

Sleds of the Children
Act 1

By

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FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

ANDREI, a ten year old boy, is in bed with his five year old sister, ANNA.

Andrei is telling Anna a story with shadow puppets using the moonlight from the window.

ANDREI
(whispering)
...and the wolf chased after the
little deer through the forest...

Andrei dramatically chases after his own hand. Anna's eyes widen and she gasps.

ANDREI
...the little deer ran out of the
woods and came to a large river...

Andrei creates a river shadow with his arms.

ANDREI
...and the deer jumped over the
river and landed safely on the
other side.

ANNA
Yay!

ANDREI
But, so hungry was the big bad wolf
that he tried to jump over the
river too!

Andrei motions with his hands. Anna gasps.

ANDREI
But the big bad wolf could not make
it and he fell in the river...

Andrei motions with his hands.

ANDREI
...and the wolf was never seen by
the little deer again. He was swept
away. But you know where he is?

(CONTINUED)

ANNA

Where?

Andrei gets out of bed and goes over to the window. Anna follows. Andrei points at the stars in the sky.

ANDREI

He's up there, among the stars,
forever watching, but never able to
attack again.

ANNA

Wow...

Andrei hears a noise and looks behind him. The bedroom door creaks and groans.

Suddenly the door bursts open and water begins pouring in. It engulfs the entire room and swallows up both Andrei and Anna.

PRESENT DAY - LENINGRAD - 1943

Andrei opens his eyes, awake. He is a couple years older now, dressed in bundles of rags.

He shivers in the cold and gets up.

Andrei walks over to a pail and hits through the ice on top.

He quickly splashes some water on his face and neck.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Andrei is scavenging through garbage.

Many other people are around doing the same.

Andrei overturns a large piece of scrap metal and a rat scampers out from underneath.

Andrei lunges after it. Others see it and do the same.

Andrei collides with ILLIANA, a girl about Andrei's age. She falls to the ground but immediately gets to her feet and glares at Andrei.

ILLIANA

Watch where you're going!

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI

Sor-

Andrei realizes Illiana is holding the rat by the tail.

ANDREI

Hey that's mine, I found it...

ILLIANA

...and I caught it.

Illiana produces a sharp, jagged piece of metal from underneath her ragged clothing and brandishes it threateningly.

ILLIANA

So it's mine.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - DAY

Andrei is huddled over a little fire he has made in the ruins of his building home.

A small mouse is roasting over the fire.

He takes it off a little twig spit and eats it.

Andrei huddles down next to the fire and looks up at the stars through a hole in the ceiling. He closes his eyes and goes to sleep.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Andrei is again scouring for food among the garbage. It is especially cold out.

Suddenly we hear the whistling of ARTILLERY SHELLS overhead.

Andrei and everybody else start to run as fast as they can for cover.

Shells start to hit the ground and nearby buildings all around Andrei.

One shell hits a crowd of people and limbs fly.

Andrei dives into the ruins of a nearby structure.

Shells continue to rain down from above.

Andrei covers his head and closes his eyes.

(CONTINUED)

A shell hits the floor above Andrei and rains down flaming bits of wood.

Andrei's shirt catches fire and Andrei quickly takes it off and runs back out into the streets.

Shells land all around him.

One sends rocks shooting out in all directions. One of them strikes Andrei on the side of the head, causing his whole world to go black.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - NIGHT

Two voices arguing.

Andrei slowly opens his eyes. His head hurts. A lot.

Andrei realizes he is wrapped up in a bunch of old blankets next to a small fire.

He touches the side of his head and feels that it has been bandaged.

Footsteps.

ANYA, a short woman in her fifties, comes in the room and sees Andrei.

ANYA
Oh, you're awake.

Anya makes her way over to him. Andrei struggles to sit up.

ANYA
No no no lie back sweetheart you're
not well enough yet.

Anya gently puts her hand on the back of Andrei's head and helps him lie down.

ANYA
That was a nasty hit you took out
there.

Anya reaches around the fire and grabs a TIN CUP with some liquid in it.

ANYA
Here, drink this, it'll help.

