

THE LAST KNIGHT OF BOHEMIA

Written by

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Note on spoken language: all scenes in native language.
Dialogue involving Americans and between Roman and Father
Anders in English.

BLACK SCREEN

WHITE TEXT ON SCREEN:

IS IT GOD THAT MAKES ONE BURN TO DO BRAVE THINGS, OR DOES EACH OF US MAKE A GOD OF HIS OWN FIERCE PASSION TO DO THEM?
Virgil, The Aeneid

TEXT SUPERIMPOSED on graphic showing the post War World II countries of Europe. Germany is shown divided by the American, British, French and Russian sectors. An expanding RED colour depicts the expanse of the Communist Bloc and the Iron Curtain.

ROMAN (V.O.)

In 1945, after the end of World War II, Germany was defeated. The remaining Nazis went underground and the Allied victors carved Germany into different sectors under their control. Few countries suffered as much as mine, Czechoslovakia, during its Nazi occupation. My words can not do justice as to how much we despised them.

The following years saw an ever increasing expansion of the Communist countries, the Soviet Union. This was orchestrated from Moscow by Joseph Stalin. I watched with dismay as Czechoslovakia fell the same way. The West and the Soviet Union would be separated by a heavily fortified border known as the Iron Curtain which ran along Bohemia, my home, Czechoslovakia's western territories.

My story starts at the beginning of this Cold War and right on its frontline. But like many others I am now displaced. Those post-war years were a time for flight. For countless numbers who found themselves under the crushing oppression of Communist rule: thoughts, dreams and attempts to escape to the Free World, to The West...and to Scandinavia.

Based on true events.

FLASHFORWARD

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MALMÖ, SWEDEN - DAY

SUPER: **MALMÖ, SWEDEN WINTER 1952**

A cramped interior, basic altar, simple adornments on the white walls and a line of PARISHIONERS wrapped in winter clothes waiting outside the confessional booths.

A White Light is illuminated above a door and a parishioner goes in.

ROMAN ŽIDEK (early 30s, lean, hooded eyes and haunted look) is sitting in the front pew on the far side casting pensive glances at the booths and the queue.

In the queue a WOMAN (40s) gives him a look of pure CONTEMPT.

LATER

Fewer parishioners waiting.

A Swedish priest, FATHER ANDERS (30s, benign appearance) opens his door and looks out to see how many are waiting.

He notices Roman - Roman looks away quickly.

LATER

Longer shadows, evening light falling in through tall windows and dust motes hanging in the air. The White Light is on. Roman is alone and facing the altar.

Father Anders sits next to Roman.

Long beat.

FATHER ANDERS
Every week you're here, Roman.
Close to God.

He gestures to the altar.

FATHER ANDERS (CONT'D)
But not us mortals.

He edges closer.

FATHER ANDERS (CONT'D)
They don't like you.

The Priest smiles.

FATHER ANDERS (CONT'D)

They tell me you were in the Czech
secret police and sent many to
their deaths for Stalin.

Roman eyeballs him.

ROMAN

They are right.

END FLASHFORWARD

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Western Bohemian countryside: rolling verdant fields, pine forest and lakes under a clear blue sky and blazing sun.

SUPER: CZECHOSLOVAKIAN BORDER WITH ALLIED OCCUPIED GERMANY 1948

An enlarging DARK SPECK swoops into view - an EAGLE flying towards us, in front of the sun, wings wide as it glides.

SUPER: ONE MONTH AFTER THE COMMUNIST TAKE-OVER

A 100m wide clearing through the pines separating the CZ Tree Line and the German Tree Line - the other side and safety for those trying to escape to The West.

At regular intervals of approximately 500m there are basic wooden WATCHTOWERS, large painted numbers at their base, which run along the middle of the clearing, the Mid Point, manned by Watchtower Guards.

A man, ADAM (30s), appears at the CZ Tree Line. He sets down a suitcase he is carrying and edges forward, cautiously looking both ways: WATCHTOWER 8 is 200m away and empty, in the other direction a distant WATCHTOWER 9.

Wind rustles the trees and birds sing.

He looks back into the Forest. Following him a distance behind are his wife, JANA(30s) and his mother-in-law, IVANA (60s), who is complaining to Jana out of earshot.

Adam turns back to The Border and smiles.

EXT. CZ TREE LINE - DAY

Four armed CZ Border Guards crouch behind a fallen tree facing a Watchtower in the distance. They wear nettle-green uniforms with red shoulder epaulets and peaked caps.

Alone at point is a more assured-looking and confident Roman, a rifle at his side. He looks over his shoulder at WATCHTOWER 7 nearby, then at the others.

ROMAN (V.O.)

I was a border guard. And my
brother and I were in the wrong
place.

A few meters behind him is PETR ŽIDEK (late 20s, rakish and charismatic) following his brother's movements.

Further back the other two in low conversation: MAREK (18, a shock of curls) lighting a cigarette for HORA (30s and big).

Roman glances at the plume of cigarette smoke, shakes his head and gives Petr a wry look.

ROMAN

Marek. You said between seven...
(points to far watchtower)
And eight?

Marek's face flushes. He takes a moment to answer.

MAREK

Yes, Captain.

Petr and Hora turn on Marek. Unnoticed by them, Roman immediately gets up, rifle in hand, and runs along the CZ Tree Line towards Watchtower 8.

PETR

You got it wrong again!

MAREK

Maybe eight and nine.

Hora walks past Marek and away in the opposite direction from Roman.

HORA

You get a tip-off you write it
down.

MAREK

Petr, your brother.

Petr and Hora swing around as Marek stands up. The EAGLE'S SHADOW falls over all three of them.

Roman running hard with the rifle slung over his back.

PETR
Roman! WAIT! LET THEM CROSS!

EXT. THE BORDER - MIDPOINT - DAY

Adam stands in the middle of the clearing, halfway to the German Tree line. He turns slowly around.

He faces the CZ Tree Line where a smiling Jana and a vexed Ivana stand by the suitcase Adam left.

ADAM
Just the birds, Ivana.

Adam points to the empty WATCHTOWER 8 then beckons them forward.

IVANA
(to Jana)
I told him a hundred times. Czech guards can only see pilsner and sausage.

JANA
Humour him.

IVANA
Humour my bloody knees.
(shouts - sarcastic)
Well done, Adam.

Jana's son, MARTIN (14), wearing a flat cap, emerges from the trees behind them carrying rucksacks and eager to join his father.

Ivana catches him, he's taller than her by three inches, and leans on his arm.

IVANA (CONT'D)
(to Jana)
Go. Go on, Jana.

Jana glances both ways along the border before picking up the rucksacks and leading them across.

EXT. THE BORDER - TREE LINE - DAY

Roman runs past WATCHTOWER 8. He stops about 20m further on and unslings his rifle, places it on a boulder and uses his binoculars to scan ahead. Far behind the others are running, strung-out, red-faced and panting.

Petr followed by Marek and then Hora stagger past two WATCHTOWER GUARDS, semi-automatics slung over their shoulders and jolly after a liquid lunch.

PETR

How nice of you to join us. Did they run out of beer?

WATCHTOWER GUARD #1

Out hunting?

WATCHTOWER GUARD #2

No rabbits here.

MAREK

We got a tip-off--

HORA

--he didn't write it down.

MAREK

--family going to cross over.

MIDPOINT

Adam and Jana have reached the German Tree Line, standing next to a big boulder. Ivana and Martin are half way when she starts to cry. They stop. Martin looks at her knees.

MARTIN

Just a bit further, Granny, then you can rest.

She looks back at the CZ Tree Line, overcome with emotion.

CZ TREE LINE

Petr arrives at Roman's side. In the background the Watchtower Guards amble to the base and start to climb the ladder attached to Watchtower 8.

WATCHTOWER GUARD #1

Wait till we get up!

WATCHTOWER GUARD #2

(laughing)

If we get up.

ROMAN

There!

He hands the binoculars to Petr who looks.

BINOCULARS' POV: Ivana and Martin walking slowly to the German Tree Line. With every other step Ivana is obscured by Martin.

The binoculars scan right to see the strained expressions of the Adam and Jana in the dense tree line, partly obscured by a big boulder.

PETR

Less than ten meters.
(he shrugs)
They're over.

A SHOT!

