

Warner Bros. Pictures

"SGT. ROCK"

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FADE IN:

A GERMAN STUKA

Rocking from side-to-side. Machine guns open and ripping. Filling frame. Diving right at us... And we're on...

THE COBBLESTONED STREET OF AN ITALIAN VILLAGE

With SGT. ROCK and EASY COMPANY...

ROCK

Hit it!

They're all face down as the Stuka's bullets stitch the ground. Sgt. Rock whips a look back as the fighter plane passes a few feet over his head and starts a steep climb back into the sky. Rock's face is scarred, tough and battle-worn. The face of war.

The men get to their feet. We'll get to know them later, but for now we see the faces of KLUZEWSKI, 4-EYES, RETREAD, ICE CREAM, STITCH, WILDMAN, MARLBORO, BEANPOLE, COHEN, FARRACCI and WHITNEY.

ROCK

Okay, Easy. Door to door. Just like salesmen.

The men begin to fan out. House to house. The dirty job of infantry. Rock moves slowly down the middle of the street, past a burning jeep, scanning 2nd and 3rd floor windows for snipers.

Nearing a door, Wildman (Boston Irish) looks over his shoulder at ICE CREAM (Wisconsin dairy farmer).

WILDMAN

Got your broom out?

ICE CREAM

(pats his Thompson gun)
Taking my mop this time.

But as he kicks in the door...

There's a rumble and a wall at the end of the street explodes as a PANZER TANK bursts through it.

RATATATAT! Easy Company dives for cover under withering machine-gun fire. But Rock has nowhere to go. He drops flat as the Panzer's 88 belches a shell. It screams overhead, obliterates the burning jeep beyond Rock.

The Panzer rolls forward, followed from behind by SIX SS GRENADIERS, lethal burp guns at their hips.

Rock's a sitting duck. As his men do their best to return fire, bullets ping up off the iron manhole cover inches ahead of him.

WHOOSH! The Panzer's flame thrower lashes out, comes up just short of the big Sergeant.

ANGLE OVER PANZER'S TURRET

Closing in on Rock. The flame thrower belches again, longer and harder this time. As the smoke clears, Rock is gone - disappeared off the street.

As the panzer rolls forward, it's turret turns, the barrel of the cannon snapping a telephone pole clean off.

STREET

The men of Easy fire back: their bullets like mosquitoes to a rhinoceros. As the Panzer nears the manhole, we see the manhole cover is slightly ajar.

SEWER

Rock's crouched under the iron lid. As the Panzer starts to grind overhead, Rock slides back the lid. Reaching up, he grabs hold of a support bar on the tank's undercarriage. As he's sucked up under the tank...

STREET

The tank fires. Wildman and Ice Cream dive to the sides as the building they were about to enter is vaporized.

ROCK

Like the proverbial cowboy under a stage coach, he bounces along beneath the klanking tank. Holding on with one hand, Rock pulls a grenade from his belt, chomps down on the pin.

As he pulls it free, the handle plinks off and Rock shoves it into the tank treads on the left side. Then Rock lets go, rolls face down as the Panzer continues over him.

STREET

Rock plays dead as the trailing Grenadiers loom. One of them aims his gun, kicks the prone Rock in the ribs...

BLAM! The Grenadiers look over as the treads explode out from under the Panzer. At that instant of distraction, Rock rolls, sweeps his Thompson gun around in a circle.

The Grenadiers go down...

As the turret of the disabled tank begins to swing back toward Rock, he loads the PANZERFAUST anti-tank gun still strapped to the back of a dead grenadier.

WHOOOM! Gas expels from the rear of the tube as the bomb slams into the Panzer's side. The hatch blows as the PANZER EXPLODES.

FARRACCI'S VOICE

(from somewhere else)

The pieces from the tank ain't even stopped falling when Rock's back on his feet.

Rock stands, looks across as his dazed and dusty men step out from cover. As they blink at him in amazement...

FARRACCI'S VOICE

And you know what he says? You know what he says to us? He says...

Rock mouths the words, but Farracci's voice comes out.

ROCK/FARRACCI

Get to it, Easy. This company works for a living.

As the men resume their task, Rock's hard, uncompromising eyes go back to scanning for snipers.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - BELGIUM COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

INSERT: Ardennes Forest. December 15, 1944.

FARRACCI'S VOICE

(from inside)

You believe that?

SKEPTIC

As a matter of fact, fuck no.

INT. BELGIAN FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Where a GI POKER GAME is about to get ugly. Marlboro, 4-Eyes, Retread and Cohen play poker along with Whitney. The pot consists of army script, Hershey Bars and cigarettes. Matinee handsome, Farracci glares over the top of his cards at a green SKEPTIC.

FARRACCI
You calling me a liar?

SKEPTIC
A prevaricator.

As Farracchi tries to figure this answer out...

COHEN
That's the same thing Farracchi.
'Cept now he's calling you
stupid, too..

FARRACCI
Sgt. Rock's a hero. You'll see
for yourself soon enough.

SKEPTIC
He talks like a Kraut, he a
German?

FARRACCI
His Pop moved 'em to the States
when he was twelve. But he's as
American as any of us. My folks
are from Firenze in Italy. I
can speak Italian. That make me
friends with Mussolini?

SKEPTIC
I don't believe you can speak
Italian either. Go on. Prove
me wrong. Say something in the
mother tongue.

FARRACCI
Fuck-a you-a.

As everyone laughs, quiet Marlboro throws a German IRON
CROSS into the pot, picks at his teeth with the tip of his
BOWIE KNIFE. Whitney studies his poker face. Then...

WHITNEY
(Southern drawl)
I'll see your medal with four
cubes of beef bullion.

The others exchange looks, shrug or nod the bet's okay. 4-
Eyes throws in a piece of scribbled sheet music.

4-EYES
I bet a song and call.

SKEPTIC
Bullshit.

COHEN

Let's hear it, 4-Eyes.

4-Eyes picks it up, sings his composition in a light tenor.

4-EYES

Her eyes were blue and so was
her dress. She was Nazi trash,
but I couldn't care less. Cuz
even though she goose-stepped
France, when the music played,
that girl could dance.

Mumbles of 'fine,' "good enough for me." 4-Eyes throws it
back into the pot. Grudgingly, Skeptic adds half a Camel.

Retread, a grizzled old timer, throws down his cards.

RETREAD

Too rich for me.
(over protests)
I can't risk it.

COHEN

This is war, Retread. How you
gonna win if you don't take risks?

RETREAD

I ain't gonna win no war. None
of us are.
(shocked silence as...)
Men don't win wars. Machines
win wars. It's who's got the
rifles with the triggers that
don't jam; who's got the ammo
with the fewest duds, who's got
the good grenades and who's got
the bum fuses. Who's got the
best planes and tanks. It's
industry wins wars. We're just
pawns. And someday, Sergeant
Rock is gonna get us all killed.

Cowed by Retread's seniority and his eloquence, the men are
silent a beat. Finally, indignantly:

FARRACCI

Rock don't ask us to do nothing
he wouldn't do.

Farracci smiles triumphantly.

RETREAD

Well, you're right about that,
Farracci.

(a beat)
 But then again, can you think of
 anything that crazy sonofabitch
 wouldn't do?

(on stunned silence)
 So where does that leave ya?

As the men erupt in argument, we focus on the other side of the room. Ice Cream and Wildman sack out while Kluzewski hamfistedly writes a letter. On the desk before him, a can of SPAM half wrapped in brown paper.

KLUZEWSKI

(writing aloud)

Dear, Honey. Tonight we had Spam for dinner. Then I opened your package. Thanks a lot, but next time don't send Spam. Honey, I'm going crazy worrying about you. Did you had the baby yet? If it's a boy, don't name it after me. One Thadeus Kluzewski is enough.

Wildman can't take anymore. Standing, he heads out.

WILDMAN

I'm gonna take a piss.

KLUZEWSKI

(writing aloud)

I'm gonna take a piss.
 (realizes)
 Shit!

Kluzewski crumples the letter, starts over again.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - BELGIUM COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Wildman pisses absentmindedly against a tree. Then something catches his eye. About thirty yards away stands Sgt. Rock. He's staring straight up into the sky.

As he pees, Wildman looks up as well. It's a clear night. No sign of planes, parachutes or anything else. Wildman zips, steps over.

WILDMAN

What's up there, Sarge?

ROCK

(still looking)

Ursa major.

WILDMAN
 (squints alongside)
 You feeling okay, Sarge?

ROCK
 Didn't your father ever show you
 the stars when you were a boy,
 Wildman?

WILDMAN
 Only thing my pops ever showed
 me was the back of his hand.

Both men freeze at the sound of movement through the trees to their left. Rock levels his Thompson gun as Wildman unslings his M-1.

ROCK
 Halt. What's the sign?

VOICE
 Reader's. What's the countersign?

ROCK
 Digest. Come on out, Beanpole.

A beat and then Beanpole, a skinny blonde California kid, emerges from the trees. Rock senses the urgency about him.

ROCK
 What is it?

BEANPOLE
 Krauts, Sarge. Me and Stitch
 spotted a whole bunch of 'em
 hauling sleds into that old barn
 beyond the woods.

CUT TO:

STITCH

Lying flat on his stomach at the edge of the woods. A hundred yards ahead: an OLD BARN. Stitch looks back over his shoulder as he's joined by Sgt. Rock and the rest of Easy Co. As they fan off to the left and right, Stitch doesn't need to be asked.

STITCH
 Ten krauts went in. So far only
 seven of 'em left.

The Skeptic lights the other half of his Camel, puffs.

SKEPTIC

Germans are supposed to be on the other side of the Siegfried Line.

As Rock thinks this over...

EXT. THE BARN - MOMENTS LATER

Easy Company creeps up. Using hand signals Rock sends some around back, others on either side of the barn doors.

As Rock sniffs the air, the Skeptic pulls the pin on a grenade, prepares to roll it inside. Rock shakes his head vigorously and the Skeptic reluctantly returns the pin.

Counting down from three to a "zero fist," Rock bursts in followed by his men.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Suddenly surrounded by Easy Company, TWO AMERICAN SOLDIERS raise their rifles. A third, a CAPTAIN, stands to the side, his M-1 out of reach.

SKEPTIC

Jesus, we thought you were Germans.

Two of them laugh, but the Captain doesn't.

CAPTAIN

What's the sign?

WILDMAN

Reader's. What's the countersign?

CAPTAIN

Digest.

Everyone seems to relax a little. Enough to look around and realize the barn is filled with 1000's of cans of...

RETREAD

Gasoline. What the hell's it doing here?

CAPTAIN

I'm wondering the same thing, Corporal.

Rock steps forward. Then, in perfect German:

ROCK

(German; subtitled)

At ease, my brothers. We are on
the same mission as you are.

The three Americans exchange looks, but don't bite.

ROCK

Heil, Hitler!

As Rock throws a Nazi salute: a knee-jerk reaction. Two of
the "Americans" salute back. It takes an instant for them
to realize they're fucked.

Everyone shoots at once. The two Americans go down along
with the Skeptic. All three of them dead.

GASOLINE runs out of 100 different bullet holes.

The "American" Captain pulls the pin on a grenade.

CAPTAIN

Drop your weapons or... "alles
kaput."

As he raises the grenade, Marlboro whips the Bowie Knife
like lightning. It pins the Captain's sleeve to a wooden
post. Rock dashes forward, grabs the grenade, before it
can be dropped. As he sticks the pin back in.

ROCK

Who are you?

The Captain doesn't answer. Rock pulls open the neck of
his uniform to reveal a German uniform underneath. On the
collar -- a GOTHIC 'GD'. As Rock tears the patch off...

THE SKEPTIC

Face down dead. His Camel hangs from his lip, the coal
burning red. As a growing pool of gasoline reaches it...

BARN

WHOOOSH! Flames are everywhere.

ROCK

Get out!

Easy Company doesn't need to be asked twice. As they scam
out the door, the Captain struggles to free himself from
the knife. It's really in there.

EXT. BARN - NIGHT

Rock's the last one out. He's gone twenty yards before the building erupts in a tremendous fireball. As Rock is hurled by the blast over the heads of his prone company...

CUT TO:

INT. CHATEAU - ST. VITH, BELGIUM - DAY

Commandeered as a battalion HQ. COLONEL PRITCHARD holds the Gothic "GD" patch, addresses MAJOR WALTERS.

PRITCHARD

They're enlisted men, Major.
They're qualified to obey
orders, not draw conclusions.

WALTERS

Rock's an experienced man,
Colonel. He served in Italy,
North Africa. He was decorated
three times at Kasserine.

PRITCHARD

For bravery, not intelligence.
Brave men are usually not bright
men, Major. Besides, we lost at
Kasserine... Through no fault
of Sergeant Rock's, I'm sure.
Send him in.

Containing his anger, Walters steps over, calls out a door.

WALTERS

Sergeant Rock.

Walters stands aside as Rock enters and salutes Colonel Pritchard. Exhausted, battered, Rock is a stark contrast to the starched and pressed Colonel.

PRITCHARD

Major Walters says you attach
considerable significance to a
group of Wehrmacht stragglers you
ran into last night, Sergeant.

ROCK

I don't believe they were
stragglers, Sir. They were
wearing American uniforms.

(re: collar patch)

GD. Gross-Deutschland. That
regiment is supposed to be in
Russia, Sir.

PRITCHARD

Are you Army Intelligence,
Sergeant? Are you tracking
troop movements now?

ROCK

Sir, that barn was full of
gasoline.

PRITCHARD

A forgotten fuel dump.

ROCK

Gross-Deutschland boys are crack
troops, Sir. Not a defensive
outfit.

PRITCHARD

If you have a point, I wish
you'd get to it.

ROCK

I believe they were trying to
infiltrate behind our lines. To
make trouble. Foul things up
for an attack.

PRITCHARD

An attack? Sergeant, that is
speculation. This army does not
pay you to speculate. I will
forward this patch to Intelligence
where it will be properly analyzed
by qualified people. In the
meantime, I don't want you
discussing this around the
battalion. Rumors and innuendo
can be very demoralizing to the
men. Do I make myself clear?

Rock stares stiffly ahead.

ROCK

Yes, sir.

PRITCHARD

Dismissed.

Rock turns. Walters arches his eyebrows in sympathy as
Rock marches out, exits.

PRITCHARD

See what I mean? Guts up the
wazoo, but no brains at all.

WALTERS

Colonel, Rock may not be bookish,
but that doesn't mean --

PRITCHARD

(exploding)

The only German around here,
Major, is Sgt. Rock! There are
no commandos! And if the Nazis
were going to attack, we'd know
it because first they would pound
the living shit out of us with
artillery! They'd hammer us with
88s and screaming mimis! They'd
shell us till we were grateful to
be attacked for Chrissake! Do
you hear any German fucking
artillery!? Do you?!

As if on cue, there's a WHISTLING sound. The two men stare
at each other as it gets louder. Suddenly, the building
shudders, plaster drops as SHELLS begin to BURST outside.

Then -- BOOOM! -- a direct hit! As part of the ceiling
collapses on top of Walters...

EXT. CHATEAU - DAY

Chaos! Screams! Death! Men scramble for cover as the
shells rain down.

Rock moves low, looking for his men. By an overturned
jeep, he finds Retread and Wildman. They strain to lift
the jeep under which Farracci is pinned.

Blood spills from Farracci's mouth as he focuses on Rock.

FARRACCI

(smiles)

I don't even hurt, Sarge. A
goddamn jeep on top of me and I
don't feel a thing.

ROCK

Well, don't start laughing,
Farracci. You're gonna feel it
bad.

Rock motions Retread to Farracci, then gets a grip on the
jeep alongside Wildman.

FARRACCI

Laugh? Ain't gonna laugh, Sarge.

Rock and Wildman strain with all they got. The jeep lifts -- just a few inches, but it's enough for Retread to pull Farracci out. Rock looks to Wildman and Retread.

ROCK

Get to cover!
(they hesitate)
Now!

They move. Rock leans over Farracci. He's scared.

FARRACCI

Don't take my tags, Sarge.

ROCK

Why would I do that, Farracci?

FARRACCI

You always take the dead guy's tags.

ROCK

You're not gonna die, Farracci.
Hang on. I'm gonna lift you.

As gently as is possible, Rock lifts him up, hurries away under the barrage.

TOWN STREET

Smoke roils. Men scatter, but there's really nowhere to turn. Rock moves...

ROCK

Medic! Medic!

From out of the smoke, a red-haired kid, maybe 18. Maybe. He's a medic named O'HARA. As Rock sets Farracci down, O'Hara is already shaking his head.

O'HARA

He's gone, Sergeant. Better find yourself a cellar.

O'Hara turns to go, but Rock's big hand holds him back.

ROCK

He was laughing a minute ago.
Check him out.

O'HARA

(firm)
He's dead. And I have to go back to work. Got it?

Rock releases the medic. Without hesitating, O'Hara heads back into the action. Rock stares across at his dead friend as the 88's and mortars blast around him. As he fishes out his DOGTAGS...

CELLAR ENTRANCE

Retread and Wildman enter with several others. Wildman pauses at the door to scan the street. Spots Rock.

STREET

A new sound: a low growl moments before two FOLKE WULF FIGHTER PLANES swoop in. So low you'd almost think they were trying to land. Their 20 mm cannon shells rip up the street, taking out man and machine.

Rock follows them with a look as they arc up at the same time they drop their payload. Everything on the street not nailed down lifts up in the air. Then -- FIRE EVERYWHERE.

Rock lies tangled, his face so bloody it's unrecognizable. But the sergeant's chevrons are visible and the bulky arms are a dead give-away.

