

BAND OF BROTHERS

Part 9:

"Why We Fight"

By

John Orloff

Based on the book

"Band of Brothers" by Stephen Ambrose

The Playtone Company
Dreamworks SKG
HBO Original Programming

July 31, 2000
SECOND DRAFT

FADE IN:

THE STRINGS OF A VIOLA (IN SLOW MOTION)

as a bow slowly moves toward the strings. As soon as it hits, we CUT TO:

A VIOLIST (REGULAR MOTION)

As the first notes of Beethoven's *String Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132, 3rd movement (Molto Adagio)*, begin to emanate from the viola.

Both the instrument and the musician have seen better days. The cello is scratched and dented; the man is old and unshaven. He wears the formal uniform of a German hotel staffer, but it's now frayed, stained and falling apart.

He sits on a wooden stool in the middle of a cobblestone street, a hint of smoke wafting by as he intently plays his music.

A beat later in the music, he's joined by--

WIDER

--the rest of the string quartet; two violinists and a cellist. They also sit on wooden stools and wear the same ragged uniform as the cellist.

The old, moustached violist is missing his left leg right above the knee. He plays beautifully.

The music is intense, complex, emotional.

The smoke weaves through them, giving the scene an almost eerie, timeless quality. We are:

EXT. THE CENTER OF A GERMAN VILLAGE - DAY

And the quartet is right smack in the middle of the cobblestone street. The village might once have looked to be out of a Grimm fairy-tale, but now it's just a collection of bombed-out buildings and rubble.

The rubble is everywhere-- rock, cement, lumber, bathroom sinks, pieces of furniture-- and it surrounds the quartet. But they don't acknowledge it. They just play.

GERMAN CIVILIANS

pick up and carry the rubble, silently stacking it into extremely well-ordered, neat piles every few yards or so.

It's mainly women, very old men, and young, pre-teen children.

THE MUSICIANS

focus on creating beauty in a landscape otherwise devoid of it. But the music seems to lift the spirits of the workers.

LUZ (O.S.)

I'll tell you one thing about Krauts.
They sure know how to clean up.

DOWN THE STREET

A group of Paratroopers watch the Germans: LUZ, LIEBGOTT, PERCONTE, GARCIA, and WEBSTER. They grunt their assent to Luz's comment.

Captain LEWIS NIXON walks over and joins them.

LIEBGOTT

All ya need is a little Mozart.

Liebgott spits.

GARCIA

(to Nixon)

Sir.

Nixon just nods his response.

NIXON

Beethoven.

LIEBGOTT

Sir?

NIXON

It's Beethoven, not Mozart.

NIXON

silently watches the Germans, his face full of mixed, complex emotions, and we slowly...

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. A FARM ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF STURZELBURG, GERMANY - DAY

An absolutely beautiful day at a picturesque farm right off a small road. Chickens SQUAWK and CROW and run around a small fenced-in chicken coop.

TITLE: **Just Inside the German Border**
 March 25, 1945
 D-Day plus 292

INSIDE THE CHICKEN COOP

Perconte and Luz are hunting for eggs. Perconte has his helmet off and is trying to distract a non-cooperating hen. A farm is not Perconte's natural milieu.

PERCONTE
 Luz! I think this one's got some!

Luz hurries over to Perconte's side.

PERCONTE (cont'd)
 Grab her and just, ah, hold her up, and
 I'll, ah, just, ah reach--

The coop door OPENS just as Luz is trying to pick up the hen. They turn to see:

A GERMAN GIRL

about 19 years old. Quite buxom, quite attractive. She holds a basket, herself about to collect some eggs.

She seems surprised to see the Americans. Then a little afraid.

LUZ AND PERCONTE

share a look. Luz drops the hen, which squawks loudly.

LUZ
 (all charm)
 Gutentag, fraulein...

She backs up.

LUZ (cont'd)
 No-- No! Don't go! Hey!

He chases after her. Perconte looks annoyed, but at least the hen is off her eggs. He starts to gather them in his helmet.

CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE COOP

As Perconte emerges, gingerly carrying his helmet. He looks around for Luz and spots him across the field with the girl, next to another building. Luz is trying to hand her a Hershey bar, but she's nodding her head "no".

LUZ (CONT'D)
 (to girl)
 Take it. It's good.
 (takes a bite)
 See? Mmmmm... Good. Wanna try one?

PERCONTE
 (annoyed)
 Hey Luz! Come on!

He heads their way.

Luz realizes the chocolate isn't going to do the trick.

LUZ
 How 'bout some cigarettes? You like cigarettes?
 (to Perconte)
 Go away Perconte! Can't you see I'm working some magic here!
 (to girl)
 Chelseas! They're Americaner...er...ers...

Luz sees Perconte approaching point of the corner of his eye.

LUZ (cont'd)
 Go on back without me, you dumb wap!
 (to the girl, re: the cigs)
 Here. Take a pack. Take another for your friends, I got plenty...

Luz sort of leads the girl around a corner, to be alone.

PERCONTE

pauses and turns around, and heads for the nearby road.

PERCONTE
(to himself)
Yeah, well don't 'spect any of my eggs
when you get back...

A few moments later--

LUZ
Hey Perconte, wait up!

Perconte pauses while Luz runs towards him-- alone.

At that very moment--

A JEEP

--comes around a bend and has to stop because of cattle
crossing the road.

Nixon is riding shot-gun, a grim expression on his black-
painted face. All his jump gear is stowed in the rear.

His DRIVER isn't in combat-gear.

LUZ (O.S.)
Ain't that Captain Nixon?

BACK TO SCENE:

Perconte nods as Luz walks up to him.

PERCONTE
Think so...

LUZ
What's he doing in harness?

BACK TO THE JEEP:

The cattle finish crossing, the driver puts it in gear, and
it LURCHES on its way.

BACK TO LUZ AND PERCONTE:

Perconte shrugs.

PERCONTE
(grins)
Maybe we jumped into Berlin last night,
and the war's over!

Luz laughs. They start to head in the same direction as the
jeep went.

PERCONTE (CONT'D)

Thought you were gonna be awhile...

LUZ

Yeah, well- no dice...

(wide grin)

But looks like it to me Germany's gonna
be pretty good fraternizin' territory,
donta think?

CUT TO:

Sunlight hitting a pair of Paratrooper boots on the floor
next to a German Pop magazine. SOUNDS of two people making
love fill the air.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL we are:

INT. A BEDROOM IN A GERMAN FLAT - DAY

And Pvt. John JANOVEC is making love to a buxom, beautiful
German GIRL. He's moaning. So is she.

The SOUND of a door KICKED open in the next room interrupts
their love-making.

SPEIRS (O.S.)

Janovec? Janovec!

Pandemonium in the bed. The German girl starts speaking very
quickly in German.

JANOVEC

Shit!

Janovec tries to grab some clothes next to the bed as the
girl grabs the sheets to cover her bosom. But before too
much can be covered--

The bedroom door BURSTS open, revealing Captain RONALD
SPEIRS, Easy Company's current Commanding Officer.

The girl GASPS, and freezes. Janovec stands, his unbuttoned
pants falling to the ground, and salutes-- buck-naked.

Speirs takes in the scene: the naked, saluting Janovec, the
bosom-baring girl. And completely ignores it.

SPEIRS (CONT'D)

Where's my stuff?

EXT. THE GERMAN VILLAGE OF STURZELBURG - DAY

Not too large. A small platoon of paratroopers are jody-marching down the road.

Speirs exits a building, his arms loaded with a silver coffee set, a framed painting, and a few other "liberated" items.

He crosses the road, but midway through the road, NIXON'S JEEP drives by. It has to swerve to avoid Speirs.

Speirs watches after the jeep, confused at Nixon's appearance. After a beat, he continues across the street.

IN NIXON'S JEEP:

NIXON

Make a right.

The Driver nods and turns at the next corner, and--

EXT. GERMAN BUILDING - DAY

--Nixon's jeep pulls up to a building which serves as his billet. Nixon gets out of the jeep, grabs his gear, and heads for the door.

NIXON

(cold)

Thanks...

INT. GERMAN GENERAL STORE - DAY

Speirs-- his arms still full of his loot-- enters what used to be a general store, but is presently the Regimental Post Office.

Pvt. VEST, Easy Company's mail orderly, comes out from the back room.

VEST

Morning, sir.

Speirs nods as he places the silver on the counter.

SPEIRS

You got a box all this'll fit into?

Speirs brings out a couple of unopened cigarette packs and places them on the counter. Vest eyes them.

VEST
Yes, sir, I think so...
(beat)
Same destination?

SPEIRS
Yep.

VEST
Yes, sir. I'll make sure it goes out
first thing in the morning.

SPEIRS
Thank you, private.

VEST
(good natured)
Boy, your folks are sure gonna have quite
a collection by the time you get...
home...sir...

Vest realizes he shouldn't have said what he just said by the
hard stare Speirs is sending his way. But then Speirs' face
turns into a dark grin.

SPEIRS
Finders keepers...

He exits.

