

THE LIBERATORS

Written by

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Inspired By True Events

"As fighting troops, the Negro must be rated as second-class material. This primarily due to his inferior intelligence and lack of mental and moral qualities."

- Colonel James A. Moss.

A BLACK SCREEN.....

Silent. Still. And in an instant --

TANK COMMANDER (O.S.)
Front right! FIRE!

KA-BOOM! Heavy artillery fractures our eardrums! AS WE SMASH
TO THE INSIDE OF:

AN AMERICAN M4 SHERMAN TANK

Fighting a LOSING battle!

TANK COMMANDER shouting frantic commands! Assistant driver
trembling -- SHELL SHOCK hitting him like a brick.

ASSISTANT DRIVER
Krauts are everywhere man! We're
all fucking dead!

THE LOADER, too scared to think, slams another shell in the
breech!

LOADER
CLEAR!

THE GUNNER goes to pull the trigger, but --

KA-BOOM! KA-BOOM! Anti-tank SHELLS rip through the steel!

SHINKKK! The assistant driver -- CUT IN HALF! Reduced to a
bloody hunk of meat! *The rest of the men...*

HOWLING; shrapnel lodged in lungs and throats. WORSE YET --

WHOOOOSH! A FIRE ignites in the engine!

THE ONLY MAN WHO HAS A CHANCE TO MAKE IT OUT --

THE GUNNER - choking down black smoke! Fighting to open the
ESCAPE HATCH! But it's STUCK!

Pulling harder and HARDER -- Seconds away from death now, he
gives it one last heave

IT OPENS! He wriggles his way:

OUTSIDE, TO THE BATTLEFIELD

Where GERMAN FORCES mangle American troops, eviscerating
tanks into scrap metal.

OUR GUNNER -- struggling; shifting his wide frame to fit through the small hatch! Flames NIPPING AT HIS HEELS!

He's not going to make it....BUT WAIT

A PRIVATE snatches him up by the shoulders! Pulls him all but AN INCH from safety when:

KA-BAAAMMM! The tank bursts into FLAMES! The thunderous explosion MATCHES TO --

INT. CAFE - SOMEWHERE IN FRANCE - NIGHT

-- KAA-DUNNNK! A hand smashing a HELMET into a table!

PATTON
Coloreds!?

By the way, that helmet - not your standard green M1 field gear type; this shit here has THREE SILVER STARS tacked right up front and belongs to:

GENERAL GEORGE PATTON -- War manifested into a man and currently, irate as all hell.

PATTON (CONT'D)
Nobody asked for color! I asked for tankers goddamit!

Patton paces. Fuming. Two subordinate officers: WILSON (30s) and JOHNSON (50s), absorb the verbal blows.

WILSON
I understand the situation isn't ideal sir but --

PATTON
Isn't ideal!? I've lost a third of my tankers and you're telling me the war department wants to replace them with Jigaboos! Men win wars Wilson. Not Jigaboos!

WILSON
Sir, the intent was never to use the coloreds in *actual* combat. That being said...They are the only available unit.

A beat.

JOHNSON
Horseshit.

WILSON

If you have reservations about my intel, you should step out and phone Ike yourself.

JOHNSON

You gettin' smart with me --

PATTON

-- At ease Major.

(To Wilson)

Elaborate.

WILSON

We have two options sir: Deploy the coloreds and proceed as planned to punch through the Siegfried Line and into Berlin. Or, stand down, and let Montgomery and the British take the lead.

Patton's teeth grind upon hearing the word British....

Johnson studies him -- worry coming over his face.

JOHNSON

Sir...They're niggers. Who ain't never seen a day of combat.

PATTON

American Niggers Johnson. And I'll whip them all the way to Berlin if it means getting to Hitler before Montgomery and his goddamn British!

PRE-LAP: TAP-TAP-TAP....

INT. ARMY TRANSPORT SHIP

CLOSE ON -- Spit-shined COMBAT BOOTS...

...Nervously TAP-TAP-TAPPING against the cold steel of an ARMY TRANSPORT SHIP.

PAN RIGHT TO SEE --

One-Two-Three more pairs of those shiny boots until...

What the fuck? A WHITE SOCK with a BRIGHT RED STIRRUP hooked underneath.

And yes...I'm talking a Nolan Ryan, Satchel Paige-type BASEBALL STIRRUP. Then -- ZHOOOOMP!

A hand slips sock and stirrup inside a boot; and this particular boot, belongs to the hero of our story:

CARTER "DOC" WILLIAMS (Black, 40's) Lieutenant. Tank Commander. And draped in Philadelphia swagger.

The four men to his left -- HIS CREW; but we're going to have to meet them later because....

...KAAAABOOOMMMM! The ship collides with the SANDY BEACH; grinding to a stop.

Carter and the other HUNDRED BLACK SOLDIERS lining the walls rise to their feet. A behemoth steel door GROANS downward....

Slivers of gray, hazy sunlight seep through, casting shadows across Carter's determined face...

Next to him is:

JOHNS (Black, 30s) Who acquired his broad shoulders from long hours of sharecropping on a North Carolina tobacco farm.

JOHNS
Say Doc...

CARTER
Mhmmmm?

Johns pulls out a brown brick of PLUG TOBACCO. Uses a pocket knife to slice off a piece...

JOHNS
Can't believe you actually wearin'
them stirrups.

CARTER
It's game day Johns.

Carter grabs the tobacco off the blade, tucks it between his lip...

CARTER (CONT'D)
I've never lost in the stirrups.

BOOOOM! The door SMASHES into the sand, transforming into a RAMP that leads to...

SUPER: LES PIEUX, FRANCE. 1944.

Bleak skies. Rolling hills of green.

The mass of soldiers begin to file off the boat...

Carter's crew inches forward. Their Adams apples heavy. Hands shaking. *Carter can SMELL their nerves...*

CARTER (CONT'D)
Everybody good?

Exhales. Gulps. Our Lieutenant knows it's time for reassuring wisdom...

CARTER (CONT'D)
A superior rating. A signal honor.
And eight hundred and seventy six
days of training. We're the best
goddamn unit this Army's got...and
the only reason we're here is
because a white one wasn't
available?
(beat)
Fuck that. And Fuck Hitler.

PRE-LAP: BA-DAUMP! BA-DUMP! BA-DUMP!

EXT. ROGERS COMMAND TENT - BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - AFTERNOON

A SPEED BAG is peppered back and forth in rhythm by:

ROGERS (40s, White) Captain of Bravo Company --

-- *BA-DAUMP! BA-DUMP! BA-DAUMP! BA-DUMP!* Until -- *BOOM!* He delivers a final right hand.

His chest heaving; The sweat doing little to wipe away the grime one absorbs after two years at war.

He slides a cigarette between his lips. A habit he practices about two packs a day.

PRE-LAP: The STRUMMING of a BANJO...

AND WE SMASH TO:

EXT. BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - DAY

A SCRAGGLY WHITE CORPORAL playing the instrument. Amongst him...

Tents, jeeps, AND FIFTY ADDITIONAL WHITE INFANTRY soldiers. One of them being:

BROWN (White, 30s) A drunk, bare-chested, good ole' boy from Alabama; currently lifting himself and a bottle of whiskey onto THE HOOD OF A JEEP.

The crowd begins to CLAP. Brown takes a long pull of rot-gut, wipes his mouth, and....

Sings his rendition of the Confederate Classic: "**OH! SUSANNA!**"

BROWN
*Weeeelllllll....I come from Alabama
 with my Banjo on my knee - I's
 goin' to Lousiana my true love for
 to see....*

The entire outpost explodes, reciting the lyrics with Brown.

Well, the entire outpost except for: **JIM** (White, 30s) A farm boy from Iowa with a wiry frame and glasses.

BROWN (CONT'D)
*...It rain'd all night the day I
 left, the wedder it was dry; The
 sun so hot I froze to def, Susanna,
 don't you cry!*

ROGERS

Appears on Jim's hip; massaging the wrinkles in his forehead, clearly....this song isn't his cup of tea.

Jim hands the Captain a box of cigarettes.

JIM
 Said you were out right?

ROGERS
 Yeah. Thanks.

Nearby -- A DRUNKEN SOLDIER and his posse; Loud. Obnoxious. And barreling right towards...

Jim and Rogers.

DRUNKEN SOLDIER & POSSE
Oh! Susanna, do not cry for me...

The soldier sees Rogers, yanks a canteen from his buddy --

DRUNKEN SOLDIER
 Give that here!
 (offering it to Rogers)
 Go on Cap!

Jim shoves the pest.

JIM

Fuck off Jerry. You know he don't drink.

DRUNKEN SOLDIER

Mighta changed his mind -- ain't that right Cap!?

ROGERS

You heard him, Corporal. Fuck off.

The drunken soldier downs the canteen. Grabs his posse, and they all fuck off in song...

DRUNKEN SOLDIER & POSSE

I come from Alabama...

WE SNAP TO -- BROWN, who picks up the tune right in stride...

BROWN

*...wid my Banjo on my knee! The
lectric fluid magnified and -*

- Beers raise. Vocal chords prep. And EVERYBODY NOW --

BROWN (CONT'D)

-- kill'd five hundred Niggerrrrrr!

But Brown's world spins, knees wobbling, boots losing traction at the edge of THE JEEPS HOOD and...

The alcohol CHOPS him down like a tree!

KER-PLOP! Brown BELLIFYLOPS into the mud below! Out cold.

The outpost goes SILENT...

ROGERS AND JIM

Rogers finishes off his beer. Paces towards Brown...

ROGERS

Come on.

JIM

(re: Brown)

Again? Shit's not our problem.

ROGERS

I'm the Captain Jim, everything's my problem.

(then)

I can't lift him by myself.

Jim reluctantly follows....

Rogers grabs the whiskey bottle by Brown's side, looks to a pudgy-private we'll call **HUBERT**.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
You know another song?

Hubert nods. Rogers tosses him the whiskey, giving him the go ahead.

A beat. Then...

The banjo comes back to life. Hubert's on the hood of the Jeep, singing the revolutionary war classic, "THE LIBERTY SONG" and the party is back in full swing.

Meanwhile...

Rogers and Jim -- LIFT BROWN from the mud.

PRE-LAP: THAAAAA-DUMPPPPP --

INT. ROGERS COMMAND TENT - CONTINUOUS

-- Rogers and Jim DROP Brown onto a cot.

Jim's beat, catching his breath as Brown SNORES away snug as a bug.

ROGERS
Hey...

Rogers tosses Jim a bucket.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
In case he doesn't make it outside again.

Jim bends to put the bucket down just as --

Brown body rolls like a crocodile and **THUMP!** His arm CRASHES into Jim's ear!

Rogers, attention elsewhere...

ROGERS (CONT'D)
....You hear that?

Jim -- angrily SHOVING Brown back on his side.

BROWN
Hear what?

SMASH TO:

EXT. BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - CONTINUOUS

HUBERT

Eyes as wide as his pudgy face...

Equally as BAFFLED as every other white man around him.

Queue: "BLACK SKINHEAD" by Kanye West AS WE REVEAL --

CARTER

Making a statement entrance as he stands fifteen feet tall atop his steel chariot:

THE M4 SHERMAN TANK.

Carter's vehicle leads a column of FIVE ADDITIONAL TANKS through the center of the outpost...

ROGERS

Trudges toward Carter with Jim in tow.

JIM
What in the --

ROGERS
-- Stay here.

Jim does what he's told. Rogers picks up the pace.