Marek has fired. He stands beside them with a raised hand gun and gunslinger stance.

PETR (CONT'D)

(to Marek)
Jesus! Who told you to fire? Fucking idiot!

MIDPOINT

Martin pulls instinctively at Ivana's arm.

IVANA

It's just a warning shot.

ADAM

Well, heed the warning!

Ivana gives him a stern look. Jana elbows Adam's arm to silence him.

JANA

Good boy, Martin. Quick as you can.

CZ TREE LINE

Petr looking through the binoculars. Hora panting and barely able to raise his weapon and a chastened Marek reholsters his weapon.

PETR

Less than five meters now. I can get a description for the report but--

A BURST of automatic fire. An arc of dirt flies into the air 20m ahead of them.

EXT. WATCHTOWER 8 - DAY

The two Watchtower Guards with machine-guns leveled. Both start FIRING again with poor control over their weapons.

WATCHTOWER 8 POV: Petr, Marek and Hora back away towards the cover of the forest whilst eyeballing the Watchtower. Roman lies prone over a large boulder, rifle aimed along the border and in the direction of Ivana and Martin. More earth explodes into the air from the machine-gun fire but the shots land well short of Ivana and Martin.

Watchtower Guard #1's machine gun jams and he struggles to clear the barrel.

CZ TREE LINE

Roman in prone position with rifle, complete poise.

More machine-gun fire from the Watchtower, a SHORT ROUND hitting the trees above Petr, Marek and Hora who scatter, dive for cover, then shout at the Watchtower.

PETR HORA MAREK

Hey! Stop!

ROMAN'S RIFLE SIGHT POV: Ivana and Martin are two steps away from safety - the big boulder and the dense tree line. Every other step Martin obscures Ivana.

PETR (O.S.)

Surrounded by drunken fucking
idiots.

In the chaos Petr looks at Roman.

ROMAN'S RIFLE SIGHT POV: The cross hairs hover over Martin's head which rises to obscure Ivana's. Ahead of them Jana and the Adam's arms are outspread. One last step.

PETR (CONT'D)

Roman! Don't!

Roman fires a SINGLE ROUND. Martin's flat cap flies upwards. Roman reloads and realigns his sight.

ROMAN'S RIFLE SIGHT POV: Martin is alive in Jana's arms. The cross hairs hover over the ashen face of Adam then move up to a tree trunk. A further SINGLE ROUND hits the tree trunk.

Adam tries to drag a shocked Jana and Martin away as they stare at a lifeless Ivana lying on the grass.

Romans lays the rifle down and meets Petr's aghast expression. Marek and Hora are equally shaken.

HORA
(to Petr)
You have to ring Prague.

Roman looks scared.

ROMAN
No!

MAREK
You have to, Petr.

Roman can't hold Petr's stare and looks away.

PETR
I know.

With his face turned away from them a ghost of a smile passes over Roman's face.

FLASHFORWARD

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MALMÖ, SWEDEN 1952 - DAY

Father Anders stares at him open-mouthed.

FATHER ANDERS
You shot her?

Roman looks away and Father Anders follows his gaze to towards a stained glass window depicting Christ's crucifixion.

ROMAN
I met the evil himself. I sat this close, closer. And danced to his tune.

FATHER ANDERS
I recognise a man who is close to God when I see him.

Roman's hands grip his wooden bench, joints blanching and breathing ragged.

ROMAN
I was.

A WOMAN PARISHIONER enters from the side of the altar. Roman and Father Anders register her shocked look on seeing them together before she hurries out.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
They know what I was. StB.

FATHER ANDERS
StB?

ROMAN
Czech secret police.
(hollow laugh)
I was the last person... After the war, Petr was an idealist. There were many who saw communism as the answer. No more greed, no more war. Where Petr went... I kept an eye on him.

FATHER ANDERS
Why?

ROMAN
Like many things, Father Anders, it's part of my story.

FATHER ANDERS
Petr became a communist.

ROMAN
I followed to the meetings, nodded and said the right things. But I knew how dangerous it was.

Father Anders raises his eyebrows.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Nazis and the Reds - two sides of the same coin. Both an affront to God.

FATHER ANDERS
But you shot the old woman.

ROMAN
The devil was Doctor Dixu and his tune was Kámen.

Father Anders sits back, shakes his head. He's not following.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Kámen was the codename for a sting operation run by the StB.
(MORE)

ROMAN (CONT'D)

The order came from Stalin. And
Dixu wanted it bad.

END FLASHFORWARD

INT. PRAGUE - SECRET POLICE HQ - OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: **StB HEADQUARTERS, PRAGUE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA 1948.**

A room with dirty walls, a high ceiling and one small window. A framed profile portrait of Gottwald-Stalin-Lenin hangs on a wall.

DIXU (late 30s, small build, delicate features and boyish looks, intelligent and ruthless) sits on a chair, the room's only furniture, reading a black file embossed with a red star and **KÁMEN** on the cover.

Dixu LAUGHS and shakes his head.

DIXU
(to himself)
Kámen. Just brilliant.

A Soviet intelligence officer, LARKOV (50s), and the StB Chief, SLABIK (50s and hard-of-hearing) enter.

Dixu leafs through the file oblivious.

DIXU (CONT'D)
(to himself)
We'll harvest them all till our
field, our nation, is clean!

The older men share a look of disdain. Larkov walks toward the window and Slabik approaches Dixu.

SLABIK
Harvest?

Realising he is not alone Dixu half rises before Slabik gestures for him to sit.

DIXU
Chief Slabik.

Dixu's eyes are shining. His gaze returns to the file.

DIXU (CONT'D)
We'll... This is...

SLABIK
Dixu.

Dixu looks up. Slabik pointedly looks at Larkov. Dixu jumps up, the file pressed tight to his chest.

Larkov holds back a stained drape with a pen, his red flag lapel-pin catching the daylight, and looks out of the window.

LARKOV

Your border is a bad joke.

He looks down at:

LARKOV'S POV: THROUGH WINDOW - PRAGUE STREET - DAY

A hustling thoroughfare - cars, motorbikes, well-dressed denizens in sunshine.

BACK TO SCENE

Larkov smiles at them. Slabik cups a hand behind his ear, straining to hear. Dixu beams.

LARKOV (CONT'D)

Stalin likes the last laugh.

Slabik raises a finger and looks at Dixu gravely.

SLABIK

You need to understand one thing,
Dixu. If the Americans find out--

DIXU

--I want this more than anything.

An exasperated Slabik gestures again for Dixu to sit. Dixu obeys.

DIXU (CONT'D)

Until every little stone is
removed.

SLABIK

Comrade Larkov.

Larkov approaches Dixu.

SLABIK (CONT'D)

(to Dixu)

You stink of Prague and that's
worse than pig shit on the border.

Larkov puts his hands on Dixu's armrests and eyeballs him.

LARKOV
Moscow admires your enthusiasm,
comrade.

He leans in close to Dixu's ear. Slabik does likewise to hear.

LARKOV (CONT'D)
Your men, your neck.

SLABIK
Your life depends on how much they
fear for their own.

INT. SECRET POLICE HQ - STAIRWELL - DAY

Dixu smiles as he skips down an unlit stairwell.

DIXU
Just brilliant.

INT. SECRET POLICE HQ - CELLAR CORRIDOR - DAY

Rusty oil lamps hang on rough concrete walls. Dixu listens at a door, checks both ways, then opens the door and enters.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Dixu flips the switch and weak light reveals a cramped room with mops, tin buckets and, in a corner, a wooden cubicle with mop handles leaning against the outside. Dixu heads straight to it.

INT. STORAGE ROOM - TOILET - DAY

Dixu takes his jacket off, sits on the toilet seat and closes the door laying his jacket along the gap under the door.

DIXU
(contemptuous)
Men. Impressed by other men.

He thinks a moment then stands, pulls his trousers and underwear down, puts one hand on the toilet wall, and starts to masturbate.

CLOSE ON Dixu's focused stare.

STORAGE ROOM

Rhythmic TAPPING of a mop handle on the toilet cubicle wall. The mop handle falls to the floor.

TOILET

Dixu's face upturned with a rictus grin and bared teeth.

DIXU
I'm bursting to start.

EXT. PRAGUE STREET - DAY

Dixu crosses a street waiting for a tram to pass, then continues.