VEST
Yes sir...

INT. NIXON'S BEDROOM - DAY

The radio is ON, tuned to Armed Forces Radio, though there's
an annoying BUZZ accompanying the music.

Nixon is just finishing removing his harness. The rest of
his gear (musette bag, weapons) are on the bed. His face is
still painted black. Which matches his dark mood...

The harness off, he goes into--

THE BATHROOM

--and turns on the hot water, steaming up the mirror. He
stares at himself for a beat... Then starts to wash his
face.

WINTERS (O.S.)

Nix?

Nixon doesn't answer.

WINTERS (O.S.)

Nix??!

NIXON

In here!

Winters enters the bedroom with a big grin on his face, sticks his head into the bathroom.

WINTERS

This the room of the only man in the entire 101st Airborne with *three* combat stars over his jump wings? You got the whole division trying to figure out how you pulled that one off...

Beat.

NIXON

Blind luck... like everything else in this god-damn war.

Winters appears surprised by Nixon's black mood.

Nixon towels his face dry and crosses Winters as he returns to the bedroom.

Nixon makes a beeline for a bottle of Vat 69 next to his bed. He pours himself a stiff one, then starts to unpack stuff from his musette bag.

NIXON (cont'd)

General Taylor wanted a vet to jump with the 17th as an observer, see how the rookies handled their first combat jump...

(shrugs)

Picked me.

Winters watches for a beat before--

WINTERS

How'd it go?

Nixon shrugs.

NIXON

The boys were pretty scared...

(beat)

Took a direct hit over the drop zone.
I was jumpmaster, so I was closest to the
door. I managed to yell "follow me"
before I jumped.

(beat)

I don't know if they couldn't hear me, or
if they just froze, or what...

(beat, matter of factly)

Two others followed before the plane went
down.

Winters regards his friend.

WINTERS

Just like Meehan's plane on D-Day...

NIXON

Yeah. Exactly. Except I made it... And
Meehan didn't.

Nixon downs the shot, goes to pour himself another-- but the
bottle's empty. He exits the bedroom, and enters--

THE LIVING ROOM

where another bottle of Vat 69 is sitting on a table.
Winters follows him. Nixon pours himself a tall one.

WINTERS

Don't you ever get sick of drinking Vat
69, and only Vat 69?

Nixon nods his head "no".

NIXON

Only the finest for Mrs. Nixon's baby
boy...

Nixon drinks the whole shot.

WINTERS

Colonel Sink came to see me this morning.

NIXON

Oh? And how is the good Colonel?

He pours himself another.

WINTERS

Concerned.

(nods at the Vat 69)

That a problem up at Regiment?

NIXON

What, this?

(brushes it off)

Nah. I just don't like it up there.

Winters nods. A beat, then--

WINTERS

Then you'll be happy to hear that Sink transferred you down to Second Battalion as my S-3.

Nixon doesn't respond.

WINTERS (cont'd)

Nix? Hear what I said? You'll be back with the guys.

NIXON

Yeah...

(beat)

Hey, you remember Dittrich?

Winters nods. But he doesn't like where this is going.

NIXON (CONT'D)

What kind of shitty luck did that guy have? Bad chute in a friggin' training jump. Didn't even live to see D-Day...

Nixon takes a swig, turns to face Winters.

NIXON (CONT'D)

You think his parents think it was worth it?

Winters stares hard into his friends eyes for a long time before answering.

WINTERS

Yeah, I do.

(beat)

Don't you?

Nixon's not so sure anymore. He just stares at his friend.

Winters has had enough. He stands.

WINTERS (CONT'D)

I'll see you tomorrow at my headquarters
at 0700, Captain.

He exits, leaving Nixon alone.

NIXON

Yes, sir.

He gives a sloppy salute to no one, then downs his shot.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A BACK YARD - DAY

All of Easy Co.'s 1st Platoon (currently only about 25-30 men) is assembled in chairs listening to Nixon giving a current events lecture.

The replacements sit up front, and seem to be taking the lecture more seriously than the vets. Pvt. PATRICK O'KEEFE (18), a face we've never seen before, sits in this section.

The veterans tend to be more in the rear, including: Luz, Perconte, Janovec, Randleman, Webster, and Sgt. CHRISTENSEN.

An uncomfortable moment of silence as Nixon consults the typed notes he's supposed to read. He skims them, looking for something important to report.

NIXON

The, ah, Cooperative for American Remittance to Europe, or CARE, has begun assembling food packages stateside to, ah, assist those European families in "dire need".

(beat, sotto)

Jesus, who isn't that over here?

(consults notes)

So notes to your family back home reminding them to donate whatever they can would be appreciated...

(beat)

Right. In news from the home front...

(consults notes)

I'm sure you'll all be happy to know that "Oklahoma" is still playing on Broadway.

(quieter)

I know I am.

Luz starts singing at the top of his lungs.

LUZ

O-klahoma, where the wind comes sweeping
down the plain,
and the waving wheat,
can sure smell sweet,
and the wind comes--

Christensen gives Luz the evil eye.

CHRISTENSEN

Luz! Knock it off.

Luz stops singing.

LUZ

What? I love that tune...

Nixon smiles at Luz, then skims his notes, switching pages.

NIXON

Rita Hayworth's getting married... Abbott
and Costello have a new...

Nixon doesn't care. He skims through the next few
paragraphs.

NIXON

Okay. Wartime news. Resistance in the
Rhur pocket is crumbling, and it looks
like there might be a breakout at
Remagen.

The men cheer.

NIXON (CONT'D)

Seems the Krauts managed to forget to
blow up the bridge after they retreated
across the Rhine.

(beat)

So I guess the 17th Airborne did okay in
the Rhur pocket after all...

The men boo.

LUZ

Woulda been in Berlin by now if it was us
instead of them!

The men laugh.

NIXON

Iwo Jima still seems up for grabs in the Pacific, although it looks like we're gaining the upper...

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF STURZELBURG - LATER THAT DAY

Perconte and O'Keefe are walking down the road. It's obvious they're not friends. After a few moments of silent walking...

O'KEEFE

So when do you think we're gonna jump into Berlin, see some real action?

PERCONTE

(hostile)

You in a rush?

A few beats.

O'KEEFE

No.

PERCONTE

So, what, you wanna go home with the frickin' Congressional Medal of Honor or something?

O'KEEFE

I just thought--

PERCONTE

Well, why don't you do us all a fucking favor, and don't think.

(to no one)

Fucking replacements...

O'Keefe hears this last comment, and feels a bit awkward.

EXT. OUTPOST - DAY

Perconte and O'Keefe silently approach the dugout outpost at the edge of a very large clearing. When the men get about 10 yards away:

PERCONTE

Groucho!

GARCIA (O.S.)

Zeppo!

Garcia and HASHEY emerge from the foxhole.

HASHEY

'Bout time...

PERCONTE

Yeah, well, consider yourselves lucky.
Nixon was givin' a current events
lecture.

(nods to across the clearing)
So tell me nothing's happening.

GARCIA

Nothing's happening. Couple of rounds of
artillery at dawn, probably from across
the river. Spooked the birds, but that's
about it.

Perconte nods. Hashey tosses Perconte a dog-eared paperback
book.

HASHEY

Here. Just finished it.

Perconte looks down at it-- it's "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn".

PERCONTE

Got any sex?

HASHEY

Ain't that kinda book... See ya.

Hashey and Garcia head back for town.

PERCONTE

(looks at the book)
Yeah. See ya.

Perconte and O'Keefe jump into:

THE FOXHOLE

which has a machine gun and a few boxes of ammo. Perconte
immediately focuses on making himself comfortable-- moving
some blankets to make a spot for him to lounge and read his
book.

O'Keefe tries to figure out what to do-- he's clearly gung-ho
and ready for battle. But there is no battle. He checks the
ammo for the Browning .30 calibre machine gun...checks the
sighting...cocks the gun...takes in the horizon critically...

PERCONTE

Hey! O'Brien, relax, will ya? I'm trying to read here...

O'Keefe turns.

O'KEEFE

My name's O'Keefe.

Perconte looks surprised.

PERCONTE

That right?

O'KEEFE

Yeah. Patrick O'Keefe. Friends call me Patty.

Perconte stares at him a beat-- he doesn't want to be friends-- then goes back to his reading.

O'KEEFE

Think the Krauts'll make a try for our position?

Perconte looks up from his book stares at O'Keefe-- *what a stupid fucking question*-- then returns to his book.

O'KEEFE

looks away. And then starts to HUM a Glenn Miller tune ("In the Mood") as he looks watches across the clearing critically.

WIDER

Perconte can't take it anymore.

PERCONTE

Hey O'Brien! Shut the fuck up.

O'KEEFE

O'Keefe...

A beat.

PERCONTE

Know why no one can remember your friggin' name? 'Cause no one wants to remember your name! That's why.

(MORE)

PERCONTE (cont'd)

Too many O'Brien's and O'Keefe's and Smith's and DiMatto's showin' up replacing Toccoa guys that other dumb fuck replacements got killed in the first place... And they're all like you-- all piss and vinegar. "Where's the Krauts?" "Lemme at 'em!" "When are we gonna drop into Berlin?"