CARTER'S TANK

CREAKKKKKK! JOHNS, the driver of our tank, brings 60,000 pounds of steel grinding to a halt along with Kanye's "BLACK SKINHEAD."

JOHNS

FSWHSIPP! Flips open his pocket knife, cuts off a fresh piece of tobacco. Hands it off to --

CARTER

Who tucks the fat wad between his lip as gallantly descends to the ground....

Face to face with Rogers now. Taking note of the Captain insignia rank on his helmet.

CARTER
Captain Rogers, Bravo Company?

ROGERS
Yeah.
(re: tanks)
What the hell is this?

CARTER
(re: tanks)
3rd platoon, 761st.
(then)
I'm Lieutenant Carter, but most the boys in my unit call me Doc.

ROGERS
Your unit?

CARTER
And your new spearhead.
(then)
My orders are escort your Company to the Siegfried Line.

ROGERS
I'm afraid you got bad intel Lieutenant. I already got a spearhead. 750th sent two armored platoons our way, should be here no later than tomorrow.

CARTER
There is no more 750th. Ran into a Wehrmacht outfit 60 miles east of here.

The comment throws Rogers for a loop...

ROGERS
That hasn't been confirmed by higher on my end.

A beat. Carter chuckles.

CARTER
This is a legally segregated Army Captain.
(then)
(MORE)

CARTER (CONT'D)
 So, way I see it...either twenty-five brothers stole five Shermans, managed to sneak them on a transport, sail three thousand four hundred miles without a single white man raising an eyebrow or...

...Carter references his tankers...

CARTER (CONT'D)
 ...Higher's confirmation is right in front of you.

Rogers swallows the truth. Steps up into Carter's grill.

ROGERS
 Get your platoon out the middle of my fucking outpost.

Carter smiles. Spits brown juice from his lip.

CARTER
 I'll see you at 0:800.

Carter turns to the tank....*"BLACK SKINHEAD" starts to boom again...*

Each beat THUMPING, BUILDING, in rhythm with his boots as he climbs the steel. Waiting for Carter on top of the tank is...

SMITH (*Black, 20s*) A cocky harlemite with herculean muscles and the words BROWN BOMBER painted on his helmet.

Smith's draped across the .50 Cal, scanning the onslaught of scrutinizing eyeballs...

SMITH
 (re: white soldiers)
 Five dollars says one of these bedsheets tries to kill me before a Kraut...

....The bass. The drums. The Yeezy -- all peaking as Carter settles into the commander's hatch.

CARTER
 I'll take that bet.

KER-CHUNK! Johns puts her in gear. Hits the gas and --

-- *BA-DUP-BOOM! Oh. Shit.*

The Sherman STALLS! The Yeezy CUTS OUT! And...

SMOKE plumes upward....right in Carter's face.

ROGERS

Staring at Carter...

Who's got the last laugh now, motherfucker?

SMASH TO:

LATCHES

CLINK! CLINK! -- Clapping onto the back of CARTER'S TANK.

VROOOOM! Another Sherman TOWS CARTER'S from the middle of the outpost.

PRE-LAP: The clanging of tools...

EXT. BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - TANK COLUMN - NIGHT

HAMPTON (Black, 20s) Detroit native and fix-it specialist, currently under the tank, working to repair the engine.

Standing over a pile of tools behind him:

QUINCY (Black, 30s) Mississippi made and as simple as they come. He's struggling (and I mean struggling) to read Hampton A LETTER.

QUINCY
(sounding each word out)
PS -- Ma-ke sure you br-in dat
black be-hind of yo-urs back James,
be-ca-u-se....

...Quincy stalls at the next word. Mumbling to himself; trying to sound it out.

HAMPTON
Because what?

Quincy clocks CARTER -- walking towards them, wrench in hand.

QUINCY
Say Doc, how I say this here...

CARTER
By sounding it out like I taught
you.

QUINCY
I's tried but Isa big one.

Carter drops the wrench to Hampton underneath the tank.

CARTER
(to Hampton)
How's it going?

HAMPTON
Be better if I knew what the end of
wife's letter said....

Carter rolls his eyes...

Takes the letter from Quincy -- who directs him where he left off.

CARTER
PS -- Make sure you bring that
black behind of yours back James,
because I'm...Pregnant. And I ain't
chasin' no heathen 'round this
house by myself.

Hampton pulls himself from underneath the tank...In shock.

HAMPTON
You're bullshitting me?

JOHNS (O.S.)
Who bullshittin' who?

Johns climbs out of the commanders hatch. Stuffing tobacco in his mouth.

CARTER
Nobody.
(beat)
Hampton's about to be father.

JOHNS
I'll be damned.

QUINCY
'Congratulations buck.

Hampton processes. Unable to find words...

JOHNS
Jus' think...Couple months time
Hampton gon' be back in Detroit
chargin' diapers, Imma have me
'nough saved to get a lil' Tobacca'
farm. Hell Doc, them Honky's might
even put you in some pinstripes,
let you get on the mound.

CARTER
Not if we don't get this tank
 running.

Hampton reads Carter loud and clear -- FLINGS himself back
 under the tank! CUT TO:

INT. CARTER'S TANK - CONTINUOUS

Smith sits in the GUNNER'S SEAT, flipping through YANK
 MAGAZINE. Passing various PIN UP GIRLS until seeing: Susan
Hayward.

SMITH
 Mhmm. Mhmm. Mhmm. Ms. Hayward ain't
 you some fine dinner...

HAMPTON

Wiping his brow; Pulling himself out from under the engine.

HAMPTON
 Should do it.

Carter BANGS the steel. Projects his voice --

CARTER
 Smith - give her a go.

INT. CARTER'S TANK - CONTINUOUS

Smith thumbs to another page; Hayward in a different pose.
 Even more enamored than he was a second ago.

When -- SHWOOP! The pin-up magazine is SNATCHED from his
 hands! REVEAL --

Carter, head hanging over the hatch.

SMITH
 Shit -- aite, aite.

Smith gets to the drivers seat and VROOOOM! The tank roars
 back to life.

EXT. BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - NIGHT

As Jim fills up the Command Jeep with gasoline...

D-BAG SOLDIER #1 (O.S.)
 How's it goin' soldier?

Jim grimaces...knowing that voice. He cranks his neck to face the inevitable --

D-BAG SOLDIER #1, with number #2 flank.

JIM
I'm in France surrounded by Krauts,
Wyatt...

D-BAG #1 reaches into his pack and tosses Jim some CHOCOLATE...

D-BAG SOLDIER #1
Got it back in Clécy. If homemade chocolate don't get you hard and happy I ain't sure what will.

Jim throws it back.

JIM
What the fuck do the three of you actually want?

D-BAG #2 steps up.

D-BAG SOLDIER #2
If we was all burning to death in a building ain't no secret Cap would run in and pull your ass out first Corporal.

JIM
Well, if it was just us three could you blame him?

A beat.

D-BAG SOLDIER #2
We need you to talk to him. About the coloreds. They're...

INTERCUT TO:

CARTER'S TANK

SMITH
....a motherfucking problem for all ya'll! Woooowee!

Smith collects DOLLAR BILLS from THE POT of a DICE GAME. Johns meanwhile....

CLANNNG! Hurls his helmet against the tank in anger!

SMITH (CONT'D)
 Either put up, shut up, or double
 up. Come on now.

CARTER - QUINCY - HAMPTON....all toss bills into a new pot,
 determined to derail Smith from his hot streak.

Smith cups the dice -- rattles, blows, going through a free-
 throw like routine...

SMITH (CONT'D)
 These sevens I'm 'bout to role is
 dedicated to my future wife Susan
 Hayward, my hero Joe Louis, and all
 them blue eyed white devil
 sumabatches who said --

INTERCUT TO:

THE COMMAND JEEP

D-BAG SOLDIER #1
 -- Nigger brains don't work as fast
 as ours do. That's why they ain't
 never been in tanks, Krauts would
 blow 'em to hell 'fore they got the
 goddamn engine started!

JIM
 You learn that while you were
 outside chasing hogs at your
 cousins or when you were inside
 fucking her?

Wyatt sees red, about to give Jim a nice, big --

INTERCUT TO:

CARTER'S TANK

HAMPTON
 -- Fuck you.

REVEAL --

Smith collecting THE WHOLE POT...*Obnoxiously, of course.* He's
 officially wrung everyone dry.

SMITH
 Don't be sour cuz you got your ass-
 whooped.

CARTER
Whooping ass and getting lucky are
two different things.

SMITH
Three games in a row. Rollin' ain't
luck, it's skill.

CARTER
Strike out Josh Gibson with the
bases loaded in the bottom of the
ninth to protect a one run lead
then come talk to me about skill.

SMITH
You get me a mound, a ball, and
that big headed Negro, I guarantee
you --

INTERCUT TO:

THE COMMAND JEEP

D-BAG SOLDIER # 2
-- We don't last a week with the
Coloreds spearheading us.

JIM
It's like Hyres all over again. You
two hiding in the cellar, crying
for your mommas while the rest of
us are fighting for you.

Jim lets that hit home for a moment...

JIM (CONT'D)
You got something you wanna say to
the Captain, be fucking men, and
say it to him yourselves.

The two D-BAGS wither at the thought...

INT. ROGERS COMMAND TENT - MORNING

BROWN

Passed out. SNORING like a bear...

Jim's on the other side of the tent. He pours fresh coffee
into TWO tin cups. Moves --

OUTSIDE THE TENT

Where ROGERS finishes up on the speed-bag.

JIM
Got your coffee...

...Jim's voice trails off, his eyes go wide like Bambi because --

THE ENTIRE INFANTRY

Huddled together in front of Rogers' tent. Pushing. Shoving. Bickering amongst themselves...

JIM

Finding -- our two D-bags; Refusing to come forward like everyone else. Jim shakes his head in disgust...*pussies*.

He extends the coffee to Rogers, who has his back to The Infantry.

JIM (CONT'D)
Cap...

ROGERS
I see 'em.
(re: coffee)
Thanks.

THE INFANTRY

Finally finds their spokesman....

HUBERT -- who nervously waddles towards Rogers.

HUBERT
'Scuse me, sir, I uh --

ROGERS
-- Private.
(raising his cup)
My morning coffee.

Hubert clears his throat. Waits...Rogers doesn't hurry.

Awkward seconds....passing slowly...

Finally, the coffee's gone.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Go ahead.

HUBERT

Well, we uh...wanted to come over,
you know, together and all, cuz
um...

ROGERS

The point...private?

HUBERT

We all got a feelin' that fightin'
with the coloreds ain't such a good
idea...sir.

Rogers lets the comment hang in the air...

ROGERS

Am I the commander of the third
army Private?

HUBERT

Uh...No sir.

ROGERS

Who is the commander of the third
army Private?

HUBERT

General Patton sir.

ROGERS

And as commander of the third army,
The General is in charge of
assigning armored units to their
objectives, correct?

HUBERT

Yes sir.

ROGERS

And the coloreds you don't want to
fight with - are they an armored
unit?

Hubert trembles. Wipes sweat from his forehead.

HUBERT

Yes sir.

ROGERS

So to be clear: You're proposing that it's in this Company's best interest to disobey a direct order from The General, which would result in a bad-conduct discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances, and confinement for six months, due to a "feeling" that you all have...?

Hubert gulps....

PRE-LAP: SHSZZZZ! A pan --

EXT. CARTER'S TANK - MORNING

-- SIZZLING as Quincy sautés K and C rations over a G.I. POCKET STOVE.