CELLAR ENTRANCE

Wild man can't believe his eyes.

WILDMAN

Sarge!

But then he's swept inside as more men make cover.

ROCK'S POV - YOUNG O'HARA

OUT OF FOCUS, the youthful face looms FULL FRAME, his red hair indistinguishable from the flames which burn. The bright blue eyes are full of fury, the innocent mouth snarls the words.

O'HARA

Come on you big bastard! Suck
in! Suck in, you sonuvabitch!
Don't you quit! You hear me?!
Suck in! Do it, do it, do it!

ROCK

His unfocused eyes stare blankly past O'Hara as the skinny medic moves over him, pounds away on his chest. There's blood all over the place.

O'HARA

You're too damn big to carry!
Breathe so you can get up and
walk! Breathe, you fucking
chickenshit quitter! Breathe!
What would your mother say?!
How about your father?!

"Father" seems to get to him. Rock gurgles, eyes now vaguely alive. O'Hara continues to pound, almost as hard as the SHELLS THUNDERING down around them. BOOM BOOM as we...

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - AKRON, OHIO - DAY

A different kind of artillery. BOYS furiously hurl snowballs and shout insults.

SUPER: AKRON, OHIO.

The target is a frail, but dignified old man, MR. VON ROCKLIN, who walks along a neatly shoveled sidewalk toward a corner grocery store.

BOYS

Nazi bastard! Heil Hitler, ya
 stinkin' Kraut! Sig heil!

Van Rocklin wipes snow from his face, addresses the boys in a thick German accent.

VAN ROCKLIN

Hitler you cannot kill with snow.
 I am not Hitler. I am not a
 Nazi. I am only myself, an old
 man from Germany.

His look seems to freeze them a moment. But as Mr. Van Rocklin turns to enter the grocery store, he's hit with another barrage of snowballs.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

His coat dripping from the snowballs, Mr. Van Rocklin steps to the counter. The portly CLERK casts a sidelong glance to make sure they're alone, then pulls a BOX out from under the counter. He opens it. Mr. Van Rocklin looks down at the enclosed Partagas CIGARS. Havanas.

Van Rocklin nods; the clerk snaps the lid shut.

CLERK

Twelve dollars.

As Mr. Van Rocklin reacts in surprise.

CLERK

Black market, Mister Van Rocklin.
The best I can do. There's a war
on you know.

He indicates a newspaper on the counter. A bold black
headline: GERMAN COUNTER ATTACK ON BELGIAN FRONT. There's
an accompanying MAP detailing the action.

CLERK

I wouldn't even do this if you
weren't a regular customer.

Van Rocklin's finger finds the sub head: ALLIED CASUALTIES
HEAVY.

VAN ROCKLIN

Twelve dollars. Yes, I pay it.
Thank you.

As another CUSTOMER enters, the clerk pulls the box out of
sight. Winking, the Clerk lowers his voice.

CLERK

You gonna smoke 'em all yourself?

VAN ROCKLIN

No. I want them sent. Air Mail.

CLERK

Air Mail, huh? Some chance.
Where to?

VAN ROCKLIN

My son.

CLERK

He got an address?

Van Rocklin's finger presses down on the newspaper map of
the battle.

VAN ROCKLIN

Here...

CUT TO:

EXT. CATHEDRAL - ST. VITH, BELGIUM - DAY

Big guns boom monotonously somewhere in the distance as
troop carriers inch past the cathedral. The street is
jammed with muddy, battered vehicles and exhausted, beaten
GIs. A DRIVER pounds on the side of his truck.

DRIVER
St. Vith, lieutenant!

LIEUTENANT TEABERRY hops out from the back of the truck. Obviously unseasoned, this traffic jam is the closest thing to war he's seen so far.

DRIVER
(gesturing)
Regimental HQ is up that way.
You can walk a lot faster than I
could drive you there.

TEABERRY
Thanks for the lift.

Teaberry looks about, up at the piece of canvas over the cathedral's roof, a big red cross painted on it. Doctor and the wounded enter through the front. The dead are bagged and carried out the back. The cathedral's been turned into a hospital.

As Teaberry continues on toward HQ...

INT. CATHEDRAL - DAY

A caring DOCTOR makes his rounds, a not so caring PRIEST on his heels.

PRIEST
You've moved the altar! This is
God's house!

DOCTOR
It's 1944, father. God moved
out a couple years ago.

As the Doctor continue on...

ROSE WINDOW - SOMEONE'S POV

Above the entrance to the cathedral. Light streams through this miraculously intact piece of medieval art. Then, the Doctor steps into frame, blocking it out.

DOCTOR
You're finally awake. We were
worried about you, Sergeant.

SGT. ROCK

Head bandaged, chest heavily bandaged, he looks up at the Doctor from his bed.

ROCK
I...don't remember...how I got
here. I don't remember...you.

DOCTOR
Mild antrograde amnesia. Not to
worry. It'll come back to you
in bits and pieces.
(big smile)
You're going home, sergeant.
Clean sheets, hot meals, pretty
nurses. Think you can handle it?

The Doctor's about to move on.

ROCK
How long have I been here?

DOCTOR
(glances at chart)
Nine days.

ROCK
(stunned)
Nine days...

DOCTOR
You had a close call, soldier,
you're lucky.

FLASHBACK - A SUDDEN VISION OF MEDIC O'HARA

Screaming at Rock to breathe. Then he's gone.

BACK TO SCENE

The Doctor is moving to the next bed.

ROCK
I remember.

DOCTOR
(impatient)
Yes?

ROCK
A medic. He saved me.

DOCTOR
They're good men. Brave men.

The Doctor moves on, whispers into the ear of a man
mummified in bandages. The man has no arms.

Rock struggles to sit up. He sees the bustle of the hospital: stretchers with wounded men groaning, medics scurrying, a CORPORAL on MAIL DUTY shouting out as he distributes mail to bedridden GIs.

MAIL DUTY CORPORAL

(passing)

Mail call for Dog Company! Sing
out or bark if you're dog!

Rock considers the bandages on his chest. He pokes himself, looking for pain. Bracing, he swings his legs over the side of the cot. As his feet touch the floor...

INT. REGIMENTAL HQ - DAY

Maps, desks, squawking radios. It's chaotic, bordering on hysterical. Teaberry waits nervously, his orders on Captain Sloan's desk. SLOAN sits beleaguered as GENERAL CRONKITE rages.

GENERAL CRONKITE

Then change the goddamn passwords!

SLOAN

We are, sir. Every hour. That's only making things more confusing. Men in the field can't keep up.

GENERAL CRONKITE

Regardless. You mean to tell me that red blooded American boys cannot tell the difference between one of their own and Nazis in American uniforms?

SLOAN

Apparently, sir. They're very well trained. No accents. And they've been studying baseball, sir. They caught two of them in Bastogne who knew every World Series winner since 1911, sir.

CRONKITE

Dirty bastards...

Cronkite is temporarily distracted by his ADJUTANT. Sloan turns wearily back to Teaberry's orders.

SLOAN

Easy company's up on the line. You'll have to find a ride up there somehow.

TEABERRY

Yes, sir.

RADIOMAN

(to Cronkite)

Order just came through, sir.
We're to fall back. Leave St.
Vith to the Krauts.

CRONKITE

They can have it. Hope the locals
still got their Nazi flags.

SLOAN

(to Teaberry)

See if you can find yourself
something to eat, lieutenant.
You're not going anywhere, but
back the way you came.

INT. ANGLE ON MEDIC - CATHEDRAL - DAY

As the MEDIC moves along an aisle, hauling one end of a
stretcher. He comes face to face with Rock, who's wobbling
unsteadily among the cots.

ROCK

I'm looking for a medic... a
medic with red hair...

MEDIC

Better get back on your cot,
buddy.

Maneuvering around Rock, the Medic and his partner set the
patient, an unconscious BLACK SOLDIER, onto an empty cot.

Rock sways as the Medic hooks a bottle of plasma to an IV
stand. A piece of tape on the bottle says "COLORED."

The Medic turns, sees Rock is still standing there.

MEDIC

Red hair. That's gotta be
O'Hara.

ROCK

Where can I find him?

MEDIC

(shakes his head)

Missing in action. About a
week. Go lie down, okay?

MAIL DUTY CORPORAL
Easy Company! Anybody from Easy?

No one answers. Rock stares a beat before...

ROCK
Easy! Over here!

MAIL DUTY CORPORAL
(steps over)
You're the big prize winner.
What's your name?

ROCK
Rock, Frank.

The Mail Carrier flips through a bundle marked Company E.

MAIL DUTY CORPORAL
We got orders to hold all mail
for Easy. Colonel assigned them
to the ass. Rearguard.
Everybody's falling back. Hey,
here ya go...

The Corporal hands Rock a neatly wrapped package.

ROCK
How far up the line are they?

MAIL DUTY CORPORAL
Don't know. It's hell up there.
7th Armor's getting the shit
kicked out of them... Open the
package. See whatcha got.

Distracted, Rock tears at the paper. He stares numbly at the package. A box of cigars! There's a hand-written note on top...

"Dear son, I love you. Kill Hitler! Your father."

EXT. OUTSIDE REGIMENTAL HQ - DAY

The distant thump of artillery isn't so distant anymore. Teaberry is in the street, arguing with a PFC who sits at the wheel of an idling JEEP.

TEABERRY
You just told me you had sixty
miles of gas, Private.

PFC

I thought you wanted to go west, sir. This gas is westerly gas, sir. It don't go north; it's a matter of internal combustion:

TEABERRY

I see. What do I need to get some easterly gas? Besides a written order from the Colonel and threat of a court-martial?

PFC

What you need, sir, is a lotta luck and a different driver.

The PFC throws it into gear and pulls away into the confusion of troop carriers and trucks.

Frustrated, Teaberry crosses to a field of rubble. All that's left of DOG COMPANY are sprawled out, trying to get some version of rest. There's battle-hardened and then there's battle-cracked. These men are cracked. No one's bleeding, much, but the light's gone from their eyes.

TEABERRY

Any of you guys Easy Company?

Most of the men don't even look over at him. One GRIZZLED SERGEANT, sitting on an empty box of ammo, stares like it was a foreign language he heard. Then...

GRIZZLED

Dog. Easy's up on the line. Better hurry if you're gonna get there before the Krauts do.

Teaberry checks out their worn, 1000-year-old faces.

TEABERRY

I guess it's pretty rough up there.

A SKINNY SOLDIER pivots a look over, his face like a skull.

SKINNY

No, sir, not at all. It's like a party. Laughing and joking with the good-hearted people of Germany who happen to be visiting Belgium like ourselves.

A whistling builds. Incoming. Teaberry dives headlong into the rut left by a tank track. No one from Dog moves a muscle. Holding his helmet, Teaberry peeks up at Grizzled.

GRIZZLED

It's an 88. Short.

The shell bursts 100 yards to the south.

Then, a second WHISTLE. Halfway out of the rut, Teaberry flattens himself a second time. No one from Baker moves.

GRIZZLED

That one's long, lieutenant.
Just like this war.

It explodes 100 yards to the north. As Teaberry rises from the rut, he's trembling. Scared.

TEABERRY

I, I remember at artillery school. Ft. Bragg. They said the key was, um, let me think...

SKINNY

Don't worry. You'll figure it out. If you live long enough.

A third whistle. The men of Dog begin to flatten themselves on the ground. But Grizzled doesn't move a muscle. Trembling, Teaberry stares across at him.

TEABERRY

What about this one?

GRIZZLED

Bullseye...

Teaberry dives for the rut. Grizzled just sits on his box.

TEABERRY

What are you doing?!

GRIZZLED

(smiles skyward)
Going home, sir.

The shell slams home. Direct hit. Clods of dirt and debris rain down. The men of Dog slowly rise as does Teaberry who looks around. Grizzled simply isn't there anymore. A beat. Then the shelling really starts.

WHOOOM! BAH-BLAMMM! Men rush for cover. Teaberry is nearly flattened by an ANGUISHED CORPORAL.

ANGUISHED

The bastards got the hospital!

Smoke pours from a gaping hole in the giant red cross.
SCREAMS sound from within the partially collapsed walls.

INT. CATHEDRAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Dark. Oddly quiet, but for the odd low groan. A few vague figures move about obscured by the smoke.

A PILE OF UNIFORMS - Some bloody, all mismatched. A hand reaches in, begins to sort through them.

BOX OF BOOTS - Scattered by the baptismal. The same thing. The hand searching for the right size.

HELMETS - Stacked on top of each other. A fire burns beyond. The hand grabs one with a hole in it.

CIGAR BOX - The hand scoops it up, grabs the note.

BOOTS - Walking through the chaos with purpose. Stepping over debris, passing the body of the dead doctor.

MAIL DUTY CORPORAL - Sprawled face down besides his spilled mail bag. The boots start to step over him, then halt. A moment passes. The hand reach into the spilled bag, searching, finding the bundle marked "Company E."

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE - DAY

A DEAD GI - Lays in the mud like he was sleeping, his face young and peaceful. The feet stop across from him. The hand takes a Thompson from beside him, then gently relieves him off his grenades and ammo.

OVERTURNED TRUCK - A Browning automatic rifle lies besides the smoldering debris. The boots appear. Big hands scoop up the BAR. Likewise a box of ammo.

EXT. ROAD INTO ST. VITH - DAY

Falling back, the wounded and the weary stream into the bombed-out town, clogging the road with one-way traffic.

But in the f.g. appear the boots! One man alone is going in the other direction. It's Rock, laden with weaponry, blood trickling down his cheek, an angry look in his eye.

He takes a cigar out, scratches a match across the fender of a passing jeep. Lighting the cigar, he continues against the flow.

A few passing men glance back at Rock like he was the government issue of the Grim Reaper. As he plods on...

CUT TO:

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

A JEEP waits as Colonel Pritchard, unshaven and haggard, stands outside what serves as his field command scanning the trees with a pair of binoculars. He can hear rifle fire, the chatter of machine guns coming from the woods.

PRITCHARD

What the hell...

Pritchard and a MAJOR watch a GI sprinting toward them.

MAJOR

It's a runner, sir.

The RUNNER staggers up, winded.

RUNNER

'A' company's falling back, sir... like you said for 'em to... their walkie-talkie was busted. That's why --

PRITCHARD

What about Easy Company?

RUNNER

Ain't no Easy, sir... not to speak of... four guys from the third platoon, six from the fourth... they're dug in back there...

The Runner points back toward the woods.

PRITCHARD

Dug in? The order was to fall back.

RUNNER

They can't, sir. Krauts got two 50s right on 'em. I got as close as I could and shouted. I think they heard me.

PRITCHARD

Jesus. What about Baker Company?

RUNNER
 Couldn't find any live ones,
 sir, but I spotted four dead
 niggers on the way back --

PRITCHARD
 Negroes, corporal! Negroes.

RUNNER
 Well, whatever they were, sir,
 they're dead now. Krauts cut
 'em open, mutilated them.

As Pritchard considers this...

RUNNER
 Colonel, there's Krauts all
 through those woods. Anybody
 down there is surrounded.

PRITCHARD
 (decides)
 We've done all we could.
 (turns)
 Major, you drive.

Pritchard and the Major get into the jeep. The Runner
 takes one last look to the trees before jumping in the
 back. As the jeep speeds away...

EXT. ROAD - LATE AFTERNOON

Scraaatch. Rock lights a match off the barrel of an
 overturned tank, relights his cigar. Traffic still flows
 in the opposite direction, though much lighter now. As
 Rock walks, a voice calls out behind.

VOICE
 Could I give you a lift, Sergeant?

Rock turns to see a fresh young officer at the wheel of a
 jeep. Teaberry. Going the same way he is.

EXT. JEEP - A FEW MINUTES LATER

Rock is behind the wheel now. Teaberry hangs on beside
 him. He sneaks glances at Rock, the scars, the arms, the
 bandage on his head. He shouts above the noise.

TEABERRY
 You heard of Easy Company,
 Sergeant?!

ROCK
Easy Company, sir?!

TEABERRY
You must have. Supposed to be
the roughest outfit around! Only
company that held their ground
when Rommel and the Afrika Korps
overran the Kasserine Pass!

ROCK
Yeah, I heard of Easy Company,
sir! What about them?!

TEABERRY
I'm their new C.O.!

Deadpan, Rock shifts the cigar between his teeth as he considers the fresh-faced youth at his side.

BOOM! A mortar shells pocks the road just ahead of them. Rock swerves through the smoke. BOOM! BOOM! Shells burst to the left and just behind.

Rock looks back over his shoulder as they leave the shelling behind.

ROCK
Jerries must have a spotter back
there somewhere.

TEABERRY
Sergeant!

At that moment, another jeep rounds the bend ahead, coming right at them. Teaberry reaches over, jerks the wheel hard left. Both vehicles skid to a stop having just avoided a head-on collision. Col. Pritchard stares across at Rock.

PRITCHARD
Where the hell do you think
you're going, Sergeant?!

ROCK
Easy Company, sir.

Teaberry holds up a salute which isn't returned.

PRITCHARD
Too late. They're trapped down
in those woods. Along with
what's left of Baker Company.

ROCK
You're pulling out without them,
sir?

BOOM! A shell hits just short as spotters readjust.

PRITCHARD
We can't help them and I'm not
sure I like your tone. You're
reassigned to H.Q., Sergeant.

BOOM! Another shell hits.

ROCK
Can't hear you, sir! The shells!

Rock throws it into gear, leaves the sputtering Pritchard
behind. Pritchard looks to the Major.

PRITCHARD
Drive, Major!

Heads low, they continue back the way they were going.