(more reflective)

Two days later, there they are lying on the ground with their friggin' guts hanging all out, screaming for their mothers, begging for a goddamn medic... Dumb fucks don't even know they're dead yet...

This registers on O'Keefe's face.

PERCONTE (cont'd)

Right here, right now's the best part of this fucking war I've seen. We got hot chow, hot showers, warm beds. Germany's almost as good as being back home. Hell, we even get to wipe our asses with real toilet paper. So quit asking about when we're gonna see some action!

(harsher)

And quit humming fucking love songs in the OP!

Perconte goes back to his book.

O'Keefe looks hurt. He silently turns to look over the edge of the foxhole.

Perconte looks up from his book, realizing he's been a bit harsh.

PERCONTE

So when you ship out? A few weeks ago?

O'KEEFE

Yeah...

PERCONTE (cont'd)

Been almost two years since I seen home.

Two years.

(beat)

Fucking war.

O'Keefe doesn't know how to respond. Perconte grabs a pair of binoculars, and looks across the clearing.

O'Keefe watches him, unsure what to say.

INT. WINTERS' OFFICE - NIGHT

A large wood panelled room that once must have been the drawing room in the home of a wealthy German family.

Winters and Speirs are going over a map pinned to the wall.

SPEIRS

Neither patrol found a single Kraut.
Nothing here either.

WINTERS

They're all across the Rhine by now.
Let's send out a night patrol across the
river, check--

Nixon enters without knocking. Behind him, we can hear a news flash on the radio in the next room.

Winters turns, and can tell something is very wrong.

NIXON

(pale)
The President's dead.

Winters and Speirs look absolutely shocked.

FATHER MALONEY (O.S.)

Franklin Delano Roosevelt came to us at a
time when America so desperately needed a
great man.

EXT. A FIELD ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF STURZELBURG - DUSK

All of Easy Company is assembled, sitting on whatever's around; chairs, rocks, the ground. The officers are up front, including Winters, Nixon, Speirs, Lt. Carwood LIPTON and Foley.

We see some familiar faces from other platoons that we haven't yet seen in this episode. James ALLEY, Babe HEFFRON, Don MALARKEY, Earl McCLUNG, Shifty POWERS, medic Eugene ROE.

They all look pretty shaken by the death of FDR.

Father MALONEY, the bespectacled chaplain of Easy Co., is giving a sermon.

FATHER MALONEY (CONT'D)

He lifted us out of depression, prepared us for battle, and led us to what can only be a total victory in the greatest conflict this world has ever seen. And though we grieve his passing for our own loss, we must not mourn his death for his sake.

Maloney opens up his missal.

O'KEEFE

is silently crying. He was only 4 when FDR was first elected.

WIDER

FATHER MALONEY (cont'd)

For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep unto his bosom... For the Lord himself, with a word of command, will come down from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise.

PERCONTE AND LIEBGOTT

are sitting next to each other.

PERCONTE

(sotto)

Guess that means you're shit outta luck, Jew-boy...

LIEBGOTT

(grins)

Who'd wanna spend eternity with a Wap-shit like you anyway?

Perconte smiles back as Christensen shoots them a look to silence them.

WIDER

FATHER MALONEY (cont'd)

Then we who are alive, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. Thus we shall always be with the Lord.

(beat)

(MORE)

FATHER MALONEY (cont'd)
Therefore let us console one another with
these words...

Maloney pauses, and turns the page of his bible...

LIPTON (O.S.)
Pair of queens bets.

INT. NIXON'S BILLET - ONE WEEK LATER - NIGHT

Lipton is the dealer in a game of Seven Card Stud with Nixon,
Speirs and Lt. HARRY WELSH.

Everyone is drinking bottles of beer-- except for Nixon, who
has a bottle of Vat 69 and a tall glass on the table next to
him.

TITLE: **Sturzelburg, Germany**
 April 21, 1945
 D-Day plus 319

Speirs looks at his hole cards.

SPEIRS
Two bucks.

LIPTON
Lew?

Nixon throws down his hole cards.

NIXON
I'm out.

Nixon finishes his drink, goes to fill the glass, but notices
his bottle is empty. He looks over to the bar. Only empty
Vat 69 bottles there too.

Welsh throws in two bills.

WELSH
I'm in.

Lipton throws in two bucks as well.

LIPTON
(to Speirs)
Dealer sees your two bucks, and raises
you one.

NIXON
Be right back...

He heads for his bedroom.

LIPTON
(to Speirs)
C'mon. Your bet.

Speirs eyes his cards. Welsh sighs. Speirs always takes awhile to decide to bet or not...

WELSH
Anyone else hearing that we're not gonna drop into Berlin?

IN NIXON'S BEDROOM

Nixon gets on his knees, and searches through his trunk, the conversation around the table barely heard.

LIPTON (O.S.)
Never happen.

NIXON
(sotto)
Shit...

WELSH (O.S.)
Nah, I think this is the straight dope.
Heard it from that Howard guy in Taylor's staff...

Nixon comes up empty in the search.

NIXON
Shit!

He exits his bedroom.

AT THE POKER TABLE

Speirs is still staring at his hole cards, deciding whether to see Lipton's bet or not.

WELSH (CONT'D)
Ike's gonna let the Russkies have it.

Speirs looks up from his cards.

SPEIRS
I'm telling ya, this war ain't about fighting anymore. It's just about who gets what.

Nixon enters and heads for the door.

NIXON

Deal me out of the next hand...

Nixon grabs a coat by the door and exits. Lipton and Speirs sort of look after him, confused.

LIPTON

Wonder what that's all about...

WELSH

(to Speirs)

So you in or you out?

Speirs looks down at his cards, still deciding.

EXT. NIXON'S BILLET - NIGHT

It's raining. Nixon lights a cigarette under the awning of the German home he's staying in and heads down the street.

He pauses in front of a couple of store fronts, looks in the windows, but doesn't see what he's after.

He comes to a third window. Looks like there might be bottles of *something* in there.

He knocks on the glass. No answer. Then hits harder. Still nothing.

He looks around, and sees an empty Jerry can. He picks it up and HURLS it at the display window, which SHATTERS.

Nixon KICKS in shards of glass and enters the store through the broken window.

We stay outside, on the street, and HEAR Nixon bump into something.

NIXON (O.S.)

Damn it!

Some lights go on across the street, and someone starts yelling in German.

We stay outside on the empty street as we HEAR Nixon rummaging in the store, breaking things in his search for Vat 69.

A beat, and MP's start running over to the store to investigate. Just as they arrive the front door pops OPEN.

The MP's pause when Nixon emerges, empty handed.

NIXON (cont'd)
Friggin' feed supply store...

Before the uncomprehending MPs can reply, Nixon heads down the street, glancing into the next store window.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REGIMENTAL "POST OFFICE" - DAY

Nixon enters the former general store a little uneasily.

INT. REGIMENTAL "POST OFFICE" - DAY

Nixon enters. Vest is sorting through some mail.

NIXON
(awkward)
Morning...

VEST
Captain Nixon! Good to see you sir. I think...

He goes into an adjacent room.

VEST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
... I have some mail for you... Yeah!

NIXON
(could care less)
Great...

Nixon looks around for a beat, clearly uncomfortable.

Vest returns.

VEST
Was gonna drop it off this afternoon with all the other 2nd Battalion mail, but since you're here...

Vest hands him a couple envelopes. Nixon doesn't really look at them.

NIXON (CONT'D)
Thanks.
(a little uncomfortable)
So, listen...
(MORE)

NIXON.. (CONT'D)

I'm, ah, having a little trouble finding some whiskey. A particular brand of whiskey...

A beat.

VEST

Vat 69?

NIXON

(surprised and relieved)

Yeah. Exactly right.

VEST

I gotta be honest with you sir... That ain't gonna be easy to find in Germany. Pickings are kinda slim here...

NIXON

Don't I know it...

VEST

And even if I do find some, sir...

(lowers voice)

...it ain't gonna be cheap...

NIXON

Right... Right. Well, that really won't be a prob--

Janovec suddenly opens the door.

JANOVEC

Hey Vest! Did ya hear the news!? Three--

(spots Nixon)

Oh. Sorry sir.

He salutes.

NIXON

What news?

JANOVEC

Three hundred thousand Krauts just surrendered.

Vest whistles his amazement.

VEST

Three hund--

JANOVEC

Yeah! We're moving out in an hour!

NIXON
 (surprised)
 An hour?

Nixon rushes for the door. . .

VEST
 Sir. Sir! Your mail!

Nixon turns, grabs his few letters, and heads out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STURZELBURG SQUARE - DAY

Confusion as just not Easy Company, but all of the 506th regiment is being mustered into the square and loaded onto a column of trucks; mostly deuce-and-half's and DUKWs (amphibious truck-like vehicles).