EXT. DIXU'S MEDICAL PRACTICE - DAY

Respectable Georgian townhouse on a boulevard.

INT. DIXU'S MEDICAL PRACTICE - DAY

Dixu enters into a professional office with several medical certificates on the wall. Dixu walks briskly past a row of three seated, well-heeled PATIENTS whose expectant looks he ignores along with his SECRETARY (20s).

He goes straight into his office and SLAMS the door behind him.

CLOSE-UP ON: DOOR - A brass plate reads **DOCTOR ALOIS DIXU**

INT. DIXU'S MEDICAL OFFICE - DAY

Dixu sits behind his desk holding the black Kamen file and a brown file. The former he locks in a desk draw, the latter he places on his desk.

CLOSE UP ON: BROWN FILE - "**POTENTIAL KÁMEN OPERATIVES**"

He opens the folder revealing fifty individual personnel files with photos attached.

A KNOCK at his door. Dixu is irritated and stares at the door. He waits.

A second KNOCK.

DIXU

Come!

The Secretary enters. She discreetly closes the door behind.

SECRETARY

I'm so sorry to disturb, Doctor,
but it's the test result from
Paris.

Dixu regards her blankly.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Madame Novotny. Her family...

The Secretary gestures to the waiting room. Dixu stares at her. He shakes his head and smiles.

DIXU

It's of absolutely no consequence.

Dixu dismisses her with a flick of his hand.

DIXU (CONT'D)

No time.

Aghast but cowed the Secretary retreats and exits.

Dixu's attention returns to the files. The first is Hora's which Dixu picks up. Then he notices Roman's picture which interests him.

FLASHFORWARD

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MALMÖ, SWEDEN - DAY

Father Anders is looking askance at Roman.

FATHER ANDERS

You killed an old grandmother. For
this devil? Dixu?

ROMAN

If there was another way to be
recruited into Kámen I would have
taken it.

END FLASHFORWARD

EXT. GERMAN SIDE OF BORDER - DAY

The supine Ivana stares at the sky.

A fragment of her skull dislodges and falls slowly away.

ROMAN (V.O.)

But at that moment...she had to die
for me to be noticed.

FLASHFORWARD

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MALMÖ, SWEDEN - DAY

Father Anders rubs his face and eyes.

FATHER ANDERS

What is Kámen?

ROMAN

It was the codename of a sting
operation--

FATHER ANDERS

(exasperated)

--How many people...how did it
work?

Roman gets up, begins to pace in front of the altar. It's clearly hard for him, he's willing himself to start.

ROMAN

At the start it gave them hope
before they even realised.

FATHER ANDERS

Realised what?

ROMAN

It was already too late, the trap
was set. They were human bait.

(hollow laugh)

Most never realised they'd been
played all along. That's how clever
it was.

(sighs)

All the lives they destroyed with a
telephone call past midnight.

END FLASHFORWARD

INT. PRAGUE APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUPER **ČAPKOVA RESIDENCE, CENTRAL PRAGUE**

CLOSE ON: MARIE (20s, demure and circumspect) her eyes open as a telephone RINGS.

Marie sits up in the bed alongside EMIL (20s, assertive and direct). They both stare at the ceiling as the ringing continues.

EMIL

Don't.

He rests a hand on her arm. Marie breaks away and rushes out.

EMIL (CONT'D)

Marie!

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The furniture and decor in the apartment are high quality.

Beside the telephone Marie steels herself before answering. Emil watches from the bedroom door.

MARIE

Čapkova...Hello?
(listening))
But--no--!

She listens before hanging up, looks bleakly at Emil.

EMIL

Damn them to hell!

MARIE

The same woman.

EMIL

Who works at the telephone
exchange?

Marie is staring at the phone. She nods.

EMIL (CONT'D)

Why does she call so late? Why does
she hang up?

MARIE

She's rarely alone. But there's
less people around at night.

(MORE)

MARIE (CONT'D)

She's worried about us, heard
rumours about you-
(directly at Emil)
-the StB, Emil.

EMIL

They're asking about all the newspaper
editors in Prague.

Emil reaches out a hand to console her. Marie shrugs it off.

MARIE

Before she hung up she said...
Alenka.

EMIL

Your sister?

Marie stares at him terrified.

EMIL (CONT'D)

Alenka's in the country, far away
from Prague. Far away from...

They stare at each other.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - PRAGUE STREET - DAY

Emil leaves the main entrance of their apartment block. The pedestrians are well-dressed, a few stately cars on the street, city hustle under bright sunshine.

A man, JOHNNY (20s handsome and calculating) moves out from a doorway and tails Emil.

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - DAY

Patrons reading newspapers or chatting, baristas busy behind a long, central, marble counter. Emil sat on a stool with his hat on a window counter drinking coffee as he reads a newspaper.

He flattens the pages out on the counter. A shadow falls over Emil. A folded note lands on the paper. Emil stares at it. He freezes, careful not to look up.

JOHNNY (O.C.)

Just read it, Emil. Best you don't
see my face.

Emil fingers the note.

JOHNNY (O.C.) (CONT'D)
For Marie.

Enraged, Emil spins around.

Two women conversing, two other men in conversation and a day dreaming, SMOKING MAN (30s) alone, staring out the window.

Emil barges forward through the women and men and yanks the Smoking Man around and grabs the lapels of his jacket.

SMOKING MAN
What the hell!

Johnny is sat at the central counter facing a mirror that affords a view of all this. He watches Emil intently.

EMIL
We won't play these games!

The Smoking Man looks bewildered. Everyone stares. It's a scene now.

EMIL (CONT'D)
We've done nothing wrong.

Unnoticed, the note falls out of Emil's hand.

Closed-off expressions amongst the customers as they edge away.

Emil flushes. Casting furtive looks around, he backs to the counter to retrieve his hat.

EMIL (CONT'D)
Nothing wrong.

As everyone stares, he exits in a hurry.

CLOSE ON - UNFOLDING NOTE ON FLOOR

Only the first part of the text is visible: ***The StB are closing in. Meet us-***

INT. PRAGUE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Emil enters and SLAMS the door. Sat with a letter in her hand, Marie is crying.

MARIE
They arrested Alenka.

Emil is horrified.

MARIE (CONT'D)

They even tried to drag Mamma away.
We've sent word, Papa's traveling
back from Paris.

She passes him the letter, goes to the window, stares out.

MARIE (CONT'D)

I can visit her next week.

EMIL

(off letter)

Says you'll be questioned with her.

MARIE

That woman, last night!

Emil pats and checks his pockets with mounting frustration.

EMIL

I know.

MARIE

(angry)

What do you know?

Emil realizes he's lost the note.

FLASHFORWARD

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MALMÖ, SWEDEN 1952 - DAY

Father Anders and Roman seated next to each other. Father Anders looks thoughtfully at Roman.

FATHER ANDERS

You will meet these young people.
And I suspect it won't be to their
advantage.

Roman stands suddenly and tries to compose himself.

ROMAN

Word had reached us that the
Larkov had approved Dixu. Everyone
said the same thing - Dixu was
shrewd as a rat, a doctor, very
clever. And he burned for
Communism. When the war started
Petr and I had joined the British
Army.

(MORE)

ROMAN (CONT'D)

And I'm half Jew raised as a Catholic. Reasons enough for him not to recruit me into Kámen.

FATHER ANDERS

But why in God's name? Why was it so important for you to be part of this Kámen?

Roman approaches Father Anders, staring with an unnerving focus. The intensity is such that Father Anders leans back.

ROMAN

Every breath, thought, muscle in my body. One goal.
(beat)
To stop it.

END FLASHFORWARD

EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE BORDER VILLAGE - DAY

A field edged by pines on one side and a wild apple grove on the other. At the top of the scene is a dirt track.

Petr takes a swig from a quarter pint vodka bottle. He stares off in the distance.

PETR (V.O.)

Roman! Don't!

He shakes his head and trouser-pockets the bottle before beginning to run in circles, mimicking a plane, shirt-tail flapping.

He encircles CILKA (20s, Roman and Petr are her adopted brothers, long red hair, free-spirited and naive) who laughs at him in the long grass, a book open on her knees, crucifix hanging from her neck.

ROMAN (V.O.)

I had very little time before Dixu arrived.