ROCK'S JEEP

Teaberry still holds his salute.

ROCK
You can put your hand down now,
lieutenant.

TEABERRY
(lowers salute)
I, um, I couldn't hear him either.

ROCK
(smiles grimly)
Cigar, sir?

INT. JEEP - A MILE LATER - DAY

The road's gotten worse. Teaberry coughs his way through a
cigar as Rock rumbles them along.

TEABERRY
My father's a U.S. Senator.
Indiana. Kid who lived across the
street from us got killed in the
Pacific. That night I heard my
dad on the phone. Arranging me a
desk job with the War Department
in Washington. I've been trying
to get to the line ever since.

ROCK

Dream's about to come true, sir.

TEABERRY

Pretty stupid, huh? I guess it was guilt. So here I am. I don't really know anything... and I'm in charge.

ROCK

(deadpan)

Imagine that?

As they rumble along, soldiers begin to rise from the ditches along either side of the road. WEHRMACHT INFANTRY. This isn't a trap; they're resting, their mouths half-full of K-rations. They're first reaction is amazement. Then they start to reach for their Mausers.

There's probably a couple of hundred of them. Rock has no choice, but to try and run the gauntlet. As he floors it:

TEABERRY

(looking about)

I... I think those are Germans, Sergeant.

ROCK

I think you're right, sir.

Shouts. Rifles start to crack after them.

TEABERRY

We... We should get out of here.

ROCK

Working on it, sir.

Bullets ping off the jeep. The Germans are all behind them now, though their fire is getting heavier. Teaberry scrunches low as a bullet ricochets the top of his helmet.

A twist and a turn and the infantry is left behind. Teaberry pulls off his helmet, runs a finger through the shiny crease the bullet left. It gives him pause.

TEABERRY

Look at that look at that.

(looks up)

LOOK AT THAT!

The jeep lurches to a shuddering stop. Directly ahead, a TIGER KING TANK - 70 tons of it. They're bumper-to-bumper.

Teaberry's mouth couldn't open any wider. POW! POW! The infantry are coming up from behind. Rock grabs his gear, then Teaberry just as...

...the Tiger rolls up and over the jeep, FLATTENING it like a tin can.

Rock and Teaberry stumble through the ditch, start across 100 yards of field for the forest. Rifles crack at their back. Rock sprays a line of return fire even as he runs.

The turret of the Tiger turns ominously. The 88 cannon adjusts, elevates slightly. FIRES.

TREELINE

Rock and Teaberry dive for cover as the shell screams in. WHAM! Shrapnel and splinters fly as the round shears three big pine trees in half.

As timber falls, Rock and Teaberry stagger to their feet, continue deeper into the forest.

CUT TO:

WILDMAN - WOODS

Wildman squirms on his belly through the leaves, casting nervous glances at the woods to his right. Not so much as a squirrel in sight, but the enemy is visible in Wildman's fear, in the way he hugs the ground as he inches along.

Reaching the lip of a FOXHOLE, he looks over the edge at the grim, exhausted faces of Retread and 4-Eyes who's huddled over the RADIO.

4-EYES

Nothing. Krauts are jamming every channel with band music.

WILDMAN

We're gonna make a run for it.

RETREAD

In daylight?

WILDMAN

You saw those flares last night. What's the difference? Besides, the longer we wait, the further behind enemy lines we get. Anyone volunteer to rear guard?

Retread shakes his head; 4-Eyes looks down at his feet.

WILDMAN

Listen for my signal.

Wildman crawls away, leaving Retread and 4-Eyes alone.

4-EYES

I wish Rock was here.

RETREAD

That'd be just great. We're pinned down. Know what that asshole would do?

4-EYES

Get us out of here alive maybe?

RETREAD

Attack.

(a beat; apologetic)

Anyhow, he's dead.

EXT. FOXHOLE TWO

Huddled miserably, Beanpole and Cohen look up at Wildman who's flat on his belly.

COHEN

In daylight?!

WILDMAN

You got a better idea, let me know. Either of you guys up to rear guard?

BEANPOLE/COHEN

Uh uh. Not me.

As Wildman crawls off, Beanpole burrows frantically in a pocket, pulls out a half pack of LIFESAVERS. With trembling hands, he shakes out several - examines them. Cohen watches as Beanpole chooses... a red one. Then reconsiders. A green one. He pops it in his mouth.

COHEN

A green one. That supposed to be good luck?

BEANPOLE

(nods)

Go ahead, Cohen. Have one.

COHEN

Be a waste, I'm not superstitious.

BEANPOLE

You got a rabbit's foot on your rifle.

Cohen fingers the little gray rabbit's foot.

COHEN

Five years driving a cab in New York, never had an accident. Because this was hanging from my rear view mirror.

BEANPOLE

So you are superstitious.

COHEN

It ain't superstition; it's a rabbit's foot.

BEANPOLE

But --

COHEN

Look, I'm not gonna discuss semantics with a guy who believes in Lifesavers!

EXT. FOXHOLE THREE

Wildman looks down at calm, toothpick chewing Marlboro and Kluzewski who's been re-reading an old letter.

WILDMAN

Either of you want to rear guard?

Kluzewski doesn't answer. Marlboro takes the toothpick from his mouth, holds it up like he was bidding at auction. He'll do it. As he checks on the breech of the BAR.

KLUZEWSKI

Aww, Marlboro. Why'd you have to go and do that? Shit.

(big sigh)

Now I gotta stay, too.

WILDMAN

When we get to the rocks back there, we'll cover you.

Wildman moves on. Marlboro looks at Kluzewski, SHRUGS.

KLUZEWSKI

Oh, easy for you to say.

EXT. FOXHOLE FOUR

Whitney and Ice Cream, haggard and gaunt, nod up at Wildman.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - FIVE DIFFERENT FOXHOLES

- #1) Retread looks resigned, 4-Eyes nervously hums a tune, as they crouch. Ready to move.
- #2) Beanpole is choosing a yellow Lifesaver with trembling fingers while Cohen shakes his head, fingers his rabbit's foot.
- #3) Marlboro nonchalantly aims the BAR over the lip of the foxhole while Kluzewski prepares a pile of magazines.
- #4) Whitney and Ice Cream are tense - ready to go.
- #5) His eyes closed in prayer, Stitch opens one to look expectantly at Wildman. Coiled like a spring, Wildman sticks his rifle up out of the foxhole in two quick thrusts. The signal.

EXT. THE WOODS - A MOMENT LATER

They're running low. Eight of them zigzagging between the bare trees. It's spooky how quiet it is after all the tension. One second... Two seconds... Three...

BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA! German machine guns chatter. Bullets sizzle through the air.

Stitch lets out a sharp cry as he lurches forward, crashes to the ground. The others all dive on their bellies. The air is alive with ammo.

FOXHOLE THREE

CHATTA CHATTA! Marlboro fires the BAR. Calm, steady. A bit more frantic, Kluzewski fires his M-1. The Germans are invisible except for muzzle flashes.

Kluzewski looks back over his shoulder at the rest of Easy.

KLUZEWSKI

Not far enough. They're gonna have to come back.

WOODS

As bullets whiz, Beanpole hugs the ground, peeks up toward the objective: a string of rocks barely visible through the trees. Sixty yards away on slightly higher ground. He looks to Whitney lying three yards to his right.

BEANPOLE

We can't make it. We gotta go back.

Whitney doesn't answer. Beanpole suddenly sees his eyes are glassy, lifeless.

TEN YARDS AWAY

Wildman calls out as he squirms his way back to his foxhole thirty yards away.

WILDMAN

Back to the holes, Easy!

Wildman nears Stitch who moans pitifully.

WILDMAN

Where you hit, Stitch? Where you hit?

STITCH

I dunno. In my body.

(panic)

I can't move. I can't move.

Wildman sees there's blood all over his back. Other Easys crawl past as Wildman digs for his first aid kit.

FOXHOLE THREE

Marlboro and Kluzewski continue to fire as Beanpole crawls to the rim, tears in his eyes.

BEANPOLE

(distraught)

They killed Whitney! Stitch is hit! Bastards won't even let us run. We were running!

Marlboro reaches back, hauls Beanpole into the hole just before a MORTAR SHELL EXPLODES a yard in front of them.

FOXHOLE ONE

Retread and 4-Eyes slither back inside. 4-Eyes squeezes his eyes shut as MORTARS POUND.

4-EYES

(singing)

I'm comin' in on a wing and a
prayer...

WOODS

Stitch SCREAMS in agony as Wildman tries to drag him back to a foxhole. A MORTAR hits nearby! This isn't working. As Wildman pauses to prepare a syringe of morphine.

WILDMAN

Listen, Stitch, I can't do anything for you, okay? I'm gonna grab your clips and get to my hole. I'll come back and getcha when it's dark.

Wildman shoots in the morphine. As Stitch moans, Wildman grabs his ammo and starts off. Dirt rains as another MORTAR HITS. Finally, Wildman makes it home. As he disappears, the firing continues for a moment. Then, all is silent. Until:

RETREAD'S VOICE

Anybody got a suggestion?

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE - BELGIAN VILLAGE - LATE AFTERNOON

More vehicles and men clogging the road, retreating, very nearly running. Colonel Pritchard has set up a temporary HQ at the cafe. The shelling is a distant, but ever present sound. The RADIO OPERATOR steps over.

RADIO OPERATOR

Message from Regimental, sir.

PRITCHARD

(hopeful)

Permission to withdraw?

RADIO OPERATOR

No, sir. A general from Division's coming forward to survey the situation. They --

PRITCHARD

A general! Christ Almighty, we can't protect a general! We can't protect ourselves! Call Regimental back. Request permission to withdraw. Now.

As the Operator heads back to his radio...

PRITCHARD

A general. Good God.
 (calls to Operator)
 Tell him to bring an armored
 division with him!

EXT. EASTERLY ROAD - DAY

An armored division, but not American. It's an SS armored division. Headed for battle. Machine gun mounted half tracks, self-propelled guns, massive low-slung Tiger tanks.

A group of 30 U.S. POWs are marched back the opposite way. Tank Commanders and Grenadiers jeer the POWs as they're marched to the rear.

EDGE OF THE WOODS

Watching the POWs pass, Rock and Teaberry.

TEABERRY

Any of those guys Easy Company?

Rock shakes his head. Taking a last look at the unfortunate men, Rock and Teaberry move back, low into the trees.

EASTERLY ROAD

A TIGER that went off-road is stuck in the mud. Division commander, SS COLONEL ANTON HEYDRICH harangues the tank crew. Handsome, dashing in his black tank leathers, Heydrich does not seem to have that fanatical SS glint in his eye.

COMMANDER

(German; subtitled)
 But Colonel Heydrich, I thought --

HEYDRICH

(German; subtitled)
 The SS doesn't want you to think;
 it wants you to follow orders.

At least some things are common to all armies.

HEYDRICH

(German; subtitled)
 The order was stay on the road.
 Until it freezes the ground can't
 support King Tigers!

As the Commander salutes in acquiescence, Heydrich turns as the POWs come up from behind. The leader, an AMERICAN LIEUTENANT recently of the 7th Armored, calls a "HALT!"

As his men catch a much needed breath, the Lieutenant steps over to Colonel Heydrich.

POW LIEUTENANT
Sprechen-zie English, Mac?

HEYDRICH
Of course. It will come in useful when we take New York City, don't you agree? If we land at Battery Park, what's the quickest route to Broadway?

POW LIEUTENANT
I'd love to pal around with you, Colonel, but my men are exhausted. They need a break. Got their own K-rations, just need permission to eat them.

Heydrich looks at the Lieutenant's shoulder insignia, then at the POWs sympathetically.

HEYDRICH
7th armored. Tank men aren't used to marching. I know.

POW LIEUTENANT
Ten minutes, they'll be fine.

HEYDRICH
I'm sorry I am unable to take adequate care with your men, lieutenant. This is an attacking army. We have neither the facilities nor the inclination to deal with prisoners.

POW LIEUTENANT
I understand that, Colonel.

HEYDRICH
Do you?

A half-track mounted with four .50 caliber machine guns pulls up across from the prisoners.

HEYDRICH
(casually)
Schiessen.

As the .50's spit death into the assembled POWs...

EXT. WOODS

A quarter mile away, Teaberry and Rock react to the chatter of the guns.

TEABERRY

What the hell are they shooting at?

His jaw set grimly, Rock doesn't answer, but he's got a pretty good idea. As Teaberry realizes...

TEABERRY

The prisoners. Oh my God...

Teaberry starts back, but Rock grabs his arm.

ROCK

Not a damn thing we can do about it, sir.

EXT. HEYDRICH

The SS glint is in his eyes now. He raises his Luger, shoots the Lieutenant himself. As the Lieutenant falls in with his men, Heydrich turns back to the Tiger.

HEYDRICH

Now get that tank back on the road!

CUT TO:

EXT. WESTERLY ROAD - DUSK

A JEEP flies a flag with three stars on it. A CAPTAIN is at the wheel. All we see of the man beside him is a helmet with three stars. The GENERAL'S face is obscured in profile and the lengthening shadows of a day nearly done.

GENERAL

I'd like to get there sometime today, son.

CAPTAIN

Doing the best I can, sir.

HONK! The Captain and the General (face obscured) turn to see an open truck looming behind them, eager to pass. A FIELD KITCHEN and several COOKS are loaded in the back.

GENERAL
What in Sam Hill?

CAPTAIN
Cooks, sir. They're gonna try
and give everyone a hot meal up
on the line. Colonel Pritchard
thought it would help moral.

GENERAL
How about killing a few goddamn
Nazis instead? Your Pritchard
sounds like a horse's ass.

CAPTAIN
Yes, sir!

The truck full of cooks pulls alongside. The DRIVER grabs
the crook of his arm, raises his fist...then turns it to a
salute when he sees it's a General.

GENERAL
How is it a truck full of cooks
is going faster than a jeep?

CAPTAIN
Don't know, sir. I guess I'm
naturally cautious.

The two vehicles are still side-by-side when with little
warning, the sound of an incoming shell crescendos. It
EXPLODES FULL FRAME obscuring everything from view.

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - BELGIAN VILLAGE - EARLY EVENING

Pritchard peeks out the window. It's quiet now. The last
of the German column has passed. Pritchard lets the
curtains fall, looks to a pair of WEARY GIs.

PRITCHARD
Forgotten. By the entire United
States Army.

Suddenly, the Radio Operator turns from the radio.

RADIO OPERATOR
Orders from H.Q., sir.

PRITCHARD
(stepping over; voice
breaking)
Withdraw?

RADIO OPERATOR

(listens; then...)

Yes, sir! Fall back, sir!

Pritchard breathes a sigh of relief, turns to the GIs.

PRITCHARD

Start up the jeep! We're getting the hell out of here!

WHAM! The door bursts open. Everyone stares at an angry-looking man about fifty. Grizzled, graying and stark naked except for a pair of combat boots and a helmet.

NAKED MAN

Doesn't a single one of you mother's sons know what to do when a general enters the room?!

Pritchard suddenly spots the three stars across the naked man's helmet. Pritchard hesitates, then tentatively comes to attention. So do the others. As the naked general brusquely returns the salute...

CUT TO:

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

It's pitch black when suddenly a FLARE WHOOSHES overhead. It bursts. Drifting down, it illuminates the woods in a spooky yellow light..

FOXHOLE THREE

While Marlboro sleeps, Kluzewski stares out at the brightly lit woods. It's surreal, spooky. Kluzewski nudges Marlboro with his boot.

KLUZEWSKI

Marlboro. Wake up.

But Marlboro just rolls over. Kluzewski whispers loud in the direction of the other foxholes.

KLUZEWSKI

Ssst! Wildman!

(no answer)

Retread? Hey, Retread!

Nothing. It's like Kluzewski's all alone in the world. The flare diminishes, but the woods retain a creepy yellow glow. Uneasy, Kluzewski starts to sit back then suddenly stiffens. Someone's dropped into the foxhole behind him.

He whirls, pointing his rifle...

It's a WOMAN IN A NEGLIGEE. Pretty goddamn attractive. Kluzewski recognizes her.

KLUZEWSKI
(flabbergasted)
Angie! Jesus Christ!

ANGIE
Klu! Honey, I missed you.

Angie reaches out. Kluzewski shrinks back nervously, casts a glance at Marlboro who still sleeps soundly.

KLUZEWSKI
Angie, honey... I mean... Angie, this is war! We're in Belgium!

ANGIE
(embracing him)
Baby, I miss you so much...

KLUZEWSKI
Ang, we can't. There's krauts, there's... Marlboro.

No use. She smothers his protests with her open mouth. She's on top of him, forcing him back, kissing him, overcoming his resistance.

She smiles at him, undoes his pants. Kluzewski tugs at her negligee revealing her tummy, her breasts. Suddenly:

KLUZEWSKI
Wait a minute! You're supposed to be pregnant! Where's your belly?

SKY

WHOOSH! More flares. The air is bright with light. BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA! The German .50s open fire.

FOXHOLE THREE

Marlboro stands at the lip, firing the BAR. He pauses to kick Kluzewski who, sleeping, rolls in a passionate embrace with his blanket. He blinks awake, looks around.

KLUZEWSKI
Angie?

WILDMAN

He squirms along the ground, pulling the groaning, injured, but still alive Stitch behind him.

FOXHOLE ONE

Retread and 4-Eyes reach up, help haul Stitch down inside. Wildman ducks in alongside them. As the German guns shut down, they crouch under a poncho. Retread switches on a flashlight, revealing Stitch. His eyes wild and feverish, his chest wrapped in bandages.

STITCH

Wildman! I seen Rock out there!
Sergeant Rock!