THE MEN OF FIRST PLATOON

are loading up into a DUKW, including Perconte, Luz, Webster, Randleman, Garcia, Liebgott, Christensen and O'Keefe-- all overloaded with bags, equipment and arms.

LIEBGOTT
 Jesus. That is the ugliest fucking truck
 I ever saw...

LUZ
 Someone forget we're supposed to jump
 outta planes?

Some laughs and grunts.

RANDLEMAN
 Least we ain't hoofing it...

CHRISTENSEN
 Let's go! Load it up!

NIXON AND WINTERS

are walking down the line together. Winters is watching the commotion, while Nixon is focused on a letter he got in the last scene.

NIXON
 (to himself)
 Jesus Christ...

Winters looks at Nixon with concern. Nixon just keeps on reading.

NIXON (CONT'D)

Jesus--
(in disbelief)
The dog?

WINTERS

(totally confused)
Lew?

NIXON

Cathy's divorcing me... She's taking everything. The kid, the house, the apartment in the city...
(more angry)
Even the dog. Not her dog. My dog.

Nixon continues to read while they walk...

CUT TO:

THE MEN OF FIRST PLATOON

as they hop into the truck, passing musette bags up.
Randleman hands Garcia his bag.

GARCIA

What the hell you got in here, Bull, half of Germany?

Randleman grunts.

Lt. Speirs walks by, an unlit cigarette dangling from his mouth.

SPEIRS

Hey Perconte! Gotta light?

PERCONTE

Yes sir.

He tosses him his lighter.

PERCONTE

So what's the dope, sir? Where we headed?

Speirs lights his cigarette.

SPEIRS

Alps.

Speirs regards Perconte's lighter-- it's nice.

PERCONTE

Alps?

The men look disappointed.

RANDLEMAN

That near Berlin?

SPEIRS

Nope.

Webster is lifting some gear into the truck.

WEBSTER

Bavaria. Birthplace of National
Socialism.

LUZ

That mean no drop into Berlin?

Speirs plays with Perconte's lighter in his hand. Perconte
eyes him-- is he gonna give it back?

SPEIRS

No drop into Berlin. Hitler's ordered
the Waffen SS to hole up in the mountains
and repel the "invaders", and start a
guerilla war.

RANDLEMAN

I like the sound of that. "Invaders".

SPEIRS

(takes a drag)

Or die to the last man trying.

Everyone pauses what they're doing.

LIEBGOTT

Shit...

SPEIRS

Nice lighter...

He tosses the lighter back to Perconte and everyone goes back
to work.

SPEIRS (CONT'D)

(to Perconte)

Thanks.

Speirs continues down the line.

PERCONTE

I knew it was too good to last...

Fucking Waffen SS...

(looks at O'Keefe)

Hey O'Flannahy, looks like you're gonna
get your wish! Those guys are crazy!

O'KEEFE

(to himself)

It's O'Keefe...

We HEAR the voices of men from the truck ahead of them start
to sing "Gory, Gory"-- a paratrooper's song sung to the tune
of "Battle Hymn of the Republic"

TROOPERS

(singing)

He was just a rookie trooper and he
surely shook with fright, As
he checked all his equipment and made
sure his pack was tight;
He had to sit and listen to those awful
engines roar--
"You ain't gonna jump no more!"

Perconte joins in. Then Randleman, Garcia, Chistensen,
etc...

O'KEEFE

doesn't know the words, and looks around meekly.

WIDER

TROOPERS (cont'd)

Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!
Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!
Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!
And he ain't gonna jump no more!

O'Keefe gets the chorus and joins in, trying desperately to
be one of the guys.

CUT TO:

WINTERS AND NIXON

Nixon is still skimming his letter.

WINTERS
(concerned)
You okay, Nix?

Nixon is distracted still by the letter.

NIXON
Yeah... I'm fine. Really.
(beat)
She hates that dog.

Winters grins at his friend.

More of the troopers in other trucks are joining in the song.
The whole regiment will be singing soon.

CUT TO:

ONE OF THE DUKWS

This one filled with men of 3rd Platoon; Malarkey, Powers, McClung, Wynn, Guth, Alley, etc...

They join in.

TROOPERS (cont'd)
"Is everybody happy?" cried the sergeant,
looking up,
Our hero feebly answered "yes" and then
they stood him up;
He jumped right out into the blast, his
static line unhooked,
And he ain't gonna jump no more!

AT A JEEP UP THE LINE

Winters and Lipton are already in the Jeep. Nixon puts the letter in his pocket, and pauses as he is about to jump in. Lipton joins in the singing, smiling at Nixon.

LIPTON/TROOPERS
Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!
Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!

Nixon smiles back, joins in, singing with gusto.

NIXON/LIPTON/TROOPERS
Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!
And he ain't gonna jump no more!

Nixon smiles at Winters, and even Winters joins in.

WINTERS/NIXON/LIPTON/TROOPERS

He counted long, he counted loud, he
waited for the shock,
He felt the wind, he felt the cold, he
felt the awful drop,

These guys are Nixon's family as much as anybody...

The Jeep fires up, and lurches to a start, joining the convoy
getting under way.

VARIOUS SHOTS

of troopers singing in different DUKWs.

The convoy starts to head out, the troopers in almost every
vehicle are singing.

TROOPERS (CONT'D)

He pulled the reserve, the silk spilled
out and wrapped around his sock,
And he ain't gonna jump no more!
Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!

IN FIRST PLATOON'S DUKW

O'Keefe's got the chorus down.

TROOPERS (CONT'D)

Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!
Gory, Gory, what a helluva way to die!
And he ain't gonna jump no more!

WIDER

The convoy heads out of town.

TROOPERS

The days he'd lived and loved and laughed
kept running through his mind,
He thought about the girl back home, the
one he'd left behind....

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GERMAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The convoy is heading through lush German countryside. The
singing has stopped.

THE DUKW WITH EASY'S FIRST PLATOON

Men are relaxing: reading, eating K-rations, sleeping...

Luz is reading a "Stars and Stripes" magazine. Janovec sits next to him, tossing a baseball up and down into a mitt.

Webster is eating some K-rations next to Liebgott.

LIEBGOTT

Gonna be good times when we get home,
donta think?

Webster looks up from his food and nods. He'd rather not be disturbed.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)

Boom times! Yeah, I got it all figured out-- first I'm gonna get my job back at the cab company in Frisco so I can make a killing off all those sailors coming home, then I'll find me a nice Jewish girl with great big soft titties, marry her, and then, then I'm gonna buy a great big house with lots of bedrooms for all the little Liebgotts we're gonna make...

Webster's not even listening. He's eating.

CUT TO:

LUZ AND JANOVEC

JANOVEC

Hey Luz. Whatcha reading?

LUZ

An article.

Beat.

JANOVEC

No shit. About what?

Luz doesn't even look up.

LUZ

Why we're fighting the war...

JANOVEC

Oh yeah? What's it say?

LUZ

Seems the Germans are bad. Very, very bad...

JANOVEC

You don't say? Good to know... Good to know....

CUT TO:

WEBSTER AND LIEBGOTT

Liebgott watches Webster eat for a beat before--

LIEBGOTT

How 'bout you? Got any plans?

Webster shakes his head.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)

C'mon, you musta thought about it a little?

Webster pauses, deciding whether to confide in Liebgott or not.

WEBSTER

I guess I'll finish school first...

LIEBGOTT

Finish-- You mean all this time you been telling us about Harvard this and Harvard that, and you ain't even finished?

Webster looks at Liebgott, getting angrier by the minute.

WEBSTER

Yeah. I haven't finished!
So-the-fuck-what?

LIEBGOTT

No big deal, no big deal. Just the way you always talked, we all figured...
Yeah, right, so what?
(beat)
So what were you studying?

Beat.

WEBSTER

Literature.

LIEBGOTT

Oh yeah? I like to read myself. Dick Tracy, Flash Gordon mostly...

Webster stares at him for a beat then goes back to his food.

EXT. GERMAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The convoy continues deeper into Germany.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF A GERMAN VILLAGE (WIDDEN) - DUSK

The convoy slows as it approaches the outskirts of town. The men are tired and quiet.

THE DUKW WITH EASY'S FIRST PLATOON

Everyone looks out the DUKW with curiosity. O'Keefe is next to Luz.

FROM O'KEEFE'S POV:

At the edge of the village, in the cover of trees, is a FRENCH SOLDIER and THREE GERMAN SOLDIERS.

The Germans can't be older than 14, but they're in uniform none the less. One of them is DEAD, face down in the snowy dirt, still bleeding from a head wound. The other boys are on their knees, scared beyond belief, watching the Frenchman in terror.

The French soldier simply SHOTS the next boy in the head, execution style. The boy falls next to his already-dead comrade.

BACK TO SCENE:

O'Keefe is shocked.

O'KEEFE

(sotto)

Oh god...oh god...

Perconte turns to see what O'Keefe is looking at.

FROM O'KEEFE AND PERCONTE'S POV:

The surviving German boy tries to plead for his life, but only gets a few words in before-- BANG!-- he falls into the red snow next to his comrades. The Frenchman starts to search the bodies.