At the edge of the apple grove, hiding behind the tree, Roman is staring at Cilka. He wears brown boots, hiking trousers and a white vest. There's a violet bite-mark scar on one forearm and a leather strap around one wrist. His uniform hangs from a branch.

ROMAN (V.O.)

If he recruited me then my every move would be watched.

(MORE)

ROMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

My plan was to cross the border and
contact the American Secret
Service.

He picks up a handful of small stones. His gaze is intense as he edges closer to the clearing, squeezing the stones under the wrist strap.

ROMAN'S POV: He sees an APPARITION rise from the long grass beyond Cilka - a shaven-headed, naked Roman covered in hand-daubed black mud. In a low crouch this Roman edges forward, eyes fixed on Cilka, a shining blade in his hand.

BACK TO SCENE

Still running like a fighter plane, Petr flashes past between Cilka and the Apparition.

PETR

Cilka! My arse is on fire! I'm
going down.

She looks up directly at Roman, laughing. He's suddenly as fearful as she is surprised.

ROMAN (V.O.)

No one I loved could know. Not
Petr. Not the family who had
adopted us; sweet, trusting Cilka.
And, if you listen to my tale
you'll see, definitely not her
mother, Dagmar.

Roman hastily stuffs his uniform in a bag which he hides in the undergrowth before grabbing a jacket and rucksack. He pulls a flat cap over his head and sets off into the thick grove away from her.

Cilka runs to catch up with Roman.

CILKA

Wait! Roman!

Behind her a tractor and trailer comes along the track. Cilka's mother, DAGMAR (60s, hardy and canny with faded red hair) is at the wheel. On the trailer are a dozen boulders and rolls of barbed wire.

Petr arrives panting at the now stationary tractor as Dagmar watches Cilka run off.

DAGMAR

(to herself)
Where's Roman off to?

PETR
 Tell me, fair Dagmar, is this
 Czechoslovakia?

Dagmar gives him an irritated look.

PETR (CONT'D)
 Praise God. My fuselage was hit and
 I had to bail. Take me to your
 leader.
 (off the trailer)
 What's this?

DAGMAR
 Prague. Easy money.
 (shrugs)
 Time for work, fool.

EXT. APPLE GROVE - DAY

Cilka runs adeptly through the low, twisted apple trees which
 give way to the sturdy pine forest.

CILKA
 (to Roman)
 Wait!

EXT. STONE BRIDGE - DAY

Roman enters a clearing in the forest with a stream and stone
 bridge.

CILKA (O.S.)
 I haven't seen you since Christmas.
 Wait! You're always running away!

FLASHBACK

EXT. STONE BRIDGE - DAY

YOUNG ROMAN (9) runs with dirty bare feet over the stones. He
 trips.

YOUNG CILKA (7) runs into the clearing in a pretty dress.

YOUNG CILKA
 Roman!

Young Roman stands on the bridge, pale and malnourished, panting hard.

Young Cilka walks up the bridge towards him.

YOUNG CILKA (CONT'D)
What are you thinking?

Young Roman looks defiant with tears in his eyes.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. STONE BRIDGE - DAY

Roman stands in the middle of the bridge watching Cilka approach.

CILKA
What are you thinking?

ROMAN
The SS were burning villages for supporting the Partizans. There was an old woman who hid me under a water pump. She feed me goat's cheese pushed through the cracks in the slats.

He bends and slaps his boots.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
I wanted her boots.

CILKA
Yes. Another story from the war.

She steps closer and places her hands on his arms.

CILKA (CONT'D)
And I would still rather have scabies...in my fanny, than listen to another--

A smiling Roman breaks away.

CILKA (CONT'D)
Where are you going?

ROMAN
Mushrooms.

CILKA
You're full of shit, big brother.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

Roman skirts a lake as he checks his watch.

EXT. BORDER - DAY

Roman using binoculars to scan an empty Watchtower, hoists his rucksack, flat cap low over his eyes and walks across.

ROMAN (V.O.)

In those first days, the beginning, I was so certain. How could I not be? How could anything in this world stop me?

FLASHBACK

EXT. DAGMAR'S FARM - DAY

A modest two storey dwelling with a cellar. A prominent conservatory with large windows affording a view of the multiple animal pens along either side of the long dirt drive way.

Young Cilka is half-way along with Young Roman trailing.

INT. KITCHEN - DAGMAR'S FARM - DAY

Young Cilka leads Young Roman towards a large wooden table where a younger Dagmar and Cilka's Father, JOSEF (40s, kind and gentle) laugh at YOUNG PETR (7) in shabby clothes devouring soup and bread.

Josef lifts a spoon to Young Roman who stares back defiantly.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. GERMAN TREE LINE - DAY

Roman passes a small cross in the grass, a bullet-hole in a tree trunk and the big boulder where Adam and Jana had stood.

EXT. GERMAN FOREST - DAY

Water break. Roman leans against a MASSIVE ROCK inscribed with weathered script:

REGENSBURG 40M, MUNICH 150M, PRAGUE 130M, VIENNA 400M, PARIS 500M, ROME 600M

EXT. GERMAN ROADSIDE - DAY

Roman walks along a country lane, rosary beads in his hand, past a sign:

**WELCOME TO ALLIED-OCCUPIED GERMANY - AMERICAN
SECTOR/WILKOMMEN IM ALIIERTEN-BESETZTEN DEUTSCHLAND, IM
AMERIKANISCHEN SEKTOR**

EXT. EDGE OF APPLE GROVE - DAY

Cilka walks out onto the field.

CILKA'S POV: The tractor and trailer slowly traversing the field. Petr stands on the trailer as Dagmar instructs. He hefts up a boulder and on her command throws it onto the grass with a THUD.

DAGMAR

Stone.

Cilka tries to make out a gleaming sign on the rear-side of the trailer. As she gets closer she sees a SWASTIKA whitewashed over. Shielding her eyes in the sun she suddenly stops - on the long side a gleaming HAMMER AND SICKLE.

DAGMAR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Stone.

EXT. GERMAN HAMLET - DAY

A crossroad. Roman kneels to tie his laces and scans the area. Behind him a bicycle is propped against a fence.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Flames reflect off the bicycle frame. Roman crouches by a campfire and basic bivouac.

He lies down eating an apple under a spectacular, star-filled sky.

ROMAN (V.O.)

When we feel awe at the majesty of creation. Or if a lost soul should walk past your doors, look in and see you saying Mass, and find peace. All I ever wanted was to be close to that still point in a changing world.

(beat)

(MORE)

ROMAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But it's violence that has always
been at my heels, hunting me down,
another bloodied carcass in its
jaws and madness in its eyes.

Roman's breathing rate increases. His face muscles twitch.

FLASHBACK

INT. HAYLOFT - DAY

**SUPER: 1939 NAZI GERMAN ARMY OCCUPIES CZECHOSLOVAKIA AIDED BY
SUDETENLAND ETHNIC GERMANS WHO HAVE LIVED FOR GENERATIONS IN
CZECHOSLOVAKIA.**

A frantic TEEN PETR (17) and TEEN ROMAN (19) peer through cracks
in the wooden slats.

EXT. HAYLOFT - DAY

A unit of 8 SS SOLDIERS lead by their UNIT COMMANDER (30s) and a
Sudetenland Nazi, ELSTNER (40s) interrogate Josef by a hay
thresher. An ancient, twisted tree throws its shadow over the
yard.

ELSTNER

Where are they, Josef? I know you
look after those two Židek
bastards. A good Christian act. But
they're weak Jews. Nature's way.
Where are they?

Josef looks evenly from Elstner to the Unit Commander.

ELSTNER (CONT'D)

Christ, it pains me to speak this
Slavic gibberish.

Elstner slaps Josef's face. The Unit Commander rams the butt of
his weapon into Josef's midriff. Josef gasps.

JOSEF

Aren't you Czech like me, Elstner?

ELSTNER

I'm Aryan! Worth a hundred of you
dogs. A scientific fact!

The Unit Commander SHOOTs the ground at Josef's feet.

INT. HAYLOFT - DAY

Teen Roman pulls out a rusty revolver and they check the cylinder - TWO BULLETS.

Teen Petr jumps to reach an open window above them and fails. He drags a hay sack under the window and takes the revolver off Roman.

TEEN PETR

We'll take our chances in the camp.