WILDMAN

Rock's dead, Stitch.

STITCH

He took Whitney's tags. Then he crawls up to me. 'Pssst, Stitch. You okay? Where's the Wildman? Where's Marlboro?' he says.

RETREAD

You were hallucinating.

4-EYES

Here, Stitch, swallow this.

4-Eyes shoves medicine into Stitch's mouth even as he rambles on...

STITCH

Oh yeah? Well, he had another hallucination with him. A lieutenant hallucination... Shit, man, I'm hurtin...

Stitch's head sags as he passes out. Retread moves the flashlight beam across the neatly done bandages.

RETREAD

(impressed)

You did that, Wildman? Bandaged him like that out there?

Wildman gently moves Stitch off his shoulder and supports him against the side of the foxhole.

WILDMAN

Fuck no! He says before Rock's ghost and the Looney came along, there was this medic out there.

RETREAD

A medic! He's hallucinating a whole army.

As Wildman covers Stitch in a slicker...

4-EYES

Still, it's a helluva job
bandaging. He couldn't have
done it himself, could he?

As they exchange puzzled looks, the German fire erupts
again. But not in this direction. Retread switches off
the flashlight as they peer over the lip.

WOODS AHEAD

Inexplicable muzzle flashes followed by an EXPLODING
GRENADE and screams of agony.... in German!

FOXHOLE TWO

COHEN

Who the fuck is over there?

BEANPOLE

Dunno. Krauts?

The sound of more grenades.

COHEN

Maybe they're blowing themselves
up.

FOXHOLE ONE

Retread wheels at movement in the shadows to his left. He
aims his rifle.

RETREAD

Who's there?!

VOICE/DARKNESS

Don't shoot!

Retread FIRES. A beat, then...

VOICE/DARKNESS

It's okay! You missed me!

Wildman pushes back the barrel of Retread's rifle, shines
the flashlight out on a fresh, young, noncombat face twenty
yards away... Teaberry.

WILDMAN

Who the fuck are you?

TEABERRY
Lieutenant Teaberry. Your new
C.O..

WILDMAN
You're shitting me, uh, sir..

TEABERRY
I'm not. And as soon as he
takes out the second machine gun
position, Sergeant Rock wants us
to move out.

4-EYES
Rock? Did you say Rock, sir?

As they turn at the sound of more screaming Germans...

EXT. GERMAN MACHINE GUN NEST - SECONDS LATER

As the GUNNER and FEEDER peer into the darkness, a hand reaches up from behind over the top of their emplacement. Rather gently, it drops a grenade over the side, then slips away. A quiet moment passes before the EXPLOSION CATAPULTS the Germans from the nest like birds not ready to fly.

A moment later, Rock leaps into the nest, pivots the gun 90 degrees and lets her rip!

2ND MACHINE GUN NEST

It's occupants torn to shreds.

WOODS

German soldiers who've been advancing among the trees start to go down as well. Shot from behind, they don't know where the enemy is. As a whole squad retreat in confusion and panic, their voices trail behind them.

SOLDIERS
(German; subtitled)
We're being attacked! American
commandos! An entire division!

ROCK

Leaps over to an abandoned MORTAR. He turns it.

WOODS

The hunters become the hunted as FLARES BURST over fleeing Germans. Suddenly robbed of night vision, two of them run straight into trees. Then, the MORTARS begin to fall.

EXT. MOONLIT WOODS - SECONDS LATER

Nine shadows, keeping low, struggling through the darkness with the tenth man, Stitch, in a pancho. They can hear the mortars blast, see the flashes between the trees.

KLUZÉWSKI

They're hitting Rock with mortars!

COHEN

No they're not! Rock's hitting them!

RETREAD

Rock's dead. I saw it happen with my own two eyes!

BEANPOLE

Rock's indestructible. I've seen shells bounce off his chest! I've seen him catch shrapnel with his teeth, then spit it out!

TEABERRY

I know I'm new at this, but shouldn't you men try and keep your voices down?

A cacophony as they all begin to argue. Teaberry looks to Marlboro at his right.

TEABERRY

I mean, don't you agree?

Marlboro stares at Teaberry a beat, then gives a little nod. Suddenly, a figure appears before him, laden with captured ammo and Kraut 'potato mashers.' Rock.

ROCK

Shut up! You're gonna wake up every German in Belgium, including the ones who died here in World War One.

As the men look at him with, yes, love...

BEANPOLE

What do you say now, Retread?

RETREAD

(glum)

I liked him a lot better when he
was dead.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAFE - BELGIAN VILLAGE - NIGHT

The road below is clogged. But this time the vehicles all
belong to the Germans. The weary GIs seen earlier peek
down from a half-shuttered attic window.

INT. ATTIC - CAFE - NIGHT

One of the GIs is dressed only in his longjohns.

WEARY GI

This has gone way past snafu.
This is a royal, first class, A-
number-1 fuck up.

LONGJOHN GI

(shivering)

At least you'll be warm when the
Krauts kill you.

WEARY GI

You believe that General Cook's
story? Uniform soaked in
gasoline. Took it off so it
wouldn't catch fire.

LONGJOHN GI

Why else would he be running
through Belgium buck naked in
the middle of December. Anyhow,
what was I supposed to do, call
him a liar?

WEARY GI

I dunno. I never heard of no
General Cook. You?

LONGJOHN GI

All I know is, somebody's wear-
ing my uniform and it ain't me.

WEARY GI

Better report in.

Longjohn GI nods. Stepping over to a (cold) radiator, he
begins to tap out MORSE CODE.

INT. CELLAR - CAFE - NIGHT

Pritchard has his ear pressed to the furnace listening to the taps. General Cook, wearing an ill-fitting private's uniform, harangues the Radio Operator hunched over his set.

COOK

Tell those idiots I want at least a dozen howitzers, I want long toms, I want air support, and I want six rifle companies by 2300 hours. In the meantime, I want an artillery barrage on this exact spot commencing now!

PRITCHARD

General, I don't quite think you grasp our situation here --

COOK

Read your rulebook, Colonel. If your position is overrun, you call in an air strike on that position. Well, we are overrun!

PRITCHARD

But, sir --

Cook turns the moment into dinner theater.

COOK

Hew down the bridge, Sir Consul with all the speed ye may, and I with two to help me will hold the hill at bay! For in yon straight path a thousand may well be stopped by three, now who will stand on either hand and fight the foe with me?

Pritchard and the Operator exchange in incredulous look.

COOK

It was a bridge, see? The idea being that three men could hold off an army of thousands. Didn't you ever read MacCauly at the point, Colonel?

PRITCHARD

General, our situation here is very serious. Even if the support you requested arrives, it'll be too late. We'll be overrun by --

Cook looms close to Pritchard, cuts him off in a heavy whisper.

COOK
Shut up, Pritchard, you'll
rattle the men.

With a meaningful look, Cook indicates the Radio Operator.

CUT TO:

EXT. ARDENNES FOREST - NIGHT

FOG is rolling. In long tendrils and wispy tails. The men of Easy cut their way through. Rock and Marlboro are at either end of Stitch's poncho.

A little behind them, Beanpole whispers to Cohen.

BEANPOLE
Rock's gonna get us home. I
know he is.

COHEN
Let's just worry about the next
mile, okay?

There's movement ahead. On point, Ice Cream freezes.

As Rock and Marlboro silently ease Stitch to the ground, Teaberry creeps forward.

Ahead, the fog parts to reveal a DEER. Standing absolutely still, head cocked to the side.

Ice Cream, Retread and Kluzewski all raise their rifles...

TEABERRY
Hold your fire!

They do. A beat before the deer bolts. As the fog closes in behind it, the men all start forward, each giving Teaberry a dirty look as they pass.

ICE CREAM
Case you didn't know, sir.
We're kinda hungry.

4-EYES
Coulda been Christmas dinner,
sir.

RETREAD
It's called venison, sir.

COHEN

Needn't have worried, sir. It
wasn't Bambi's mother.

Finally, Marlboro who doesn't say a word and then Rock.

ROCK

(low; reassuring)

At least they followed your
order, lieutenant.

Teaberry thinks about this. Smiling, he starts after them.

EXT. MEADOW - NIGHT

The fog is heavier. Easy breaks from the woods, starts
toward a little FARMHOUSE. A hole in the roof, no smoke
coming out of the chimney. It looks deserted. Still, the
men of Easy move up silently.

Rock looks to Teaberry who nods nervously; it's okay for
Rock to lead. Rock hand signals Wildman and Marlboro to
flank the door, Cohen, Ice Cream and Kluzewski around the
back. The others watch the perimeter as Rock goes to the
door. Grenade in hand, he pushes the door open, steps in.

A moment later, he steps out, over to Teaberry.

ROCK

Clean. With your permission, sir,
I'd like to take two men and
reconnoiter. See what's ahead.

TEABERRY

Uh, good idea, Sergeant.

As the men exchange looks, roll their eyes, Rock hands
Teaberry the packet of mail.

ROCK

You might want to distribute the
mail.

TEABERRY

Yeah, right. Good idea... Um,
since we don't know the sign-
counter-sign, we'll go with the
usual. Who's Mickey Mouse's
girlfriend?, that type of thing.

As Rock nods...

EXT. WOODED SLOPE - MINUTES LATER

Foggier still. Rock moves cautiously, flanked by Wildman and Ice Cream. All three of them are alert, looking this way and that, weapons ready.

Rock pauses to look up toward the sky. Wildman follows his gaze, then they exchange a look. No stars tonight.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Except for Marlboro who stands watch outside, the men wait expectantly as Teaberry pulls the first envelope from the bundle of mail.

TEABERRY
Jones, William...

An awkward silence. The men exchange glances. Then...

KLUZEWSKI
He... he ain't with us no more.

TEABERRY
Oh. Sorry. Um... Fletcher,
Jerry.

Another silence.

TEABERRY
Absent?

RETREAD
Dead, sir.

Teaberry pulls out another letter. A beat...

TEABERRY
I can't pronounce this. F-A-R-
R-A-C --

COHEN
Farracci, sir. He's dead, too.

BEANPOLE
Shit...

Another silence. It's like a funeral home in here.

4-EYES
Why don't you let me do it,
lieutenant?

TEABERRY

Sure, Corporal. Here.

4-Eyes takes the letters. He looks at the top one, sighs, then sets it aside solemnly. He sets aside the next one as well. And the next one. A grim moment. The room is full of the ghosts of E Company. Finally...

4-EYES

Here you go, Klu.

There's tangible relief through the room as Kluzewski takes his letter.

KLUZEWSKI

Thank Christ. I was starting to think maybe none of us was alive.

The men gather as Kluzewski opens the envelope. The first thing he sees inside is a snapshot.

It's his wife - ANGIE. No longer hot and seductive, she's smiling innocently, half-turned to show her big, pregnant belly. The men crane for looks; as though the image had the power to sustain. Kluzewski smiles in relief.

KLUZEWSKI

She's pregnant.

COHEN

No kidding, Kluzewski, you've been tellin' us for months.

EXT. ARDENNES FOREST - NIGHT

The fog's cut the visibility to about ten yards. Ice Cream and Wildman are just ghostly images on either side of Rock.

ROCK

(stops)

We're not going to learn anything more in this. Better get back.

CRACK! CRACK! Sharp SNAPS sound in the distance. Ice Cream frowns, doesn't recognize the sound.

ICE CREAM

Is that rifles?

The CRACKS are getting closer.

WILDMAN

Not M-1s. Not Mausers. Maybe Russian rifles or something.

Rock frowns, knows what they are...

ROCK

Tanks.

ICE CREAM

Tanks?

EXT. WOODS - TANKS

CRACK! SNAP! POP! Trees break like twigs as PANZER TANKS move ominously through the woods. Smaller than Tigers, still formidable. As their searchlights probe ghostly white fingers through the fog...

Rock, Wildman and Ice Cream crouch behind a tree, watching. As the tanks pass, the three men start back through the woods, their vision obscured by the thick fog.

WOODS

More tanks pass by.

ROCK, WILDMAN AND ICE CREAM

Stop short. More cracks and snaps. Now in front of them. A tank is coming.

ROCK

This way.

As they move decisively to the right...

THE FOG

Closes behind the rear of two tanks.

WOODS

Rock and the boys stop short. More tanks ahead. Hastily, they turn back only to stop again. The engines get louder.

ICE CREAM

We're going in circles.

WILDMAN

No. They're driving in circles.

Roaring surrounds them. Ice Cream and Wildman look to Rock for guidance. Which way to go? Rock doesn't know.

Suddenly, an 88 cannon splits them, an instant before the rest of the hulking black tank follows behind.

As they stand, it continues, apparently never having seen them. Dodge ball time. A second tank appears to the left, also continues on. A third to the right. This one stops.

As the turret of the machine guns turns...

ROCK

Split up!

Half crawling, half running, they scramble off in different directions as the machine gun CHATTERS to life.

ICE CREAM

Arms outstretched, he jerks to a stop, SCREAMS. Nearly cut in two, he crumples...

ROCK

Hears Ice Cream, stops short. He works his way back, finds Ice Cream's body on the ground. Dead. Jaw set, Rock removes Ice Cream's dogtags.

Another tank looms. Dashing in front of it, Rock rolls a grenade underneath, dives out of the way.

BLAAM! The grenade explodes! But the tank rumbles on unharmed. As Rocks scowls, it stop, pivots. He scurries away as another machine gun rips.

Another tank. He's nearly run over! Dashing away, another FIGURE LOOMS. Rock raises his Thompson gun as he and Wildman nearly run into each other.

Wildman lowers his M-1. MOVE WITH them as they sprint off a new direction, begin to put distance between themselves and the THROBBING ENGINES.

EXT. FARM HOUSE - MEADOW - NIGHT

The fog a bit thinner here. Marlboro frowns beside 4-Eyes at the distant rumble. Then heaving breath and footfalls.

4-EYES

Halt! Who was taller, Ira or George Gershwin?

VOICE

(hesitant)

George?

4-EYES

Come outta there, you rat Nazi bastards!

VOICE

Jesus, 4-Eyes, ask something we
might know the answer to!

ROCK'S VOICE

Rock and Wildman coming in!

Rock and Wildman loom out of the mist.

ROCK

Tanks. Headed this way.

4-EYES

Where's Ice Cream?

Rock just shakes his head. As they enter the farmhouse,
the rumbling gets louder.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Rock has briefed everyone.

TEABERRY

We can't fight tanks...

ROCK

(not quite sure)

We'll sit tight, there's a
chance they'll go right past us.

The engines are getting louder.

TEABERRY

Good idea, Sergeant. I --

4-Eyes looks in from the door.

4-EYES

No it's not a good idea! Hit
the deck!

EXT. TANK TURRET

From behind the turning turret, we see the farmhouse thirty
yards ahead. The big gun BLASTS. The entire top half of
the farmhouse is OBLITERATED.

INSIDE THE RUBBLE

Covered with cuts and bruises, Teaberry, Cohen, and
Kluzewski scramble up, help get their comrades up.

Marlboro fires at the tank GRINDING right at them.

Rock pulls back a beam to reveal Stitch. Dead.

BEANPOLE'S VOICE

Help! I'm caught!

Easy Company bravely, frantically try to uncover Beanpole. They get his head and torso clear, but his legs are stuck.

The tank looms...

Eyes wide at the sight, Beanpole pops a red Lifesaver into his mouth. He's about to be crushed when...

KAA-BOOOM! An explosion blossoms off the rear of the tank. Canted halfway up the debris, it's menacing treads stop only three feet from Beanpole.

COHEN

Sonofabitch!

WILDMAN

Bazooka!

4-EYES

Helluva shot!

TEABERRY

(to Rock)

Who?

ROCK

I don't know, sir.

TANK

It's machine gun starts to turn. Marlboro leaps up, shoves a grenade down the barrel of the 88. A dull explosion. Blow back out the barrel. The machine gun stops moving.

RUBBLE

As they pull an intact Beanpole clear, two more tanks bear down. These are accompanied by German Grenadiers. Easy Company takes position in the rubble as the firefight begins. Rock fires the BAR.

A streak and then a bazooka shell flattens itself against one of the tank's AMMO RACKS. KA-BLAAAM! The hatches blow clean off. Rock shouts over the fire to Teaberry.

ROCK
Colonel Pritchard said Baker
Company was out here, too!
Maybe it's their bazooka!

INT. CELLAR - CAFE - NIGHT

The Radio Operator hunched over his set, General Cook and Pritchard crowded behind. Even they can hear the SCREAMING, the HARRIED CRIES coming over the German communication band.

COOK
Well? Well?!

RADIO OPERATOR
A tank battle. East of here, sir.

COOK
East? Behind enemy lines?

Cook looks over to Pritchard, wants an answer.

PRITCHARD
(shrugs)
Could be Easy Company. Maybe
Baker?

COOK
(incredulous)
You left men back there? You
left men behind?

PRITCHARD
I didn't really have a choice,
general sir. It was --

COOK
(to Operator)
What's happening now?!

RADIO OPERATOR
Krauts are retreating, sir. I
think...

COOK
Easy Company. Baker. Brave
bastards! Real fighters!

Cook pauses, throws an accusing look Pritchard's way.

PRITCHARD
Sir, I --

COOK
What's that?

On a tangent, Cook points at CANS stacked in the corner.

RADIO OPERATOR
 Looks like paint, sir.

COOK
 (inspecting)
 Paint? What kind of paint?

PRITCHARD
 I imagine it's Belgian paint,
 sir. Perhaps we should continue
 our discussion of tactics. I --

Cook holds up a white dabbed forefinger.

COOK
 (with meaning)
 It's white paint!