BACK TO SCENE:

O'Keefe can't believe his eyes, but is too overwhelmed to say anything. He turns to Luz... who just turns away and lights up a smoke.

Any other trooper that might have witnessed the executions turns away as well. They've seen far worse than this...

O'Keefe turns back to watch, his face a wrecked in confusion as the Frenchman continues to rifle through the dead bodies' uniforms.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THE HALLWAY OF A GERMAN APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A large group of Paratroopers are rushing down the hall, picking flats to "occupy" as billets for the night.

CUT TO:

PERCONTE, HASHEY, O'KEEFE AND RANDLEMAN

pause in front of a door, M-1's ready. Perconte nods to Randleman, who KICKS the door open and they all rush into:

INT. A GERMAN FLAT - NIGHT

A German woman and a German man look up from eating dinner.

Perconte points his M-1 at them.

PERCONTE

Raust! Raust! You Nazi fucks! C'mon!
Schnell! Schnell!!

GERMAN MAN

Nicht Nazi. Nicht Nazi!

The German man continues to protest in German.

PERCONTE

(to Hashey)

Hear that, Hash? Says he ain't a Nazi...
Why is it in all of Germany, I ain't
never met a Nazi yet?

HASHEY

(under his breath)

Yeah, and they all got a cousin in
Milwaukee.

PERCONTE

(to German)

You a Republican? I ain't never met one
of them either! Raust! RAUST! You fat
fuck...

Hashey chuckles as Randleman brushes by the standing woman,
and starts to finish her very good looking chicken dinner.

INT. ANOTHER FLAT - NIGHT

Similar scene as above, only this time it's Speirs, Lipton
Liebgott and a few Easy Company HQ staff with rifles drawn.

There's a forty-ish German HAUSFRAU and two small children by
her side. She's SHOUTING in German.

SPEIRS

(to Liebgott)

Tell her she's got five minutes!

Liebgott starts to talk to her in excellent German.

*NOTE: Any dialogue in ITALICS will be spoken in German, with
subtitles hopefully NOT needed.*

LIEBGOTT

*You have to leave! You have five
minutes! Get everything you need! Now!*

She argues back.

Speirs is inspecting the living room. He sees A GOLD POCKET
WATCH displayed on the mantle. He picks it up, examines it.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)

She says she's got nowhere to go. But
the house next door--

SPEIRS

Jesus Christ, we're only gonna be here one night! Tell her she's got four minutes.

Speirs winds the watch as the Hausfrau stares at him as:

LIEBGOTT

You have to get your children ready and leave! Please hurry!

Speirs puts the gold pocket watch in his pocket, never taking his eyes off of her.

She starts to yell at him, and he ignores her as he heads for the next room. One of the troopers has to hold her back.

INT. THE HALLWAY - NIGHT

German civilians are hurrying down the hall and towards the stairs-- all confused, all talking to each other, all carrying bags, prized possessions, etc., as ever more troopers come into the building with their own bags for the night.

DISSOLVE TO:

HOBNAILED BOOTS

hitting pavement and marching in perfect unison. We are:

EXT. THE GERMAN AUTOBAHN - DAY

A long line of German Whermacht P.O.W.'s are marching west as far as the eye can see (or budget will allow). They might be beaten, haggard and thin, but they march in perfect German unison.

They're escorted by surprisingly few GI's and MP's armed with Tommy guns. The luckier Germans-- including officers-- are in horse-drawn wagons. Lots of them.

The SOUND of boots hitting pavement is soon drowned out by the ROAR of internal combustion engines as the convoy of U.S. DUKW's, jeeps, and deuce-and-a-half's comes around a bend, going in the opposite direction as the Germans. They're all loaded with the troopers of the 506th. One after another... almost endlessly.

CUT TO:

AN AMERICAN JEEP

Zielinski is behind the wheel, Winters rides shot-gun, and Nixon is in back.

WINTERS

(impressed)

Now those are soldiers. Look at them!
Even in defeat, they still know how to
march with pride!

CUT TO:

GERMAN WAGON

The German officers are stupefied by the scale and scope of the industrial might passing them.

GERMAN OFFICER

Mein gott...

WEBSTER (O.S.)

(yelling)

That's right you stupid Kraut bastards!!!

FIRST PLATOON'S DUKW

It's right in front of Winters' jeep. Webster is looking at all the POWs. He stands.

WEBSTER

Say hello to Ford and General-fucking-Motors, you stupid bastards! What were you guys thinking!? What were you thinking?!!

Some of the guys pull Webster down.

GARCIA

Give it a rest Web!

WEBSTER

(to himself)

Dragging our butts halfway around the world, interrupting our lives...

Webster stands again.

WEBSTER (CONT'D)

For what?!

IN WINTERS' JEEP

Nixon listens to Webster.

WEBSTER (cont'd)
You stupid fucks! What the hell are we
doing here!?

Winters looks over at Nixon. They don't say anything to each other. But clearly Nixon is thinking the same thing Webster is.

CHRISTENSEN (O.S.)
Webster!

WIDER

The Germans continue to march as the convoy motors down the road, no end in sight as we--

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE VILLAGE OF BUCHLOE - LATE AFTERNOON

A few civilian Germans watch as the caravan of DUKW's, trucks and jeeps enters the town. It's relatively unscathed by Allied bombing.

TITLE: **Buchloe, Germany**
April 28, 1945
D-Day plus 326

Brakes SQUEAK as the convoy rolls to a stop and men start to get out of the vehicles.

Malarkey, Alley, Powers, Heffron, Wynn and LESNIEWSKI jump out the back of their DUKW under the watchful eyes of an old German man and his eight year old GRANDSON.

GRANDSON
Our uniforms are much nicer...

WYNN
What'd he say?

LESNIEWSKI
He said the Kraut uniforms are nicer.

Alley GRUNTS.

HEFFRON

Oh yeah?

(to the kid)

They're a lot easier to see when you shoot at 'em, too.

And then he pretends to shoot an invisible soldier with an invisible gun.

FURTHER UP THE STOPPED CONVOY

Winters jumps out of his jeep with Nixon close behind, looking around; getting a feel for the new village. His Battalion Officers quickly find him, including Speirs, Lipton, the C.O. of Dog Company and the C.O of Fox Co.

WINTERS

Let's send out some patrols. Dog takes the village, Easy and Fox, the woods...

Speirs and the other two C.O.s nod, and head away with their junior officers.

SPEIRS

(to Fox Co CO)

We'll take North/West.

FOX CO. CO

Right.

SPEIRS

(to Lipton)

First and second platoons take the woods to the north. Third will swing around...

Nixon has remained with Winters.

NIXON

(to Winters)

Not worried about an ambush, are you?

A slightly pregnant pause.

WINTERS

(lying)

No... Just in case we have to stay the night...

DISSOLVE TO:

CORCORANS (PARATROOPER BOOTS)

stomping on pine needles and underbrush. They make a loud CRUNCHING noise. We are:

EXT. A FOREST - AFTERNOON

And the morning sun is creating a chiaroscuro effect as it filters through the branches.

Christensen, Perconte, Luz, Randleman, Garcia, and O'Keefe are on patrol, walking through thinly scattered pine trees.

They're eating sandwiches as they walk, their M-1's casually at their sides.

RANDLEMAN

(eating)

Hey, is it just me, or don't it look a little like Bastogne here?

LUZ

Now that you mention it, it's kinda uncanny. 'Cept for there's no snow... We got warm grub in our bellies... And the trees aren't exploding into a million fucking pieces from Kraut artillery fire!

(beat)

But yeah, other than that...

Randleman smiles.

Luz comes close to Perconte, smiles, and nods towards--

O'KEEFE

who is completely tense, M-1 rifle at the ready. He is NOT eating a sandwich.

WIDER

Perconte notices something about O'Keefe.

PERCONTE

Hey O'Malley! If you're gonna be pointin' that thing like your actually gonna shoot it, you better take the safety off!

O'Keefe checks his rifle as the other guys crack up.

O'KEEFE

It is off.

GARCIA

(grinning)

He's just giving you shit, O'Keefe...

CHRISTENSEN

Alright. Enough with the chatter...

Perconte, why don't you take point for awhile.

Scolded, they continue on.

INT. GERMAN BUILDING - AFTERNOON

Speirs is walking through an abandoned office. Lipton, Janovec and Malarkey appear from down the hall.

LIPTON

I think we found something, sir.

CUT TO:

A PAD-LOCKED DOOR

Speirs is just staring at it; Lipton and the troopers next to him.

Speirs brings out his .45 and SHOOTs at it, busting the lock. He KICKS open the door and... a STENCH assaults them from down a dark stairwell.

MALARKEY

(curling his nose)

Oh man...

Speirs sniffs as he walks into the--

DARK STAIRWAY

And the other men follow him down the stairs and into the--

CELLAR

Speirs finds a light switch, turns it on. They all look surprised at what they see.

MALARKEY

What the...?

LIPTON

Cheese...

Lots and lots of wheels of cheese.

