes his head. Bachler speaks again, then gets on the back of the motorcycle, sitting backwards.

The pair ride away, Bachler watches the sky for airplanes. Dark clouds are coming in.

43

EXT., OPEN ROAD, AFTERNOON

The motorcycle runs along empty roads, passing occasional smashed vehicles. The engine is loud, drowning other sounds out.

In villages people are using horses and carts and bicycles. Bachler keeps watch for aircraft. They take cover when any appear. The motorcycle runs slowly, to avoid the debris on the road, bricks from ruined buildings, tree limbs shattered by gunfire and the lines of people huddling together in woodland.

The bike has to stop several times to let people pass. Some are REFUGEES, OLD PEOPLE, CHILDREN with one toy left from their home. Some are SOLDIERS, guarding starving PRISONERS walking the roads in columns. When a PRISONER stumbles and falls, unable to walk any further a GUARD shoots him at the side of the road. The body is kicked into the ditch. Nobody even looks interested. Everybody looks hungry.

More refugees dig with their hands in a field, eating potatoes raw when they find some. When they hear airplanes again run back under the nearest cover.

The airplanes shoot at anything on the road. A horse and cart is caught out in the open and shot to pieces, dust and stone chippings and pieces of cart and horse blasted into the sky by the hail of enormous bullets.

The joyous young PILOT smiles. His RAF aircraft pulls a Victory roll as it swoops away. The noise of the aircraft fades.

Bachler and the rider push the motorcycle back onto the road in a small group of DESERTERS emerging from the trees.

BACHLER

Can't we do something to stop
this?

(CONTINUED)

DESERTER

What with?

BACHLER

The miracle weapons -

DESERTER

You see any miracles here? No.
Wait. I'll show you a miracle
weapon. Listen. Can you hear it?

The DESERTER looks to the sky with Bachler, cupping his ear.

DESERTER (cont'd)

Shush! There you are! You see?

BACHLER

There's nothing there.

DESERTER

That's where you're wrong. The
Fuhrer said so. If a plane in the
sky is silver, it's American. If
it's blue, it's British. If it's
invisible, it's ours.

A troop of fully-armed GERMAN SOLDIERS walks along the road escorting a train of horses carrying munitions. They meet unarmed GERMAN SOLDIERS at a cross-roads. Soldiers from the horse train dump the boxes off the horses - ammunition and grenades spill out onto the road.

A lone MILITARY POLICEMAN raises his gun at the deserters. Two soldiers club him to the ground with their rifles. An OFFICER steps forward but thinks better of it. Half the horse-train soldiers pull the horses on and continue towards the front. The rest join the column of DESERTERS and move off in another direction. Bachler and the despatch rider are alone with the body of the military policeman.

DESPATCH RIDER

Kettenhunde. Chained dog. Only
one use for him.

BACHLER

What do you mean?

DESPATCH RIDER

Get the ID tag off him. Nobody's
going to ask any questions if
you're wearing that.

BACHLER

That's true. But -

(CONTINUED)

DESPATCH RIDER

No butts. Use your head. And don't throw your weight around if you're outnumbered. Especially when everyone hates your guts.

The despatch rider spits on the body.

DESPATCH RIDER (cont'd)

....Like this idiot.

The despatch rider bends and takes the big metal ID plate on its chain off the man's neck. He gives it to Bachler.

DESPATCH RIDER (cont'd)

There you go. Instant promotion!

BACHLER

How?

DESPATCH RIDER

Wear that and you outrank anyone in any service with the same rank as you. Even an SS Captain has to do what you say, Captain.

BACHLER

I suppose -

DESPATCH RIDER

And get rid of it fast if you see the Russians. They'll shoot you on the spot if they see it.

BACHLER

Yes. I heard that.

DESPATCH RIDER

Take the opportunities when you can. Sometimes you can't. The trick is knowing when. But you never know that till afterwards.

Bachler and the despatch rider ride on to a cross-roads. They can't decide which way to go. Bachler gets off the bike. The engine stops.

DESPATCH RIDER (cont'd)

Good luck.

BACHLER

You too.

DESPATCH RIDER

I'm going to travel by night. No airplanes at night.

(CONTINUED)

BACHLER

You can't see where you're going,
either.

DESPATCH RIDER

I don't know where I'm going
anyway. Does it matter any more?

BACHLER

Yes. I'm going home.

DESPATCH RIDER

It'll be safer for you to only
move at night too. The
Kettenhunde are shooting people
on sight if they don't have the
right papers.

Bachler touches the big ID tag around his neck.

BACHLER

Yes. But I've got the badge.

DESPATCH RIDER

Sure! You're catching on! You
make your choices, don't you?

BACHLER

We all did.

RIDER

You reckon? I don't remember
there being a choice.

The despatch rider watches Bachler walk away as evening
gathers. The motorcycle won't start. The despatch rider
takes the cap off the petrol tank, shakes the bike from
side to side. There is no petrol. He walks away.
Bachler walks on into night, curling up in a barn in a
field. It's too dark to see what else might offer shelter.
It's starting to rain again.

44 EXT., VILLAGE, LATE MORNING

Koch comes out of the bakery loaded with bread for the
soldiers.

An SS Jeep appears in the distance running on a flat tyre.

The soldiers grab the bread, get into the few vehicles
that still run and drive away quickly.