Petr climbs up onto the hay sack and takes aim.

Roman body-slams him into the hay.

TEEN PETR (CONT'D)

You won't fight?

END FLASHBACK

EXT./INT. TRUCK - GERMAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY - DRIVING

An old German man drives. He looks inquiringly at Roman who rides shotgun, his rucksack next to him. Roman is lost in thought, staring out at the passing fields.

FLASHBACK

EXT. CZ TREE LINE - DAY

ROMAN'S RIFLE SIGHT POV: The cross hairs hover over Martin's head which rises to obscure Ivana's. Ahead of them Jana and the Adam's arms are outspread. One last step.

PETR (O.S.)

Roman! Don't!

Roman fires a SINGLE ROUND. Martin's flat cap flies upwards.

END FLASHBACK

EXT./INT. TRUCK - GERMAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY - DRIVING

Suddenly Roman SCREAMS and starts tearing at his hair and scratching the cheeks.

The truck wobbles as the startled Driver looks at Roman and momentarily loses control.

Battling to regain control of himself Roman grabs the rudimentary dashboard, takes slow, heaving breaths, then slaps his own face. He starts to cry, head covered by his arms, rocking his body slowly back and froth.

The Driver pulls over and stares dumbfounded at Roman.

Tentatively, the Driver reaches over and puts a hand on Roman's shoulder. Roman jolts like an electric shock passed through his body. He flings the door open, grabs his rucksack and jumps out and starts running away leaving the Driver in open-mouth shock.

ROMAN (V.O.)

My whole life I felt separate from everything else. I only ever wanted communion, with others, with God.

Along the roadside Roman slows to a walk, still crying and distraught.

FLASHFORWARD

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MALMÖ, SWEDEN - DAY

Father Anders is sat watching Roman who stands facing the alter, tears in his eyes.

FATHER ANDERS

That's what we all desire, deep down.

ROMAN

People don't feel God anymore. They've witnessed the dominance of the Nazis and now the Communists. And they worship this world and that strength. They have forgotten what we had before.

FATHER ANDERS

You killed the old woman yet dare to tell me there is a meaning behind it all?

ROMAN

When do you feel closest to God, when do you feel whole...holy?

Father Anders stares at him. Roman turns and advances on him.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Doing his work?

Roman stands over Father Anders, nodding.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
 Kámen was evil! You said it
 yourself: a man who is close to
 God. I'll tell you how I was called
 to more.

FLASHBACK

EXT. SERBIAN HILLSIDE SMALL-HOLDING - DAWN

**SUPER: YUGOSLAVIA 1943 SS UNITS OF GERMAN ARMY FIGHT THE
 PARTIZAN RESISTANCE ARMY, WHO ARE AIDED BY THE ALLIES.**

First light breaks on a clear morning.

An isolated stone cottage: main door hanging off one hinge, a
 dead dog shot bled out from the gut and a stack of smoldering
 cut wood.

A tough-looking SS Soldier on sentry duty pisses on to the
 grass, semi-automatic slung over his back. Nearby two more SS
 Soldiers are asleep by a campfire.

INT. STONE COTTAGE - NIGHT

Black mud-daubed walls, low ceiling, two pots on a wooden shelf
 and low fire in an open range. A large WHITE CRUCIFIX dominates
 the wall.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 Her name was Vaclava. My partizan
 unit left me with her, just a crazy
 old woman with a good view of the
 valleys. I was there maybe a month
 before the SS arrived.

VACLAVA (70s, gravitas and hardy) in a man's jacket and trousers
 with woolen socks on and the Bible in her hands.

VACLAVA
 (reads)
 My Spirit will not always strive with
 Man, for he is flesh.

She closes the Bible and stares at the cross, rosary beads tight
 over her clenched fist.

EXT. STONE COTTAGE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

She exits wearily past the broken door and shows the Sentry some seeds in her open hand. Blankly he follows her movement as she walks to the far side of the cottage and the edge of a precipice.

ROMAN (V.O.)

She saw something in me.

Behind the Sentry is a standing WATER PUMP with wooden slats at its base.

She raises her hand to the sky and SINGS the Gregorian chant "*Conditor Alme Siderum*" as a chorus of birdsong gets LOUDER.

ROMAN (V.O.)

She was a Sister in an ancient order. One that serves and directs a secret warrior caste, soldiers of God. She initiated me, gave me my key.

The Sentry looks idly at the sky. Behind him one end of the slats rises silently.

Birds alight on Vaclava's arm. The BIRD CHATTER and the SINGING gets louder. The Sentry looks irritated, casts a glance at his sleeping colleagues who are rousing, then raises his weapon at Vaclava.

ROMAN (V.O.)

Our rituals and holy vows, they go with me to the grave. And beyond.

BEHIND THE SENTRY: a wild-eyed, shaven-haired, naked Roman daubed in black mud (exactly as the APPARITION behind Cilka) sprints at him, shining blade raised to strike.

Roman slices open the Sentry's throat in one clinical strike. Barely pausing he runs at the other two SS Soldiers. One is sat up looking annoyed at Vaclava.

SS SOLDIER

Fuck sake, Dieter.

He turns to look at the Sentry but only has seconds to react before Roman is on top of him. Roman delivers three savage stabs through the ribs over the heart. Bones CRACK with each blow and a SUCKING NOISE as the rendered heart keeps pumping. The dagger is deep to the hilt and stuck.

A blood-drenched Roman sees the third Soldier waking. Roman tries one more yank on the dagger but his hand flies off the handle as the last SS Soldier dives forward, his hands at Roman's throat.

The momentum rolls them over so that they both lie on the grass, face to face SCREAMING in rage as they try to strangle the other.

The SS Soldier's hand slips, propelling Roman's head forward. Roman suddenly angles his forearm under the other's chin.

Roman's mouth is centimeters from the SS Soldier's neck. He bares his teeth. He bites. The SS Soldier HOWLS in pain as blood squirts everywhere.

EXT. STONE COTTAGE - DAWN

Vaclava hands over her boots to a barefooted Roman (same boots he has on in the truck). He's freshly washed, shirt open and whipped by the wind.

VACLAVA

For you it will never end. The holy
vows made to our order set you
apart.

He puts them on and walks past three sets of boots belonging to the SS Soldiers who are laid out: two with their throats open, drenched in blood, marble-white faces in extremis. He picks up their weapons as she shouts after him:

VACLAVA (CONT'D)

Even in death.

Roman lifts up the slatted-wooden base under the pump, his hiding place.

VACLAVA (CONT'D)

And this world will always bring
you its evil!

He picks up a sheepskin coat that he puts on as THREE PARTIZANS - two men and a woman - come walking over the crest of a hill, combat fatigues and slung rifles.

The male Partizans hang back and scan the area. BRANKA (30s, female, battle-hardened and cunning) approaches Roman whilst taking in the wrecked cottage and dead SS.

BRANKA

Tell me little wolf, how do they
taste?

ROMAN

Worse than you, Captain Branka.

He slings the weapons over his back and they walk away.

VACLAVA

You are called to more! The last
Knight of Bohemia! But the
world is coming!

Branka looks back at her surprised.

VACLAVA (CONT'D)

Your life is not your own!
(quietly)
And your soul will stay in hell.

END FLASHBACK

FLASHFORWARD

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - MALMÖ, SWEDEN - DAY

Father Anders looks afraid and moves away from Roman. Clearly shaken, he takes the three steps up to the altar which he stands behind.

He touches the chalice, rearranges and refolds ornamental coverings, casting glances at Roman. But he is unable to meet Roman's even stare.

Roman stands and slowly approaches the altar.

FATHER ANDERS

(off the altar)

This is the Church. To speak of
such things here...is sacrilege.
What did she see in you?

Roman sets his foot on the first step.

ROMAN

If this breath is calm, then the
next I can feel the heat in my
fists and rage in my cold heart.
(beat)
She saw Death.

FATHER ANDERS

Do not stain this holy place!

Roman steps back.

ROMAN

I was at war: as a Partizan, as a border guard. Those SS soldiers I killed with my bare hands and teeth. The grandmother two steps from safety. It's war against the enemies of God!

He slowly places his foot on the first step again.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

From David's time we have been there. God's Warriors. From The time of the old covenant...

Father Anders comes forward to stand in his way.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

...to the new. Always behind the cross on the battlefields of Europe.