SPEIRS

(disappointed)

Shit.

He turns and exits the cellar.

MALARKEY

What's he so pissed at?

JANOVEC

Guess you can't ship cheese back home...

Malarkey chortles.

LIPTON

Knock it off.

Lipton follows Speirs.

EXT. A FOREST - AFTERNOON

Luz, Randleman, Christensen, Garcia, Perconte and O'Keefe continue their patrol. The trees are thinning a bit.

O'Keefe looks around. Something isn't right.

O'KEEFE

It sure is quiet...

Perconte stops chewing the last of his sandwich and listens.

PERCONTE

Yeah. He's right.

Beat.

CHRISTENSEN

Hold it for a minute.

Everyone stops walking. They listen.

No birds. Nothing. Just silence. Complete silence.

Christensen takes a slow step, and they resume their walking but a lot more cautiously, their rifles now at the ready.

INT. A GERMAN UPPER-CLASS HOUSE - DAY

The front door is slowly pushed open by the muzzle of an M-1 rifle, and Nixon cautiously enters the entry way. He's alone.

A RADIO is ON, playing an eerie piece of Richard Wagner, perhaps *Forest Murmurs* from "*Siegfried*".

NIXON

Hello?

No response. Nixon slowly walks through the entry way and into the--

LIVING ROOM

It's upper-class and extremely well furnished. Nixon walks around, curious.

NIXON (cont'd)

Hello?!

No one seems to be home.

Nixon sees a table that serves as a bar. There are bottles of liquor on top. He quietly rummages through them, just to make sure there's no Vat 69. There isn't. He looks disappointed (but not surprised).

The music is annoying him so he walks over to the radio and shuts it OFF. Silence. His eyes catch--

A LANDSCAPE PAINTING ABOVE THE FIREPLACE.

An Alpine scene.

NIXON

admires it for a moment, then walks over to a book shelf. He looks at the volumes, pulls one out, examines it, then puts it back.

He notices that another shelf holds some framed black and white photos. All are family portraits. His eye catches:

AN 8X12 PICTURE

of a stern-looking German Whermacht *Oberst* (Colonel) about 50 years old. A BLACK RIBBON is draped over one corner of the frame.

WIDER

Nixon stares at it for a beat. He picks it up, stares at it some more... then just DROPS it onto the floor. The glass of the frame SHATTERS.

He picks up another picture. It's of the Oberst, now in civilian clothes, and his wife on a ski trip.

Nixon studies the picture for a moment... then the skin on the back of his neck crawls. He can tell he's not alone. He looks up and sees:

A GERMAN WIDOW

Her arms are crossed. She's just STARING at Nixon, a look of complete and utter contempt aimed his way.

NIXON

holds her cold stare for a moment, but then feels completely *ashamed* at what he has done...

He puts down the second picture, and then slowly leaves the room, not saying a word. Neither does she.

IN THE ENTRY WAY

Nixon pauses when he hears the RADIO turn back ON, the music of Wagner again filling the house. It's on much louder than it was before, as though the music alone can disinfect the home from Nixon's presence.

A beat later-- just to add insult to injury-- a little dachshund scurries in and starts to bark at him with a particularly annoying high-pitched tone.

EXT. A FOREST - AFTERNOON

The men are now walking forward quite cautiously.

Everyone's a bit more tense, a bit more on guard. A few yards later--

GARCIA

(sotto)

Hey, Bull, you smell something?

RANDLEMAN

(sotto)

Yeah...

They keep on going for a few yards, exchanging nervous glances as the trees thin...

A few yards later, the men emerge from the trees and enter a clearing.

Almost as one, they all PAUSE. They see something up ahead.
But we don't see what they see.

We HEAR the SOUNDS of someone PANTING heavily as we--

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF BUCHLOE - DAY

Perconte is RUNNING at full speed down the road. He's out of breath, hence the sound of panting.

He passes a line of troopers waiting for the DUKWs to fuel up, including Alley, Heffron and Wynn. Some guys are playing catch, others are nodding off, still others are reading or eating.

ALLEY

Hey! Watch it!

PERCONTE

Anyone seen Foley?

HEFFRON

Nope!

PERCONTE

Speirs? How about Speirs? Anyone see
Speirs?

The troopers nod no.

WYNN

He's searching buildings down the street.
But Major Winters is right over there.

Perconte sprints in that direction and, sure enough, spots Winters down the road leaning against the jeep, eating some food.

PERCONTE

Major Winters! Sir! We... We found
something.

Perconte tries to catch his breath. He can't speak. Winters can tell something is very wrong.

WINTERS

What?

After a few more pants.

PERCONTE

I...don't know...sir...

EXT. THE FOREST/THE CLEARING - DAY

Winters' jeep emerges from the trees and into the clearing.

A couple of trucks follow, filled with men of Easy's 1st and 3rd platoons. Unsure where they're heading, they're tense, with weapons ready.

INSIDE ONE OF THE TRUCKS

are men of 3rd Platoon, among them: Malarkey, Alley, McClung, Lesniewski, Shifty Powers and Popeye Wynn.

WYNN

That is one powerful smell...

IN WINTERS' JEEP

Winters is driving himself. Nixon is riding shot-gun next to him, Speirs and Perconte are in the back.

NIXON

is the first to see--

FROM HIS POV (MOVING):

Landsberg Prison. It's a compound in the middle of the clearing surrounded by a large fence made of 15 foot logs and barbed wire.

There are wooden guard towers every hundred feet of fence and A-Frame huts scattered within. Some of huts have been half burned to the ground, and smoke still smolders.

It's hard to tell from this distance, but there seems to be people leaning on the prison-side of the fence by the gate.

Also, behind them appear to be mounds of debris, and of dirt, and maybe some sort of white rubble...

BACK TO SCENE:

Nixon is grim faced. So is Winters.

A few moments later, the Jeep arrives at the gate and comes to a stop. The officers jump out of the jeep and head for the gate of the compound.

EXT. LANDSBERG PRISON COMPOUND - DAY

Christensen, Garcia, Luz and O'Keefe silently wait in front of the gate, wearing handkerchiefs on their faces, covering their noses.

Behind them, a couple dozen PRISONERS are on the other side of the barbed wire.

Most of the prisoners wear striped blue-and-white burlap uniforms (Jews), but others wear a solid light blue color burlap uniform (non-Jews). They're all thin and haggard, and start to quietly talk among themselves.

WINTERS

notices that Randleman is squatting about 5 yards away, his back to the camp, tears in his eyes. Winters exchanges a worried look with Nixon.

WIDER

They reach the gates, and Christensen pulls down his handkerchief and salutes Winters.

CHRISTENSEN

Major, sir.

Winters nods, and looks in at the prisoners. He makes eye contact with

ONE OF THE PRISONERS

who can't hold Winters' gaze. Almost like when you stare at a dog.

BACK TO SCENE

Winters turns away, not wanting to humiliate the man any further than he obviously already is.

WINTERS

Open it up.

CHRISTENSEN

Yes sir.

Christensen heads to open the gate.

BACK BY THE U.S. TRUCKS

The men are getting out, staying by the trucks. Watching quietly, unsure of what's going on.

Malarkey is watching and waiting next to Heffron and Liebgott.

MALARKEY

(sotto)

Hey, Babe, you ever seen a POW camp like this before?

Heffron silently nods his head back and forth.

BY THE GATE

CHRISTENSEN

(to prisoners)

Stand back! Give us some room! Stand back!!

They enter the camp, and the prisoners simply flock to them, shouting and yelling in joy. They grab the Americans, hug them, touch them.

Nixon, Winters and Speirs try to hide their shock and smile and nod at all the greetings.

SPEIRS

Major...

Winters follows Speirs' nod at--

THE GROUND JUST BEHIND THE GATE

where there are about 10 dead prisoners laying on blood covered ground. They seem to have been shot only a few hours earlier...

BACK TO SCENE:

WINTERS

(to Christensen)

Any of your men speak German?

CHRISTENSEN

No sir.

Winters turns back to the trucks.

WINTERS
 (yelling)
 Liebgott!

And then Nixon sees something deeper in the camp.

WINTERS (cont'd)
 Somebody find me Lieb--

NIXON
 (interrupting)
 Oh my god...

Winters turns and freezes when he sees--

WINTERS' POV:

More prisoners are emerging from the A-Frames. But these prisoners are different than the ones by the gate. These prisoners are *truly* skeletal... Emaciated. Almost translucent... The prisoners that were too weak to wait outside by the gate, in the cold.

AND THE CAMERA CRANES UP

As these figures stagger out of the rows of huts, heading for the Americans...

The stronger hold the weaker, supporting them on their walk to liberation...

Many are grinning in almost terrifying reflections of smiles... Others cry. Others shout.

Behind them, the piles of rubble we saw from the jeep are actually *piles and piles of dead, naked, emaciated bodies*...

And as the CAMERA goes higher, we see ever more of the prisoners... walking skeleton after walking skeleton heading for the gate... hundreds... maybe thousands...