Andrei coughs and sputters as the hot liquid goes down his throat.

The world goes dark again.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Quick shots of somebody running through and around the trees.

Sounds of children laughing and giggling.

Roaring water crashes through the forest.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - DAY

Andrei is startled awake and startled again when he sees BORIS, a large man in his early sixties, staring right back at him.

BORIS

Good morning Anna, name's Boris.

ANDREI

I'm...Andrei.

BORIS

Really? You were mumbling Anna under your breath while you were out.

ANDREI

Oh, that's somebody else.

BORIS

Oh...

An awkward moment. Then Boris leans back and lets Andrei sit up.

ANDREI

What happened?

BORIS

Well some shells hit, my wife pointed you out to me, running around in the streets half naked like a crazy person. Then you got hit and my wife made me and our granddaughter go out and fetch you. You're welcome.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI

Thank you sir-

BORIS

-don't thank me, thank Anya.

Boris turns his head to the side.

BORIS

He's awake...

Anya comes into the room with some water and a rag.

BORIS

This is my wife Anya.

ANDREI

Thank you for sav-

BORIS

-what are you thanking her for? I ran out and carried you in didn't I?

ANDREI

I-

Boris laughs.

ANYA

Oh stop it Boris the boy's been through enough. Go and fetch my herbs.

Boris gets up and leaves, still laughing. Anya walks over to Andrei.

ANYA

Sorry about him. Sixty-one years old and still a rascal at heart. What's your name?

ANDREI

Andrei.

ANYA

I'm Anya.

Anya checks Andrei's bandages.

ANYA

Looks better than last night.

(CONTINUED)

Anya takes the rag, dampens it, and starts to clean off some of the dried blood.

ANYA

Where are you from Andrei? Do your parents know where you are?

Andrei says nothing and looks down.

ANYA

No parents then. I'm so sorry. Seems like that's happening more and more now since the invasion began.

Anya pats Andrei's wounds dry and puts fresh bandages made of old rags over them.

ANYA

My husband and I have always lived here in the city. I studied biology and he was a fisherman. I know, quite a pairing. Our granddaughter Illiana, she's about your age, her parents died too. She's out right now. She'll be back later.

Boris reenters with a small, odd looking assortment of roots and leaves. He lays them down beside Anya.

BORIS

Will any of these work dear?

Anya selects one root and two leaves.

ANYA

This and...these.

She breaks off a little bit of each and puts them in the tin cup by the fire.

BORIS

Giving him more of that stuff eh?

ANYA

It'll help.

BORIS

If you say so. I'm going out, look for something to eat, see if Illiana's around.

ANYA
Be careful.

BORIS
(pointing at Andrei)
I went out and got him didn't I?

Boris leaves before Anya can get up.

Anya helps Andrei drink the herb liquid.

Andrei closes his eyes.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - LATER

Anya is helping Andrei dress.

ANYA
It's not much but it's what we have
I'm afraid.

ANDREI
It's okay, they'll do. Thank you.

Illiana enters the room.

ANYA
Lilly!

Andrei is surprised. Anya runs up and gives her a hug.

ANYA
Where were you? I was worried.

ILLIANA
Helping them clear out the bodies.
Shells got more than you could
imagine.

Illiana holds up an OLD SACK filled with holes.

ILLIANA
I was able to get some food but the
soldiers took all the clothing off
the bodies for themselves.

ANYA
Food is what's important. We'll
always have fire to keep us warm.

Anya takes the sack and leaves. Illiana looks at Andrei.

(CONTINUED)

ILLIANA
So, you didn't die after all then.

ANDREI
No.

ILLIANA
You're lucky Grandma made us go out
and get you or I would have had to
carry your body too. Almost all of
her medicine is gone now, I hope
you're grateful.

Illiana spins around and leaves before Andrei can say anything.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - NIGHT

Boris, Illiana, Anya, and Andrei are all huddled around the fire.

Each is roasting little bits of meat on makeshift wooden spits.

Boris takes his off the fire and looks at the meat. He pops it in his mouth and makes a face.

BORIS
I've had chum better than this.

Anya sighs.