EXT. RUBBLE - MEADOW - NIGHT

The third tank is running away, followed by the remaining grenadiers. Easy Company has beaten them back, with some mysterious bazooka help. As the men peer into the gloom, they hear WHISTLING. "Yankee Doodle." As it nears...

WILDMAN
 Halt! Who's got good legs?

VOICE #1
 (from the fog)
 Betty Grable.

VOICE #2
 Who's got big tits?

RETREAD
 Lana Turner?

ROCK
 Who's a big asshole?

EVERYBODY
 Adolph Hitler!

Two figures step out of the mist. The first carries a BAZOOKA under his arm. It's still smoking and so's the man carrying it. Two hundred pounds, black - SGT. STEELE.

STEELE
 Willie Steele. Master Sergeant.
 Baker Company. This here's my
 loader: Lightning.

Much less formidable, LIGHTNING gives Easy a quick nod.
 Steele extends his hand proudly.

STEELE
 We're a Negro outfit.

ROCK
 (smiling)
 No kidding? I thought it was an
 Belgian suntan. I'm Sgt. Rock.

Steele laughs. As they shake hands, Rock indicates
 Teaberry.

ROCK
 This is Lieutenant Teaberry.
 He's in charge.

STEELE.
 (salutes)
 Lieutenant. We lookin' for
 Nazzies.

TEABERRY
 (re: the dead)
 Here they are. The master race.

STEELE
 Only master race I know about
 was Jesse Owens, hundred yard
 dash, 1936 Olympic Games.

CUT TO:

EXT. 12 TIGER TANKS - NIGHT

Barrels elevated, sending a stream of 88 shells into the
 American lines. Colonel Heydrich climbs from the hatch of
 one. Jumping to the ground, he hurries over to where a
 field table has been set up. MAJOR HELDER and the RADIO
 OPERATOR await him.

HEYDRICH
 (re: radio)
 Manteuffel?

They nod. Heydrich pulls on the headset, shouts over the
 barrage.

HEYDRICH
Heydrich here, General.

MANTEUFFEL'S VOICE
(over radio)
I need your Tigers at Bastogne.
The city is surrounded and your
tanks may make the difference.

HEYDRICH
But General, I --

MANTEUFFEL'S VOICE
(over radio)
Heydrich, this offensive could
depend on it. How soon can you
be on the move?

HEYDRICH
(a beat)
At once, General. At once.
Heil Hitler!

Heydrich pulls off the headset, consults a field map.

HEYDRICH
Germany asks the impossible...
I will give it to her.
(looks up)
Major Helder, prepare to move
for Bastogne.

HELDER
And the prisoners, herr colonel?

Helder gestures back toward a huddled, miserable looking
group of 15 POWS. Heydrich glances at the annoyance.

HEYDRICH
Shoot them.

Heydrich looks back to the map. Helder hesitates.

HELDER
They are prisoners, Colonel.
Helpless. There are rules.

HEYDRICH
(doesn't look up)
I grow tired of you, Helder.
Germany needs soldiers, not
lawyers. If you won't shoot
them, join them.

HELDER
 (a hard swallow)
 Ja voll, Colonel. I'll assemble
 a firing squad.

As Helder moves off, Heydrich finds a southerly road on the map. He follows it with his finger to Bastogne.

EXT. RUBBLE - MEADOW - NIGHT

Easy Co. and Steele and Lightning of Baker gather around Rock who's got a similar map opened up. Everyone smokes one of Rock's cigars. Teaberry nearly chokes on his.

On the map, Rock's finger cuts across open country, meets up with the same road.

ROCK
 We're at least ten miles behind
 the line. Until we can get
 something on the radio besides
 German band music, our best bet is
 to head to Bastogne. Work our way
 past the krauts and get home.
 (to Teaberry)
 If you agree, sir.

TEABERRY
 Good idea, Sergeant.
 (coughing)
 Good smoke, too.

Several of the men exchange looks behind Teaberry's back.

ROCK
 (standing)
 Okay, let's shake it. Retread
 and 4-Eyes on the point.
 Wildman and Marlboro on the ass.
 We march till we find a good
 spot to sack out.

As the men gather themselves together, Rock steps over to where Stitch lies. Solemnly, he reaches down and removes the dead man's dogtags. As he pulls a piece of curtain over his face...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAFE - BELGIAN VILLAGE - EARLY MORNING

Huge white letters on the wall of the cafe say...

USA ALL THE WAY

And incomplete...

EAT SHIT, ADOL...

Weary GI and Longjohn GI are working on the P and H of Adolph, buckets of white paint in hand. A few curious VILLAGERS watch. The Germans are gone, moved on.

WEARY

This is nuts!

LONGJOHN

You're telling me. If it was just the Colonel, I'd tell him to blow it out his ass.

WEARY

Sure you would.

LONGJOHN

But that fucking general. I'm not crossing that general.

WEARY

General Bare Ass...

COOK & PRITCHARD

A field behind the cafe. The fog is still burning off. Cook scans the area with binoculars. Pritchard frowns at the sound of distant shelling.

PRITCHARD

I don't understand the point of the painting, General.

COOK

Morale, Colonel. It's not good to sit around on your ass thinking about dying. Unless your a Nazi. They'll have to come back through here when they retreat. That's when they'll see our handiwork.

PRITCHARD

That's what I'm afraid of, sir.

CAFE WALL

The GIs consider the completed "EAT SHIT, ADOLPH" as Cook and Pritchard stride past.

COOK

Looks good, men.

WEARY

Uh, what should we write next,
sir?

COOK

Think of a good one. How about
'Goebbels is a cocksucker'?

Cook and Pritchard reenter the cafe. A beat, then...

WEARY

.You know how to spell 'Goebbels'?

LONGJOHN

I can't even spell 'cocksucker'.

EXT. VALLEY - DAY

Overcast and it's getting colder. The men move in a line,
some by themselves, others in twos. Ahead, a WOODED SLOPE.

KLUZEWSKI

Walking along, looking at the snapshot of Angie.

4-EYES & LIGHTNING

Becoming fast friends.

4-EYES

You know Count Basie? No shit?

LIGHTNING

I shit you not. He's gonna give
me a tryout after the war. I'm
a singer.

4-EYES

I'm a singer, too! Well, mostly
I'm a songwriter. Actually, I
mostly get shot at by krauts.

As they share a laugh...

ROCK & STEELE

Also becoming friends of sorts.

STEELE

I just, I love killin' tanks,
Rock. I love destroyin' them
big ass noisy bastards.

ROCK

You guys trained as tank
killers?

STEELE

Motor pool. We shouldn't even be
fighting. Got caught behind the
line like you. But I shot a
bazooka in basic training. Got
the hang of it real quick. Been
waiting for my chance ever since.

ROCK

You got it now.

STEELE

No offence, Rock, but you
talk... kida funny. Where you
from, anyhow?

ROCK

(relights cigar butt)
Akron. Akron, Ohio.

STEELE

Right, right. Akron, huh?
Thought I recognized the accent.
I'm from Macon, Georgia myself.

WILDMAN

Alert. On the point.

MARLBORO & TEABERRY

Teaberry checks out the overcast skies.

TEABERRY

Looks like snow. Don't you
agree?

Marlboro checks out the heavens, doesn't commit himself one
way or the other.

RETREAD & BEANPOLE

Retread's stuck on the usual topic as Beanpole rifles
through his pockets.

RETREAD

I ain't saying the Rock ain't a
good soldier. He's a great
fucking soldier.

BEANPOLE

Then why do you hate him so much?

RETREAD

I don't. He's okay... for an asshole. It's his style pisses me off. He's too much of a hero.

BEANPOLE

Meaning he takes risks?

RETREAD

For nothing. Soldiers don't win wars. Planes win. Big guns win. Ships win. Machines win.

Beanpole isn't really looking as his pocket search grows a bit desperate.

RETREAD

What's wrong, Beanpole?

BEANPOLE

Can't find my lifesavers.

Ahead, SINGING... 4-Eyes and Lightning. They're good.

4-EYES & LIGHTNING

"Santa Claus Is Coming To Town." Like you never heard it before.

4-EYES

He's sees you when you're sleeping.

LIGHTNING

He's knows when you're awake.

4-EYES/LIGHTNING

He knows if you've been bad or good so you better be good for goodness sake!

WILDMAN

Looks back over his shoulder, smiles. But as he takes his next step... BOOM! Wildman's thrown back ten feet.

FIELD

Everyone freezes except...

TEABERRY
 (stepping forward)
 Is it artillery?

ROCK
 We're in a mine field!

Teaberry freezes. Bloody, Wildman moans in pain.

WILDMAN
 I hurt fucking bad, Sarge.

ROCK
 I'm coming, Wildman. Don't
 move.
 (to others)
 Get out your bayonets. Mark 'em
 and move on. We should be okay
 once we make those trees.

The men get out their bayonets, get on their bellies, and
 start probing.

Cohen's bayonet scrapes metal. Shoving a stick in the
 ground to mark it, he moves on.

Beanpole keeps searches his pockets.

BEANPOLE
 I know I got a fresh pack.

Lightning finds a MINE. Pulling back his bayonet, he
 exhales in relief, marks it and moves on.

Teaberry. Probe, probe, slide forward. Probe, probe --
 He lifts the edge of a mine up out of the loam.

TEABERRY
 I got one! I got one!

VOICES
 Great, sir. Congratulations,
 sir.

Marlboro marks it, crawls past Teaberry.

Kluzewski's the first one to the woods. Standing, he steps
 to the treeline.

KLUZEWSKI
 This way, fellas! Work to me!

Rock reaches Wildman. He's trembling, going into shock.

ROCK
Hang on, Wildman.

As Rock prepares a morphine syringe, a distant drone from beyond. As Rock looks up and over his shoulder.

INT. FIGHTER COCKPIT - PILOT'S POV

A beautiful day as the pilot watches the valley unfold below. Ahead and below, he see little figures on the ground. Can't tell if they're German or American.

EXT. MINE FIELD

Retread joins Kluzewski. They hear it as well.

RETREAD
Ours or there's.

KLUZEWSKI
(eyes widening)
There's.

Rock knows there's little to do, but...

ROCK
Stay flat and keep digging!

INT. FIGHTER COCKPIT - PILOT'S POV

Now he's diving for a closer look, his dive-activated SIRENS coming rapidly up to full SCREAM as the tiny figures suddenly loom - AMERICANS!

EXT. MINE FIELD

The sound is unbearable as the Stuka swoops right in, then suddenly begins a steep climb.

LIGHTNING
Maybe he's outta ammo.

TEABERRY
I think he was checking to see.
Friend or foe?

ROCK
Now he knows. Foe. Work for
the trees.

Rock moves on, dragging Wildman behind him.

4-Eyes passes Beanpole who's still looking for candy.

4-EYES
Forget about it, Bean!

EXT. STUKA - DIVING

The wing mounted MACHINE GUNS begin their merciless CHATTER.

EXT. MINE FIELD

Lightning makes the trees. He and the others urge on the rest.

Rock throws himself over Wildman as bullets chew the ground toward him.

Beanpole can't take it. He stands and runs for it.

TEABERRY
(looking up)
Get down, soldier!

BOOOM! A mine blows up directly below Beanpole. He's dead before he hits the ground.

As the Stuka swings up, the others continue their trek.

EXT. STUKA

Turning. Coming back for more easy pickins...

EXT. MINE FIELD

Steele makes it to the trees, stands, unslings his bazooka.

STEELE
Lightning!

As Lightning dashes over to load the bazooka...

...the Stuka comes in low. Maybe fifteen feet above the ground. Machine guns wide open. Bullets tear up the dirt behind Teaberry, Rock and Marlboro...

...On one knee, Steele fires...

...the bomb streaks and the Stuka EXPLODES.

As debris rains down:

STEELE

It ain't no tank, but the
son'bitch was just as noisy.

4-Eyes steps to the trees. Marlboro and Teaberry grabs
Wildman from Rock. As they get him to safety...

Rock checks out what's left of Beanpole. Dead for sure.

As Rock fishes out the kid's DOGTAGS, he unearths the fresh
pack of LIFESAVERS. Closing Beanpole's hands around the
candy, Rock crawls off for the trees.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. RIDGE - DAY

A ROAD runs up a slope to a rocky ridge, then falls away
steeply on the other side. Rock and Easy Company emerge
from the trees. Lightning and 4-Eyes haul the unconscious
Wildman in a poncho.

RETREAD

(looks west; grins)

The road to Bastogne.

But Rock squints back the other way. East. Beside him,
Teaberry raises a pair of BINOCULARS...

BINOCULARS - TEABERRY'S POV

On the road below, headed up for the pass - EIGHTEEN KING
TIGER TANKS - rumbling along at 20+ mph, each carrying a
half dozen grenadiers. A mighty formidable force.

TEABERRY

(lowering)

Jesus. Maybe we aren't the only
ones on the way to Bastogne.

The men take notice, begin to pass a battered pair of
binoculars back and forth. Teaberry and Rock step off to
converse. The men notice this as well.

RETREAD

Shit. Whaddaya wanna bet Rock's
talking the looey into taking a
couple of volunteers and
ambushing the pass? Shit.

(disgusted)

Hero time again.

ROCK AND TEABERRY

Deep in conversation.

TEABERRY

Those are King Tiger tanks,
Sergeant. We're heavily
outgunned and outnumbered. We're
supposed to be pulling back.

ROCK

Wherever they're going, they're
in a helluva hurry. We slow 'em
up a little here, who knows what
good we're doing further down
this road.

TEABERRY

I don't doubt it, but as near as
I can see, it's my responsibility
to get the men out of here.

ROCK

Myself and two men only.
Volunteers. The rest of you go.

As Teaberry considers this...

BACK TO OTHERS

The men are heavily into a dialogue of their own.

RETREAD

Rock wants to stay and fight the
goddamn tanks. I know it. Well,
I don't volunteer for nuthin.

COHEN

What I'm saying, asshole, is
it's a no-win situation. If
Rock asks for volunteers and you
don't go, you're stuck with this
Lieutenant Teaberry.

KLUZEWSKI

What the fuck kind of name is
Teaberry anyhow?

COHEN

A discussion for later, Kluzewski.
Personally, I would feel safer
attacking Berlin alone with
Sergeant Rock than I would walking
around America with this green
kid. That's just me personally.

As these words sink in, Teaberry steps over from his
discussion with Rock, addresses the men.

TEABERRY

The sergeant wants two
volunteers to...

COHEN

(hand shooting up)

Me!

STEELE

Here, sir.

VOICES

Me too! I'll go! Yeah, me!

Everyone volunteers except Retread..

RETREAD

How about the Wildman? He needs
a medic. He needs blood.

WILDMAN

(stirs; looks over)

I need a miracle. Get the
fucking tanks....

Retread realizes it's hopeless. He looks from Rock to
Teaberry. As his hand reluctantly goes up...

CUT TO:

JURY RIGGED EXPLOSIVE

Potato mashers and bazooka rounds. As Steele sets the
charge, Rock holds out his hand. A big, fluffy snowflake
drifts down into his palm.

STEELE

Nine men against eighteen Tiger
tanks plus infantry.

(a big grin)

You an' me, Rock, we could be
friends.

ROCK

It might be a short friendship,
Willie.

Below, we hear the distant rumble of the Tigers. As Rock
and Steele scramble up...

EXT. HAIRPIN TURN

The lead, unsuspecting King Tiger comes up around the bend.

MARLBORO

Flat on the rocks, aiming with a SNIPER'S RIFLE at...

SCOPE POV

The explosives.

MARLBORO

As snowflakes drift around him, he fires.

ROCKY SLOPE

KA-BLOOM! First the explosion, then after a beat, a sudden, huge noise as a LANDSLIDE of massive BOULDERS surge down and into the pass.

The first THREE TIGERS are overwhelmed, the men riding on top crushed. The rest of the column pull up short.

TIGER FOUR

The hatch opens. Heydrich raises up, scowls in disgust. He scans the ridge, starts to yell orders to his grenadiers.

MARLBORO

Smiling. Taking his time with his shots.

THE PASS

The lead grenadiers go down. Sitting ducks. As the others retreat back to cover, there are many shouts in German...

EASY COMPANY

Watching and listening from the ridge.

COHEN

What're they saying, Sarge?

ROCK

(deadpan)

They're unhappy.

STEELE

No shit.

ROCK

They don't like us.

KLUZEWSKI

Aaawww...

ROCK
Or our mothers.

Rock steps down to Teaberry who's impressed. Rock overhears as he recites...

TEABERRY
"In yon straight path a thousand
may well be stopped by three.
Now who will stand on either
hand and fight the foe with me?"

Rock looks over. Teaberry waves dismissively.

TEABERRY
MacCauly. Made us read it at
West Point. What now, Sergeant?

ROCK
If you agree, sir, I say we hold
them off till dusk. Then get
out in the dark.

As Teaberry thinks this over...

CUT TO:

HEYDRICH

Furious, he's called over to the radio operator who holds out the headset like he's afraid he'll be hit.

OPERATOR
General Manteuffel, herr colonel.

MANTEUFFEL'S VOICE
(over radio)
What is your progress, Heydrich?

HEYDRICH
(into radio)
Delayed, General.

Heydrich pulls the headset off as we hear Manteuffel's filtered voice cursing away. Finally.

HEYDRICH
General... General! If you want
to see these tanks in Bastogne,
I need assistance.

MANTEUFFEL'S VOICE
(after a beat)
What manner of assistance?

THE PASS

Snow swirls as two grenadiers hover beside a six-foot boulder, one of many blocking the pass. They suddenly sprint away back toward the tanks.