Johns tinkers with the tank tracks. Hampton sits next to him, adding finishing touches to his letter home.

JOHNS

(re: Hampton's letter)

Make sure you tell Gloria I said congratulations. And Hampton...

HAMPTON

Mhmm?

JOHNS

Once that youngin' of yours is up on two feet, bring 'em to North Carolina. Let Uncle Johns show 'em how to sow the seeds and pick the lugs.

HAMPTON

You want me to bring my family to North Carolina so they can pick tobacco on slavemaster Anderson's plantation...?

JOHNS

Watch ya' tone...Anderson ain't no slave master and I ain't no slave. Imma a sharecropper. Counties best too, four years straight.

OFF SCREEN....MPPHH! MPHHH! GRUNTING coming from --

SMITH, shirt off, muscles bulging, talking to himself for added motivation as he uses the hull of the tank to do DECLINE PUSH UPS.

SMITH
*Who gon' whoop Nazi ass? Black
 Bomber gon' whoop Nazi ass.*

Johns looks to Hampton, shakes his head...

JOHNS
 And if you have a son, and he act anything like that one there...

HAMPTON
 (re: Smith)
That happens when a boy don't know his father.

QUINCY
 Foods up!

Quincy plates the grub for Johns and Hampton.

Smith -- obnoxiously roaring now; like that guy at the gym we all hate...

SMITH (O.S.)
*Who gon' whoop Nazi ass? Black
 Bomber gon' whoop Nazi ass.*

JOHNS
 Hush boy. We all don't need to keep hearin' that mess while we're trying to eat.

He ignores Johns, keeps at it --

SMITH
*Who gon' whoop Nazi ass? Black
 Bomber gon' whoop Nazi ass.*

-- KA-THUD! AN EMPTY WATER JUG plops next to Smith. SNAP TO:

CARTER -- emerging from the commander's hatch. Two more JUGS in hand. Tossing another to the ground.

CARTER
 (to Smith)
 Need those filled before we roll out.

Smith finishes his last rep. Hops to his feet.

SMITH
Can't Doc. Got one more set.

Smith FLEXES HIS PECS -- muscles twitching, dancing up and down as he makes a SHOOTING gesture with his fingers.

SMITH (CONT'D)
Mo' Bigger, quicker I pull that trigger -- know what I'm saying?

A beat.

Johns - Hampton - Quincy; all wearing the same "go fuck yourself" expression...

Carter hops to the ground, picks up one of the jugs. Gestures to Smith --

CARTER
(re: jug)
Alright. Give it here then.

SMITH
For real?

Carter waits...

SMITH (CONT'D)
Appreciate that Doc...

Smith finally hands over the Jug but IN AN INSTANT --

Carter YANKS it from him! Flings his leg behind Smith's, powers a palm into his chest, and --

WHOOOMP! Sends him right to the ground; knocking the wind out of him!

Carter tosses all THREE jugs onto Smith's panting chest...

CARTER
You're welcome.

EXT. BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - LATER

SMITH

Grumbling profanities to himself...

LUGGING three now-full water jugs through high grass on the outskirts of the outpost.

SMASH TO:

BROWN

Folded over in agony. Clutching ROGER'S COMMAND JEEP for stability as he --

BLEHHHH! THROWS UP more of last night's whiskey. Head pounding. Lungs fighting for air. So out of it....

He doesn't notice the PUKE DRIBBLE on his uniform.

He takes a deep breath, world still spinning...

Whoa, wait, that THING in the rear-view mirror...

..Is that...A NEGRO!?

Brown gives himself a good smack. Rubs his eyeballs. But....

He's not dreaming...There is a Negro in the mirror -- SMITH.

BROWN

Say boy!

Brown circles around like a DRUNKEN BALLERINA; searching for a WEAPON he can't find.

BROWN (CONT'D)

Ay -- Stop!

SMITH

Finds BROWN....

And wisely opts to keep moving. UNTIL --

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

I said stop Nigger!

BROWN

Found his pistol -- and has it trained directly between Smith's shoulders.

BROWN (CONT'D)

They told me you French Niggers were different and here ya' are -- thievin' like the rest of 'em.

SMITH

I ain't french jack, I'm --

BROWN

Ya' only speak if I tell you to speak, boy.

(MORE)

BROWN (CONT'D)
 (Re: Water Jugs)
 Now drop 'em.

A tense beat. Then....

KER-PLOP! Smith follows orders. Brown, continues to zig-zag his way to Smith.

BROWN (CONT'D)
 (re: Smith's uniform)
 Take it off. Ain't yers neither.

Smith obliges, goes to take his uniform off when --

BROWN (CONT'D)
 -- AY! Hands above yer fuckin' head!

SMITH
 You gonna come get friendly then?

BROWN
 Zip it! Last warnin'!

Brown carefully stalks towards Smith...

BROWN (CONT'D)
 Where's the pistol?

SMITH
 Waistband...

Brown, within an arms distance now. Circling to Smith's backside to get the weapon...

Smith motions to Brown's PUKE COVERED UNIFORM.

SMITH (CONT'D)
 (re: Brown's uniform)
 Also got a rag in the left pocket
 if you wanna clean yourself off.

Brown takes the bait; LOOKS DOWN; in a flash -- *THWACKK!*
 Smith KNOCKS the pistol from Brown's grip.

PA-POW! The collision sends a round sputtering from the pistol that echoes between the trees! And now...

SMITH -- sitting pretty; His gun drawn on Brown.

SMITH (CONT'D)
 This is my uniform you dumbass cracker.

ROGERS (O.S.)
Put it down.

Smith checks his peripheral, sees:

ROGERS -- By the Command Jeep where Brown just was. Pistol aimed at Smith.

A beat.

Smith doesn't budge. Keeps his weapon on Brown.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
(yelling)
Jim!

One Mississippi. Two Mississippi. Three Mississippi. And...

Jim comes into view from THE OPPOSITE side of Roger's command tent, adjacent to the Jeep.

JIM
(seeing Smith)
SHIT --

-- Jim yanks ANOTHER gun on Smith.

ROGERS
Drop the gun and we can all go
about our business.

Smith ignores him, knowing the pistol is his only leverage.

CARTER (O.S.)
Morning Captain.

SNAP TO --

CARTER, QUINCY, JOHNS, and HAMPTON....all packing heat.

Flanking Rogers and Jim on their left -- as seen in the wonderful arts and crafts below:

	Smith	
	Brown	
Crew / Carter ----	Rogers	Jim

The arts and crafts portion of this script has now come to an end. Please welcome back our main attraction:

Soldiers of various races pointing guns at each-other.

CARTER (CONT'D)
Smith, my jugs full?

SMITH
(re: Brown)
They were 'till this Offay pulled a
goddamn gun on me!

BROWN
Fuck you call me --

ROGERS
-- Brown. Quiet.
(to Carter)
Morning Lieutenant.

Rogers and Carter -- exchanging glances...

Evidently clear that both want to PUT OUT the fire, not start another one.

CARTER
Smith - toss it.

SMITH
Me!?

CARTER
Corporal.

A beat...

Smith reluctantly lobs his gun to the side.

ROGERS
Jim...

Jim steadily tucks his handgun away.

CARTER
(to his crew)
Stand down...

Hampton, Quincy, Johns....all put away their weapons.

ROGERS AND CARTER -- the only two with firearms pointed at each other now.

Tense seconds ensue. Finally...

Rogers makes the first move, putting his away.

Carter looks to Smith -- The corporal adheres to the queue, striding back towards our tankers.

Before he submerges back in the group...

CARTER (CONT'D)
(to Smith)
You alright?

SMITH
I want my five dollars....

Carter relinquishes his weapon. Trades an icy stare with Rogers before turning away...

CUT TO:

EXT. BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - LATER

The outpost BUZZING with activity --

Tents being taken down. Infantrymen loading into Jeeps, packing up ammo.

Bravo Company prepares to depart...

INT. ROGERS COMMAND TENT - BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - CONTINUOUS

Brown, shirtless once again -- huddled over a bucket of water, ringing out his puke splattered uniform.

Jim stuffs items in his pack. Decides to try and ease the lingering tension...

JIM
Hey.
(beat)
No one asked for them to be here.
But orders are orders. We don't
need to make it more difficult on
Cap than it already is.

WHOOOSH! The tent flap opens -- ROGERS enters.

ROGERS
Jim. A minute.

Jim exits. A beat...

Then, out of nowhere -- *WHABAM!* Rogers DROPS Brown with a right cross to the jaw.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Stupid-ass...

Brown's STILL on the floor -- nose bloody, GROANING in pain....Until Rogers offers him A HAND UP.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Almost got yourself killed.

Brown takes it, pulls himself up. Rogers gives him a pat on the shoulder.

Brown nods, adjusts his jaw...*knows it's tough love.*

BROWN
Coulda' least hit me with yer left....

ROGERS
I did. And if you weren't the best fucking shot in this company it would've been my right.
(then)
Pack your shit. Quickly.

Rogers turns his back on Brown....

BROWN
Cap' we can't let them niggers --

ROGERS
-- Brown.

Rogers curls his right hand into A FIST -- *threatening.*

Brown gets it. Backs off...

EXT. TANK COLUMN - BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - DAY - CONTINUOUS

IN SINGLE FILE FORMATION - Tankers give their vehicles last looks before heading to the front lines...

CARTER

Trudging through thick mud. Meticulously eyeing his column back to front.

CARTER

Make sure those Duckbills are bolted on tight -- Panzers already got an inch of steel and pack a bigger punch. We get caught in mud, we can't afford to stay there.

CARTER'S TANK

At the head of the column. OUR CREW...

Lounging on the hull. Bullshitting. Quincy spots an approaching Carter; who is all business as usual --

CARTER (CONT'D)

Are the --

QUINCY

-- Duckbills is on. Wedges is tight. And da' clutch release bearings is all oiled up, Doc.

Carter nods, satisfied.

Hampton grabs a **BOTTLE OF MACALLAN 1940** from the hull -- this Scotch is important. Remember it.

He tosses it to Carter...

HAMPTON

Should be you who does the honors, Doc.

Carter rubs his hand over the label. Doesn't open it...

JOHNS

Back at Fort Hood, you told us you was savin' it for a special occasion, so....

CARTER

We are.

Our Lieutenant lobs THE MACALLAN back to Hampton.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Mount up. We're on the move.

SMITH

...No one's tryin' to get the joint jumpin', jus' a celebratory swig is all.

HAMPTON

If being the first Negroes to ride
sixty-thousand pounds of steel to
the Western Front ain't special,
I'm not sure what is?

CARTER

When being Negro isn't a part of
the conversation.

A beat.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Mount up. I'm not asking again.

PRE-LAP: The building pitter patter of RAIN...

EXT. MILES OUTSIDE BRAVO COMPANY OUTPOST - MORNING

...Dousing the french landscape. *PINGING* against the cold
steel of:

CARTER'S TANK

Parting MORNING HAZE. Barreling through MUD on a dirt road.
Trees sporadically placed in the ocean of GREEN on both
sides.

The rest of the Platoon is tight on his ass in LEFT FLANK
formation.

CARTER

Trained on A SMALL HILL -- Half a mile in the distance.

A *SQUELCH*, then -- Carter speaks into his headset,
communicating with his men via PLATOON NETWORK.

*(NOTE: This network only connects Carter with HIS TANKERS.
Not the Infantry. That's the COMPANY NETWORK.)*

CARTER

Lieutenant Carter to all tanks -
Button up. Strong-point's over this
hill.