The SS pull into the village square. Allied planes are
still audible in the distance. Villagers look nervously at
the SS and equally nervously at the sky.

(CONTINUED)

The SS deploy in a defensive position around the square in a hurry, guns ready. There are only four of them. They look as if they're going to shoot anything that moves. The SS SERGEANT sees Koch, waves him over to the Jeep urgently.

SS SERGEANT
You! You're in charge here?

KOCH
Well, I'm head of the police here.

SS SERGEANT
Who's the Volkssturm leader?

KOCH
Well -

SS SERGEANT
Who?

KOCH
Herr Horst.

SS SERGEANT
And the Hitler Youth?

KOCH
Herr Horst. This is only a small place.

SS SERGEANT
These trucks - where are the drivers and men?

KOCH
They left. Just now. I thought -

SS SERGEANT
Don't. You've got a bigger job to do. Where is this Herr Horst?

KOCH
Over at the school.

SS SERGEANT
Show me.

KOCH
Sir?

SS SERGEANT
The Americans will be here in an hour. The Fuhrer requires this village is defended to the last man. Come with me.

The SS sergeant and Koch walk across to the school. Two SS MEN follow on while another changes the wheel on the Jeep. The SS walk straight in to the school.

45 EXT., RURAL LANE, LATE MORNING

Bachler walks past a field on the edge of a small wood, down a hilly lane into the village square. The big Military Police badge hangs around his neck on its chain. His coat is exactly like the coats the SS are wearing.

He doesn't see that there are SS there until it's too late.

46 INT., SCHOOLROOM, LATE MORNING

OTTO is at the blackboard, leading a class. He looks up alarmed as the door is thrown open violently. So do the children in the class. Otto looks at Koch, who looks equally uncertain.

SS SERGEANT
Herr Horst?

OTTO
Yes?

SS SERGEANT
You're in charge of the
Volkssturm and Hitler Youth here.

OTTO
I am.

SS SERGEANT
Duty calls. Parade your troops in
the square. Ten minutes. All of
them. Bring shovels. This is not
an exercise.

OTTO
The Americans?

SS SERGEANT
Will be defeated by the armed
force of this village.

Otto takes a deep breath. The children are uncertain, some excited, some afraid.

OTTO
Yes. Elspet?

An older girl steps forward.

(CONTINUED)

ELSPET

Yes sir?

OTTO

Elspet, take all the girls - girls, stand-up! Elspet, make sure all the girls go home and stay there.

ELSPET

Sir?

OTTO

Make sure everyone stays there. Be quick.

ELSPET

Sir, what's happening?

OTTO

I think - I think it's the final battle.

A murmur runs around the room. Some of the bigger boys are excited. Some of the girls too, but most of the children are confused, scared.

JANNI

Sir?

OTTO

Yes, Janni?

JANNI

Here in the village sir?

OTTO

I think so. Elspet, go. Quickly. Make sure every one of you girls gets home. And stay there.

ELSPET

Yes sir. Come!

All the girls line up, the smallest shepherded to the front, then in a crocodile line they walk out of the school to their homes. There is silence as the door closes behind them. Otto takes the centre of the room.

OTTO

Quiet! Let us pray.

The boys clasp their hands and bow their heads, eyes closed. Janni and Franz peek open their eyes. The picture of Hitler stares down at them all from the wall. Otto thinks deeply, very conscious of the SS in the room with the children.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO

There is very much we have to make good before our own history and before our Lord God. Once his Grace was upon us and we were not worthy to keep it. In this dire need we learned to pray once more. We learned to respect one another. We believed in the virtues of a people. We tried again to be better. So there arose a new community that cannot be compared with the people that lie behind us. It has become better, nobler. We feel it. The Grace of the Lord God now turns again at last towards us, and in this hour we fall on our knees and pray the Almighty to bless us and to give us strength to endure the struggle for the freedom and the future and the honour and the Peace of our People and of all mankind. So help us God.

Otto looks at the SS in the room. Their heads are bent in prayer, eyes closed.

OTTO

When we speak of God we do not mean a man as the Christians believe. We do not mean a man like us, somewhere sitting on a cloud. We mean a one-ness, a force governed by natural law, the force that makes the planets move. This is the one-ness we call God. It is everything. It is everywhere. It is in all of us and in all things. And it is more than all of us and more than all things. This universal force cannot be moved by naivety or self-interest. It cannot trouble itself about the destiny of each individual being. It cannot be moved by one person's prayers. Because it is all of us. It is ourselves, in our entirety. It is all of us. And God is with us today.

The SS check their watches, edgy. Otto sees the movement.

OTTO (cont'd)

God's will - will be done.
Remember boys, young men, you are

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OTTO (cont'd)
 the protectors of your country.
 Your village. Your homes and your
 families, And God is with us. The
 brave men of the SS will lead the
 defence of our village.

The two SS exchange glances as the boys file out of the schoolroom.

OTTO
 Two ranks. Into the square and
 form up. Remember, every nation
 and every individual is being
 weighed in the balances, and
 those found wanting will fall.
 God will be a just judge.

Otto brings up the rear. One of the SS gives him a sub-machine gun. It contrasts oddly with his civilian clothes, his tie.

SS MAN
 Nice prayer.

OTTO
 The Führer's own.

Everyone files out of the room. Otto casts a last look around the schoolroom, looks back directly at us as he closes the door.