ANYA
I know.

Andrei quickly eats his then stands up.

ANDREI
Well thank you very much for saving
me and everything but I have to go
now.

BORIS
Whoa there son, where exactly are
you going to?

ANDREI
I have a place of my own.

BORIS
Is it better than here?

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI

No...

Boris laughs.

BORIS

Then what's the point of leaving?
Stay here, stick with us. Better
chance of surviving 'til they break
through and free the city.

Illiana looks annoyed.

ILLIANA

Why do we have to take him in?
We're already thin on everything as
is and who knows how long before
we're rescued?

ANYA

Because he has no family and no
where else to go Lilly. What if
your Grandfather and I had never
taken you in?

BORIS

Your Grandmother is right, Andrei
can stay with us. We'll stand a
better chance of surviving if we're
together.

Illiana gets up.

ILLIANA

Why don't we just go outside and
take in everybody else then?

Illiana storms off into the night.

BORIS

She's the living embodiment of your
brother.

ANYA

I know.

Andrei sits back down.

ANYA

Don't worry Andrei, you'll get used
to her. She's had a very hard life.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI

Thank you for letting me stay. I'll do my best to help with things.

BORIS

I'll drink to that.

Boris raises his cup to his lips.

Explosions suddenly break the silence of the night.

Boris pours his cup over the fire and grabs Andrei by the arm.

Anya leads the way into the next room and opens up a TRAP DOOR in the floor, leading to a CELLAR.

Boris shoves Andrei down as Illiana comes running in from outside. She follows down behind Andrei. Boris goes in last and shuts the door.

Anya lights a single CANDLE and keeps it close as dust and dirt sprinkle down from overhead.

Andrei is noticeably scared.

ANYA

It's okay Andrei. We'll be safe.

In the flickering light Andrei notices a single row of jars. Most of them are empty but a few contain various bits of plants.

The shells continue to rain down from above.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Andrei is helping Boris, Illiana and others clear the streets of body parts and debris from the previous night.

Soldiers are directing where to dump remains so they can be burned.

Andrei coughs from the stench.

ILLIANA

Cover your mouth please. I don't want to catch what you have.

ANDREI

I don't have anything.

(CONTINUED)

Illiana is annoyed. She looks over the bodies and the damage.

ILLIANA

I still don't understand why we
have to burn them.

Boris comes over huffing.

BORIS

If I hadn't spent so many years
hauling in fish...

ILLIANA

People need to learn to find cover
in buildings not run around in
circles in the streets like idiots.

BORIS

Hard to find cover if all the
buildings get blown up.

A young soldier, DEMETRI, comes over.

DEMETRI

Stop complaining comrade. We are
all in this together.

ILLIANA

Maybe if you stopped supervising
and actually started working like
the rest of us you'd feel the same
way.

DEMETRI

I have my job and you have yours.

ILLIANA

If you people helped out more we'd
have an easier time with all of
this.

DEMETRI

My job is to protect this city-

ILLIANA

-and a real fine job of that you're
doing.

BORIS

Alright Lilly that's enough. Come
over here and help me carry this.

Illiana holds her stare with Demetri a moment longer, then walks over to Boris.

Andrei looks over and notices a young man stick half of a person's arm underneath his shirt and continue cleaning up.

Andrei moves away a sizable piece of debris and sees the body of a little girl. He freezes as the girl reminds him of Anna.

He starts to walk backwards as the body opens its eyes and stares at him.

ANNA

Is it safe?

Andrei trips over some debris. Boris comes over and helps him up.

BORIS

Careful, almost hit your head again.

He notices Andrei is shaking.

Boris looks over and sees the body.

BORIS

Lilly, come take Andrei home.

ILLIANA

Why?

BORIS

He's helped enough here.

ILLIANA

He should know the way back by now.

Boris looks at Illiana with a stern gaze.

BORIS

Take him home please Illiana.

Illiana huffs and starts walking.

ILLIANA

Come on.

Boris gives Andrei an encouraging, understanding look.

BORIS

It's okay son, go on. I'll be back later.

Andrei starts to walk back.