WE RACE DOWN THE LINE OF TANKS TO SEE AS --

CLLINKKK!

CLLINKKK!

CLLINKKK!

One-by-one, all the Tank Commanders DUCK beneath their hatches; CLASPING the steel lids closed.

Oh... When I said ALL, I meant ALL EXCEPT FOR:

CARTER

Top half still exposed to the crisp October air.

PRE-LAP: Frantic BREATHS--

SMASH TO:

A YOUNG NAZI SCOUT

SPRINTING through shrubbery. Zig-zagging around tree trunks.

PANICKED -- running *faster and faster AND FASTER* as we--

CUT TO:

A BASEMENT

Cramped, dusty with minimal light and: A HANDFUL OF NAZI SOLDIERS.

The Young Scout catches his breath. Salutes **THE CAPTAIN** -- a hollowed-eye motherfucker with a hacked off ear. *They converse in GERMAN.*

YOUNG SCOUT

They were about to crest the hill,
sir. On the main road.

The Captain twists an evil eye to the other soldiers...

NAZI CAPTAIN

Get in position.

CUT TO:

CARTER'S TANK

Remember that hill? The one Carter saw a half-mile in the distance? Well -- they're already on the OTHER SIDE OF IT.

But the pristine landscape, the evergreen beauty, all of it...GONE.

CRATERS blown into the earth. TANKS turned to scrap heap.
 JEEPS plastered with bullet holes. GERMAN and AMERICAN
 CORPSES - strewn everywhere.

WAR chewed this place up and spit it right back out...

CARTER

CARTER
 Got eyes on our strong-point, eight
 o'clock --

We follow our leaders shifting eyeballs to:

A WINDMILL

Up on the LEFT. But wait...

No. That's NOT the strong-point. SNAP TO --

A FARM

In the distance; PAST the windmill....

BARN. CHICKEN COOP. MAIN HOUSE -- All spread horizontally for
 an acre or two.

THIS is the strong-point.

CUT TO:

ROGERS' COMMAND JEEP

Leading all Infantry forty yards behind Carter's Platoon.

Jim drives. Rogers and Brown, on high alert, guns up...

BROWN
 Reckon' we won?

ROGERS
 Let's assume they did until we find
 out different...

CUT TO:

JOHNS, INSIDE THE TANK

Eye tight to his PERISCOPE. Spotting:

A FORK IN THE ROAD....

The road LEFT -- goes past the WINDMILL, leading to the MAIN HOUSE.

The road RIGHT -- continues just past the BARN.

JOHNS
(re: fork)
Sarge - right or left?

INTERCUT --

ROGERS, IN THE COMMAND JEEP

Lowering binoculars from his eyes. Answering Jim and (inadvertently) Johns --

ROGERS
They should be going right.
(then)
The road left just does a round-a-
bout around the house.

BACK TO:

JOHNS, INSIDE THE TANK

Confused. Buzzing Carter in the intercom -

JOHNS
Whoa, Doc, "Hold on" or "Right",
which is it?

CARTER

Binoculars cupping his face now.

CARTER
Hold on -- need to make sure
nothing on our left surprises while
we're on the right.

CARTER'S BINOCULAR POV:

Following the road left up to....

THE MAIN HOUSE

Lifeless GI's litter the lawn. Front door blown to shit.
Curtains sway in and out of SHATTERED WINDOWS.

But wait....The fuck!? A DARK SHADOW -- behind one of the
curtains...

REVEAL:

The TIP OF AN 88MM TIGER TANK GUN concealed behind the linen!

SMASH TO:

CARTER

Snapping into high gear --

CARTER (CONT'D)
Johns - Left!

The tank kicks up dirt! GROANING, pulling LEFT at the fork just in time!

CARTER (CONT'D)
(into platoon network)
All tanks -- got a Tiger two
hundred yards out, eight o'clock.
Everyone stay right at the fork --
don't want him getting suspicious
while we move up on his flank.

CUT TO:

ROGERS, IN THE COMMAND JEEP

Perplexed -- fuck is Carter doing? He grabs the radio; flips to Carter's frequency --

ROGERS
Lieutenant, this is Rogers - do you
copy?

Crickets....

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Carter - you sightseeing or I got
something to worry about?

CUT TO:

CARTER

Cringing as Rogers's voice crackles in his ear -

CARTER
Hampton - Un-plug him.

HAMPTON, INSIDE THE TANK

Pulling plugs. Flipping switches -

HAMPTON
Copy - Infantry's off comm.

CUT TO:

ROGERS, IN THE COMMAND JEEP

ROGERS
Carter? Carter!?

-- WHAM! Rogers SLAMS down the receiver!

BROWN
What happened to goin' right?

Rogers ignores Brown -- whips the binoculars tight to his face instead.

A beat...Then he's back on the radio; communicating with HIS MEN.

ROGERS
(into Radio)
Love two - Love three; Get on my bumper and prepare for contact.
(to Jim)
Get us to that windmill. Now.

PRE-LAP: KA-THUNK --

CUT TO:

QUINCY, INSIDE THE TANK

As he JAMS a 75MM AMMUNITION SHELL in the breech!

QUINCY
Clear!

HAMPTON, nervously fuddles the trigger on his .30 cal...

JOHNS, wipes a rainstorm of sweat from his cheeks...

SMITH, slaps the "BLACK BOMBER" logo on his helmet for good luck. Presses his pupil tight to the GUNSIGHT...

CARTER

CLICK-CLACK! Readyng the .50 CAL.

Up ahead: THE WINDMILL -- fifty yards, left hand side.

CARTER
Johns - twenty yards past that
Windmill, you pull her wide left
and get us on that Tiger's ass.

JOHNS
Copy.

SMITH, IN HIS GUNSIGHT --

SMITH
Doc - get me on that Tiger's ass
now, it's a sure thing.

CARTER
We're out of range, I'll tell you
when to hit him.

CUT TO:

ROGERS' COMMAND JEEP

Trailed by TWO SUPPORT VEHICLES. All of them --

OFF-ROADING at top speed! CROSSING through the field; Closing
in on Carter's position.

CUT TO:

CARTER

Nearing the WINDMILL. Putting the binoculars back to work...

CARTER
(into headset radio)
Johns - thirty yards and we're in
position.

CARTER'S BINOCULAR POV

On the SAME WINDOW as before...

SHADOW of the heavy tank gun still looming behind the
fluttering curtain.

BUT THEN -

A gust of wind WHIPS the curtain upward, REVEALING --

The entirety of the 88MM GUN, and...There's A CRACK AT THE
END OF THE BARREL.

Ho-ly. Fuck. It's inoperable, which means...

CARTER

Has been PLAYED FOR A FOOL! *But why?* His head, rotating, desperately searching for answers....

Then -- It hits him: THE WINDMILL.

SMASH TO:

THE INSIDE OF THE WINDMILL

Nazi Commander tucked on the side of a window.

His grip tight on a PANZERFAUST -- *The german equivalent of a BAZOOKA.* He PEEKS out the corner of the window as we-

CUT TO:

CARTER

CARTER

Johns - flip us around!

(then)

Smith - traverse the gun to that windmill!

SMITH, INSIDE THE TANK

In his gunsight -- still AIMED AT THE TIGER.

SMITH

Fuck would I do that!? I'm right on 'em!

CARTER

With no time to argue, overrides Smith. Thumbs a SWITCH.

TURNING THE TURRET on his own...

BACK TO:

THE INSIDE OF THE WINDMILL

The Nazi Commander gives the go ahead to a Corporal -- who hoists up a PANZERFUAST of his own. Pivots in front of a window, and --

FWHOOOOOM! Fires a fucking rocket --

KA-DIING! The blast RICOCHETS off Carter's tank!

ON CARTER

Ditching THE OVERRIDE SWITCH! Putting both hands back on the .50 CAL!

INSIDE THE TANK

Gaskets HISSING! Oil flinging onto laps!

ON HAMPTON -- BRRAAAPPP! Full throttle on his .30 CAL!

ON JOHNS -- Yanking levers! Hammering the gas! Fighting 60,000 pounds of steel, FINALLY --

Getting the tank SQUARE with:

THE WINDMILL

GERMAN INFANTRY spilling out from both sides. Plopping heavy machine guns on the ground!

Spraying bullets at the approaching tank! AIMING FOR --

CARTER

Staring through the storm of lead! Going to work with the .50 Cal -- FHHHWAPP! FHHWAPPP! Two Nazi's hit the ground; DEAD.

But -- BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! Enemy grenades hurl shrapnel in every direction!

Splicing open the SANDBAGS on the tank! Punching DIRT ten feet into in the air! OBSTRUCTING Carter's VIEW...

Daylight for --

THE NAZI COMMANDER

Who has CARTER in the crosshairs of his Panzerfaust. Our Lieutenant's end just milliseconds away. BUT --

FWAHPPPP! A bullet punches through The Commander's skull! His fingers go LIMP, legs wobble as...

KA-THUD! His DEAD BODY slumps out of frame, revealing:

ROGERS -- who lowers his smoking gun...

CUT TO:

SMITH, INSIDE THE TANK

Cranking the WHEEL, traversing the MAIN GUN! Click - in position now. SMASH OUTSIDE TO:

*THE WINDMILL **EXPLODING!** Engulfed in a PLUME of fire.*

The last of the Nazi Infantry ducking and rolling for cover as they scramble to a new position; only to meet --

BROWN, JIM, AND ADDITIONAL INFANTRY

BRAAAPPPPP! All spraying their automatic rifles! OVERWHELMING the handful of remaining foes in seconds...

A beat.

The Nazis that were -- are now no more.

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

Chests heave with sighs of relief...

ROGERS

Beside Carter's tank, surveying the bloodshed.

A beat...

ROGERS
Don't ever take me off comms,
Lieutenant.

Rogers departs back to his Jeep.

Carter, blood boiling...takes a second, then -

DROPS DOWN INTO THE TANK

Concerned eyes study his men...

CARTER
Everyone alright?

Nods all around. BLOWN GASKET still hissing...

Carter looks to Hampton.

CARTER (CONT'D)
(re: blown gasket)
What do you think?

HAMPTON
It's nothin'. Patch it up when we
get to Dieuze.

CARTER
Good...that's good news...

Carter EYES Smith, tense seconds ensue...until -- He turns to
leave out the Commanders hatch AND STOPS.

Fists curling inward, forehead wrinkling with anger. Carter
CAN'T HELP HIMSELF...

He drops back down and SNATCHES Smith by the collar!

CARTER (CONT'D)
Next time I give you a fucking
order, you follow it. Understand?

THA-DUNK! Carter releases his grip. Exits.

A beat.

Johns thumbs his blade through the tobacco, offers some to
Smith...

Who declines...*ashamed*.

CUT TO:

ROGERS - BROWN - JIM

Settling back into the Command Jeep. Rogers lifts the radio -

ROGERS
Love one - four - five, move out.

Rogers turns to Jim...

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Punch it. We don't leapfrog this
spearhead, they're gonna get us all
killed.

CARTER

Nursing a bruised ego as he watches Rogers race ahead.

PRE-LAP: FWOOSHHH! The sound of...

EXT. DIEUZE - SUNSET - LATER THAT DAY

...A WHITE FLAG, hoisted out of a THIRD story window;
fluttering in the wind. DOWN BELOW --

CARTER'S PLATOON

Passes under the sign of peace. Tight road forcing them into
a single file column as they enter:

SUPER: DIEUZE

EXT. DIEUZE - MOMENTS LATER

HOUSES and SHOPS with boarded-up windows. Walls pocked with
bullet holes.