BA-WHOOOM! The boulder explodes.

STEELE'S VOICE

Demolition team. They're gonna start clearing the pass.

RIDGE

Lightning looks down the barrel of his rifle as they hurry toward another boulder.

LIGHTNING

Wish I had the range.

RETREAD

Don't waste a round...

CRACK! One of the grenadiers falls.

RETREAD

Marlboro'll keep 'em on their toes.

4-Eyes flips through radio bands, all still jammed with German band music.

COHEN

Rock says to the lieutenant our best bet is to get out after dark. Know what the lieutenant said?

KLUZEWSKI & 4-EYES

(together)

Good idea, Sergeant.

Chuckles all around except for Retread.

RETREAD

Hey, we're not in this mess 'causa the lieutenant; we're in this mess 'causa Rock.

KLUZEWSKI

What mess, Retread? It'll take hours for the krauts to clear the way. In twenty minutes it'll be dark and we'll be history.

A very faint droning comes from above the cloud cover.

Through the fading light, the SILHOUETTES of PARATROOPERS. At least ten, disappearing back on the other side of the ridge, leaving a clean pull-back impossible.

RETREAD

Aw shit... Sarge!

A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Teaberry, Rock and Steele are having an urgent discussion as darkness descends.

ROCK

Ten parachutes confirmed. Means there's probably twice that many.

TEABERRY

SO we're cut off. They're behind us.

STEELE

Question is, do we stay put or pull out anyways?

ROCK

Pulling out'll give them the advantage. We got a wounded man.

TEABERRY

If we stay, we've got a solid defensive position.

ROCK

But we'll be stuck here in the morning. Pinned down.

STEELE

'Tween the devil and the deep blue sea.

ROCK

There is no right answer.

TEABERRY

But there's probably a wrong one.
(decides)
We'll dig in. Position the men in twos. Take turns awake and see what the morning brings.

ROCK

Right, sir. Plus I've got a
trick or two.

As Rock heads off, we hear a distant explosion as another
boulder is blown. Steele comforts Teaberry.

STEELE

Don't worry, sir. They got at
least another twelve hours
clearing that pass.

4-EYES

Still playing with the radio. Static and then an American
voice. Or was it? 4-Eyes looks to Retread.

4-EYES

Get the lieutenant.

As Retread moves off...

INT. CELLAR - CAFE - NIGHT

Cook and Pritchard loom over the Radio Operator.

OPERATOR

I got him, sir. Here...

Cook takes the headset.

COOK

Who's there? What? Eighteen
tiger tanks? King Tigers?

EXT. RIDGE - NIGHT

Teaberry's on the other end.

TEABERRY

We'll hold 'em as long as we
can, but they are going to be
headed west on what the map says
is highway 12. Toward Bastogne

INT. CAFE

Cook looks to Pritchard.

COOK

Highway 12. Toward Bastogne.

Pritchard looks to the map, blanches.

PRITCHARD

This village is on highway 12,
sir. They'll come through here.

COOK

(smiles; into radio)
We'll be waiting for you, son.
What's your status now?

TEABERRY'S VOICE

(over headset)
Surrounded. We --

Nothing but static.

COOK

Hello, hello!
(removes headset)
Get me divisional HQ in
Bastogne. I want an artillery
barrage ready on my command.
When those Nazi bastards show,
we'll be ready. Won't we?

As Cook hurries out, the Radio Operator and Pritchard exchange a nervous look.

EXT. RIDGE - NIGHT

4-Eyes has the headset on now. He finally shakes his head, looks to Teaberry.

4-EYES

We lost him, sir, whoever he
was.

TEABERRY

He said he'd be waiting for us...
(shrugs)
Keep trying.

EXT. RIDGE - LATER

Rock is in position alongside the unconscious Wildman. Lightning comes from one side trailing two different CORDS. The ends are tied off to STICKS. He gives them to Rock.

LIGHTNING

(heads off)
Night, Sergeant.

Rock nods, watches as Kluzewski comes from the other side, trailing two more CORDS.

KLUZEWSKI
How's the Wildman, Sarge?

ROCK
(shakes his head)
I don't think he'll wake up
again, Klu.

Kluzewski nods grimly, moves off to his position.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - SNOW FALLS ON THE MOONLIT 'DUOS' STRUNG OUT AMONG THE ROCKS.

- A) Kluzewski watches west, Cohen sleeps.
- B) Steele watching east, Lightning sleeping.
- C) Teaberry watches west. Marlboro watches west.

TEABERRY
Sure you don't want to sleep?

Marlboro just quietly shakes his head.

- D) 4-Eyes watching east, Retread sleeping.
- E) Rock watching west, turns and checks the unconscious Wildman, wipes snow from his face

END OF MONTAGE

CUT TO:

RETREAD & 4-EYES - MUCH LATER

Retread watching now, his helmet covered with snow. 4-Eyes sleeps, a couple inches of snow on his blanket.

Studying the darkness intently, Retread stiffens. Did he hear something? Without taking his eyes off the darkness, he nudges 4-Eyes awake with his foot.

RETREAD
(whispers)
I think there's somebody out
there.

As 4-Eyes reaches into his pocket for his glasses...

KLUZEWSKI

It's his turn to sleep. He's curled up in his snow-covered blanket. A shadow falls on his face. Ominous...

Kluzewski stirs, but he doesn't wake. Suddenly, a hand clamps down on his mouth. His eyes open wide with fear.

He's looking up at Angie's face! It's her hand on his mouth. She's completely naked and not a day pregnant.

ANGIE

Klu, baby, I --

Kluzewski pushes her hand aside, sits up abruptly.

KLUZEWSKI

(a desperate whisper)

Angie! For Chrissake, honey,
you can't --

ANGIE

I miss ya, Klu. I got the hots
for you, baby.

She tries to force him back to the ground with a kiss, but he fights her off.

KLUZEWSKI

Angie, there's guys around.
This is a war zone. There's
Nazis. You gotta put on some
clothes. You gotta --

COHEN'S VOICE

For Pete's sake, Klu, go ahead.

Kluzewski whirls... Cohen sits there, cradling his rifle, his eyes drifting over Angie's naked body.

COHEN

I'll watch, I mean, I got the
watch. You guys just go ahead
and I'll, er, keep watch.

Kluzewski moves to block Cohen's eager eyes from his wife's body. Kluzewski hisses over his shoulder.

KLUZEWSKI

Angie! Cover up, you slut!

COHEN

(affable)

Hey, I'd jump her in a minute.
Great body, perfect tits.

KLUZEWSKI
 (very loud; very
 indignant)
 That's my wife, you asshole!
 Watch your mouth!

COHEN
 (very reasonable)
 See if you can follow me here.
 All I'm saying is, if she's got
 the hots, and you're not --

KLUZEWSKI
 Cover your eyes, you sonofabitch!
 (to Angie)
 Honey, cover your breasts!
 (back to Cohen)
 Look at my wife again and I'll --

VOICE/DARKNESS
 Shut up! Boce uff you!

Kluzewski, Angie and Cohen all whirl to see two German soldiers standing over them, weapons pointed. The speaker is CAPTAIN HANS, a nasty-eyed blonde.

CAPTAIN HANS
 She iss for uss! We are real
 men! Aryan men! We vill fuck
 her for you, yesss?

Captain Hans smirks. The soldier beside him leers. Angie shrinks back, a helpless maiden.

ANGIE
 No, please! Klu, save me!

Kluzewski's eyes bulge with apocalyptic rage.

KLUZEWSKI
 (lunging)
 I'll kill you, you pig!

COHEN (O.S.)
 (strangled)
 Ughh. Klu! Help!

Cohen's voice is very present and urgent. Angie looks startled as Kluzewski grapples furiously with Hans. The sounds of the violent struggle are suddenly very real.

SGT. ROCK

Has his weapon ready as he listens to CURSING in the darkness and the sound of a STRUGGLE.

MARLBORO & TEABERRY

Teaberry, waking, sees Marlboro crouched tensely, finger on the trigger.

4-EYES & RETREAD

Peering out. Listening. Ready for anything.

STEELE & LIGHTNING

Likewise...

SGT. ROCK

Swings the muzzle of his gun, at an approaching sound.

ROCK

Who is it?

VOICE/DARKNESS

Max Schmelling.

ROCK

Joe Louis. Come in.

Cohen crawls into view, his nose bloody, his shirt bloodier. Trembling with exertion and fear.

COHEN

Couple of kraut paratroopers jumped us. Tried to kill us quiet, slit our throats. All in white, too. Can't tell 'em apart from the snow.

ROCK

Is Kluzewski okay?

COHEN

He went crazy, he killed both guys with his bare hands. This guy was choking me, trying to slit my throat. Klu grabbed him, bashed his head in with a rock. Then starts yelling about his wife's tits.

ROCK

(puzzled)

His wife's tits?

COHEN

I should tell the lieutenant --

ROCK
I'll tell him. Go back to your
position.

CAPTAIN HANS

A paratrooper. His remaining eye stares up lifelessly, his skull crushed. The second German lies dead, face down in the snow, his neck broken. Kluzewski is crouched close by, panning his rifle into the darkness, still fuming.

KLUZEWSKI
Fucking perverts.

Kluzewski whirls at a sound in the darkness.

KLUZEWSKI
Who's there?

VOICE/DARKNESS
Max Schmelling.

KLUZEWSKI
Joe fucking Lewis. That you,
Cohen?

COHEN
(crawling up)
Yeah. Don't kill me, Klu. I
swear to God I never seen your
wife. Never mind her tits.

As Kluzewski scowls...

ROCK

Crawling for the next position, leaving Teaberry and Marlboro. They're both alert, one facing east, the other west.

STEELE & LIGHTNING

Likewise.

4-EYES & RETREAD

Fingers on their triggers.

ROCK

Eases back in alongside Wildman. Straining his senses. Was that movement ahead? A muffled curse behind? Rock takes hold of one each of the pair of cords on either side. As he yanks...

FLARES

A row. Hidden a distance away. Igniting.

SECOND SET OF FLARES

Spilling brilliant white light.

EASY COMPANY POSITIONS

The flares go off fifty yards on either side. Paratroopers on one side and grenadiers on the other who once were invisible are suddenly well-defined, BACK-LIT SILHOUETTES.

Easy Company opens fire. The Germans, caught wide open, are mown down. A cry goes up. As they retreat back...

SGT. ROCK

Pulls the second set of cords.

QUICK CUTS TO:

TWO ROWS OF GERMAN POTATO MASHERS

Hooked up to the cords. BOOOOM!

RIDGE

The retreating Germans rush face first into both blasts. The slaughter is great. As the flares die out...

ROCK

Looks about grimly. Knows that's only Round One.

ROCK

Klu! You okay?

KLUZEWSKI

Reloading his M-1.

KLUZEWSKI

So far!

ROCK'S VOICE

4-Eyes?

4-EYES

Taking a moment to wipe clean his glasses.

4-EYES

I'm o --

In mid-reply, a POTATO MASHER lands at 4-Eye's feet. For a quarter second he and Retread stare at certain death, then 4-Eyes KICKS the grenade down the slope. BOOOM!

COHEN
(gulping)
-- Kay, Sergeant...

Several more grenades explode, most of them short. Then a shout in the dark. Muzzle flashes. Here they come again.

SGT. STEELE

Holding the BAR at his hip. Unleashing a fury of lead. At his back, Lightning suddenly clutches at his throat. Blood pulses through his fingers.

STEELE
Nothing like killing nazxies!

As Steele looks back over his shoulder, he sees his buddy go down. As Steele drops the BAR...

STEELE.
Lightning!

RIDGE POSITIONS

The night is alive with muzzle flashes and the furious stutter of AUTOMATIC WEAPON fire as men scream in the dark.

KLUZEWSKI & COHEN

Kluzewski fires his last round, reaches back.

KLUZEWSKI
Give me a clip, huh?

COHEN
I'm out.

KLUZEWSKI
Whaddaya mean you're out.

COHEN
I mean I'm out of clips. I was just gonna ask you for one.

A beat. Then suddenly, both men go about fixing BAYONETS to their rifles.

4-EYES & RETREAD

Giving as good as they get.

4-EYES

If this is what it's like to
fall back, I don't ever want to
see an attack.

RETREAD

The bullshit is, Rock gets us
into this, but if we get out
alive, you're gonna tell me how
Rock saved our ass and as long
as we soldier with the Rock we
live forever.

4-EYES

I got serious doubts about
living forever, Retread.
Serious doubts.

Approaching SHOUTS of "Joe Louis" & "Max Schmelling." They
hold their fire as they're joined by Kluzewski and Cohen.

KLUZEWSKI

We're outta ammo.

RETREAD

So what do I look like, the five
and dime?

4-EYES

I only got three rounds left
myself.

As they trade nervous looks.

RETREAD

Anybody seen Rock?

GERMAN PARATROOPER

Sneaking around the rock face. On an extreme narrow. Just
as the path widens, he sees Sgt. Rock waiting for him.
Rock has a grenade in hand, the pin already pulled.

ROCK

(German; subtitled)

We have a Christmas present for
Mr. Hitler.

(hefts grenade)

Would you deliver it?

Before the astonished German paratrooper can react, Rock
shoves the grenade into the waistband of his pants. As the
paratrooper reaches for his explosive crotch, he falls off
the slope. BOOOM! He explodes!

Bullets pockmark above Rock's head. He's pinned down. As a German flare drifts down toward him, he's in big trouble.

TEABERRY & MARLBORO

Marlboro falls back, shot through the shoulder. A PARATROOPER leaps down between them. Teaberry clubs him in the head with his rifle butt, bayonets him.

Teaberry blinks in disbelief at what he's done. Then, he gets Marlboro to his feet: They start away.

TEABERRY
Easy Company!

COHEN'S VOICE
(ahead)
Over here, lieutenant!

As Teaberry leads Marlboro that way...

STEELE

Wild-eyed. Not thinking clearly, he carries his dead buddy Lightning in his arms, trudges through the deepening snow.

STEELE
Medic! Medic!

But there isn't one and Lightning is obviously dead. As a grenade lands a few feet beyond, Steele doesn't notice.

BOOOM! As Steele is thrown head-over-heels...

THREE PARATROOPERS

Advance on Rock's position. They get there, but he's gone.

ANGLE AROUND ROCKFACE

Rock clings to a meager hand and foot holds.

TEABERRY & EASY CO.

Gathered together, pinned down, wounded, running out of ammo and in the middle of a debate.

4-EYES
We shouldn't do anything till
Rock gets here!

RETREAD

Maybe he's not coming.

KLUZEWSKI

Gee, I don't know...

TEABERRY

Well I do. And it's my decision.

As they all stare back at Teaberry...

GERMAN PARATROOPER POSITION

As they set up a .50 mm gun to use on Easy.

TEABERRY'S VOICE

Übergaben! Übergaben!

The Paratroopers look on as a WHITE FLAG is waved on the end of a rifle.

PARATROOPER

Cumzie-out!

Teaberry emerges.

TEABERRY

Don't shoot!

Teaberry's followed by Cohen, then 4-Eyes and Kluzewski supporting Marlboro. Retread brings up the rear. A glum looking lot. As the paratroopers and grenadiers move forward, there's at least thirty of them...

RIDGE - MOMENT LATER

Easy Company is being marched down toward the tanks.

Rock watches from distant cover. Not a lot he can do.

CUT TO:

EXT. RIDGE SLOPE - DAY

Battered, but still in one piece, Steele sits in the snow looking down at the body of Lightning. A sound behind. Steele looks back over his shoulder to see Rock.

STEELE

(re: Lightning)

Told his mama I'd look after him.
What am I gonna tell her now?

ROCK
I don't know, Willie.

Steele slips Lightning's dogtags off. Reaching into a pouch at his belt, he adds them to the rest he carries.

STEELE
(re: Baker Co. tags)
I got a lot of explaining to do.

ROCK
I know how you feel, Willie. Got a collection of my own.

Rock's hand pats a pouch of his own. We hear the tags and chains as they jangle.

ROCK
Feel like they weigh a thousand pounds.
(a beat)
Krauts got Easy. Want to help me get 'em back?

Willie wipes his nose, looks down at Lightning a beat, then stands, turns to Rock.

STEELE
Sure, Rock. I'll give you a hand. Whatcha got in mind?

EXT. KING TIGER ENCAMPMENT - NIGHT

Tanks are being WHITEWASHED to blend with the snow. Beyond, another boulder EXPLODES. A SERGEANT reports to Heydrich - the eye of the storm.

SERGEANT
A few more hours, Colonel.
That's all.

Heydrich nods impatiently, trying to hold his anger in check. As the Sergeant moves off...

HEYDRICH
Helder!

The beleaguered Major Helder steps over.

HELDER
Yes, herr Colonel.

HEYDRICH

The instant the pass is cleared,
I want everything ready. See
that the men are fed and the
tanks are fueled.

HELDER

Yes, herr Colonel.

As Helder turns to see this done...

HEYDRICH

Helder...

(Helder pauses)

Have the prisoners been shot
yet? Or did you use silencers?

(no answer)

All prisoners are to be executed.
That is my standing order.

HELDER

Please, Colonel, do not ask this
again.

Helder won't have to worry about it as BANG, Heydrich draws
his Luger and shoots him. As he crumples to the ground...

CUT TO:

TEABERRY, MARLBORO, KLUZEWSKI, 4-EYES, COHEN & RETREAD

A raggedy ass group. Stamping their feet to stay warm,
passing around the stub of an Havana. Marlboro's arm is in
a makeshift sling.

Two Mauser-toting GUARDS look over as the sergeant steps
over. He's accompanied by two grenadiers who briskly go
about snapping a .50 mm MACHINE GUN together.