BACK TO SCENE

Nixon, Winters and Speirs are stunned, unable to form words.

BY THE TRUCKS

The men are shocked.

HEFFRON
 Mary, mother of god...

LIPTON (O.S.)
 Liebgott! Any of you see--
 (spots him)
 Liebgott!

Lipton jogs over to Malarkey and Liebgott.

LIPTON (cont'd)
 The major wants you up front! Now!

LIEBGOTT
 Yes sir!

Liebgott heads at a run for Winters.

LIPTON
 (to the men)
 Okay, boys! We can handle this. Just
 follow me...

The troopers head for the prison.

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE COMPOUND

as these two groups of humans, prisoners and liberators, head towards each other from opposite directions. We can see Liebgott running ahead of the rest of the men, making for Winters.

And slowly, as the troopers enter the gates, and the prisoners stagger to the gates, the two groups *merge into one*...

ON THE GROUND - WHERE THEY MEET

Stunned troopers... Relieved victims... The stronger ones weeping with joy.

The men are deeply moved by what they see-- almost to the point of speechless shock.

HEFFRON

can hardly process what he sees. A man who should be dead walks up to him and touches his hand...

PRISONER
 Danke...danke...

JANOVEC

is kissed by a prisoner on both cheeks. Janovec just stares at the...creature smiling at him. Janovec's eyes tear up as he embraces the prisoner. The prisoner starts to sob.

JANOVEC

Oh my god...

WYNN AND POWERS

are approached by a prisoner carrying the emaciated, hardly human-looking corpse of his friend. He walks up to them and starts to plead to him in German.

POWERS

I'm sorry... I'm so sorry...

The Prisoner is crying. Sobbing. Wynn's eyes tear up as well.

LUZ AND WEBSTER

look around in bewilderment.

LUZ

(loud- near panic)

What the fuck is this place, Web!?

Webster stares into the compound, unable to answer.

BY NIXON AND WINTERS AND SPEIRS

Liebgott has joined them. Perconte has left them.

Liebgott is translating what one of the more able bodied prisoners-- an OTTO HERZFELD (29, but looks 59)-- is saying to Winters.

NOTE: Any dialogue in ITALICS will be spoken in German, with subtitles hopefully NOT needed.

HERZFELD

The guards? They left this morning before...

Herzfeld continues to talk in German as Liebgott stares at him, translating.

LIEBGOTT

He says the guards left this morning, sir... But they... they burned some of the huts, first... With the...

(MORE)

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)
 (he pales)
 With the prisoners still in them,
 sir...alive...

NIXON
 (sotto)
 Jesus Christ.

LIEBGOTT
 (still translating)
 But then some of the prisoners... tried
 to stop them... some were killed... But
 the guards didn't have enough ammo for
 all the prisoners... They shot as many
 as they could before they... just left.
 They locked the gate behind them... and
 headed South.

NIXON
 (to Winters)
 Someone in town must have told them we
 were here...

FURTHER IN THE CAMP

Malarkey and Heffron are walking further into the camp.

Malarkey notices the fore-arm of one of the prisoners. It
 has a large tattooed number on it. Malarkey looks at the
 next prisoner. Same thing. And another. They all have them

MALARKEY
 (sotto)
 Look at their arms...

Heffron grimly notices the tattoos as well.

BACK BY WINTERS

WINTERS
 Ask him what kind of a camp this is.
 What... why are they here?

LIEBGOTT
What is this place?

Herzfeld starts to answer in German.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)
 It's a...work camp for, for...
 (to Herzfeld)
 Unerwuensch?
 (to Winters)
 (MORE)

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)

I'm not sure what the word means, sir...
"Unwanted", maybe?

NIXON

You mean criminals?

LIEBGOTT

I don't think so, sir.
(to Herzfeld)
Criminals?

Herzfeld gets very agitated and animated in his reply.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)

(translating)

No. No. Doctors... Musicians...
Writers... Tailors... Clerks...
Farmers... Intellectuals...

A pause, then Herzfeld continues.

HERZFELD

(as if it explains everything)
Juden. Juden!

LIEBGOTT

They're... Jews...

Liebgott pauses as this hits him. Herzfeld says a few more words.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)

(translating)

And Poles and Gypsies...

Herzfeld nods over and over. The reality of the situation almost overwhelms the officers.

Herzfeld continues talking.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)

What? Say again?

Herzfeld repeats himself. Liebgott is visibly shaken. So much, that he's stunned into silence.

WINTERS

Liebgott?

LIEBGOTT

The... the... women's camp is at the next
railroad stop...

The Americans look extremely confused.

SPEIRS
Jesus Christ...

Speirs just walks away.

Tears start to form in Herzfeld's eyes. He takes Winters' hand. Just to touch a human being that has no malice...

Winters, visibly moved, turns to--

NIXON

who is overwhelmed by the camp. He is close to tears. Any doubts he might have harbored about the worth of this war now gone forever...

IN A DIFFERENT PART OF THE CAMP

Janovec is walking with Alley. Their stunned expressions turn to confusion as they spot something up ahead...

WIDER

They stop in front of one of those MOUNDS that look like rubble from far away. But it's not rubble. It's dead, naked, skeletal bodies.

Janovec's face contorts in nausea, and he THROWS UP.

ANOTHER PART OF THE CAMP

Perconte is walking alone, deeper into the camp than anyone else, holding a piece of cloth against his nose to keep out the particularly strong stench coming from this part of the camp.

He is literally having to walk over corpses.

After a few yards, he comes to a stop at a half-burned A-Frame hut. He sees something.

FROM HIS POV:

A trooper is sitting with his back to us in the middle of the burned out hut surrounded by the corpses of twisted, burned bodies, smoke still rising...

PERCONTE
O'Keefe??

The trooper turns-- it's O'Keefe. He's completely overwhelmed. Dazed. Confused. Tears flowing from his eyes.

ON WINTERS AND NIXON

Winters looks around the camp. It's incomprehensible to him.

WINTERS

I'm gonna call Colonel Sink, get some
medics...

Winters heads back for the gate.

WINTERS (cont'd)

Find Speirs and figure out how the hell
to get them some food...and water!

CUT TO:

INT. THE GERMAN CHEESE CELLAR - DAY

The one we saw Speirs and Lipton in. The door SLAMS open, and a dozen troopers, including Malarkey, Heffron, and Shifty Powers, rush in and immediately start to load up with wheels of cheese.

INT. A GERMAN BAKERY - DAY

As another squad of troopers, including Webster and Lesniewski, are urgently rifling through what little bread is there.

A FAT BAKER is YELLING at them to stop in German.

WEBSTER

(to Baker)

Shut up! Shut up!

The Baker ignores him. If anything, he gets louder.

WEBSTER (cont'd)

I said...

(pulls out .45)

SHUT UP, YOU NAZI FUCK!

He GRABS the Baker by the throat, and puts the gun to his head. The Baker stops and stares at Webster. He's terrified.

BAKER

I'm not a Nazi, I'm not a Nazi...

WEBSTER

Oh yeah? Not a Nazi? You fat prick...
 (grabs him tighter)
 Well how about a fucking human being?
 You one of those? You gonna tell me you
 NEVER FUCKING SMELLED THE STENCH!!

BAKER

*Don't kill me! Please don't kill me! I
 don't know what you are saying! I'm not
 a Nazi!*

They stare at each other a beat.

LESNIEWSKI

Let him go, Web! He says he doesn't know
 what the hell you're talking about!

Webster looks hard into the eyes of the Baker. He doesn't believe him for a second. After a few more terrifying moments for the Baker, Webster let's him go. But he doesn't take his eyes off him.

WEBSTER

Bullshit.

EXT. LANDSBERG PRISON - DAY

CLOSE ON:

A BRASS PLAQUE with German writing is mounted on a small cement column.

WIDER:

Winters, Nixon, Foley, Liebgott, Perconte, Garcia, Luz and a few other troopers are staring at it. They are at the far end of the camp, near the railway depot.

LIEBGOTT

(reading)

Near this site, Landsberg Prison confined Germany's greatest son from November 11, 1923 to December 20, 1924. During this time, Adolf Hitler wrote the book of the National Socialist revolution, Mein Kampf.

Winters starts to head for a building near the railroad tracks that seems to house some administrative offices. All the men follow him in a line. Luz leans towards the sign as he passes it to get a better look.

LUZ
 (under breath)
 What a crock of shit...

Near the building, Winters pauses when he hears:

HASHEY
 Major Winters! Major Winters, sir!
 Colonel Sink is at the front gate, sir.

Winters nods.

WINTERS
 Nix, Liebgott.

Nixon and Liebgott follow Winters as he heads for the front gate, leaving Foley, Perconte, Garcia, Luz and a few other troopers to head for the building.

EXT. THE CLEARING - DAY

Winters, Nixon and Liebgott go out the front gate of the prison and into the commotion filled clearing in front of it.

Food is being handed out to prisoners from one truck by Webster, Heffron, Malarkey and other troopers. In another, Alley, Christensen and others dole out water from Jerry cans.