OUR PLATOON in a single file line, parked along the street.
Tankers exit confined chambers; Stretching arms and legs.

CARTER

Outside THE TANK, the rest of the crew just behind him.

CARTER

Quincy - small arms. Once we locate
the Infantry, we'll set up shop.

Quincy pulls SUBMACHINE GUNS and PISTOLS from the hatch.
Hands out the "small arms" to the crew WHEN--

BANG! BANG!!

Ears perk up and men take cover -- barrels suddenly LEVEL
with shoulders. Ready to put a hole in something.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Contact! Anyone got a visual?

SMITH

Can't see shit!

Carter BARKS at the crew to his left -

CARTER

Button up!

"BUTTON UP" ECHOES down the line from COMMANDER to COMMANDER
as tankers scramble back inside the fortified steel!

Another BANG! This time, Carter snuffs out the source...

STREET CORNER -- less than a block away. Carter bee-lines toward the echoing gunshots, his crew in tow.

PISTOL raised with deadly intent, he rounds the CORNER, finding:

Two drunk, DOPEY INFANTRY SOLDIERS -- one flinging a beer bottle mid-air as the other BANG! Fires off another round like he's DUCK HUNTING...

INFANTRY DOPE #1
Son of a cross-dressing Hitler... I don't believe it.

INFANTRY DOPE #2
Well ya' better. Cause we're outta empty bottles...

INFANTRY DOPE #2 lowers his rifle. #1 lifts two fresh beers. Cracks his open, hands the other to #2.

They clink glasses as #2 spots -- CARTER AND CREW.

A beat.

INFANTRY DOPE #2 (CONT'D)
Howdy.

CARTER
No action since you've rolled in I take it?

INFANTRY DOPE #1
Townsfolk said they ain't seen a Kraut in a month.

INFANTRY DOPE #2
For the two hours we've been here it's been nothin' but free booze and beautiful women.

SMITH
....Women?

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

Dark and musty. Two columns of PILLARS line the cellar front to back. BEER BARRELS scattered in-between.

CARTER, our crew, and the rest of the platoon walk towards...

A YELLOW LIGHT -- spilling outward from a DOOR at the end of the hallway. Sound swells from the other side....

BASS. TRUMPETS. PIANO.

Getting louder as they grow nearer and Carter pushes through the CREAKY-ASS DOOR revealing:

THE LOCAL BAR

SWING MUSIC blaring. Infantrymen pack the place like sardines, twirling women on the DANCE FLOOR. *An island oasis in the vast sea of war...*

That is, until...

THEY CATCH SIGHT OF OUR TANKERS. Awkward seconds that feel like hours... Until... Finally...

The soldiers start to flock to the OPPOSITE side of the bar, where luckily --

There's ANOTHER BARTOP. *And for reasons to come, we'll dub this bar the "WHITE BAR."*

SMITH

DROOLING over the plethora of WHITE WOMEN on the dance floor.

SMITH

It must be my birthday.

INT. LOCAL BAR - DIEUZE - LATER

ROGERS and JIM lean against a wall. Jim nurses a beer, eyeing:

THE BLACK TANKERS

On the OPPOSITE side of the bar, occupying what we'll refer to now as, "**THE NEGRO BAR.**"

JIM

(re: tankers)

They shouldn't be in here. Drinking up all the damn beer.

ROGERS

The beer?

JIM

Yeah. The beer.

ROGERS

You're not worried about the fucking beer.

Rogers's eyes refer to Jim's real worry -- BLACK TANKERS dancing with WHITE WOMEN.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Quit being a pussy and go dance.

Jim POUNDS his beer. Takes a deep breath.

CUT TO:

SMITH

Glued to the dance-floor, watching:

BROWN

Cut it up with a **MARLENE** (20s) -- a once in a decade beauty; and she has Smith under A SPELL....

HAMPTON

On the dance floor with **ASTRID** -- She's ten years old and make your heart melt cute.

ASTRID'S MOTHER watches on the sideline; smiling ear to ear, cheering on her little girl...

...who is adorably off-rhythm, but Hampton plays along-- copying the dizzying movements.

BROWN, ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Dancing the JITTERBUG with Marlene. SNAP TO -

JIM -- sauntering towards the dance floor like the kid at prom who couldn't find a date.

Brown can't help but PITY HIM.

He pulls Marlene back into his arms. WHISPERS in her ear...

BROWN
Listen here beautiful, Imma pour us
a couple and my friend is gonna
keep ya' company, jus' 'till I get
back alright?

MARLENE
...A friend?

Brown throws Jim a stern NOD. Jim cocks his head; confused, but that's WHEN --

Brown SPINS Marlene into Jim's wake -- forcing them together.

Marlene's not impressed with her suitor...

MARLENE (CONT'D)
You are.....*Friend?*

JIM
Well not...I mean, sure... Yes I am.

Jim gesturing a "thank you" to Brown...

JOHNS AND QUINCY

Twisting and turning with TWO GIRLS.

SMITH - Still alone. Johns zips past him mid-dance move...

JOHNS
(to Smith)
Ain't never seen you gun shy boy.

SMITH
Relax. I know what I'm doin'.

Johns follows Smith's love-struck stare right to:

MARLENE...*itching to be free from Jim's grasp.*

JOHNS
(re: Marlene)
Nu-uh. Already had enough Honky's
try and kill me for one day.

Jim's clammy hands and lack of rhythm are quickly turning his opportunity with Marlene into a disaster....

Just look at her face. Jim senses the widening divide, knows it's do or die time...

He takes a chance, treading in water he hasn't, and --

-- SPINS MARLENE, unfortunately (*and inadvertently*) right into the arms of a waiting:

SMITH

Oozing confidence. He takes control, brings Marlene close.

She bites her lip, loves it...

CARTER

Back on the wall. Extending the beer in his left hand to --

Hampton, fresh from the dance floor. He takes a swig. Carter finds Astrid and Sophie. Flashes a grin at Hampton...

HAMPTON

What?

Carter shrugs. Coy.

HAMPTON (CONT'D)

What?

CARTER

Whole different ballgame now that you got one on the way, huh?

HAMPTON

Man....You got no idea.

A beat.

CARTER

You're gonna be a hell of a father, Hampton.

Both men drink...

HAMPTON

You ever wonder what it would've been like having kids?

CARTER

All the time...

CUT TO:

SMITH AND MARLENE

The center of attention...

Smith showcases a dazzling array of moves, *speaking of* --

WHOOOP! He scoops Marlene up, and literally: FLIPS HER up and over his arm!

The Tankers ERUPT in cheers!

JIM

Ironically, so impressed with Marlene and Smith, can't stop watching.

BROWN (O.S.)

Ain't no way you scared her off that quick...

Jim spins, instantly mortified upon seeing BROWN, who's all smiles, until...

He spots Marlene with Smith.

Brown sees red. STOMPS and SHOVES his way through the dance floor --

BROWN (CONT'D)
Say boy!

WE INTERCUT --

ROGERS

On the move. He's seen this version of Brown and knows NOTHING good comes of it...

SMITH

Spots the inbound raging bull that is Brown. Slips Marlene BEHIND HIM for safety while...

CARTER AND HAMPTON

Push through bodies -- making their way to back up Smith as...

JOHNS AND QUINCY

Move to INTERCEPT Brown but --

SMITH

-- Declines the help. SMILES and cracks his neck instead.

BROWN (CONT'D)
Who said you could put yer filthy
Nigger hands on that woman!?

Brown, in STRIKING RANGE NOW --

Fires first! THAWCK! A SOUTHPAW JAB cuts just below Smith's eye--

But BOOM! Smith counters! A Tyson like right hand that nearly DROPS Brown but he stays upright --

Lands a hard left to the ribs! Looks to finish with a HAYMAKER, but --

Smith WEAVES underneath and WHA-BAM! An uppercut sends Brown TOPPLING to the FLOOR!

He slides his arm under Brown's chin and puts him in a CHOKEHOLD! Whispers in his ear...

SMITH
You my Nigger now, boy!

Brown - COUGHING! *Slowly turning PURPLE....*

ROGERS - CARTER - HAMPTON

Right there, about to break up the fight WHEN --

-- KSSSHHHKKSHHH! High velocity rounds BLAST THROUGH THE FRONT WINDOWS! Tearing through arteries! Dropping bodies to the floor!

ON SMITH -- letting Brown out of headlock! Darting for cover!

SMASH TO:

THE FRONT OF THE BAR, OUTSIDE

Where we find the source of devastation -

A HALF TRACK - Spewing ammunition from it's heavy machine gun at an unimaginable rate.

German soldiers FAN OUT from behind the armored vehicle. Form up, and ADVANCE INSIDE....

ROGERS AND JIM, INSIDE THE BAR

Yanking Brown to his feet! The three of them now, toppling --

OVER THE BARTOP! Finding cover, and a second to breathe....

ROGERS
Brown - you alright?

Brown finds his breath - *he's good.*

ROGERS (CONT'D)
We're on the move! Both of you, on my ass!

Rogers SPRINTS; Brown and Jim follow! All heading --

TO THE CELLAR.

SNAP TO --

CARTER

Able to watch ROGERS chart his course to the cellar because...

He's behind THE SAME BAR ROGERS JUST WAS! Only further down the line.

OUR CREW -- right on Carter's hip. *BLAM/BLAM/BLAM!* Bottles shatter! GLASS raining down on them!

It's time to make a move, and Carter knows it.

CARTER
(to the crew)
Get to the cellar! It's our only
shot at flanking those fuckers!

Carter yanks up a M1A1 THOMPSON from a dead infantryman.

CARTER (CONT'D)
On me!

The crew nods, *ready for action*. Then -- *BRAPPPPPP!* Carter lays down cover fire at 700 rounds per minute!

SMITH - HAMPTON - JOHNS - QUINCY

Racing through the bar! LEAPING over mangled bodies! Evading death by centimeters as --

They close in on THE CELLAR.

CUT TO:

ROGERS - BROWN - JIM

Momentarily shielded from gunfire in:

THE HALLWAY that connects to the CELLAR! Rogers RIPS open the door! Clangs down the STAIRCASE into the --

THE CELLAR

Rogers, Jim, and Brown tuck themselves BEHIND PILLARS. When --
Rogers freezes.

A *SOUND*....From the opposite side of the cellar -- BOOTS, crunching dirt.

A SPLIT-SECOND passes, then -- Rogers whips around the pillar, and *BRRRRAPPP* -- dumps lead into:

A GROUP OF GERMANS, firing back! Advancing in Rogers's direction!

CUT TO:

HAMPTON AND SMITH

Backs on the wall; in the SAME HALLWAY Rogers just passed through!

THE DOOR

At the bottom of the STAIRS, is open. THE FIREFIGHT Rogers is engaged in....VISIBLE to our tankers!

Hampton barks at Smith --

HAMPTON
(re: infantry firefight)
Imma go lend a hand!

But Smith yanks Hampton before he can dart off!

SMITH
Not our problem!

Smith yells behind him at --

QUINCY AND JOHNS

Down on one knee. Weapons on shoulders.

SMITH (CONT'D)
(to Quincy/ Johns)
Doc close?!?

JOHNS
Flyin' in!

Both men spray ammo, covering Carter's six as he SPRINTS from the bar!