47 EXTERIOR, VILLAGE SQUARE, MID-DAY

On the hill Bachler sees the SS gathered. There is nowhere else to walk except towards them. The SS are pre-occupied; one salutes Bachler, he nods in return.

SS MAN
 Captain.

BACHLER
 The Amis?

SS MAN
 About five kilometres last we saw
 of them. On their way. How many
 are with you?

BACHLER
 It's just me.

The boys pile out of the schoolhouse and gathering in small excited groups in the lane. Only their armbands show that they are Hitler Youth. They look very young.

(CONTINUED)

BOY
We're going to fight!

BOY 2
....throw them back into the sea!

The SS sergeant takes Otto to one side.

SS SERGEANT
How many boys in the school? Are they all here?

Otto looks over the schoolboys. He sees the faces of his comrades from the First World War, singing as they marched through a shattered landscape. Then the schoolboys again, in the present.

OTTO
Ten. That's everybody.

SS SERGEANT
And the Volkssturm?

OTTO
Six more men, when they get here. Janni! Pauli! Go and fetch Herr Axen. Tell him to get everyone into the square. Fast as you can! Make sure you get all of the Volkssturm here, every one of them.

Otto winks at Janni. Pauli and Janni smile at each other, excited and run off on their errand.

48 EXT., VILLAGE STREET, DAY

Janni and Pauli run up to a front door, out of breath.

PAULI
The Volkssturm! How are they going to help? Herr Auerbach must be eighty!

JANNI
You know! (Laughs) Why is the Volkssturm Germany's most precious resource?

PAULI
Because they have silver in their hair -

JANNI
- gold in their mouth

(CONTINUED)

PAULI & JANNI
- and lead in their bones!

The boys laugh as they knock on house doors in the street.
No answer at the first.

At the second house they knock on the door then look
through the window. The CHAIRMAN and his WIFE are lying
dead on the floor. Their DAUGHTER lies dead on a sofa.

Janni and Pauli race to the next house, scared. Looking
through the window the scene is the same there.

49 EXT., VILLAGE SQUARE, DAY

SS SERGEANT
How long are they going to be?
This village has to be held!

OTTO
We took an oath. We won't break
it now. How many Americans are on
their way? A platoon? A Division?

SS SERGEANT
Enough of them.

OTTO
Tanks?

SS SERGEANT
You have anti-tank weapons!

OTTO
No, we don't. This is just a
small village. We -

The SS sergeant sees Bachler and registers the rank badge
on his coat, the Military Police ID tag hanging around his
neck. He salutes.

SS SERGEANT
Captain?

BACHLER
Sergeant!

Bachler takes his only chance.

BACHLER (cont'd)
Give me a situation report. Come
on!

SS SERGEANT
Sir! Less than twenty Hitler
Youth and Volkssturm when they
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SS SERGEANT (cont'd)
get here sir. They say they don't
have any anti-tank gear.

The other SS wait for Bachler's orders.

BACHLER
Very good. They'll have to do.

SS SERGEANT
Take them up the field now sir?

Bachler is non-nonplussed.

BACHLER
All of them, Sergeant?

SS SERGEANT
Easier that way sir. Except two
of them aren't here. Rounding up
the old blokes in the Volkssturm.

Otto sees his memories of the last war spooling out like
an old film. Bachler tries to play for time.

BACHLER
Time for initiative, sergeant!

SS SERGEANT
Yes sir! Here!

The SS sergeant gives Bachler a rifle. Bachler looks at it
doubtfully. The SS sergeant thinks he has made a mistake.

SS SERGEANT (cont'd)
We can get you something better
at the bunker, sir.

The SS sergeant misinterprets Bachler's silence for anger.

SS SERGEANT (cont'd)
I'll get them all up to the field
now, sir.

BACHLER
The field?

SS SERGEANT
We'll take them all up there sir.
Sort them out.

Bachler is silent for a moment. The SS sergeant looks more
uncomfortable.

BACHLER
Carry on, sergeant.

(CONTINUED)

SS SERGEANT

The two other kids. They should be back with the Volkssturm. We can take care of them when they get back.

BACHLER

OK, do it. You!

Bachler points at one of the SS men.

SS MAN

Sir?

BACHLER

What are we doing?

The SS MAN pauses.

BACHLER

Now, man!

SS MAN

Sir! Get the kids up to the field. Double back here after, set up defensive positions. Sir.

BACHLER

So what are you waiting for? Move!

A few OLDER MEN walk towards the village square and a YOUNGER MAN on crutches.

The BOYS march out of the village square up the hill. The SS surround the BOYS. Otto stares suspiciously at Bachler then takes one last look around the village.

Allied aircraft are visible in the distance, diving on another nearby village.

SS MAN

Next village!

FRANZ

That's Asel! My aunt -

OTTO

Quiet Franz!

A distant bang. Everyone turns to look. A column of smoke rises on the horizon.

The boys move up the hill together, out of the village square.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO (cont'd)

Come on.

50 EXT., FIELD, MID-DAY

The four SS men, Otto and the schoolboys march into the field. The SS deploy, weapons ready.

Bachler stops. The SS sergeant orders the boys to start digging. It looks as if they're digging their own graves.

Otto remembers soldiers digging in WW1.

SS SERGEANT

You, you and you, here!