Boris watches until they are out of sight. He then walks over to the body of the little girl, picks it up, and starts walking towards the piles of bodies.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - NIGHT

Anya hands Andrei something to drink.

ANYA

Was it really bad?

Andrei nods.

ANYA

I'm sorry.

ANDREI

She looked just like her.

ANYA

Who?

ANDREI

Anna.

ANYA

What happened?

Andrei shakes his head and takes a drink.

ANYA

When I was young, I had a little kitten named Freida. She was the runt of the litter, very weak. I wanted to save her, nurse her back to health. I came close but she passed away. I hated myself for many years because of my failure. But I moved on eventually, because I realized some things in life are inevitable, no matter what you do.

Anya sees Andrei is trembling slightly. She immediately puts her arm around him.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Oh I'm sorry, I didn't mean to
upset you.

Andrei starts to cry.

ANYA

Shhhh.....

Anya pulls Andrei in closer and starts to sing.

ANYA

(singing)

Good morning, pretty, Good morning,
pretty, I love you, I love you.
Don't fear, I'm Mommy. I'll take
care of you. I'll take care of you.
Hi, darling, I'm Mommy. Hi,
darling, your Mommy. I love you,
I'll take care of you.

Andrei sniffs and stops crying.

Anya points up at a large hole in the roof.

ANYA

See that? You know when that
happened?

ANDREI

No.

ANYA

That happened a little while ago. A
shell hit and some wood fell down.
It covered the door to the cellar,
so we couldn't get in. I turned
around and looked outside. You know
what I saw?

ANDREI

What?

ANYA

I saw you get hit by that blast. I
sent Boris and Illiana out to get
you. So you see, if that shell
hadn't hit and sent all that debris
down so we couldn't get in the
cellar, I wouldn't have seen you
and you wouldn't be with us now.
Everything happens for a reason
Andrei. Nothing is random. Don't
feel so bad, whatever happened.

EXT. CITY ALLEY - DAY

Andrei is cautiously walking and wading through some garbage and rubble.

Boris is walking quietly behind with a tattered old FISHING NET. Andrei looks back.

ANDREI

Are you sure about this?

BORIS

Of course I'm sure. I can catch fish, little rats should be nothing.

Andrei looks back in front and moves to the side.

He looks at Boris. Boris nods his head.

Andrei kicks up some rubble.

A rat scurries out to find new cover.

Boris throws the net, which envelops the rat.

Andrei and Boris yell in triumph.

BORIS

There see, what I tell ya?

The rat runs out through a hole in the net and disappears through a crack in the side of the building along the alley.

BORIS

Damn it!

Andrei picks up the net and looks at the hole.

ANDREI

I don't think this was a good idea.

Illiana appears from around the corner.

ILLIANA

Grandpa come back, something's happening.

Boris and Andrei hurry after her.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

A large crowd of people are gathered around a high ranking OFFICER standing on a pile of rubble.

Andrei, Boris, and Illiana arrive at the scene.

OFFICER

...as much protection as possible will be provided to you. All males between the ages of eighteen and fifty must remain in the city in case of invasion. First evacuations will begin early tomorrow morning behind the city.

Boris turns to Illiana.

BORIS

Evacuating?

ILLIANA

He said the army has broken through behind the city and is setting up so we can get out of here.

BORIS

Well great! Good! And none of us have to stay behind too! Lets go home and tell your Grandmother.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - DAY

Andrei, Anya, Boris, and Illiana are all standing in the room together.

ANYA

Are you sure it will be safe enough?

BORIS

If the army thinks it's safe then that's good enough for me.

ILLIANA

We should be fine Grandma. The line is behind the city and it's cold enough so you can walk across the lake without-

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI
-wait, the lake?

ILLIANA
Yes Andrei, the lake behind the
city where the line will be.

ANDREI
Oh...

ANYA
Is there something wrong Andrei?

ANDREI
No, nothing.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

Andrei is helping Anya pack things up via candle light.

ANYA
I'm so glad we have a chance to get
away from here.

Anya shakes one of the jars.

ANYA
I don't think we would have lasted
much longer.