Long beat. They are staring at each other.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You have heard the rumours.
(beat)
But not dared to look in the shadows.

END FLASHFORWARD

EXT. REGENSBURG DISPLACED PERSONS' CAMP - DAY

Light rain on a grey day as Roman trudges toward a simple guard house and barrier. Behind it: a large, spread-out building complex with a simple wire fence running around the perimeter.

Sign behind the fence: **REGENSBURG DISPLACED PERSONS' CAMP. U.S MILITARY CAMP**

INT. ADMINISTRATION BLOCK - CORRIDOR - DAY

A PRIVATE leads Roman. They pass a room stacked with FILES: on shelves, tables and the floor. Two Army Personnel read a file each and smoke under a NO SMOKING SIGN.

At the far end of the corridor a weary CLEANER (50s) with a long-handled brush.

The floor shows two lines of MUDDIED FOOTPRINTS. Halfway down the corridor the Private gestures for Roman to sit as the Cleaner works her way towards him.

The Private passes the Cleaner and opens a door to a room where the footprints lead and enters, leaving the door open. Roman glimpses a desk and an unseen SECRETARY'S hands working a typewriter.

The Private moves into the doorway holding up a long overcoat. Under the hem of the coat Roman sees a pair of shiny black shoes, mud-rimmed, approach the desk.

The weary Cleaner sits next to Roman. Roman's gaze stays on the shoes.

CLEANER

Czech?

Roman's non-committal. She looks at the footprints and sighs. Roman watches as the heels move apart, then swiftly together with a CLICK.

CLEANER (CONT'D)

Different shoes, same mud.

Roman looks at her then back to the doorway. The owner of the shoes, now with the overcoat on, strides down the corridor. Even in civilian clothes and hair grown long Roman recognizes a NAZI (40s).

The Nazi's smile fades as he realizes Roman is staring at him mouth agape. Feigning nonchalance, he checks his watch as he passes.

The Private is in front of Roman.

PRIVATE

Ok.

Roman is rooted to the chair. He stares at the Private then back at the Nazi just as he exits the building.

INT. ADMINISTRATION BLOCK - OFFICE - DAY

Roman is in front of the Secretary staring down at the mud.

SECRETARY

Name?

Roman shakes his head.

She looks at the Private who shrugs. Roman looks at a sign by an inner doorway: **AMERICAN CONSUL GENERAL**

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

We need a photo.

ROMAN

No photo.

The Secretary whips out the page from the typewriter and hands it to the Private who leads Roman through the inner doorway. At the top of a spiral staircase leading down the Private gestures to Roman to take his backpack off.

PRIVATE

Your cap and your boots too.

Roman does this. The Private frisks him.

PRIVATE (CONT'D)

That too.

Roman removes the leather wrist strap and the stones fall. The Private cocks an eyebrow at the inflamed skin where the strap was. Roman massages a shoulder.

ROMAN

Pain blocks pain.

Barefoot Roman followed by the Private walk down the stairs.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A bunker-style room, whitewashed walls. On a desk a lamp, the only source of light.

SKIP SARTESS (40s, big, brash, clever diplomat in an expensive suit from the Midwest) takes the sheet from the Private without taking his eyes off Roman.

SKIP

(off the blank form)

What's this? He contacted us.

He flips open the file and reads.

SKIP (CONT'D)

Roman Židek. It was you who contacted us.

Long beat.

SKIP (CONT'D)
He frisked?

PRIVATE
Sir.

Skip eye-balls Roman.

SKIP
Dismissed, Private.

PRIVATE
Sir?

Skip intimates that he feels no physical threat from Roman. Private salutes and exits. Skip sits.

SKIP
Seat? Smoke? I'm Skip.

Roman sits.

SKIP (CONT'D)
A Czechoslovakian Border Guard...

He waits for Roman to nod.

SKIP (CONT'D)
...who wanted to talk. Now he
doesn't want to talk.

ROMAN
You talk to all sorts.

SKIP
I'm talking to a communist right
now. Ain't that so, Roman?

Skip stands and leans over the desk, his shadow filling the wall.

SKIP (CONT'D)
Anyone in authority has to be a
party member, especially along the
border. StB insist. You here for
money?

ROMAN
You have that too.

SKIP
Are you StB?

Skip sits abruptly, neck veins bulging as he jabs the file.

SKIP (CONT'D)

All this sweet-smelling bullshit
about Special Ops with the Brits.
Blindsiding the Jerries in
Yugoslavia. Ripping out their
throats with your teeth.

Roman kicks back his chair and starts pacing his side of the desk.

SKIP (CONT'D)

You think we buy this rosy prose?

Moving faster now Roman rakes a hand through his hair and sticks a finger into his mouth.

SKIP (CONT'D)

You think this buys my trust?

With deft movements Roman swats the file off the desk. As Skip lunges forward Roman is already behind him. A wire garrote wraps taut around Skip's throat and a stiletto attached to Roman's little finger wavers in front of the stunned American's eye.

SKIP'S POV: The stiletto blade wavering in front of his eye and the bite-mark on Roman's forearm.

Roman breathes calmly, in total control.

An increasingly loud CUTTING SOUND.

ROMAN

(chanting to himself)

Locked in the first room, that must
be the last, with words that feel
nothing from the Sun.

INT. DIXU'S MEDICAL OFFICE - DAY

CUTTING SOUND continues.

Dixu sat at his desk using a scalpel to cut a cardboard heel-wedge (the cutting sound). On the desk two cardboard shoulder epaulets and a rolled-out cloth case containing surgical instruments. A small travel case stands by the door.

His hand hovers over a desk drawer but he doesn't open it.

Dixu puts the heel-wedge in his shoes and stands before a long mirror then stuffs the epaulets inside the shoulders of his jacket. He tares unsatisfied at his reflection.

DIXU

Men...who are impressed...by other
men.

He throws the epaulets and heel-wedges into a wastepaper bin. Replacing the scalpel he rolls up the instruments and pockets them. Picks up the travel case, opens the door, and pauses.

He returns to the desk, unlocks the drawer and takes out a metal tin placing it on the desk. Opening the tin he stares at its contents: an inverted red cloth triangle with a **T** in the middle (a Nazi concentration camp badge for Czechoslovak communists).

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Skip makes a KEENING SOUND like a dying dog.

ROMAN

The British taught me tricks.

Roman wiggles his little finger with the attached stiletto.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

But the winters with the Partizans
made me a wolf.

SKIP

Please.

ROMAN

War brings you to many places, some
best never seen again. Only one
thing can take me back.

Skip shakes his head but quickly stops, wincing in pain.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

A smiling Nazi.

Skip's eyes dart side to side in confusion.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

What happened to a short trail and
a long neck?

SKIP

The guy who just left? You
recognized him?

ROMAN

The smell.

Roman slowly removes the garrote. Skip gasps, rubs his neck.

SKIP

The man's a rat, plain and simple.
Smokes out the bigger names. We
promised him a ticket to Argentina
he'll never get.

ROMAN

You can live with that?

SKIP

We all have to live with something
these days.

Roman walks to the door. It's locked. He BANGS on it.

SKIP (CONT'D)

I know you had something important.
Damn it! Why are you here?

ROMAN

TO STOP THESE FUCKERS!

They stare at each other.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Don't care for your dance partner,
Skip.

SKIP

(off file)

What about...Petr?

Roman BANGS harder. Skip traces his finger over the page.

SKIP (CONT'D)

Christian family bringing in a
couple of half-Jewish orphans--

ROMAN

--His mysterious ways.

SKIP

Must have been hard times. Cilka.
She must be like a sister.

A brief moment as Roman's whole body tenses before he assaults
the door with a fury of punches and kicks.

ROMAN

Two days walking to see a
nazi...and a dumb fuck of a yank.

Roman turns suddenly and Skip retreats behind the desk. The
Private runs in - handgun drawn aiming at Roman's head.

Skip gestures for the Private to Hold Fire. Roman hasn't taken his eyes off Skip.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You know hell is just no escape.

SKIP

Where's your hell?

ROMAN

My home. And I'll be delivering them to the devil himself.

SKIP

Them?

(gestures to Private to lower handgun)

We've got ourselves a shiny, new organization - the CIA, Central Intelligence Agency. Nothing but a big bull with a limp dick.