The boys dig until before their shovels clunk against the wooden panels in the ground.

The SS sergeant orders the boys to their knees - they scabble in the dirt with their hands. Franz feels something in the dirt, pulls it, stands and is about to reach down again.

A trip-wire from the wooden panel in the ground runs to a grenade.

An SS man pushes Franz out of the way, reaches down and detaches the trip-wire from the grenade fuse.

It's just a simple piece of thin wire. Franz reacts.

SS MAN

Get on with it.

Franz reaches down again and swings the wooden panel upwards.

Inside the hole the dirt falls in, black against the white sky. The boys look in. Their faces turn to wonder.

The SS sergeant shouts orders, two boys drop into the hole in the field, then they are ordered out.

An SS man runs over. He pushes the boys away from the hole then jumps in himself. The SS DRIVER runs out of the field, back down towards the village, gun at the ready.

An SS man appears in the hole. Wood splinters. He emerges carrying brand new guns and Panzerfaust anti-tank rockets. He orders the boys over and gives each a new weapon and ammunition.

(CONTINUED)

The SS Jeep drives back up the hill. The driver stays inside, his gun pointing out of the window, the engine idling. Bachler gets out of the Jeep. The SS sergeant gives Otto and Bachler new pistols. Bachler puts his into his belt. Otto puts his new gun in his jacket pocket.

The largest boy, ULRICH, carries a huge new machine gun over his shoulder and belts of bullets. The SMALLEST BOY holds a huge steel box full of bullets for the machine gun. The SS MAN in the hole smiles, clicks his fingers, reaches into the hole again and pulls a pistol from its cloth wrapping. He lays the cloth on the ground in front of him, as if it was an altar cloth,. He slides the pistol's magazine out of the handle then scoops bullets from a container in the hole still out of sight.

He thumbs bullets into the black metal magazine then slides it into the plastic handle of the pistol. His left hand smooths the slide of the pistol backwards out of habit, shuffling a bullet into the breech as he lets the slide spring forward.

The SS man leans towards the small boy. He holds the pistol next to his face, flicks the safety catch on the left side of the pistol upwards.

The SS man tenderly tugs the boy's belt away from his body and tucks the pistol into the gap between cloth and leather. He pats the pistol in its place the way he would reassure a horse or praise a dog. He ruffles the boy's hair, looks into his eyes and smiles again.

The boys and the few Volkssturm march back down to the village with their new weapons.

51 EXT., ROAD JUNCTION, DAY

The SS Jeep stops half-way down the hill at a side road. Keeping their weapons ready the SS men leave the field and get into the Jeep. Bachler hangs back as far as he can. In the far distance an American half-track appears. AMERICAN SOLDIERS are deployed around it, cautiously working their way forward along the lane.

SS SERGEANT
Captain! Americans!

52 EXT., VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS, MID-DAY

LT BOSCO, SGT CLICKER and soldier TRADER ride on the half-track vehicle. There is a huge gun on top of it. American soldiers fan out cautiously into skirmishing order either side.

(CONTINUED)

BOSCO
Ok. hold it!

SFX: The powerful half-track engine idles. Allied aircraft in the distance.

LT BOSCO
What can you see, Clicker? We don't want to lose this gun to some kid with a Panzerfaust.

Clicker climbs a tree and looks through binoculars. He shouts something inaudible. Bosco shakes his head, looks around to see if anyone else can hear. The GI DRIVER shakes his head, chewing gum, eyes fixed on the road. Bosco gestures Clicker down from the tree.

CLICKER
There's uniforms up on the hill. Little lane leads up from the village square. Couple of black uniforms and a Jeep.

BOSCO
SS.

Clicker shrugs.

CLICKER
Black uniforms.

BOSCO
Unless they've got a tank up there.

CLICKER
Didn't see any tank. Looked like just four, maybe six guys.

BOSCO
You sure there's no armour?

CLICKER
Nothing that I can see.

TRADER
Watch them Panzerfausts! Whoosh!
Bang!

BOSCO
I know about damn Panzerfausts!

TRADER
The anti-tank rocket even kids can use! Plenty of cover for them all the way up this lane, behind the wall.

(CONTINUED)

BOSCO

Cut it out!

Bosco scans the fields and the lane for places where he might be ambushed as the half-track moves into the village. There are a lot of them.

BOSCO (cont'd)

OK. Listen up.

The GIs gather around BOSCO. Clicker still watches the village.

BOSCO (cont'd)

We've got to make the best time we can. But I don't want anyone dying when they don't need to so

-

CLICKER

So why don't we just level the place?

Clicker pats the huge gun on the half-track.

BOSCO

Because it's just a village and -

CLICKER

The Jeep's moving out. Black uniforms with it.

BOSCO

This way?

CLICKER

Nope. Runnin' for it. Away from us.

BOSCO

Towards the Russians.

TRADER

Towards Switzerland.

The GIs laugh quietly.

BOSCO

Just because the SS have pulled out doesn't mean it's safe. Those Hitler Youth kids -

TRADER

Don't have to tell me about Hitler Youth kids.

(CONTINUED)

BOSCO

I know -

TRADER

Lucky I got him first. Little kid
with a Luger he could barely hold
in both hands. Blam!

Trader mimes shooting a pistol. Bosco is twitchy, nervous.
Not as combat experienced as he wants to be thought of.