ANDREI
Why is that?

ANYA
All the food here is almost gone.
We're eating rats and garbage.

ANDREI
Oh, yeah, I guess so.

ANYA
My medicine is nearly out too. If
one of us got injured again it
would be hard to treat and I doubt
any of the soldiers would give up
any of their supplies.

Anya finishes putting things in her sack.

ANDREI
Is that all?

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

That should be it. This war really took a lot from us. I hope we can make it across in the morning.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - NIGHT

Andrei is helping Anya pack things up with Illiana.

Boris enters, smiling. His hands are hidden behind his back.

BORIS

You know, I think it really just hit me that we're gonna get out of this mess tomorrow.

ANYA

I hope so.

BORIS

I know so. I think we should celebrate.

ILLIANA

With what?

Boris smiles even wider. He brings his hands out from behind his back and reveals a LARGE POT and some FRESH MEAT.

Anya, Andrei, and Illiana all jump to their feet.

ANDREI

How...

ANYA

...in the world...

ILLIANA

...did you get that?

Boris laughs hard.

BORIS

You outta see your faces. Somebody from the garrison gave me this while I was out. Lots of people are celebrating tonight.

Boris puts the meat in the pot, walks over and gives it to Anya.

Anya touches the meat and shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA
I don't believe it.

Boris smiles.

BORIS
Seeing is believing ain't it? Ain't
that what you told me?

Anya tries to hold back a smile but can't.

BORIS
So what will it be?

ILLIANA
Steak!

ANDREI
I thought we were having stew,
because of the pot right?

Illiana glares at Andrei. Boris laughs.

BORIS
Right you are my boy, right you
are. I'll get some water. Lilly,
come help me. Andrei, help Anya
prepare the meat.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - LATER

Boris is kneeling down over a large fire. The pot is on top,
full of boiling water.

BORIS
Alright go ahead, dump 'em in.

Andrei helps Anya put in the chopped up meat.

BORIS
Careful now, don't let any water
get on ya.

All the meat goes in.

BORIS
Good! Now Anya if you would please
add the herbs this will be done in
no time.

Anya looks confused.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA
What herbs?

Boris gives her a look.

BORIS
Your herbs, you know, the ones you
use to treat injuries with.

ANYA
I can't put those in there!

BORIS
Why not?

ANYA
Why do you want to use them up?

BORIS
We can use them as spice, gives the
meat some flavor. Why don't you
want to put them in?

ANYA
They're for healing not eating.

BORIS
Yeah well I feel a little nauseous
right now actually.

ANYA
You do?

BORIS
No, not really.

Anya gives him a look.

BORIS
Oh come on! We'll get plenty of
medicine and food and shelter when
we get out of here tomorrow.

Anya relents.

ANYA
Oh, fine then.

Anya walks into the other room.

Andrei and Illiana watch her come back in with a few jars.

Anya bends down beside Boris.

BORIS

Ah, there we are!

Anya unscrews the lids. Illiana walks over and helps her.

ANYA

I don't like this.

BORIS

Don't worry about it honey, we'll be fine.

Anya dumps all the herbs and roots in the pot.

Boris stirs them around with a stick.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - LATER

The stew is ready and smells delicious.

Boris, Anya, Illiana, and Andrei all stand over it and inhale deeply.

ANDREI

I can't remember the last time I had this.

ILLIANA

Me either.

Boris takes a few rags and lifts the pot off the fire. Some water spills onto the fire and makes a hissing noise.

ANYA

Careful, don't spill any.

Boris puts the pot on the floor.

Anya passes out tin cups to Andrei and Illiana.

Andrei walks over beside Boris and the pot.

BORIS

Alright there Andrei, keep it steady now.

Boris carefully tips the pot over and pours some stew into Andrei's cup.

Andrei raises the cup to his mouth and blows. He takes a small sip.

He smiles.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI

It's the best thing I've ever
tasted.

Boris quickly pours some into Illiana and Anya's cups then
pours some for himself.

All four spear the meat with little wooden spits and eat it
greedily.

BORIS

Ah, now this is more like it.