SMASH TO:

ROGERS

Still at it, but....CLICK! -- out of ammo! He loses the machine gun, pulls a pistol!

THE GERMANS -- Gaining ground. Pushing Rogers and his crew to the brink!

CUT TO:

CARTER

Charging into the HALLWAY -- unscathed; Filing in line with the rest of his men...

HAMPTON
(re: the cellar)
Doc -- Infantry's fading quick!

Carter assesses. Decides--

CARTER
(to Quincy/Johns)
Hold that corner! Make sure those Germans don't come crawling up our ass!
(Smith & Hampton)
You two - with me in that cellar!

SMITH
Fuck that - Let 'em clear it! We'll go in after!

CARTER
Not the fucking time Smith!

Damn right it's not. That's why --

HAMPTON DARTS INTO THE CELLAR! Adrenaline pumping -- *FWHAP!* *FWHAP!* He drops TWO GERMANS!

Ducking and rolling to -- COVER; Behind a PILLAR, right next to JIM.

CARTER AND SMITH -- storm the cellar! Finding cover behind pillars of their own! And now --

A blitz of RAPID, THUNDERING SHOTS! Black and White, working together, eliminating the THREAT!

The gunshots go silent; Debris and dust, NOW BILLOWING....

HAMPTON
CLEAR!

Hampton, captain of this ship; Pressing FORWARD, past --

ROGERS, who plucks up an MP-40; then files in line BEHIND HAMPTON like everyone else....

Stepping over dead Germans. Advancing towards THE CELLAR'S EXIT when -

KA-DINK! A GRENADE PLUNKS against the wall! FWAHPPP! Carter drops the Nazi who hurled it but...

....DINK....DINK....

THE EXPLOSIVE -- already on the ground; two-blinks of an eye from detonating now!

HAMPTON (CONT'D)

Get down!

-- HAMPTON THROWS HIMSELF on the grenade! PFFFT-BOOM! His body absorbs the blast.

MUFFLED SILENCE. A SHOWER OF BLOOD...

A beat.

ON SMITH -- in shock. Wiping specks of RED from his cheek! Darting to the BLOODY STUMP that is now Hampton.

SMITH

Hampton! Hampton! Hold on brother!

(then)

Yo! Help! Someone! He's fuckin'
bleedin'! He's bleedin' real bad
man!

Carter, in disbelief, unable to stomach the visual. And for the first time, without a plan. IT'S --

ROGERS

Who lifts Smith by the collar! Staring THROUGH the young soldier.

ROGERS

He's dead.

(to everyone else)

And for shit unless we all move.

CUT TO:

JOHNS AND QUINCY, INSIDE THE BAR

Losing the fight against the advancing German infantry...

JOHNS

(re: his surroundings)

Them boys ain't here in two minutes
we're in some shit!

CUT TO:

THE ROW OF TANKS, PARKED OUTSIDE

GERMANS swarming them like bees on honey --

The Nazis surround a tank, and -- *PLOP! PLOP! PLOP!* Place STICKY BOMBS on the tracks!

One-one thousand, and....*BOOOOOOM!* The tracks BLOW OUT! Going up in smoke!

CARTER AND SMITH

Bursting outside through the CELLAR DOOR! In an all out sprint towards --

THE ROW OF TANKS, PARKED OUTSIDE

Where -- THE GERMANS, prep more sticky bombs, but *SPLAT!* One falls; lifeless, brains everywhere. SNAP TO --

ROGERS - JIM - BROWN

Nestled near the cellar doorway, laying down cover fire!

Allowing for --

CARTER AND SMITH

TO SLIDE INTO THE TANK!

Smith gets behind the GUN! Carter in the DRIVERS SEAT...

And the engine ROARS TO LIFE.

OUTSIDE THE TANK

A handful of Nazi's exchange bullets with Rogers. The other handful --

Slapping sticky bombs on a Sherman a few doors down from Carters! A beat, then --

KA-BOOOOMMM! They put ANOTHER Sherman out of order!

ROGERS - JIM - BROWN

Continuing the onslaught. When -- *CLICK!* Jim's out!

JIM

Cap'n -- your eight o'clock, now!

ROGERS whips to the noted position. Looks down the sight, finds: Sticky-bombing German sonsabitches --

On the HEELS OF CARTER'S TANK. Ready to take it out!

BBRAAAP! BRAPPP! -- Rogers hits TWO, buckling them to the ground! TWO MORE LEFT NOW.

Jim, locked and loaded now, -- BRAPPPP! BRAPPPP! Takes care of business. Paving safe passage for:

CARTER'S TANK

To plow it's way towards AN INTERSECTION.

CARTER
Twenty yards until the
intersection!

KER-CHUNK! Smith loads the Breech himself; Moves back to the gun.

Carter, hauls the tank LEFT at the intersection. REVEALING -

THE BAR

Blocks away -- and taking a beating. Germans, INCHES NOW from overrunning the place.

SMITH'S GUNSIGHT POV

Pans....Stops....FOCUSES ON: The Half Track

CARTER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Get that fucker.

Smith squeezes and - WHAAAABAM! Gets that fucker.

Half-Track NOW IN FLAMES. It's occupants SPRAWLING outward! Flames chewing through uniforms!

JOHNS AND QUINCY, INSIDE THE BAR

No long pinned down by the Half Track's firepower! They take advantage -- LEAPFROG FORWARD! Mowing down their foes!

TANKERS, INFANTRY, following suit! Coming out from cover!

PUSHING BACK the German Infantry! Sending them into --

A full fledged RETREAT! Feeling through shattered windows, scampering --

OUTSIDE

Only to be met with -- KA-BOOM! Smith's armor piercing shell from the Sherman's canon!

BOOM! BOOM! Two more for good measure.

A beat.

Clouds of ash, gunpowder....settling onto German bodies laid out in the street.

SMITH, INSIDE THE TANK

Exhaling relief...

Dropping his eye from the gunsight. Exhausted.

PRE-LAP: HOWLS of pain...

INT. BAKERY - DIEUZE - LATER

Shattered windows. Dusty countertops. This MOM AND POP BAKERY has become...

A FIELD HOSPITAL -- And it's a BLOODY MESS.

Wounded bodies everywhere. Some dead, some dying. Those that are neither -- forced to act as a MEDIC.

JOHNS

Emptying the last of HIS VODKA -- cleaning a fellow Tanker's bloody leg.

JOHNS
(re: Vodka bottle)
Gotta go grab some more...

QUINCY

Working in A MAKE-SHIFT KITCHEN -- Pots, pans, and several G.I. STOVE'S all at his disposal.

CLANG! -- SMITH appears; plopping down an armful of PLATES and CUPS for the soldiers to eat with.

QUINCY
Good timin', food 'bout ready.

Smith -- stoic; reeling from the Hampton ordeal worse than everyone else. Finding...

Bottles of VODKA on A TABLE...*practically calling his name.* Smith plucks one, but --

Johns appears, SNATCHING the bottle from Smith.

JOHNS (O.S.)
I don't see any wounds on you, boy.

Johns and Smith -- eye to eye. Then...Johns hockey checks our gunner as he goes on his way.

QUINCY
(re:Johns)
Havin' a hard time is all. He'll
come 'round.

A beat.

QUINCY (CONT'D)
Doc give ya' a reason why ya'
couldn't help?

SMITH
No.

QUINCY
Didn't tell none of us either.

PRE-LAP: SHINKKKK! The sound of steel driving into the earth--

EXT. DIEUZE - FIELD - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

-- As CARTER stakes his shovel into the ground. Standing it upward like a fence post.

Carter takes a moment, catching his breath. Whatever he's been doing, he's been at it a while...

REVEAL -

HAMPTON'S GRAVE - Rifle stuck in the ground between his boots; both still tattered from the grenade-blast.

CARTER -- Alone in a field. Staring at the resting place of his friend. Trying not to break. But the emotions are piling up.

HE CLENCHES HIS FIST. Moves to the shovel and -

SHINK! SHINK! SHINK! Continually pounds it into the ground in anger until he *THROWS IT....*

Exhausted, he deflates downward. REVERSE ANGLE ON -

ROGERS - pacing towards Carter. Until finally, sitting down next to him. Rogers reaches into his pocket, pulls out:

HAMPTON'S DOG TAGS. He spends a second with them before offering them to Carter...

Who takes them.

ROGERS
Just got a hell of a lot more
experience looking than you
do...Unfortunately.

Carter pockets the tags.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Don't always get to where they're
supposed to. Figured they were
safest with you.

Rogers pulls out his smokes. Lights one for himself.

CARTER
Got an extra? Left my chew in the
tank.

Carter pulls a cigarette from the box. Rogers lights him up.

CARTER (CONT'D)
Appreciate it.

A beat. Both men, smoking in silence...

ROGERS
Why'd your boys start calling you
Doc?

CARTER
They didn't. Got the name back when
I played ball for a club in Philly.

ROGERS
...Stars, right?

Carter -- surprised Rogers knew that.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
You guys wore the grey jerseys with
red trim?

CARTER
For away games, yeah....

ROGERS
I used to spar at a boxing gym
across from Forbes Field.
(MORE)

ROGERS (CONT'D)
 Corner we were on made it easy to
 see the players getting off the
 bus.

CARTER
 Were you any good?

ROGERS
 Hell no...Loved it though. Smell of
 the gloves. Way the bell echoed.
 Always wanted to fight
 professionally, just didn't have
 the speed. So I settled for ten
 cents a round and having pros knock
 the shit outta me instead. Used to
 ache so bad it took me a fifth of
 rotgut to get to sleep.

Carter raises an eyebrow -- *shit man...*

ROGERS (CONT'D)
 Boys at the gym called me dime. Not
 the type of nickname you keep with
 you.

(then)
 Imma guess Doc's got a more heroic
 story?

Carter takes a drag...exhales smoke through his nose...

CARTER
 I was pitcher. Anytime we got in a
 jam, I'd come in, find a way to fix
 it. So, everybody started calling
 me Doc.

A beat.

ROGERS
 Well Lieutenant, we're in a hell of
 a jam.

INT. DIEUZE - QUAIN HOME - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

BROWN tears through the place in a hurry. Blood stained hands
 flinging open DRAWERS, CABINETS --

Searching but not finding. Finally, coming to A CLOSET in the
 hallway. Inside --

FOUR levels of shelves. Second from the top has what he's
 looking for:

LINENS. He piles the sheets in his arms. STOPS...

Noticing, the top shelf of the closet -- STACKED WITH BOOZE.

Brown looks down at the sheets. Back at the Booze...

Makes the right decision: The sheets.

EXT. QUAIN HOME - DIEUZE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

-- KA-DUNK! Brown, hands occupied, KICKS the front door open.

Pacing down the street. Heading back to the church. Along the way, spotting:

ROGERS AND CARTER --

Still sitting together. Finishing those smokes...

The sight WRENCHING Brown's stomach.

INT. BAKERY - DIEUZE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Jim works on an ailing soldier's flesh wound.

...SHIIINNKKK! It's BROWN -- right behind him, dragging his knife through one of the sheets.

Jim accepts, and uses the rag to wrap the soldier's wound.

JIM

Thank god ~ outta fuckin'
everything over here.

(then)

You see Cap'n out there? Said he'd
be gone a minute twenty minutes
ago.

BROWN

Nope.

(then)

Come on - Lets get the rest of
these boys patched up.

EXT. DIEUZE - STREETS - DAY

RIPPED apart by the hurricane that was yesterday's AMBUSH...