BOSCO

OK, cut the chat. Tanner, take
your squad down that hedge line
to the bridge, come in along that
road. Trapper, take two guys who
can shoot straight and work up
through that woodland, come down
on the village from the hill.
Take a radio with you.

SGT TANNER gets his little team together and prepares to
move out.

TANNER

Reckon it'll work?

BOSCO

The radio? Not hardly. But it
might.

TANNER

It might. OK guys, move.

TRAPPER

Meet up in the village square?

BOSCO

You got it. Watch out for that
church tower. Keep an eye on
that.

TRAPPER

First thing I'll be doing
Lieutenant, don't worry about
that!

Bosco looks towards the village, tracking the route his
two teams and the half-track are going to take. There is
no movement in the church tower. Bosco swallows hard.

BOSCO

One shot.

GI

Sir?

(CONTINUED)

BOSCO

If we take one round we level the whole village, hear me? Don't leave a stone.

GI

Yes sir.

BOSCO

One round and we don't leave a house standing, got it? It's too damn late in this war to get killed for a little hick town like this.

GI

Suits me.

The GIs load the huge gun. There is a clang of metal as the driver shifts into gear, the engine revs noisily, black diesel exhaust plumes into the sky and hangs over the lane as the half-track moves slowly forward.

The GIs ready their weapons and follow, using the vehicle as cover, scanning every hedge and building, tense and ready to shoot.

53 EXT., IN THE LANE, MID-DAY

From their position in the road the SS, the boys, Otto and Bachler can see the sudden plume of exhaust from the half-track as it moves slowly forward. It's still a long way off.

SS SERGEANT

Get these kids in position!

Otto hesitates.

SS SERGEANT (cont'd)

What is your oath?

OTTO

I will be faithful and obedient to the leader of the German empire and people, Adolf Hitler, to observe the law, and to conscientiously fulfil my official duties, so help me God!

SS SERGEANT

Then get these kids where they ought to be!

The SS sergeant turns to Bachler.

(CONTINUED)

SS SERGEANT (cont'd)
Sir, we need to get out of here.

BACHLER is silent.

The SS sergeant turns to Otto.

SS SERGEANT (cont'd)
You - this village is to be
defended to the last bullet.
Understand? Any questions?

The SS are nervous, fingering the triggers on their
weapons.

SS SERGEANT (cont'd)
I said any questions?

Bachler takes control.

BACHLER
What is your oath, boys?

The boys raise their hands to make their oath, blindly
obedient, their voices ringing out young and pure.

HITLER YOUTH KIDS
I swear by God this sacred oath
that to the Leader of the German
empire and people, Adolf Hitler,
supreme commander of the armed
forces, I shall render
unconditional obedience and that
as a brave soldier I shall at all
times be prepared to give my life
for this oath.

There is silence for a moment until Bachler turns to the
SS sergeant.

BACHLER
Sergeant! Your oath.

The sergeant freezes at the authority in Bachler's voice.

BACHLER (cont'd)
Answer me!

SS SERGEANT
I will be faithful and obedient
to the leader of the German
empire and people, Adolf Hitler,
to observe the law, and to
conscientiously fulfil my
official duties, so help me God!

BACHLER
So you believe in a God?

SS SERGEANT
Yes, I believe in a Lord God.

The SS sergeant recites the SS oath automatically, with Bachler, as a call-and-response.

BACHLER
What do you think about a man who does not believe in a God ?

SS SERGEANT
I think he is arrogant, megalomaniacal and stupid; he is not eligible for us.

Bachler and the sergeant face each other. In the distance the American patrol advances towards the village. Bachler speaks more softly, almost confidentially.

BACHLER
Sergeant -

SS SERGEANT
Sir?

BACHLER
Get these men out of here.

SS SERGEANT
Sir?

BACHLER
I said get them out of here. Somebody has to lead this rabble.

SS SERGEANT
Sir -

BACHLER
Get out while you can. Go!

The SS look back down the hill towards the approaching American patrol, get into the Jeep and speed away to safety.

Otto and Bachler face each other.

OTTO
So - you're not going with them?

Bachler takes a good look at Otto.

(CONTINUED)

BACHLER

No. You're in charge of the
Hitler Youth?

OTTO

And the Volkssturm. Or are you?

BACHLER

Am I?

OTTO

Your collar badge says you're a
Captain, Captain. Your coat is
SS. Your ID tag says you're
Military police. You outrank me a
lot. Don't you?

BACHLER

The Americans have armour. If any
of us is going to get out of this
we're going to need to think hard
and fast what to do now. How many
kids have you got here?

OTTO

Sixteen. Plus the Volkssturm.

BACHLER

They've got one machine-gun, four
Panzerfausts.

OTTO

Four machine-pistols and the rest
rifles. They've all got grenades,
I think.

BACHLER

You think?

OTTO

I know.

BACHLER

It matters a lot.

Otto turns to the schoolboys.

OTTO

Franz, get the boys - all of you
- down to the square. Now. Line
up in fours when you get there.
At the double!

The boys move off down the lane towards the village square
leaving Otto and Bachler facing each other, neither
trusting the other.

(CONTINUED)

BACHLER

Where are the rest of the
Volkssturm?

OTTO

They should be in the square.
That was always the plan.

BACHLER

How many will be there?

OTTO

Good question.

BACHLER

You think they won't fight.