Andrei hears a noise behind him. He turns and sees a MAN
standing just outside the building, shivering and looking at
the food inside.

Boris gets up and puts his cup down. He walks over to the
door frame.

BORIS

Good evening.

MAN

Hello sir. I don't mean any
trouble, I was just happening by
when-

BORIS

-you saw us eating here eh?

MAN

Yes...

BORIS

Well come on in! Celebrate with us.

The man is surprised but immediately walks in out of the
cold and sits down by the fire.

MAN

Thanks, I won't be long.

BORIS

Neither will we, we're gettin' the
hell outta here along with
everybody else come morning.

MAN

That's nice.

Boris motions to everyone else while pouring some stew into
a cup.

(CONTINUED)

BORIS
That's my wife Anya, my
granddaughter Illiana, and Andrei.

MAN
Hello.

Boris hands the man the cup and a spit.

MAN
Thank you so much for this.

The man eats while everybody else watches him.

MAN
So you're all leaving tomorrow
right?

BORIS
Yes sir.

MAN
So am I. I actually have a wagon if
you want to come along. I don't
have any food or anything else.
Just the horse really.

BORIS
Great. We'll meet up with you in
the morning.

MAN
Deal.

BORIS
Ah this is great, everything is
working out.

Boris gets up and walks over to Anya.

BORIS
May I have this dance?

Anya laughs.

ANYA
Boris, I just ate.

BORIS
Nonsense, you're fine.

Boris pulls Anya to her feet and starts to dance heartily
with her around the room.

Anya laughs.

ANYA

Not so fast Boris, not so fast.

The man starts to clap his hands in rhythm with their steps.

Andrei smiles then gets up and goes outside.

He looks around, takes a deep breath, and lets it out.

Andrei looks back at all the joy and cheer in the room.

INT. RUINED BUILDING - DAWN

Andrei walks into the room. Everybody else is almost ready to leave.

BORIS

All ready there Andrei?

Andrei takes a moment.

ANDREI

I'm not going.

BORIS

What?

All three stare at Andrei.

ILLIANA

Don't be stupid, you'll die here.

BORIS

Illiana's right, you nearly died without us before. You'll either starve to death or get blown to pieces if you stay.

ANDREI

I know that but, I...want to help out...defending the city.

ANYA

Andrei, you're not a soldier, you're just a boy.

ANDREI

Look I'm not going alright? I appreciate everything you've done for me. I'm going to stay here and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANDREI (cont'd)
help out more. You're not my mother
or my father.

Boris advances closer and draws himself up to his full height.

BORIS
You listen here boy, we may not be
blood related and I don't know what
happened to your sister or your
folks, but us three here are what
you've got now.

ANYA
You haven't eaten much. You're not
thinking clearly-

BORIS
-like it or not, you're sticking
with us.

Andrei holds his ground

ANDREI
No, I am not.

Boris sighs heavily, looking resigned.

BORIS
Okay then.

Boris starts to turn around, then, with surprising speed,
whips around and hits Andrei with the back of his fist.

Andrei is knocked out cold.

EXT. FROZEN LAKE - DAY

Sounds of movement.

Andrei opens his eyes. He sees he is riding in a WAGON
pulled by a horse. The man from the previous night smiles a
toothy grin at him.

Andrei sees an enormous column of people in front of him
moving slowly in one direction.

He turns around and sees the city close behind him and
realizes he is on the lake.

Boris, Illiana, and Anya are walking beside the wagon.

(CONTINUED)

BORIS

Ah you're awake finally. Sorry
about that. We're on our way now.
No turning back.

Andrei is visibly upset.

ANDREI

Why did you do that?

BORIS

Left me no choice.

ILLIANA

Why don't you listen for once?

ANYA

Lilly! Its alright Andrei. We're
here. We'll be over the other side
before you know it.

Andrei sits back in the wagon and curls up into a ball,
trying hard not to look at the lake.

The man looks at Andrei.

MAN

Cheer up son. We're finally leaving
this hell. Fish much?

Andrei remains silent. The man looks forward and doesn't say
anything more.