ROMAN

You're tourists.

SKIP

You know it. Stalin knows it. But heck, we're busting ass smuggling Czech families out, good people in tight spots. You must've heard about that grandmother shot the other day?

ROMAN

She...that's what border guards do.

SKIP

Bigger picture, Roman, we get enough right-thinking Czechs to safety, to the West, they can take your country back.

ROMAN

Do you fear God, Skip?

SKIP

America loves God.

ROMAN

A new operation. Our personnel but it's the Soviets. No details yet. Orders will be last minute.

SKIP
Does it have a name? This
operation?

ROMAN
Kámen. Means--

SKIP
--Border Stone. StB?

ROMAN
Prague are sending someone.

Skip opens a drawer and takes out a slim brown package.

SKIP
You want to stop it and we can
help. Decoder papers, coordinates
to the dead-drop.

Skip crosses quickly to Roman's side.

SKIP (CONT'D)
They're calling it a Cold War,
Roman. A stand-off with missiles.

ROMAN
Uncle Sam and Uncle Joe.

SKIP
And they'll let off steam by
picking on the little guy.

ROMAN
Thank you for not killing me. But
it's a No from me.

Skip puts the package in Roman's jacket pocket just before Roman
exits.

SKIP
Do a dummy run at the dead-drop.
See for yourself.
(shouting up the
stairwell)
Desperate people out there!

INT. COFFEE HOUSE - PRAGUE - DAY

Emil at the same window counter, disheveled appearance, looks
around furtively. Three empty cups next to him.

INT. PRAGUE APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Telephone RINGS. Emil and Marie in bed with thousand yard stares. Emil's resolve breaks, he races to the hall.

INT. PRAGUE APARTMENT - HALL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

He throws himself at the telephone.

EMIL

Yes! Hello?

He crumples to the floor.

INT. PRAGUE APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Marie crying silently in bed.

EMIL (O.S.)

Hello? Goddamn you all!

EXT. PRAGUE STREET - DAY

Emil locks the entrance and slips into a stream of pedestrians before turning a corner.

At the corner Johnny arrives. He realizes Emil has disappeared from view before Emil emerges from a doorway staring intently at Johnny.

JOHNNY

Smart. We can use that.

INT. ST VITUS CATHEDRAL - DAY

Marie and Emil sat in one pew, Johnny in the pew behind kneeling. Johnny scans the other scattered worshippers - OLD WOMEN.

JOHNNY

(low)

What did they say?

Marie and Emil exchange a look, they are very wary.

MARIE

Warnings.

Johnny exhales slowly, barely masking his irritation.

JOHNNY

We get tip-offs from the Americans.
They arrested your sister.

They are surprised he knows this.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

It's how they operate, rattle the
main target, make it look
procedural.

MARIE

Why us?

JOHNNY

Time for that question is long
gone. They'll crush anyone - war
heroes, poets. Anyone with links to
the West.

(to Emil)

Your paper.

(to Marie)

Your father and his factories. You
just disappear.

He clicks his fingers then leans in.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Ten thousand koruna. Each.

They react with guffaws - serious money.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

And no bank withdrawals. Transport to
the forbidden zone then I guide
you over the border to American-
controlled territory.

EMIL

What about Alenka?

JOHNNY

She's part of a bigger package.

MARIE

What?

JOHNNY

You've spoken about it yourself
with your Father. They're listening
to your calls.

The pair are dumbfounded by this.

EMIL

The Americans have a...spy in he
StB?

Slight nod from Johnny.

MARIE

But why us? Why help us and risk...

JOHNNY

You're propaganda now. For both
sides. Your fall as enemies of our
young and brave new socialist state
or your daring rescue by the free
world.

Johnny stands and makes the sign of the cross over them.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Wasted too much time. No visits. No
goodbyes or it's off. Tonight.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

Returning from Regensburg, Roman approaches the town square
slowing as he sees a long black sedan parked outside the Police
Station and a Driver smoking.

Petr approaches Roman from a side lane off the square.

PETR

Who's that?

Roman shrugs. Petr studies his brother.

PETR (CONT'D)

You tell me to take a week off I
don't want now Prague arrives.

Roman shakes his head.

PETR (CONT'D)

Me out of the way but Laurel and
Hardy are still in there.

ROMAN

You belong on the stage.

PETR

You worried I won't stick to the
script?

A low guffaw from Roman as he continues to the Station.

PETR (CONT'D)
I'll find out.

ROMAN
Go find a pilsner.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Basic desk, wooden chairs and dull grey filing cabinets. Roman passes two StB Agents sat inside the door (throughout they wear LONG BLACK LEATHER COATS).

Roman's team look nervous: Hora mopping in a far corner and Marek stoking burning coals in the grate. Hora catches Roman's eye and nods at the stairwell.

INT. POLICE STATION - ROMAN'S PRIVATE QUARTERS - DAY

Dixu sits on Roman's bed with a view of the town square Roman has just walked through. The door is open and the room spartan with a single narrow bed and bare desk. Roman's rifle hangs on the wall.

Dixu listens to the silence downstairs then looks at the New Testament in his hand. He flips through the pages and stops at underlined text.

DIXU
(reads)
Blessed are the meek, for they will
inherit the Earth.

Dixu laughs and throws the book on the desk.

EXT./INT. CAR/FOREST - DAY - DRIVING

The sedan moves along a stone track. Dixu and Roman are in the backseat with a cardboard box of bourbon bottles and American chocolates in the footwell.

DIXU
You Jews are hard to shake off.
Even the meek ones.

Roman looks at him quizzically.

DIXU (CONT'D)
Only by grace of your Hebrew god
that Tito's partizans found you,
half-dead and feral.

Dixu takes off his jacket.

ROMAN
It was a Christian home.

Roman glimpses a CONCENTRATION CAMP NUMBER TATTOO on Dixu's forearm.

DIXU
I know Jews. And reading your file
I saw a brother. A brilliant shot
guarding our border from the nazi
scum.

ROMAN
It's my job.

DIXU
You'll have your own land, a
country safe for Jews and Stalin
will welcome you into the great
communist collective! You need
strong legs.

Dixu slaps Roman's leg and leaves his hand there.

ROMAN
Never standing alone again.

DIXU
Exactly. We have them on the run!
The Americans have barely anything
left in Prague.

Dixu LAUGHS and Roman joins in.

DIXU (CONT'D)
They sent their head man, their
peacock, off to the refugee camp at
Regensburg.

Roman grips his wrist strap. As the box slides towards him he opens his legs.

DIXU (CONT'D)
We have people there too, cleaners
collecting all the rubbish.

Roman LAUGHS again. The car stops. Roman's legs are spread wide with the box in between, his knee touching Dixu's leg.

They both look at the box. Roman grabs a bottle. They both look out at a new-built wooden building with a flagpole.

DIXU (CONT'D)
Our jewel in the forest. Kámen.

Roman raises the bottle.

ROMAN
(In English - American
accent)
My country, great and free. Heart of
the world I drink to thee.

DIXU
Let's raise the flag.

EXT./INT. CHEAP CAR - DAY - DRIVING

A battered, cheap-looking car drives along a country road
through forest and rolling hills.

INSIDE: Johnny drives. Marie and Emil are in the back, looking
like they have been on the road all night.

EMIL
Where are you from, Johnny?

JOHNNY
Relax when you're over that fence
and looking at an American.

Emil is chastened.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
Forbidden zone two kilometers.

Emil pulls the middle seat down then helps Marie crawl into the
luggage boot before disappearing himself. Johnny reaches an arm
back and flips the seat up with a SNAP.

EXT. FORBIDDEN ZONE - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - DAY

Two Border Guards lounging outside of a simple wooden hut.
Johnny lights a cigarette for one, the car is parked nearby.

INT. LUGGAGE BOOT OF CAR - DAY

Faint light illuminating the tense expressions of Marie and
Emil. Another CAR approaches then stops. INDISTINCT RAISED
VOICES, then LOUD FOOTSTEPS come around the back of the car.

A dog BARKS. Tires SQUEAL. The boot slowly opens...revealing
Johnny.

JOHNNY
Come on, nazi gold!

He goads the unseen Border Guards before LAUGHING straight at the pair and SLAMMING the boot shut.