ROGERS' COMMAND JEEP

PINNED by a landslide of rubble from the side of a building.

Jim, Rogers, and a couple Privates work away -- moving bricks and debris in order to free the vehicle.

Jim lifts a BOULDER from the hood, chucks it -- KA-DUNKKK!

MATCH TO...

INT. QUAIN T HOME - DIEUZE - CONTINUOUS

...KA-DUNKKK! BROWN -- flinging open THE FRONT DOOR of the house he was in last night!

This time -- startling a Mother and Son. He pays them no mind, makes his way to:

THE LINEN CLOSET

Brown PILES the alcohol from the top shelf into his arms.

Mother and son -- catatonic as Brown tips his helmet on the way out...

CUT TO:

ROGERS' COMMAND JEEP

Freed from the rubble.

ROGERS
(to Jim)
See if she'll start.

Jim hops in the Jeep. Around a nearby CORNER here comes:

BROWN -- Alcohol in hand. Passing Jim and Rogers...

ROGERS (CONT'D)
That was a long minute.

BROWN
Reckon' it was long as yours last
night?

A beat between the two.

ROGERS
See ya'll up in Lorraine.

Brown walks on. Loads his belongings in ANOTHER JEEP and hops in the back seat.

EXT. DIEUZE STREETS - TANKS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

LARRY -- a tank commander, works with his crew to repair their tank's tracks that fell victim to German sticky bombs.

CARTER

Spots Larry struggling...

CARTER

(to Larry)

No point. Just hitch a ride up with Williams.

Before Carter can get back to doing maintenance on his own tank...

JOHNS

Bet you Hampton coulda fixed them tracks...

CARTER

Johns. Don't.

JOHNS

Don't what? Realize he gone? That two of our tanks gone?

SMITH

Yo - you not hear what Doc said?

JOHNS

Oh, now you wanna listen?

Smith simmers; hand balling into a fist.

SMITH

Fuck did you just say?

JOHNS

Yo' ass woulda listen to Doc when you was supposed to Hampton might still be here --

-- Smith DARTS at JOHNS, ready to take his head off, but Carter hurls Smith backward before damage can be done.

CARTER

HEY -- Enough! Both of you.

A beat.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Load up.

EXT. ARDENNES FOREST - NIGHT

Wind whispers through TREE TOPS. DOWN BELOW...

Foxholes. Scattered canteens and ammo. Belonging to:

A group of AMERICAN SOLDIERS that play poker around a fire.

Warming their bones. Laughing. Smiling. Then -

One of them twists his ear to the sky - *hearing something*. A
FAINT WHISTLE....

That builds. And *BUILDS*...

He squints, searching for the root of the noise above him...

And then TERROR strikes him like a lighting bolt as he sees:

A METEOR STORM OF ARTILLERY SHELLS descending upon the
forest!

AND WE SMASH TO:

INT. BARRACKS - VERDUN, FRANCE - NIGHT

Complete silence...

Dim lights drape cold walls inside OLD ARMY BARRACKS. The
place is empty except for -

FIVE MEN who sit at a table. Maps ravaged with pins and pen
marks lay in the middle of them.

We know GENERAL PATTON. But we meet:

GENERAL EISENHOWER. GENERAL BRADLEY. LT. GENERAL JACOB
DEVERS.

And finally, ARTHUR TEDDER, British Field Marshal Bernard
Montgomery's chief of staff.

Aside from Patton, every one of them bears a GRIM FACE.

PATTON
Happens. It's war.

TEDDER
Quarter million Germans just
punched through eighty miles of
Allied lines and we had no idea it
was coming.
(MORE)

TEDDER (CONT'D)

That is not war, that, is a bloody fucking mistake, General.

PATTON

Hitler knew we smelled blood. Went for ours before we got his. We'll respond. Least I fucking will.

EISENHOWER

Everyone's aware of the big picture Tedder, and of the obvious, General.

(then)

The matter at hand is Bastogne. Tedder, when could your men get there?

TEDDER

Four days.

PATTON

Too long. 101st are jammed up with the Krauts breathing down their throats.

DEVERS

If Tedder's men are the closest we don't have another option.

PATTON

Bullshit. I'll be in Bastogne in three days.

TEDDER

You? Your men are a hundred miles south of the city.

PATTON

And in three days they'll be in the city.

TEDDER

Not possible. It would take my men four days from half the distance.

PATTON

Course it would. You're not a goddamn American.

EISENHOWER

Patton.

Patton stops giving Tedder the *fuck you face* for a second...

EISENHOWER (CONT'D)
Three days?

GENERAL
Three days.

Eisenhower nods. *It's decided.*

BRADLEY
(to Patton)
What if Hitler makes a push to
punch through before you get there?

DEVERS
He's right. Bastogne's got roadways
all through the city. All of them
are vital to German armor.

PATTON
I got a couple of boys from the
761st that shouldn't be further
than a day out.

DEVERS
...The coloreds?

PATTON
Nothing permanent. Just a speed-
bump to slow down the Krauts until
I get there.

EXT. ROAD - SUNRISE

Frigid air. Lumps of snow salt the ground.

TWO PRIVATES man a roadside post. Coffee steaming from their
tin cups. Private #1 with his nose between The Bible.

Private # 2 takes a sip of the morning brew. Turns his neck --

STOPS. Double takes. *And just to make sure he's not crazy...*

SLAPS Private # 1 -

PRIVATE # 2
Ay.
(relentless)
AY.

Private # 1 finally pulls himself from the holy book.

PRIVATE # 1
What --

-- The young man goes MUTE. Shell-shocked. His dumbfounded expression perfectly MATCHING THAT OF:

EXT. LORRAINE - TANGO COMPANY OUTPOST - DAY

MAJOR LEWIS (50s, white) -- Jaw ajar. Puzzled. Staring, for a LONG second at -

CARTER AND ROGERS....Well, mostly Carter.

ROGERS

The Lieutenant was asking about --

LEWIS

-- Fuel. I heard him Captain.

(beat)

Ya'll gon' need fuel. Just not to get up to that Siegfried line.

Off Carter and Rogers bewildered look we CUT TO:

EXT. LORRAINE - TANGO COMPY OUTPOST - FIELD H.Q. - DAY

AN OPEN AIR TENT -- Chairs. Canteens. And...LEWIS, standing over a MAP spread across a table.

Carter and Rogers pay close attention.

LEWIS

Krauts ambushed us last night. 1,600 artillery pieces. Lit the whole forest up like a fuckin' Christmas tree. Which means: No Siegfried line. And no Siegfried Line means; war's gonna run later than expected, and Patton's makin' ya'll wait up in Bastogne.

ROGERS

Why? What's in Bastogne?

LEWIS

101st Airborne -- nearly outta food, men, ammo...and surrounded by fuckin' Krauts. Your orders are to hold the city until The General arrives with the cavalry. Clear?

CARTER

We tying up with more armor before Bastogne or are the additional units gonna meet us there?

LEWIS
The only "additional" unit is
ya'll.

Carter...shell-shocked.

ROGERS
The fuck do you mean we're the only
unit?

LEWIS
Like it or not, ya'll gotta paddle
up shits creek just like the rest
of us.
(then)
So, take your paddle...

Lewis holds out A MAP....neither Carter or Rogers take it.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
Or I'll court-martial the both of
you for Insubordination.

...Carter reluctantly takes the map.

LEWIS (CONT'D)
(re: map)
Red lines detail the quickest route
to Bastogne from here. You'll run
into some of my engineers a couple
miles up. They're puttin' together
a Bailey so you can get over a pass
and be on your way.
(beat)
Now, go give your boys the bad news
and get the fuck outta my outpost.

EXT. LORRAINE - TANGO COMPANY OUTPOST - DAY - CONTINUOUS

THE INFANTRY -- Load up, piling into Jeeps. Adding scavenged
ammo to their stockpiles. And some of them, like --

BROWN

Hanging by the *not-Rogers-Command-Jeep*. Holding a canteen to
his lips; attempting to drink away the bad news.

NEARBY -

THA-DUNK! Jim drops AMMO in the backseat of Rogers's COMMAND
JEEP.

JIM (O.S.)
That Jeep run any different?

Brown finding Jim now. Both men - tense.

BROWN
Better.

Brown grabs another bottle from the backseat. Fills his canteen, and takes a 10 second gulp.

JIM
Only gonnna take about an hour to get to that bailey.

BROWN
Uh-huh...

Brown takes another swig.

JIM
(re: Brown's canteen)
Brown. Not a good idea.

BROWN
'Bout fightin' with niggers? 'Bout Bastogne? Them good ideas?

At least Jim can say he tried...

EXT. FOREST AREA - DAY

SNOWFLAKES...

Sink downward from grey clouds. The breeze rocking them back and forth like feathers as they pass...

PINE TREES that overlook a heavily forested region of BELGIUM.

Snowfall spiraling past branches and tree trunks until finally...

It STICKS against A WHITE HAND that tightens a bolt with a wrench.

REVEAL -

A half built BAILEY BRIDGE: A portable, pre-fabricated truss structure.

Currently being constructed at the MOUTH of a shallow OVERPASS that will connect both sides of the forest.

COMBAT ENGINEERS (*All White*) work diligently to put the pieces together. AS --

CARTER AND SMITH

Carry A WOOD PLANK onto the bailey bridge...

SMITH
Show the white boys we could tax
Nazi ass. Break through the
Siegfried Line. End Hitler. Go
home. That was the plan.

THADUNK! They set the plank on the bridge's transom. Work to put it in place...

CARTER
It's war. Plans change.

SMITH
No men. No ammo. No artillery. Fuck
Bastogne. And fuck this plan Doc.

CARTER
Lot of men trapped up there. What
about them?

SMITH
Tough shit - if we were in
Bastogne, nobody be comin' for us.

CARTER
So we shouldn't come for them?

Smith, silent, digests that...

EXT. BAILEY BRIDGE - FOREST AREA - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Rogers uses a SLEDGEHAMMER to pound a pin into a panel; interlocking it with another.

Jim cranks away with a WRENCH but isn't getting anywhere. The Captain takes note of Jim's building frustration.

ROGERS
No luck?

JIM
(to Rogers)
No - think the shit's stuck.

BROWN (O.S.)
Ain't stuck - just don't know what
yer doin'.

Brown -- Close by, transom clamp in his hands. *Clearly inebriated...*

JIM
Go ahead then...

Jim invites Brown to have a crack at it. Rogers GLARES at the drunkard as he stumbles over.

Brown gets to work. Cranking. *And Cranking....But, STILL STUCK.*

ROGERS
Brown - leave it be...too damn
drunk to know what's stuck and what
isn't.

BROWN
I ain't fuckin' drunk, ya hear?
Goddamn difference between havin' a
drink and bein' drunk!

THAWACK! Rogers hammers in another pin; giving Brown the cold shoulder.

BROWN (CONT'D)
(to Rogers)
Hey! Ya' hear me?
(beat)
This here wrench is the problem!
Piece of shit --

-- Brown CATAPULTS the tool into the pass! SLAMS his boot into the truss!

This is officially: An adult tempter tantrum.

CARTER AND CREW

Turning their attention to the escalating scene....Along with EVERYONE ELSE.

A beat.

BROWN (CONT'D)
Fuck ya'll lookin' at! HUH!?

Rogers turns his back on Brown...

BROWN (CONT'D)
And where the fuck you goin'!?

JIM
Probably to get a wrench since your
drunk ass just threw mine in the
pass.

Brown noticing: Rogers is headed right TOWARDS CARTER.