COHEN

(realizing)

Motherfuckers...

Covering them with the Mausers, the guards take a few steps
back. One machine gunner slaps open the breech; the other
threads the ammo belt.

4-EYES

(scared)

It's one helluva Christmas.

KLUZEWSKI

Hope my wife got the present I
sent her.

Marlboro takes a last draw, blows a SMOKE RING and casually flicks the cigar butt through the ring and at the machine gunners. Terrified, Teaberry braves it out.

TEABERRY

Easy Company! Ten-hut!

The men stand at attention. All but Retread.

RETREAD

Oh well... Soldier on, right?

Retread joins them. In a crisp line.

Few formalities, the sergeant just nods at his gunners. The .50's barrel swings over. The gunner takes a bead...

VOICE

Halt!

Everyone looks over as TWO PARATROOPERS approach. One is Rock. The other's face is wrapped in a bloody bandage. We have a good idea it might be Steele.

Rock and Steele both carry paratrooper sub machine-guns. The Easies exchange nervous looks of hope.

GERMAN SERGEANT

(German; subtitled)

We have orders from Heydrich.
These men are to be shot.

ROCK

(German; subtitled)

Countermanded by headquarters.
These men are to be interrogated,
then shot.

Before the sergeant can formulate a response, Rock steps over to the prisoners.

ROCK

(German; subtitled)

Typical Amis, can't tell the
officers from the men.

(in English)

Who is commanding officer?

TEABERRY

Umm... Me.

ROCK

What is the strength of your
forces in Belgium?

TEABERRY
I'm not sure.

ROCK
(low; quick)
Gotta hit you now, sir.

Rock slaps Teaberry. As he rubs his jaw...

TEABERRY
I, um, think that's a violation
of the Geneva Convention.

ROCK
Absolutely.
(crisp)
Follow me!

Rock leads. Easy Company follows. The German sergeant looks vaguely suspicious until Rock pauses, looks back at the guards.

ROCK
(German; subtitled)
Well...?

The guards step to, join the group. That satisfies the German sergeant.

The group moves off, Steele brings up the rear adjusting his bandage so he can see. They head between the Tigers.

4-EYES
(whispers to Retread)
We're gonna live forever.

BETWEEN THE TANKS

Steele can't see. As he tries to adjust, a lot of the bandage slips down around his chin.

Guard one glances back, stops short, stares in stunned astonishment at his first "Black German."

GUARD
(flabbergasted)
Schwartz...?

Steele slaps a hand over his mouth, digs a KNIFE into his gut and rips.

Guard two turns. He's about to shout out when Rock reaches over the top of his helmet and jerks it back. The helmet strap catches the guard's chin. As his mouth snaps shut, Rock jams a knee in his lower back and breaks his neck.

As guard one dies, Steele lowers him to the ground. Cohen can't help but smile.

COHEN

His first Negro Nazi, Sarge.
You broadened his horizons.

As they stow the dead guards under one of the tanks...

CUT TO:

COLONEL HEYDRICH ..

At the field table with his radio operator. As another boulder explodes, the choleric colonel removes the headset to rub his throbbing temples. As he looks up, he see two paratroopers leading the American prisoners through camp.

Heydrich strides forward.

HEYDRICH

(German; subtitled)
Where are you taking these
prisoners!

As Rock turns, Heydrich notes his rank.

HEYDRICH

(German; subtitled)
Sergeant.

ROCK

(German; subtitled)
We are going to shoot them,
Colonel.

HEYDRICH

(German; subtitled)
My men should have already done
so.

There are soldiers everywhere. No chance to shoot their way out of this one. Time for brainpower, not firepower.

ROCK

(German; subtitled)
I apologize, sir. My men were
mauled up on the ridge. I
bribed your sergeant a pack of
cigarettes to let us kill them.
Retribution, sir.

HEYDRICH

(German; subtitled)
Your name, sergeant?

ROCK
 (German; subtitled)
 It's Von Rocklin, sir.

Heydrich studies Rock a long, tense moment. Finally:

HEYDRICH
 (German; subtitled)
 A pack of cigarettes, eh? Next
 time come to me. I would've let
 you kill them for free. Hmm?

ROCK
 Ja voll, herr colonel.

Heydrich slaps him on the shoulder.

HEYDRICH
 (German; subtitled)
 A good soldier. Take them out
 beyond those trees.

Rock nods. As Heydrich turns back to the field table and
 radio, Rock starts to lead Easy Co. away.

Heydrich considers the radio which reminds him of
 something. He suddenly turns back.

HEYDRICH
 (German; subtitled)
 Sergeant!

Rock freezes, his finger on the trigger of his machine-gun.

HEYDRICH
 (German; subtitled)
 We have to report your status.
 What radio channel were you
 operating on?

After a beat:

ROCK
 (German; subtitled)
 I don't know, sir.

Not exactly the right answer.

HEYDRICH
 (German; subtitled)
You don't know?

ROCK
 (German; subtitled)
 Commando unit, sir. Channel
 identities are only known to the
 operators in case of capture.

HEYDRICH
 Yes, of course. Carry on,
 sergeant.

Heydrich turns away. As Rock and the guys continue,
 Teaberry whispers to Rock...

TEABERRY
 What was all that about?

ROCK
 Wanted to know if your sister
 screwed on the first date. I
 said only for officers... Sir.

BEYOND THE TREES

Rock and Steele fire their machine-guns into the air. As
 Cohen and 4-Eyes "SCREAM..."

COLONEL HEYDRICH

A grim, satisfied smile at the sound. As a PARATROOP MAJOR
 passes by...

HEYDRICH
 Major! I just spoke with your
 Sergeant Von Rocklin.

PARATROOP MAJOR
 (confused)
 Von Rocklin? Who is Von Rocklin?

The look on Heydrich's face says it all.

EXT. SLOPE - DAWN

As Rock, Steele and Easy Company scramble their way along.

ROCK
 Sun'll be up in a few minutes.
 We gotta move.

Sudden SHOUTS from the German position below. FLARES begin
 to light the slope behind them.

STEELE

Sun's up.

They move double time.

GRENADIERS & PARATROOPERS

In a slower, scattered pursuit.

EXT. RIDGE - DAWN

As Easy Company reaches the top, near their previously abandoned positions, they can hear the pursuit.

RETREAD

Figures. We're unarmed sitting ducks. Out of the frying pan -- .

ROCK

(looming)

For once in this war, Retread, shut your big mouth.

Retread shuts it.

ROCK

Get your ponchos out. I got to get the Wildman's tags.

As Rock moves off, the men exchange a confused look...

STEELE

You heard the man. Ponchos.

TEABERRY

What are we supposed to do with them?

STEELE

(shrugs)

Beats the hell out of me.

WILDMAN

Where we last left him. As Rock reaches around his neck for his tags, Wildman's eyes open up. It's the first thing this whole war to scare Rock.

WILDMAN

Hey, Rock...

ROCK
You're alive.

As the Easies step up, panchos in hand...

WILDMAN
A red-headed angel was over me,
Sarge. Least that's what I
thought. But the guy is yelling,
'Come on, asshole, hang on.
Who's gonna fuck your girlfriend
'if you die, shithead?' And I
think, 'An angel ain't supposed
to say "asshole" or "fuck".'

KLUZEWSKI
Or "shithead." They can't say
that either.

WILDMAN
Guy was a goddamn medic. He
pumped my arm full of blood and
next thing I know he's gone.

Rock looks from Wildman to a set of fresh footprints in the
otherwise untouched snow. They lead off down the pass.

The mystery is forgotten as the sound of pursuit
approaches. Rock looks to his men.

ROCK
You guys play in the snow when
you were kids?

GERMAN SOLDIERS

As they advance, Rock and Steele suddenly crest the ridge,
open fire with the sub machine-guns.

Four are shot. The rest throw themselves flat. Rock and
Steele disappear as the Germans return fire. The Germans
lob several hand grenades after them. A beat before
several explosions. As the krauts advance...

RIDGE

The soldiers crest it just in time to see Rock and Steele
'SLEDDING' down the slope on their panchos. The rest of
Easy are already far down. The soldiers fire after them,
but it's no use.

ROCK & STEELE

Hang on to their panchos, moving upwards of 40 mph. As they leave the Germans far behind...

CUT TO:

EXT. BELGIAN VILLAGE - DAWN

At the edge of town, Weary and Longjohn are using a team of OXEN to pull a HALF-TRACK with a missing tread into place on a hastily constructed ROAD BLOCK. As the half-track scrapes across the pavement...

General Cook steps up, watches them a beat, then clears his throat to get their attention.

COOK

Sign and countersign, soldier.
You have to challenge everyone.

LONGJOHN GI

Right, sir... Spit it out, general.

COOK

Red Grange.

LONGJOHN GI

Number seventy-seven.

They watch as Cook steps around the roadblock and starts down the road.

WEARY GI

Where the hell is he going?

LONGJOHN GI

Berlin. He's going to ask Adolph Hitler to the prom.

The two GIs hear a sound. They turn to see Pritchard looming behind them. They snap to.

WEARY GI

Uh, sorry, sir. We, uh, didn't see you.

PRITCHARD

At ease, men.

(re: general)

Let's just hope we don't have to go to Berlin with him.

CUT TO:

THE FINAL BOULDER

EXPLODES! The pieces have barely fallen to the ground before the remaining fifteen Tiger tanks roll forward.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Back down in the flats. Easy Company on the march. 4-Eyes and Retread hand Wildman off to Rock and Steele who've changed back into their fatigues. Teaberry stops short, points ahead.

TEABERRY

Look at that.

AN OLD BARN

Painted on the side in huge letters:

FUCK HITLER!

As they consider the implications...

EXT. HOTEL - BASTOGNE - DAY

Military police guard the entrance.

INSERT: Divisional HQ: Bastogne, Belgium. Christmas Day.

From the outskirts of town, we hear the thud of artillery and the cracking of small arms fire.

INT. HOTEL - BASTOGNE - DAY

Exiting a staff meeting, his broken arm in a sling, Major Walters (Rock's backer at St. Vith) is intercepted by a communications CAPTAIN.

CAPTAIN

Major Walters, I know you're busy, sir, but --

WALTERS

What is it, captain?

CAPTAIN

We got a frantic radio operator on the horn, sir. Six miles behind enemy lines east of here. Wants an artillery barrage. Locked on position and ready to fire upon request.

WALTERS

Did you tell him we have our hands full here?

CAPTAIN

Yes, sir. He says it's ordered by a general, sir.

WALTERS

A general? Behind enemy lines?

CAPTAIN

Yes, sir.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Easy Company moves along. Cohen and Teaberry now carry Wildman. They're passing a spot along the road, where an action took place (at least a few days ago judging by the snow cover). A COLUMN of blasted US VEHICLES including several truck and two SHERMAN TANKS.

COHEN

(looks skyward)

Must've got hit by the Luftwaffe.

Kluzewski climbs into the back of one of the trucks. The others wait till he reappears, a sheaf of PAPERS in hand.

KLUZEWSKI

It's fulla '201' forms!

They groan at the irony till Kluzewski, grinning, hefts a wooden box.

KLUZEWSKI

And a box of ammo.

He hands it down to Retread who pops the lid, starts passing out M-1 cartridges.

Everyone wheels at a grinding sound. The gun on one of the disabled Shermans slowly turns.

ROCK

It's being hand cranked.

It stops. We can hear muffled cursing from within. Easy steps over. Steele clangs the side of the tank with the butt of his gun.

STEELE

Come out, come out, whoever you are!

Dead silence for several moments, then...

VOICE
(inside tank)
Number seventy-seven!

The Easys all look at each other a beat before:

ROCK
Red Grange!

The tank's hatch is thrown back and General Cook emerges, three stars across the front of his helmet.

COOK
You boys Easy? You boys my tank fighters?

TEABERRY
That's us, sir.

Cook salutes them. They salute back.

COOK
Brave bastards. Heroes! That's what you are. Two divisions of you men and I'd have Hitler's balls in my hands right now!

WILDMAN
Helluva war souvenir, sir.

Cook looks over at Wildman slung in the poncho, winks.

COOK
I'll take one; you got the other.

ROCK
If he's got that many, sir.

They all share a laugh. The first in a long time.

TEABERRY
Just out of curiosity, general, what are you doing here?

COOK
Been talking to you boys on the radio. Putting together a roadblock a mile or so down the road. Little Christmas present for your Tigers. Been scouting for anything worth bringing to the party. This Sherman doesn't seem damaged, but it won't start.

STEELE

Baker Company, general. Motor pool. Mind if I take a look?

COOK

Be my guest, sergeant.

Steele climbs onto the back of the Sherman, starts to pull off the cowling covering the engine...

COOK

Where are you boys headed?

TEABERRY

Trying to get to Bastogne, sir.

COOK

Bastogne's surrounded. I expect that's where your Tiger's are going. Help break through.

ROCK

Then I guess we better stop them.

As Retread rolls his eyes, Cook studies Rock a beat.

COOK

Where are you from, son?

ROCK

Akron, sir.

STEELE

(looking up)

It's in Ohio.

CUT TO:

EXT. KING TIGERS - DAY

Roaring down the road with their grenadiers and paratroopers aboard. Heydrich stands in the turret of the third tank, his headset on.

HEYDRICH

No, herr General, I am not making excuses. I will be in Bastogne in an hour. Heil Hitler!

Heydrich double-takes as he passes the old barn with its: FUCK HITLER! Distracted a beat, then...

EXT. ROADBLOCK - BELGIAN VILLAGE - DAY

The half-track with its machine guns and a HOWITZER with one wheel anchor either end of a mass of debris. Colonel Pritchard, the Radio Operator, Weary and Longjohn stare apprehensively down the road at an approaching rumble.

Pritchard looks over his men. If there ever was a time for inspirational words, it's now.

PRITCHARD

Look, when I give the command,
run, run for all you're worth.
It's every man for himself.

A tank crests the rise. Everyone's ready to bolt.

WEARY GI

Colonel, that's a Sherman.

Indeed, Steele must've gotten it started. Easy Company rides on top. As Pritchard see General Cook standing in the turret...

PRITCHARD

Oh shit...

INT. HOTEL HQ - BASTOGNE - DAY

Walters steps over to the communications captain who works one of a bank of radios and field telephones.

CAPTAIN

I just got confirmation, sir.
Well, sort of...

WALTERS

Sort of?

CAPTAIN

There is a general missing
behind the line, but I lost
contact before I got his name.

EXT. ROADBLOCK - BELGIAN VILLAGE - DAY

On the Sherman, Steele talks to Cook on the ground.

STEELE

Sir, I'd love to stick her in
the roadblock, but Tigers? My
shells'll bounce right off the

front of 'em. Better I take an angle. Maybe over there.

Steele points off by some buildings to the left. Cook considers a moment, then nods.

COOK

See it done, Sergeant.

Steele smiles, ducks back inside. As the tank rumbles away, Cook turns to the Radio Operator.

COOK

Been in touch with HQ?

RADIO OPERATOR

Briefly, sir.

COOK

You request artillery? Give 'em the coordinates?

RADIO OPERATOR

Yes, sir, but... I doubt if... if it'll be here, sir.

COOK

It'll be here. Now get your radio out of the cellar and up on the roadblock.

As the Operator heads off...

PRITCHARD, ROCK & TEABERRY

Over by the roadblock. Pritchard's pulled them aside.

PRITCHARD

Sergeant, we've had differences in the past, but right now, we need to stick together.

ROCK

How do you mean, sir?

Pritchard glances off at Cook then leans in to Rock and Teaberry. his voice low, conspiratorial.

PRITCHARD

You haven't seen what I have. General Cook is not fit to command. It's our duty to relieve him off that command.

TEABERRY
And then what, sir?

PRITCHARD
Surrender. There's no other
choice.

Rock and Teaberry exchange a look, then...

TEABERRY
Sir, I think I speak for Sergeant
Rock when I say, we'll take our
chances with the general.

Pritchard looks to Rock for corroboration. Rock echos the
words Pritchard once used about him.

ROCK
Sorry, colonel.
(shrugs)
Brave men are usually not bright
men.

COOK

Turns at the distant, but approaching rumble.

COOK
Here they come, boys.

EXT. ROADBLOCK - MINUTES LATER - DAY

Weary and Longjohn man the half-tracks machine guns.
Pritchard and Cook are on the howitzer. The Radio Operator
operates the radio. Kluzewski, Marlboro, Rock and Teaberry
are behind the barricade: Kluzewski on the BAR, Marlboro
with an M-1, Rock considers a BAZOOKA and three missiles.

ROCK
(to Teaberry)
Can you load, lieutenant?

TEABERRY
I'm not sure.

ROCK
I'll talk you through it.

The rumbling nears, but no Tigers in sight yet.

COOK
(to Operator)
Get me regimental!

INT. SHERMAN TANK - DAY

Not exactly spacious. 4-Eyes HUMS to himself. Cohen cracks his knuckles. Retread checks the breech of the machine gun. Steele's in the driver's seat.

STEELE

4-Eyes, you know "Swing Low?"

4-EYES

I think so. Sure.

STEELE

You mind? Lightning used to sing it for me.

As 4-Eyes starts to sing...

EXT. ROADBLOCK - DAY

Rock lights his last cigar, considers the note his father wrote him. Shoving it into his pocket, he looks up at the sky. Teaberry follows his gaze.

TEABERRY

It's clearing.

ROCK

Stars'll be out tonight.

The Radio Operator looks to Cook. He's got: .

RADIO OPERATOR

(re: radio)

Regimental, sir.

The first Tiger crests the ridge.