OTTO

I'm sure they will do their duty
to the best of their ability.

Down the hill more American tanks arrive to reinforce the
attack on the village. A column of three tanks advances
towards the river bridge, meeting Bosco's patrol there.

BACHLER

That changes things.

OTTO

Three tanks and that mobile
artillery.

BACHLER

Against four Panzerfausts and
your kids.

OTTO

I heard the Panzerfausts don't
always work.

BACHLER

How?

OTTO

Sabotage at the factories. Either
you pull the trigger and nothing
happens or they put sand in the
charge and it doesn't explode. I
heard, anyway.

Bachler and Otto look hard at each other.

OTTO (cont'd)

Look out!

An Allied airplane arrives out of nowhere, engine howling,
bullets ploughing up the earth and ricocheting off the
road and the stone walls either side of the lane.

(CONTINUED)

Bachler clutches his steel helmet then drops to the ground. Otto is covered in dust from the smashed wall. He shakes his head, checks he hasn't been hit, looks over at the motionless Bachler, makes up his mind and runs down the hill to the village square.

Bachler tries to get up but falls again. Alone, he starts to crawl towards the village.

54 EXT., VILLAGE SQUARE, AFTERNOON

All the boys are formed-up on parade in the village square, holding their brand-new weapons, weighed down by bullet bandoleers, badly-fitting helmets too big for them.

Even Ulrich finds it difficult to manage the weight of the machine gun. Next to him the smallest boy's trousers are sagging under the weight of the pistol in his belt.

Janni and Pauli arrive out of breath from running, excited.

JANNI

Sir!

OTTO

Where are the Volkssturm, Janni?

JANNI

We couldn't find them sir!

OTTO

I told you to go to their houses!

PAULI

We did, sir! Nobody answered the door! Except - except sir! Herr Schlieker - his house sir - his wife -

JANNI

I think they were dead sir.

OTTO

Dead?

55 EXT., HERR SCHLIEKER'S HOUSE, DAY

Janni and Pauli look through the window of Herr Schlieker's house to see the family has killed itself. The bodies flash into view like crime-scene photos in flashbulbs.

56 EXT., VILLAGE SQUARE, DAY

PAULI

They were lying on the floor sir.
They didn't move. And Elspet -

OTTO

What about Herr Fischer? Herr
Muths?

JANNI

I think they're all dead sir!

OTTO

What do you mean, they're dead?

JANNI

They didn't move sir. We knocked
as loud as we could. Elspet - she
was just lying there. I think - I
think they're all dead.

PAULI

They must have heard us, sir.

SFX: Faint sounds of AMERICAN TANKS squealing on the road
and the sound of their engines.

JANNI

We saw American tanks, sir!

OTTO

How far are they?

JANNI

Down by the bridge sir. They were
stopped, talking to soldiers on
foot.

PAULI

Three tanks, sir. If we'd had a
Panzerfaust with us!!

OTTO

Fall in, now, both of you.

Janni and Pauli join the ranks lined up on parade in the
village square.

Otto looks over the ranks of boys. He looks at the little
valley, the village nestling under the trees.

There is movement in the woods at the top of the hill
where the THREE-MAN AMERICAN PATROL are working their way
to get clear fire down on the village.

(CONTINUED)

At the bottom of the hill the tanks have stopped. There are GIs ON FOOT talking, pointing to the village. Several Jeeps with machine-guns mounted on top arrive and come to a halt next to the tanks.

Otto makes his decision.

OTTO
Attention!

The boys snap to attention, alert and eager.

OTTO (cont'd)
As you know, the Americans are outside our village, which we must protect at all costs.

The boys listen intently.

OTTO (cont'd)
There are - Janni, Pauli, where is Herr Braun?

JANNI
We didn't see him sir.

OTTO
You went to his house?

PAULI
Yes sir. Both of us.

JANNI
There was no-one there, sir.

OTTO
There are at least three American tanks and artillery advancing on our village. As some of you know, as we saw earlier -

JANNI
Sir, where are the SS sir?

OTTO
They - they withdrew.

SMALLEST BOY
When are we going to fight the Americans sir?

OTTO
Quiet! Attention all of you!

Otto watches the boys at attention.

(CONTINUED)

OTTO (cont'd)
Are you prepared?

HITLER YOUTH KIDS
Yes sir!

OTTO
Are you ready to fight for the
Fatherland?

HITLER YOUTH KIDS
Yes sir!

Otto waits. He walks over to the largest boy, Ulrich.

OTTO
Present arms!

Ulrich presents the machine gun. Otto takes it from him, flips open the feed-cover, sticks his finger into the action and pulls it out again. He holds his finger up.

OTTO (cont'd)
Grease. Factory grease. Did a
single one of you check the
barrel?

The boys look one to another, uncertain.

ULRICH
Sir, there's no -

OTTO
Silence! How dare you talk back
to your commanding officer! You
think this is a game? Answer me!

Ulrich looks confused, abashed but he obeys his order.
Otto looks as commanding as he can.

ULRICH
Sir, no sir!

OTTO
Your weapon. Describe it to me.
Now!

ULRICH
Maschinengewehr 42 sir. 7.92 by
57 Mauser calibre. Range out to
2,000 metres, sir.

OTTO
Rate of fire?

LARGEST BOY

Rate of fire 1200 rounds per
minute sir.