SINK (O.S.)
 Major!

Winters sees that Sink is by his staff car, one ear pressed against a walkie-talkie. Winters and Nixon head his way. Liebgott knows to stay behind.

Major KENT, a doctor from Regimental, is next to Sink.

SINK (cont'd)
 This is Doctor Kent.
 (to Kent)
 Tell Major Winters what you just told me.

KENT
 Yes, sir.
 (to Winters)
 We have to stop giving them food. Now. Right now. They're starving-- we give them too much food too quickly, they'll eat themselves to death. We...
 (he hesitates)
 We need to put them back in the camp.

NIXON

(shocked)

You want us to lock them back up?

KENT

Yeah.

(to Winters)

Otherwise they're gonna scatter. And we need them centralized so we can supervise their food intake and their medical treatment. So until we find someplace better...

Nixon understands.

Sink hears something on the walkie-talkie

SINK

(into walkie)

General Taylor, sir! I think we've found something you need to be aware of...

(to Winters)

Take care of it, Major.

(into walkie)

Well, I think you really need to see for yourself sir...

CUT TO:

BY A TRUCK GIVING OUT FOOD - FIVE MINUTES LATER

Liebgott is staring at Nixon and Winters. Winters has just told him Sink's orders.

LIEBGOTT

(to Winters)

I can't tell them that, sir...

WINTERS

You've got to, Joe...

Liebgott looks at Winters for a beat, then to Nixon. Nixon nods his support. Liebgott realizes it needs to be done.

LIEBGOTT

Yes sir.

He jumps up on the bed of the truck.

LIEBGOTT (CONT'D)

Attention! You need to go back into the camp! It's only temporary so we can give you the proper food and medicine!

Nixon starts talking quietly to the troopers giving out food. They stop.

LIEBGOTT (cont'd)
Please go back into the camp! It's only temporary! For your own health!

The Prisoners look confused. Some head back to the gate.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE VILLAGE OF BUCHLOE - NIGHT

It's peaceful and quiet. Almost idyllic in that German Hansel and Gretl way. A few troopers doing guard duty walk the main street.

INT. WINTER'S BILLET - NIGHT

Winters is alone, behind a desk, writing a report. The door OPENS, and Nixon appears. He looks ashen.

Winters looks up.

NIXON
 Turns out I'm staying in the only dry house in all of friggin' Germany...

Winters nods as Nixon goes up to a table in the corner of the room that served as the former occupant's bar.

Nixon takes a rummages through the bottles-- no Vat 69. No surprise.

He grabs a bottle of brandy instead. Pours himself a stiff one.

WINTERS
 Thought you weren't drinking the local.

NIXON
 Yeah, well...

Any port in a storm. He downs the drink. Grimaces. It isn't Vat 69. Pours himself another.

WINTERS
 Heard from Division. These camps are being found all over the place.

Nixon pours himself another.

NIXON

Jesus...

WINTERS

Guess the Russians liberated one a lot worse...

Beat.

NIXON

Worse?

WINTERS

(nods)

Ten times as big... filled with giant execution chambers and... ovens...

NIXON

(almost doesn't want to know)

Ovens?

A beat.

WINTERS

For cremating all the bodies...

NIXON

Jesus...

A long pause as Nixon downs his drink and pours another.

NIXON (CONT'D)

The locals are saying they had no idea the camp existed... that we must be exaggerating...

WINTERS

(snorts)

Well, they sure as hell are gonna get an education tomorrow... General Taylor declared martial law about an hour ago and ordered every able-bodied German in town 14 to 80 to bury the bodies starting tomorrow. 10th Armored going to supervise the clean-up...

NIXON

What about us?

WINTERS

We move out for Thalham at 1200 hours.

Nixon nods, pours himself another drink. Downs it quickly.

MUSIC BEGINS-- The same Beethoven Quartet piece that started the episode, the *String Quartet No. 15 in A minor, Op. 132, 3rd movement (Molto Adagio)* as we--

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. A ROAD - MORNING

Nixon is in a jeep, alone, driving with a determined expression on his face, a cigarette in his mouth.

EXT. LANDSBERG COMPOUND - MORNING

Nixon's jeep pulls up to the camp, and Nixon gets out. There's something he's come to see. By himself.

An MP salutes Nixon as he enters the Camp. Nixon nods almost imperceptibly.

MP
Kerchief, sir?

Nixon pauses just long to nod his head "no".

INSIDE THE COMPOUND

Nixon wanders in.

GERMAN CIVILIANS-- of all ages-- are spread out through the camp in work groups. They're guarded and watched by MPs as they lift and carry dead bodies into piles, or into common graves... They wear their nicest clothes: suits, lederhosen, dresses, overcoats... It's a very incongruous sight.

Most all of the MPs wear either gas masks, or kerchiefs around their faces to filter the overpowering stench. The Germans are NOT allowed to cover their noses.

A MONTAGE begins of various images of the camp as Nixon looks for something:

DEAD BODIES

line the main dirt path of the camp, now in a neat row, ready for burial.

ONE GROUP OF GERMANS

form a work line. Two Germans to a body. They try to remain dignified as they work.

A GERMAN BOY

not more than 13, dressed in lederhosen, is THROWING UP into the dirt. An old man goes to his side, but an MP prevents him. The boy continues to throw up, alone.

NIXON

watches him blankly. This isn't what he came to see, and he continues on.

MORE GERMANS

are digging a common grave.

NIXON

stares into their faces, searching.

AN OLD GERMAN MAN

is crying as he tosses a body into a pile, horrified by his surroundings.

AN MP

watches wordlessly, his face covered by a gas-mask.

NIXON

continues on, passing a group of former prisoners being attended by a group of NUNS wearing the an old-fashioned type of habit that includes the intricate head-dress that looks like the wings of a bird...

Nixon looks down another work line, and pauses when he sees:

DOWN THE GERMAN WORK LINE

An old woman is hunched over, trying to lift a skeletal corpse. She looks up--

It's the WIDOW that had so shamed Nixon earlier when he entered her home and broke the portrait of her dead husband.

She looks over at--

NIXON

who stares intently at her.

THE WIDOW

might not even recognize him. But either way she is too shamed to hold his gaze.

NIXON

continues to stare at her...

WIDER

We see much of the camp. The piles of dead bodies. The open graves. The MP's. The German civilians...

MATCH DISSOLVE TO

EXT. A GERMAN VILLAGE - DAY

A similar angle as the last shot. Only now we are back in the German village *from the very first scene of the episode.*

We see the String Quartet playing in the middle of the cobblestone street... the rubble around them... the bombed out buildings... the German civilians stacking the bricks and rubble into piles...

TITLE: **Thalham, Germany**
 May 1, 1945
 D-Day plus 329

THE GERMAN STRING QUARTET

This is-- literally-- a REPETITION/CONTINUATION of that first scene. And it is their musical performance we heard in the preceding scene at the concentration camp.

The smoke continues to weave through the old musicians, creating an almost surreal effect...

WIDER:

The German civilians stack their rubble into neat piles, the quartet playing behind them in the middle of the cobblestone road.

 LUZ (O.S.)
 I'll say this for 'em. They sure know
 how to clean up.

Smoke wafts by and we--

CUT TO:

THE TROOPERS DOWN THE STREET

Garcia, Liebgott, Randleman and Webster watch the Germans.
They grunt their assent to Luz's comment.

Captain LEWIS NIXON walks over and joins them.

LIEBGOTT

All ya need is a little Mozart.

Liebgott spits.

GARCIA

(to Nixon)

Sir.

Nixon just nods his response.

NIXON

Beethoven.

LIEBGOTT

Sir?

NIXON

It's Beethoven, not Mozart...

NIXON

silently watches the Germans, his face full of mixed, complex emotions. A long beat, then--

NIXON

Hitler's dead.

WIDER

The men turn to him, shocked.

NIXON (cont'd)

Shot himself in Berlin...

LIEBGOTT

(to himself)

Holy shit...

RANDLEMAN

Is the war over?

Long pause.

NIXON

No.

The men hide their disappointment.

NIXON (cont'd)

We've been ordered to Berchtesgaden. We
move out in an hour.

The men start to grumble as they gather their gear...

WEBSTER

Crazy bastard should have killed himself
three years ago, save us all a lot of
trouble...

RANDLEMAN

I'll say...

NIXON

Yeah...

The men head away from Nixon, leaving him alone.

NIXON

watches the Germans, certain that all this killing and death
has been needed.

NIXON (cont'd)

(to himself)

But he didn't...

He moves to join the rest of the men as we

CUT TO:

THE GERMAN CIVILIANS

who continue to put their rubble into neat little piles.

THE QUARTET

plays the last, long, mournful note of the movement.

Then, silence.

The Violist looks over to the Cellist with a questioning
look. The Cellist nods. They're done for the day.

The Violist silently puts his viola in it's case.

CLOSE-UP OF THE VIOLA CASE

The viola fits in the velvet perfectly. The case closes, and the clasps are SNAP-LOCKED.

HARD CUT TO BLACK

THE END.