COOKS

Commence artillery barrage!

As the Radio Operator relays the message.

The second Tiger crests the ridge.

The men look up, wait for the sound of incoming. Nothing but the sound of tanks.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

In the turret, Heydrich orders the column to stop. He scans ahead with his binoculars.

ROADBLOCK - HEYDRICH'S POV

Nothing much to worry about here.

HEYDRICH

Lowers the binoculars, speaks into his headset.

HEYDRICH

Forward! Fire at close range!

As the column rolls, Heydrich disappears into his tank.

EXT. ROADBLOCK - DAY

Fifteen tanks in view. Cook to the Operator:

COOK

Where's my artillery?!

OPERATOR

I've lost HQ, sir.

He pulls off his headset and grabs an M-1. Pritchard looks across to Teaberry, shakes his head: "I told you so."

LEAD TIGER

Getting close. It's gun fires!

ROADBLOCK

The shell screams just overhead. It EXPLODES the building behind them.

Manning the Howitzer, BOOM!, Cook flings a shell back.

LEAD TIGER

The shell bursts off the front of it. Unaffected, the Tiger rolls forward. It's gun lowers in elevation ever so slightly and... Miracle from above...

KA-BLOOM! A shell explodes right in front of the Tiger, twisting its barrel hard to the left.

ROAD

KA-BLOOOM! The artillery barrage has started. Shells scream through the air, rain down around the tanks. A second Tiger is hit! A third! A fourth!

ROADBLOCK

The men watch, grin, open fire on the paratroopers and grenadiers.

ROAD

Caught in the open the grenadiers and paratroopers are being mauled. The column is in disorder. Tanks breaks to the left and right as two more are destroyed.

STEELE - INSIDE SHERMAN

Sighting.

STEELE

That's it. That's it. Show me your ass. I want some get back.

EXT. SHERMAN TANK

It fires!

TIGER TANK

Hit in the rear, it explodes!

ROAD

The artillery barrage takes out two more.

SHERMAN

Belches fire again.

THE 10TH TIGER

Explodes!

ROAD

One last shell falls and suddenly it's very quiet.

ROADBLOCK

The men exchange looks. The barrage is over.

COOK

Suppose that's all Bastogne could
spare, boys! Up to us now!

HEYDRICH - INSIDE TIGER

Screaming into the radio.

HEYDRICH

Forward! Forward!

As he bears for the roadblock...

EXT. ROADBLOCK - DAY

Heydrich's tank bears down on them. It's followed by the remaining four. Five Tigers remain in total.

Rock grabs the bazooka, the three missiles.

ROCK

Fall back!

(to Cook)

Just a suggestion, sir!

COOK

Listen to the man!

As the roadblock is abandoned, Pritchard is frozen to the spot. He stares at the approaching tank in disbelief. And as Heydrich's Tiger fires...

KABLOOM! The roadblock is obliterated. All that's left of Pritchard is a smoking BOOT which drops back to the ground.

Followed by two others, the tank continues up and over the debris, chasing the men retreating to the streets beyond. The machine gun fires; the Radio Operator is hit. As he sprawls dead.

EXT. SHERMAN TANK - DAY

The remaining two Tigers head for the Sherman, no ass ends in sight. A shell EXPLODES into the building behind it. As bricks bounce off the top of it.

STEELE - INSIDE SHERMAN

Checking out the controls.

STEELE

Where's reverse in this piece of junk?

COHEN

Don't know, Sarge, but it's our sincere hope that you find it.

Steele finds it.

EXT. SHERMAN TANK - DAY

CRASH! As the tank back up through the building...

EXT. VILLAGE STREET ONE - DAY

A TIGER prowls for GIs. Marlboro dashes across the street ahead. The Tiger's machine gun opens up as it pursues.

It passes a doorway in which Rock kneels, the bazooka on his shoulder. He aims. Teaberry drops in the missile. As it streaks away...

And EXPLODES against the Tiger's ammo rack.

Rock and Teaberry duck down. The Tiger explodes so hard, it nearly goes over. One down, four to go.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET TWO - DAY

As the Sherman prowls, a Tiger turns a corner, starts in behind it. The Tiger's big gun traverses toward the Sherman.

RETREAD'S VOICE

Hey, hey, we got company.

The Sherman turns down a side street just as the Tiger FIRES! Misses...

SIDE STREET

The Sherman finds itself behind another Tiger ahead. The Tiger's turret starts to turn, but its gun barrel slams into a building on the narrow side street.

INT. SHERMAN - DAY

As Steele sights and smiles.

STEELE

Like fish in a barrel.

EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY

BOOM! The Tiger goes up in flames. WHOOPS from inside the Sherman are shortlived. Behind them, the first Tiger turns down the side street. It's bigger gun fires!

The shell slams the Sherman's left track, obliterating it.

INT. SHERMAN - DAY

Full of smoke and shouting.

STEELE

Everybody out! Before they reload!

EXT. SHERMAN - DAY

The hatch pops. Retread and 4-Eyes scramble out, see the Tiger bearing down.

Retread and 4-Eyes jump down from the front of the Sherman. Steele climbs out the hatch. As he looks back down at Cohen who's still inside.

STEELE

Come on, kid.

Steele reaches down. As Cohen reaches up for his hand...

...the Tiger fires!

Steele is thrown back to the pavement as the Sherman goes up. But Cohen's not getting out of there.

4-Eyes and Retread haul the dazed Steele off the street and past the Tiger they killed.

INT. TIGER TANK - DAY

Heydrich considers the burning Sherman a beat, then...

HEYDRICH

Reverse!

As the Tiger starts to back up out of the side street...

EXT. VILLAGE STREET THREE - DAY

Kluzewski, Cook, Weary and Longjohn, in a bakery storefront, shoot it out with a group of paratroopers. Kluzewski's on the BAR.

Suddenly, a German potato masher bounces in. A horribly eternal instant passes as the men register it. Then...

General Cook dives on it.

Everyone else ducks. A beat. Another. Kluzewski looks over. Cook looks up, surprised not to be exploded yet. He rolls over to reveal the grenade just lying there.

COOK

(laughing)

A dud.

Cook picks it up. As he stands, a shot rings out. Hit square in the back, Cook goes back down.

WEARY

General!

Weary goes to his side as Kluzewski and Longjohn return furious fire.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

Two grenadiers ride atop a prowling Tiger. One of them spots Marlboro standing behind a fountain. As he opens his mouth to shout, Marlboro puts a bullet through it.

As the second grenadier looks back, Marlboro gets him, too.

The Tiger stops. As its turret turns, Marlboro calmly just lowers his gun and smiles.

Behind the Tiger, Rock aims while Teaberry loads and the missile streaks. SLAAAMM! Three Tigers down, two to go.

But as Marlboro smiles as Rock, machine gun fire rips into the silent man as the fourth Tiger enters the square.

Rock and Teaberry position themselves, fire their third and final missile. WHAAMM! Direct hit, but no good. The Tiger keeps coming.

It fires! The fountain explodes. Teaberry and Rock duck back under the machine gun fire.

Marlboro writhes on the ground as bullets pockmark around him.

TEABERRY

Dashes out. Under heavy fire, he grabs Marlboro by the collar, starts to drag him off the street.

ROCK

Heads for the tank.

TEABERRY

Hit in the leg, he keeps dragging Marlboro.

ROCK

As he nears the tank, its 88 fires. BOOOM! Rock is knocked back off his feet as the shell screams past and there's a shttering EXPLOSION behind him.

Rock chokes as a black blanket of smoke and shell exhaust covers him. As the Tiger rolls right over him, he pulls his last grenade.

The Tiger clears Rock and he climbs up the backside, pulls the pin on the grenade.

TEABERRY & MARLBORO

Around a corner, which is being obliterated by machine gun fire.

ROCK

Pounding on the Tiger's hatch.

ROCK

(German; subtitled)

Open up! Open up! I have a message from the Colonel.

The hatch opens. As a GRENADIER looks out...

ROCK
 (German; subtitled)
 He said keep a place warm in
 Hell for him!

Rock drops the grenade down the hatch, slams it shut on the grenadier's head. As Rock dives aside, we hear the muffled explosion, screams and dying groans from within.

TEABERRY & MARLBORO

As Teaberry tries to stop Marlboro from bleeding. Marlboro winces, but doesn't cry out as Teaberry presses a field dressing against one of the wounds.

TEABERRY
 Don't you ever say anything?

MARLBORO
 To be honest, lieutenant. I
 ain't seen nothing over here
 worth talking about.

Teaberry smiles. As Marlboro smiles back, he dies.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET FOUR - DAY

Still supporting Steele, Retread and 4-Eyes exit an APARTMENT BUILDING in a hurry. It EXPLODES behind them. A moment later, Heydrich's Tiger is tearing up and over the rubble. The 88 fires again.

The shell screams past our trio, EXPLODES beyond them.

4-EYES
 (a litany)
 Swing low sweet chariot. Swing
 low sweet chariot.

RETREAD
 Let's hope it don't swing any
 lower!

INT. BAKERY STOREFRONT - DAY

Kluzewski and the Longjohn exchange a last few rounds with the paratroopers. Then, a cry goes up. The ones not dead begin retreating, then fleeing down the street.

KLUZEWSKI
 They're running.

Cook blinks up from where Weary tends to him.

COOK
We beat 'em. I knew you boys
could do it.

As Longjohn steps over to help with the general, Kluzewski, carrying the BAR, cautiously steps out to the street.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

Retread, 4-Eyes haul Steele around the corner almost run smack dab into Sgt. Rock.

RETREAD
Tank!

STEELE
(bleary)
Knew it had to be somethin'...

Rock grabs a hold of Steele, helps pull him off the square.

COVERED POSITION

Rock, Steele, Retread and 4-Eyes join Teaberry just before Heydrich's Tiger enters the square. 4-Eyes looks over, spots Marlboro. Rock stares down, a fury building.

4-EYES
Aww hell...

RETREAD
Cohen didn't make it either,
Sarge.

ROCK
(grim)
Kluzewski?

RETREAD
(shrugs)
Don't know, sir...

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

Heydrich's tank pulls up short. It's turret turns as it fires in an indiscriminate rage. KA-BLOOM! KA-BLOOM! The square is being reduced to a dump heap.

INT. TIGER TANK - DAY

Boiling over, Heydrich screams one word.

HEYDRICH
Fire! Fire!

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

As Rock slips off Marlboro's tags, a shell hits near our boys. Their position is exposed.

INT. TIGER TANK - DAY

Heydrich spots them.

HEYDRICH
To the left! Forward!

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

The Tiger surges forward, then jerks to a stop. It sputters, then the engine stalls and cuts out. Silence.

INT. TIGER TANK - DAY

Heydrich is apoplectic.

HEYDRICH
What is it?!

TANK COMMANDER
Herr colonel, we're out of gasoline.

Heydrich's eyes say it all.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

The tank just sits there. Useless. And then Rock strides out, Thompson gun in one hand, all the Easy Company DOGTAGS he's been carrying in the other. Bullets ping as Rock opens fire, all the time walking.

The hatch opens. A GRENADIER fires back. Rock nails him and he slumps over dead...

Rock climbs onto the tank. Hauling the grenadier aside, he fires the Thompson down into the tank till he's out of ammo.

Still holding the dogtags, Rock climbs down inside.

INT. TIGER TANK - DAY

Splattered in blood: Crew dead. Tank commander dead. Wounded; Heydrich looks up as Rock descends on him.

Heydrich raises a Luger, fires. Hit in the shoulder, Rock swipes the Luger aside.

Crazed, Rock wraps the dogtag chains around Heydrich's throat and strangles him. Heydrich's struggles last about as long as expected. As he dies...

EXT. STEELE, TEABERRY, RETREAD & 4-EYES

Watching. Waiting. Retread looks over to 4-Eyes.

RETREAD

I take it all back. Machines don't win wars. Men do.

As Rock reemerges from the Tiger...

STEELE

Men shit. It's crazy muther-fuckers win wars. That's who.

As they all look back at Rock...

EXT. VILLAGE STREET ONE - DAY

The BAR at the ready, Kluzewski walks past one of the burning tanks, a few dead grenadiers. He can't find anyone to fight. It's quiet.

Finally, Kluzewski stops looks around...

KLUZEWSKI

Guess we won the war.

Leaning the BAR against his hip, Kluzewski fishes out the snapshot of pregnant Angie. He holds it up, sighs.

CRACK! A bullet drills a perfect hole through the snapshot and into Kluzewski's chest.

Kluzewski registers a dying grenadier dropping his rifle and slumping back lifeless to the cobblestones. Then Kluzewski drops the snapshot, crumples in a heap.

INT. DELIVERY ROOM - CHICAGO HOSPITAL - EARLY MORNING

Angie Kluzewski on the table. In heavy labor. She screams in pain. A NURSE mops her brow. Head down, we can just make out the OBSTETRICIAN between her legs.

Ringing the room are an INSTRUCTOR and EIGHT fresh-faced MEDICAL INTERNS. As another contraction builds...

ANGIE

Oh sonofabitch!

INSTRUCTOR

As you can see, gentlemen,
delivery can be a very intense
experience.

Angie screams out again. Then, as she turns her head...

ANGIE

Klu?

Kluzewski is here. Unshaven, exhausted, helmeted. A big bloody bullet wound in the chest. He moves through the interns, who take absolutely no notice of him.

He reaches Angie, wipes a sweaty strand of hair from her forehead.

KLUZEWSKI

I missed you so much, Honey.

ANGIE

What are you doing here, baby?
You're supposed to be in France.

The Nurse leans in, concerned.

NURSE

Who are you talking to, Mrs.
Kluzewski?

Kluzewski leans over the Nurse's shoulder.

KLUZEWSKI

Belgium actually. We got into a
helluva scrape, Ang.

ANGIE

Klu, you're shot.

KLUZEWSKI

(looking down)
Yeah... How 'bout that?

Suddenly, the Obstetrician looks up, flaming red hair sticking out from under his cap. It's O'Hara!

O'HARA
You shouldn't be here, you dumb
Pollock! You're here cause
you're dying!

ANGIE
Is that true, baby?

INSTRUCTOR
(motioning interns)
If you squeeze in, you can see
the top of the baby's head.

Spit flies from O'Hara's mouth as he snarls.

O'HARA
Come on, stupid! Who's gonna
teach your boy how to catch a
ball, you retard?! Who's gonna
let him back the car outta the
garage?! Get back to Belgium,
you dumb fuck!

As Kluzewski blinks at him...

INTERCUT WITH COBBLESTONES

Kluzewski lays there dying. O'Hara stanches the wound with cotton wadding, starts to feed a bottle of plasma.

O'HARA
Come back to me, mutherfucker!

DELIVERY ROOM

O'HARA
Get the fuck outta here!

ANGIE
(crying)
Go, Klu.

Confused, Kluzewski starts to drift back. MOVE IN on him as we hear a BABY'S CRY. As Kluzewski blinks a look...

NEW ANGLE. Kluzewski's gone. So's O'Hara. As the black-haired obstetrician holds up a NEWBORN...

OBSTETRICIAN
It's a boy.

EXT. STREET ONE - DAY

Rock looms over Kluzewski who opens his eyes, back in the land of the living.

KLUZEWSKI

It's a boy. Angie had a boy.

Rock notes the expert bandaging, turns to see...

Far down the street trudges O'Hara, his body draped with plasma bottles. Headed off for wherever the action is. As he nears the BURNING TIGER, he pauses and turns.

Seeing Rock watching after him, his face twists into a grin. Then he raises his arm, salutes.

Rock plucks the cigar butt from his mouth, salutes back.

Turning, O'Hara disappears, lost somewhere in the black smoke pouring off the burning Tiger.

INT. BAKERY STOREFRONT - DAY

Teaberry looks in on Weary and Longjohn. Exhausted, they just sit there with Cook whose body they've covered.

TEABERRY

(re: body)

General Cook?

WEARY GI

A cook, sir. But not a general.

LONGJOHN GI

His name was Cummings.

WEARY GI

He was a cook with the Third Infantry.

TEABERRY

You mean, like with a spatula?

LONGJOHN GI

(nods)

He was conscious for a while after he got it.

WEARY GI

He told us everything.

LONGJOHN GI

Gave me my pants back.

TEABERRY
Your pants...?

WEARY GI
They were on their way up here to
give us a 'hot.' Him and a bunch
of cooks in a four by four...

LONGJOHN GI
Boom! German shell...

WEARY GI
Killed his buddies...

LONGJOHN GI
And turned over this jeep
carrying a general.

WEARY GI
He took a helmet. The general's
helmet.

LONGJOHN GI
The part about his clothes being
soaked in gasoline was true.

Teaberry can barely keep up.

WEARY GI
He wanted us to win the war.

LONGJOHN GI
He said the, er, leadership
is... weak, sir.

Teaberry looks over at Cook/Cumming's body...

TEABERRY
Not his.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Rock, Steele and Teaberry. Retread and 4-Eyes ease Wildman
into a horse drawn hay wagon alongside Kluzewski. Longjohn
and Weary are here as well.

STEELE
(re: all)
Never seen such a bunch of
raggedy asses.

Rock looks to Teaberry.

ROCK

Well, lieutenant, we still got
us a German line to get through.

TEABERRY

We'll get close, pick a spot.
When the sun goes down, we'll
squeeze through.

ROCK

(a beat; grins)

Good idea, sir.

They exchange a long look of mutual respect. Then, as he
looks to his men, Rock's last line is the same as his first.

ROCK

Okay! Let's get to it, Easy!
This company works for a living.

And as they move out...

PULL BACK.

ROLL CREDITS.

FADE TO BLACK.