OTTO

How often do you need to change
the barrel?

ULRICH

Every 250 rounds sir.

OTTO

Why?

ULRICH

Why sir?

OTTO

Why! What will happen if you
don't change the barrel over to a
new one?

ULRICH

Reduced accuracy sir.

OTTO

Why?

ULRICH

It'll get very hot sir. The
barrel, sir.

OTTO

And?

ULRICH

It'll jam sir.

OTTO

It'll jam sir. And it'll cook off
sir. It'll get so hot that the
bullets fire themselves, whether
they're in the barrel or not,
then your weapon is scrap metal.
And you won't have a hand or a
face.

ULRICH

Sir, yes -

OTTO

Shut up! Muzzle velocity?

ULRICH

Sir?

(CONTINUED)

OTTO

How fast do the bullets travel?

ULRICH

740 metres per second sir.

OTTO

A little basic physics for you, Ulrich. All of you! The bolt slides forward, the striker crushes the primer, the primer detonates the charge, the charge burns, the expanding gas propels the bullet. Yes sir?

ULRICH

Yes sir.

OTTO

How hot is the flame that propels a bullet? Tell me.

LARGEST BOY

I- I don't know sir.

OTTO

You don't know, sir. What happens when a 7.92 bullet travelling at 730 metres per second hits a barrel blocked up with grease?

ULRICH

I -

OTTO

It slows down. A pressure wave builds up in the grease that makes a ring bulge in the barrel. There won't be any accuracy after that. But it does something else as well. What does it do?

LARGEST BOY

I don't know sir.

OTTO

It slows down so much the one behind it goes into the back of it. Then the one behind that goes into the back of them. If you pull the trigger with a barrel full of grease your gun will explode. Did you learn nothing? It won't kill the Americans. It'll kill you. Not one of you checked the barrel. Not one!

(CONTINUED)

JANNI

We still have grenades and our knives, sir!

OTTO

Show me! Put the guns down. Put them on the ground, now. Let's see what we've got.

The boys put their new guns on the floor.

OTTO (cont'd)

Attention. Eyes front!

The boys stand to attention again.

Otto thoughtfully picks-up one of the guns and walks along the ranks of boys. He walks behind Ulrich, then stops for a moment.

Otto swings the gun at the boy. Ulrich drops like a stone.

Otto swings the gun again, hitting boys in their arms, in their legs, avoiding hitting their heads. The magazine falls out of the gun and Otto throws it away, punching and kicking the horrified, crying boys.

Otto is screaming, sobbing with effort as he punches boys in their arms and backs.

OTTO (cont'd)

Stand still! Stand to attention!

The boys try to stand up as Otto hits them until he is the only one standing in the middle of the village square among the sobbing boys.

The noise of the tanks is much louder now.

Otto hauls the boys to their feet. He rips the Hitler Youth armbands from their sleeves.

OTTO (cont'd)

Get home! Get off home now!

JANNI

But sir -

OTTO

You want to save Germany?

JANNI

Yes sir!

OTTO

Then live for her! What use are you dead? Get home! Get home, all

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OTTO (cont'd)
of you. Leave every weapon here.
Now! Get out of here. The Amis
are going to kill every last
person in this village if any one
of us fires a shot! Move! That's
an order!

Otto rips grenades and knives from the sobbing boys belts. He throwing the weapons as far as he can, kicking the boys away until he is the only person standing in the square.

He wipes his face clean of tears and snot and tries to get his breath back.

Janni staggers away from the square sobbing, stumbling into a run as he moves towards the barn.

57 INT., BARN, AFTERNOON

Janni moves painfully up the stairs of the barn. He rummages through the straw, disturbing his cat lying there in the winter sunshine. There is no bandage on her leg now. She's a healthy-looking cat.

JANNI
Sorry, Gitta. You have to move. I
have to do this.

Janni brushes straw off a wooden box. Wires are sticking out of it. The wires cross the ceiling, along the rafters and out of sight.

Janni connects the wires to two terminals on the box and plugs the box into the light socket hanging from the roof.

Janni looks out of the window as Braun appears in the village square.

58 EXT., VILLAGE SQUARE, AFTERNOON

Braun walks purposefully, determined.

BRAUN
I heard the Volkssturm were
needed in the -

Braun stops talking, stares at Otto wild-eyed, taking in the guns littering the ground.

BRAUN (cont'd)
This is our defence against the
Americans?

(CONTINUED)

OTTO
Our defence is to live for
Germany.

BRAUN
Coward!

Braun picks up a Panzerfaust and backs away from Otto,
looking over his shoulder.

BRAUN (cont'd)
You can stand there and let them
trample us into the dust. I'm not
going to.

OTTO
It's done. (shouts) It's
finished. Can't you see that?

BRAUN
You had more guts last time.

Bachler appears behind Braun, bleeding from a head-wound.
Bachler grabs the weapon Braun holds but he's slow,
stumbling. Braun grapples with Bachler.

SFX Tank tracks and engines.

59 EXT., VILLAGE STREET, AFTERNOON

An American tank approaches the village through a narrow,
walled street, making for the village square, directed by
the tank commander standing half-out of his turret.

60 INT., TANK HULL, AFTERNOON

The tank driver peers through a slit in the tank armour
ahead of him. The engine noise is deafening.