Soldiers are walking beside the column, escorting it.

SOLDIER

Keep moving comrades, keep moving.

Boris notices another soldier run up and whisper something
to the other. Both stare at each other grimly, then look
behind them and back at the column.

BORIS

Look, something's wrong.

All along the column the soldiers become more active.

SOLDIER

Alright, let's keep moving, keep
moving. Faster!

Everybody starts to rush.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

What's happening?

PEASANT

They said the army lost its hold on
some of the bank along the lake.

A look of dread crosses everybody's faces.

BORIS

Come on, hurry.

ANYA

Oh God.

A familiar sound pierces the sky above.

Everybody looks up as a shell whistles overhead and hits the
lake, sending ice and water everywhere.

People panic and scream. Some begin running back to the city
while others try to make it to the other side.

Shells begin raining down all over the place, hitting both
the lake and the mob of people on it.

The horse pulling the wagon rears up out of control. Boris
runs in front and tries to calm it down to no avail.

Boris runs back around.

BORIS

Come on everybody. Get on. We can
still make it!

Andrei scrambles to the back with Illiana as Anya joins
Boris up front with the man.

BORIS

Give me that!

Boris grabs the reins from the man.

BORIS

Move it you bastard.

Boris hits the horse with the reins.

The horse starts running forward, still frightened.

Shells continue to fall.

(CONTINUED)

BORIS

Hee-ya!

Boris steers the cart as best he can, weaving around people and holes in the ice. Everybody holds on for dear life.

A shell hits the ice right in front of the wagon.

Boris tries to stop but it is too late. The horse falls right in with the wagon in tow.

Boris, Anya, and the man dive in head first. Andrei and Illiana are sent flying forward through the air and spill onto the ice. Both struggle to get up.

Boris and Anya both appear on the surface. The man and the horse are nowhere to be seen.

Boris grabs Anya as she struggles to stay above the water.

ANYA

Help!

Illiana makes herself get up and run over to them.

Andrei stays where he is, unable to move, frozen by dread at the scene in front of him.

Illiana gets beside the wagon, which is only half submerged. She bends down as Boris swims over to her with Anya in tow.

BORIS

Here, take her.

Illiana grabs Anya's hand.

ANYA

I think my leg is broken.

Anya is too heavy and there is too much water on the ice for Illiana to pull her out without falling in herself. She looks up over at Andrei.

ILLIANA

Help me, please!

Andrei stands where he is, shock on his face.

BORIS

Let's try and climb up the wagon.
Hurry.

Boris is disoriented from the cold as he swims with Anya to the front of the wagon.

(CONTINUED)

A shell lands and hits some distance behind the wagon.

The ice starts to crack and break on both sides from where the shell hit.

The cracks expand and move towards each side of the wagon.

Boris sees this. Anya is barely conscious in his arms.

ILLIANA
Whats wrong Grandpa?

BORIS
Lilly, get away.

Illiana looks behind her and sees the cracks.

ILLIANA
Come on Grandpa get out, hurry!

BORIS
(tiredly)
It's too late. Get away Lilly.

ILLIANA
No!

BORIS
Lilly...

ILLIANA
No, I'm not leaving!

Andrei hears somebody running up behind him.

Demetri comes up and grabs Andrei.

DEMETRI
Get away from here!

Demetri pushes Andrei away from where he is standing as the ice beneath him cracks open.

Demetri runs over to Illiana.

DEMETRI
Come on, the ice is breaking.

ILLIANA
No, get off me!

BORIS
Go with him Lilly. Go.

Illiana locks eyes with Boris for a moment.

BORIS
I love you.

Boris looks at Demetri.

BORIS
Help them.

DEMETRI
I-I will.

Demetri pulls Illiana off and away as the weight of the wagon pushes down all the way and sends a large piece of ice up into the air.

Boris holds Anya close and kisses her as the ice flips over and falls on top of them, trapping them underneath.

Illiana screams.

Demetri runs over to Andrei and pulls him to his feet.

DEMETRI
We have to get back. It's not safe.

Demetri pulls Illiana along. She remains silent as the three run with other survivors back into the city.