EXT./INT. CHEAP CAR - DAY - DRIVING

Johnny driving with the pair in the backseat. The car passes a village sign: **VSERUBY**. They pass tarmac roads, stand alone brick houses, fields and trees. Further ahead the village itself, bigger and more densely built-up buildings around a central square.

Johnny turns and raises an eyebrow at Emil who flips the seat down. Marie is surveying the rolling countryside.

MARIE
You forget how beautiful it is.

EXT. FOREST - DEAD DROP - DAY

Roman throws a stick for his Czech wolf dog. In the background the top of a Watchtower is visible.

Roman pauses to listen, looks around then pushes a six-inch nail with plastic-wrapped paper into the soil.

EXT. FOREST - DEAD DROP - DAY - LATER

Rain. Now alone, Roman hides behind an upturned wooden pallet with binoculars pressed up against the slats watching the dead-drop.

FLASHBACK

INT. HAYLOFT - DAY

Continuation of earlier scene. Teen Roman has Teen Petr in a headlock and wrestling the revolver out of his brother's hand. He strains to see through the cracks.

ROMAN'S POV: Josef doubled-over with Elstner one side of him and the Unit Commander the other. Nearby stand two SS Soldiers.

EXT. - HAYLOFT - YARD IN FRONT OF HAYLOFT - DAY

Josef heaves hard holding his gut. Elstner points to the hayloft.

ELSTNER
 (to the Two SS soldiers)
 Find the ladder.

The soldiers advance on the loft.

ELSTNER (CONT'D)
 (to the Unit Commander)
 My Father helped build that. I
 can't in good conscience burn it
 down.

Elstner picks up a short length of ROPE.

INT. HAYLOFT - DAY

Teen Petr is about to scream. Teen Roman clamps his forearm
 across his brother's mouth.

Petr bites. Roman yanks his arm away - a large wound - before
 hitting Petr's temple twice with the butt of the revolver. Petr
 passes out.

Roman scrambles back to the cracks. Behind him Petr, has a
 seizure.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. FOREST - DEAD DROP - DUSK

Roman watches a YOUNG SHEPHERD with his flock of sheep sit and
 drink from his water bottle.

The Shepherd reaches into the earth and drags out the plastic-
 wrapped nail.

ROMAN (V.O.)
 The dead drop worked well. But I
 could only see that nazi drinking
 the best American coffee.

LATER - Roman walks through the darkening forest. Hearing
 something he uses the binoculars to scan the distant roads.

BINOCULARS' POV: Car HEADLIGHTS on a winding road far away below
 his position. The car disappears behind trees then emerges in
 the forecourt of a farmstead whose outer lights come on. Roughly
 200m behind the farmstead is a Watchtower and a pair of Guards
 walk along the Border. Roman picks up a track leading from
 behind the farmhouse to an underground bunker whose entrance is
 lit.

Roman is intrigued by what he has seen. He uses the binoculars again to scan back along the road the car has traveled.

BINOCULARS' POV: He just manages to pick out a SLEEK SEDAN (similar to the one Dixu used) traveling at speed with headlights off. The sedan stops some distance from the farmstead. Two StB Agents get out, converse and take notes, then get back in the car and swing the car around before speeding away with headlights on.

Roman walks fast up to a vantage point and scans the farmstead again with his binoculars.

BINOCULARS' POV: A single torch beam carried by one person with two following - all indistinct in the gloom - along the track to the bunker.

ROMAN (V.O.)

It would've been No to the CIA. I'd find another way to bring Kámen down, to hurt the communists.

The group of three reach the lit entrance to the bunker. FRANTISEK (60s, spry, enthusiastic and grey-haired) is leading two others by torchlight. He opens the bunker door.

ROMAN (V.O.)

But out of the night came Frantisek.

AT THE LAST MOMENT - before Frantisek guides them inside an old man and woman are revealed. Frantisek follows them in.

A moment later he returns alone and shuts the bunker door, turns off the light at the entrance and his torchlight makes its way back to the farmhouse.

Roman looks thoughtful before checking his watch and hurrying down the hills.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Johnny runs followed by Emil and Marie carrying one case each. They stop at the edge of a clearing, all three crouched and listening intently.

Johnny points at a cloud partly covering the moon and gestures that they pause.

JOHNNY

Those stones...

A line of stones lit by moonlight across the clearing (Dagmar and Petr laid the stones in an earlier scene).

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
 ...get past them and there's no
 going back.

The moon is completely covered by the cloud. Johnny nods at them then starts to sprint. Emil and Marie follow.

They arrive at a wire fence. Johnny starts cutting it with clippers. They freeze as a dog BARKS far off. A hole is fashioned.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
 Five hundred meters straight ahead
 is the German border station.
 You'll see the American flag.

The dog BARKS louder. Johnny pushes them through-

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
 A new life begins.

-before running back into the darkness.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Emil and Marie scramble through denser undergrowth.

EMIL
 420...430...440

They reach another clearing with a wooden building and flag pole (the same building viewed by Roman and Dixu). They edge closer, straining to make out the flag hanging limply.

Finally, they are close enough to discern the TWO FLAGS - a Federal German and above it the Stars and Stripes.

Marie SHRIEKS for joy and jumps, her hair gets tangled in a pine tree. Emil helps her and they embrace then race to the entrance.

INT. KAMEN BORDER POST - NIGHT

Basic office with filing cabinets, a typewriter and telephone on a desk and chairs. Portrait of Harry S. Truman and American flag on the wall.

Two American Privates look up shocked at the unexpected arrival. One draws his weapon - GARY (20s)

EMIL
We seek asylum in the West!

The other Private, TONY (20s) starts to smile.

TONY
Well, I'll be damned. Call me Tony.

LATER - Jovial atmosphere around the desk. The two Privates with Emil and Marie relaxed with chocolate and bourbon on the desk.

TONY (CONT'D)
So how'd you guys get out? There must be a bit of a queue, no!

EMIL
You could say that.

GARY
Maybe others we can help?

Emil is completely off guard now. As the questions continue Marie becomes more wary.

EMIL
You can throw a stick in Prague and hit twenty with their suitcases packed.

TONY
Desperate times...would be good though...

GARY
...to help more, yeah.

TONY
Give them hope.

EMIL
I could put you in contact--

MARIE
--Are we to be moved to the American Embassy tonight?

TONY
Sure. Make that call, Gary.

Gary exits. Tony pushes forward a pad and pen.

TONY (CONT'D)
Here you go, pal. Sure would be neat to help more folks.

Emil laughs nervously, beats the pad with the pen.

MARIE

We can do it at the Embassy, maybe.

TONY

Say! We're all friends...maybe you need time to think, Emil. Talk it through with your little gal here.

EMIL

No. I have good friends...
(starts to write))
...there's--

MARIE

--Emil!

Tony stands to leave.

TONY

I'll go check on your transport.
One ride you don't wanna miss.

Emil forces a CHUCKLE before Tony exits.

EMIL

We're free, Marie! Free. You think like you are still there.

MARIE

That's as good as a death sentence in the wrong hands.

EMIL

Or a golden ticket in the right hands! This is American soil.

MARIE

It's only the other side of the forest!

Emil starts writing.

EMIL

The right hands! There's Konrad and Jan to start with. Konrad's father was with the Resistance. He hates the Reds.

Tony returns.

TONY

Hey, that's a lady that's been
through a lot tonight, fella. And
take that list with you, show
them...

Beams of torchlight flash over the building from the outside as
Emil tears off the page. All stand and are smiling.

TONY (CONT'D)

Thing is folks...my country ain't
made for communists.

Tony's smile fades and features harden.

EMIL

That's good.

TONY

And you ain't welcome in my
country.

EMIL

But we're not--

There's a CLICK. Gary is by the entrance with a rifle just
cocked. Tony levels a handgun at them and gestures for them to
leave the room.

TONY

Now get back where you belong.

EXT. KAMEN BORDER STATION - NIGHT

Roman, Hora and Marek are armed in front of a battered, old car.
The shell-shocked pair are led towards it.

TONY

Good of you to come over.
(salutes)
We have something of yours.

Tony steps aside as Emil and Marie are pushed forward.

The Prisoners are handcuffed. Roman hands Tony a bottle of
vodka.

ROMAN

The Czechoslovak Socialist Republic
thanks you.

END OF EPISODE