All he can see is narrow lanes between houses, a glimpse
of the village square the other side of a high wall.

AS the tank gets closer to the wall nothing else is
visible.

The tank driver is sweating, tense. He wears headphones.

The tank-driver's headphones crackle.

TANK COMMANDER
(distorted)
Put it through. Just put it
through the damn wall! Keep it
moving! You want to sit here
until some damn kid sneaks up and
cooks us? Keep it moving!

The engine revs as the tank lurches forward towards the wall.

61 EXT., VILLAGE SQUARE, AFTERNOON

Bachler and Braun grapple for the Panzerfaust. Bachler is losing, slowly, inevitably.

The wall behind them disintegrates.

The tank smashes through, burying them both in the rubble.

The half-track roars up the lane, blocking any exit from the square.

Otto stands calmly, unarmed, surrounded by tanks and American soldiers with their guns trained on him.

The only noise is the tank engines idling.

Bosco dismounts from the half-track and approaches Otto, covering him with his gun.

The soldiers fan out around the square. More soldiers appear at the top of the church tower, covering everything in sight. Otto carefully notes all of this, keeping still.

BOSCO
Kameraden Sie?

OTTO
I speak some English. I surrender
the village to you.

White bedsheets are appearing out of windows. Hannah hangs a white towel out of an upstairs room.

BOSCO
You do, huh?

OTTO
Without condition.

BOSCO
That's big of you.

Bosco keeps his gun pointing at Otto. He shifts his grip on it as he fishes in his pocket for a soft-pack of cigarettes, tips one into his mouth.

He puts the packet back in his pocket, takes out a Zippo lighter and lights up. The smoke from the cigarette drifts over towards Otto.

(CONTINUED)

BOSCO (cont'd)
You're the Burger Mister?

OTTO
Headmaster.

BOSCO
So where is everyone?

OTTO
The town council and the
Volkssturm are unaccountably
absent. Apart from Herr Braun.

Otto looks dispassionately at the rubble of the wall.
Bosco follows his gaze.

BOSCO
Absent?

OTTO
Not here.

BOSCO
Soldiers? Any soldiers in this
village?

OTTO
No. Not now. I - I haven't tasted
Virginia tobacco for a long time.

Bosco throws his cigarette to Otto and lights another.

OTTO (cont'd)
Thank-you.

BOSCO
Turn your pockets out.

OTTO
Of course.

He takes out his wallet, a piece of chalk, spectacles,
then hesitates.

Otto's hand touches the pistol forgotten in his pocket. He
freezes.

Bosco sees Otto's hesitation.

62 INT., BARN, AFTERNOON

Janni makes the last connection to an electrical circuit,
next to his cat. He turns away to wind something
furiously, unseen.

He flicks a switch. Nothing happens.

(CONTINUED)

He winds the handle of a wooden box rapidly again.

Flicks the switch again.

Still nothing.

Janni moves as quickly as he can back out of the barn into the village square.

63 EXT., VILLAGE SQUARE, AFTERNOON

Bosco is ready to shoot as soon as he sees Otto's hand leave his pocket. Otto stays very still.

Janni sees what's happening. He hides.

Soldiers approach Otto and Bosco's stand-off, guns at the ready, staking out the area at the run.

The tank gun swings round, aiming at the barn, and Janni's cat in the open doorway on the second floor.

Janni moves out of cover so everyone can see him.

The soldiers' guns swing onto Janni.

There is an odd sound, a crackle, loud, from the barn. All heads turn.

Then a blast of Swing music from a loudspeaker.

64 INT., BARN, DAY

A wind-up gramophone plays a 78 record spinning in the loft of the dusty barn.

Wires lead from the amplifier in the box to the salvaged speakers.

65 EXT., VILLAGE SQUARE, DAY

All eyes are on the barn, tension dissolving as the Swing music blasts out into the village square.

Janni sings as he walks forward, his hands above his head towards Bosco and Otto. Tears run down his cheeks.

Bosco shakes his head, reaches into Otto's pocket. He pulls the pistol out and puts it into his own pocket.

A tattered, tired, unarmed German soldier walks into the village. As he sees the Americans he puts his hands up.

(CONTINUED)

Hannah screams. She puts her hands to her face, then runs towards the German soldier, hysterical. He smiles. She throws herself past the Americans surrounding him and puts her arms around him.

The old record player runs on, the stylus stuck on the last groove, the click and hiss of the record amplified oddly.

66 INT., 1970S LIVING ROOM, SUMMER EVENING

This is a nice room. Modern, clean, comfortably well-off. A record spins on a contemporary turntable, with the SCHENCK makers name clearly visible.

A YOUNG COUPLE enter the room. The guy looks towards the record player. Swing music is playing. The guy pulls a face.

YOUNG GUY
Nice deck. Pity about the music.

YOUNG GIRL
Shush!! He'll hear you!

He looks around the room. Above the record player there are pictures of the younger Janni, in his Hitler Youth uniform. The young man recoils.

GIRL
It's not what you think.

GUY
And this is your dad?

The girl nods.

The older Janni walks into the room. The young couple freeze, embarrassed. An older Hannah hurries in.

HANNAH
Janni!

OLDER JANNI
He did hear you.

A long silence. The young guy looks more embarrassed.

OLDER JANNI (cont'd)
This music that you don't like saved my life once. Let me tell you how.

FADE TO BLACK.