BROWN
(yelling now)
That's right, *I am a drunk-ass
fool....*But least I ain't no Nigger
lover!

Rogers stops. Gets his shoulders square with Brown's.

BROWN (CONT'D)
Plenty of us white folk mighta had
a wrench. But you don't want no
white wrench, do you Cap'n? You
want a Nigger wrench! Cuz you love
Niggers so much, huh!?

Rogers, SEETHING now -- gets in Brown's face.

BROWN (CONT'D)
You gon' do somethin'...Nigger
lover?

Rogers summons every ounce of his will power not to deck
Brown.

A beat.

ROGERS
Pack up. Grab your weapon. Walk
your ass back to Tango's Outpost
and report to Major Williams.
(then)
You got five minutes.

Brown, deep down, wasn't expecting that. He takes a look
around....

HATEFUL STARES -- from every direction. Brown, A PARIAH for
the first time in his life....

A beat.

And then Brown makes his way off the bridge. Alone.

ROGERS (PRE-LAP) (CONT'D)
HEAVE!

EXT. BRIDGE - FOREST AREA - DAY - LATER

BLACK and WHITE, manning both SIDES of a nearly completed bridge -- pushing forward together.

Causing it to lurch further over the PASS, just FEET AWAY from the OTHER SIDE.

EXT. JUST OUTSIDE OF BRIDGE - FOREST AREA - DAY

BROWN

Somewhere DEEP IN THE TREES...

Blood boiling. Uttering every obscenity to himself as he trudges through the forest.

He takes a BIG PULL from his canteen when -- *FWAHHP!* A round punctures HIS SKULL! Dead in an instant.

AS WE STAY ON...

THE FOREST. Silent. Still. The assailant remaining invisible in the ocean of white...

PRE-LAP: The EXHALE of exhausted lungs...

EXT. FOREST AREA - BRIDGE - DAY - LATER

CARTER AND ROGERS

On opposite sides of the truss. Hands on their sides, catching their breath as they ready for another push.

A beat, then....

ROGERS
HEAVE!

CUT TO:

THE FOREST BEHIND THE BAILEY BRIDGE

Frozen. But only for a moment...

WE HEAR - *Trees rustling. The HISS of breath...*

REVEAL -

Camouflaged German soldiers. Dropping to their knees. Filing into formation.

First we see five, then FIFTEEN, then....

AN ENTIRE PLATOON -- readying to unleash hell on our guys...

BACK TO:

CARTER

Unsuspecting; readying for another push forward, WHEN --

-- BRRRRAPPPPPPP! .50 Cal rounds punish everything in sight!

Puncturing flesh. Snapping bones. Leaving masses of soldiers lifeless. *And without hands to hold the BRIDGE -*

KA-BOOM! The alloyed steel collapses downward onto CARTER, pinning his leg!

QUINCY, JOHNS, SMITH -- all rush to help!

SMASH TO:

THE GERMAN PLATOON, IN THE TREES

Continuing to unload with an arsenal of rifles and automatics....*Just the appetizer before the main course:*

AN 88MM ANTI-TANK GUN appears! It sets. Fires and --

BOOOOMMMMM! Ends a Sherman with a single shot.

CARTER

And the others -- wide-eyed upon finding the devastating weapon. Carter flings helping hands away.

CARTER

Get to the tank!

QUINCY

Gettin' you out first Doc!

CUT TO:

ROGERS AND JIM

Taking cover behind A BOULDER.

Popping up and down; sporadically letting off shots! Picking off German foot soldiers like bowling pins!

CARTER

Fervently stating his point --

CARTER

That 88 stays in business we're all
fucked!? You hear me!?

PHEWWWWWW! A round from the 88MM breaks the sound barrier,
JUST missing it's desired target!

ON SMITH -- 88MM GUN in his sights. His heart flutters. Takes
a deep breath then -- **MAKES A RUN FOR IT!**

PRE-LAP: BRAPBRAPBRAP! --

SMITH

-- **SPRINTING!** Ducking and dodging a hail storm of gunfire!

One close call after another until -- *KAA-PING!* Lead
ricochets off his helmet!

Smith and the Helmet now -- **TUMBLING** in opposite directions!

Smith, gets up, dazed, checking his scalp...*ALL CLEAR.*

THE HELEMT, its "Black Bomber" insignia -- left behind as
Smith darts off to the tank.

ROGERS AND JIM

Re-loading behind the boulder. Scanning the battlefield.
Rogers, **FINDING** --

CARTER, still wedged between steel and snow.

SMITH, INSIDE THE TANK

KERCHUNK! Loading the breech. **RACING** against time!

Climbing into the gunners seat. Jittery palms gripping the
handles...

THE 88MM GUN

Lining up THE TANK SMITH IS IN...

*One Mississippi, two Mississippi...*and -- *BOOOOOM!* A shell
hurls like a jet-liner! **SCARCELY MISSING SMITH!**

ROGERS AND JIM

Barreling through the snow, making it to --

CARTER

Rogers, Jim, LIFTING with the rest of the boys now!

The extra muscle giving Carter enough wiggle room to sneak his leg OUT FROM UNDER THE STEEL.

ROGERS

Jim - cover!

Jim sprays the tree-line as Rogers and the others DRAG CARTER to the nearby --

BOULDER

Scarcely enough cover for all of them. Rogers goes to tend Carter's leg wound, but --

QUINCY

(re: Carter)

We got 'em!

Quincy yanks a knife through his shirt, then suppresses the wound.

Rogers goes back to work picking off --

GERMANS...who've considerably thinned out. But -- BOOM! That 88MM delivers another devastating blow! Its up to...

SMITH, INSIDE THE TANK

To end the 88MM. He puts the anti-tank gun in his crosshairs...

-- BOOM! Punches it with a shell! Causing the weapon to IMplode!

OUTSIDE THE TANK

The handful of remaining Germans retreat into the forest.

A beat.

And the thundering sound of war fades, but it's wounds, *still visible...*

Trees on fire. Black smoke seeping through the frigid air.

OUR SOLDIERS -- Infantry and Tanker alike; rise from fighting positions. Wipe red war paint from their faces...

The battle now OVER.

ROGERS

Slumping behind the boulder, next to Carter...Who gestures Rogers a subtle thank you.

PRE-LAP: TING....TING...The sound of -

EXT. FOREST AREA - LATER

- DOG TAGS, gently bumping in the breeze; dangling from BROWN'S NECK...

REVEAL --

ROGERS....Lifting the tags from his friend. Studying Brown for a minute before --

COVERING his corpse with his coat.

JIM

Behind Rogers in the Command Jeep; at a loss for words.

Rogers gets in. A beat....

And Jim hits the gas.

EXT. BAILEY BRIDGE - FOREST AREA - LATER

CARTER

Putting weight on that newly bandaged leg; propping himself up, and OUTSIDE the Commander's hatch. REVEAL --

Carter's on the opposite side of a now fully completed bailey bridge. Swiveling left to right, *looking, but not finding...*

He peers down the hatch to Smith.

CARTER

Smith - Infantry still off comm?

SMITH

(as he checks)

Yeah.

CARTER
Put them back on.

Smith fuddles a couple switches and....

CARTER (CONT'D)
(into company network)
Rogers - this is Carter. You copy?
Over.

ROGERS AND JIM

Their Jeep nearly at the edge of the forest...

ROGERS
This is Rogers. Copy, over.

CARTER

CARTER
You close? Think I'm about to lose
my right testicle to frostbite.

ROGERS AND JIM

Breaking the tree line now. Headed for the bailey bridge.

ROGERS
Not possible Lieutenant. You don't
got testicles.

Rogers clicks off the radio.

JIM
Cap...

Rogers looks ahead, sees: White and Black soldiers. Packed on
the sides of tanks.

SIDE BY SIDE for the first time...

EXT. ROAD - BASTOGNE - EARLY MORNING

CARTER'S TANK

Leads all the others down a frozen road into...

BASTOGNE

What was once a sleepy market village now looks apocalyptic.
Buildings reduced to rubble. Corpses frozen over in the snow.

GROUPS OF SOLDIERS

Sit amongst rubble throughout the city. Holding their M-1 Carbines close. Warming their chilled bones around a fire....

MAJOR HANSEN (PRE-LAP)
How was the ride in?

INT. ROOM - ABANDONED BUILDING - BASTOGNE - DAY

A cottage living room turned into a Battle HQ. Boarded up windows and a roaring fire place fight against the cold.

MAJOR HANSEN - Gray and battle hardened, pours coffee for ROGERS and CARTER.

CARTER
Got hit when we weren't looking.
Suffered heavy losses.

HANSEN
Doesn't surprise me. Krauts got the whole fucking city surrounded. We had them on the ropes first couple rounds, then supplies started running low. So, here we are.

ROGERS
Which is where, exactly?

HANSEN
Fucked - according to a Lieutenant that came limping in a few days back.

Hansen takes a sip of the coffee. Cherishes it.

HANSEN (CONT'D)
Said a platoon of Tigers did his boys in twenty miles outside the city. Also said they're headed this way.

CARTER
A platoon like three or a platoon like five?

HANSEN
Does it matter? Last time I saw one Tiger it put down three Shermans.

ROGERS
You know how far Patton is with the division then?

HANSEN
A Day. And we don't got it.

EXT. SOUTHWEST BASTOGNE - LATER THAT DAY

Rogers, Hansen and Carter stand in front of a cluster of tanks and Infantrymen. Currently studying...

The SOUTHWEST portion of Bastogne. Hanging on by a thread. Past mortar shells causing houses and shops to fall inward on themselves.

Allowing for a better view of THE FOREST that's blanketed in white before them.

Hansen references the beat to shit section of the city surrounding them...

HANSEN
Most vulnerable part of the city.
It's where they'll hit us.

ROGERS
What'd you do to keep them out before?

HANSEN
Lot of Anti-tank. Mortars. But ain't none of that shit left.

Rogers and Carter survey the rubble. *Thinking...*

ROGERS
Carter, you and your boys could take the flanks. I'll put my men in what's left of these buildings. Hit 'em with bazookas while you give them the good stuff.

CARTER
Won't they be expecting that...

Rogers, expression suggesting *"probably"*...

CARTER (CONT'D)
They got more range. Firepower. We trade punches with them we'll lose.

HANSEN
What are you thinking?

CARTER
 (to Rogers)
 How many grenades you got left?

PRE-LAP: KA-CHINK - the sound of a pin being pulled from a GRENADE...

AND WE SMASH TO:

EXT. FOREST OUTSIDE BASTOGNE - LATER

-- *BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!* Grenades rock a long stretch of the forest floor! Detonating in rapid succession!

SNOW - DIRT - SHRAPNEL - all burst into the air.

A beat...

As the haze of explosives and dust clear. REVEAL -

BLACK and WHITE faces creeping upward from behind TANKS...

PRE-LAP: SHINK! SHINK! SHINK! A shovel digs into hard earth -

EXT. ANTI - TANK DITCH - FOREST

QUINCY, JOHNS and other black tankers are in a ditch.

Shoveling away to ensure it slopes at a 45 degree angle, taking a V shape -- *damn deadly for tank tracks.*

This is: THE ANTI-TANK DITCH.

JOHNS AND QUINCY

Huffing and puffing...

JIM (O.S.)
 Ya'll need a hand?

REVEAL - JIM, with a dozen more infantrymen in tow, all of them holding shovels.

JIM (CONT'D)
 Figured a couple more bodies be useful.

JOHNS AND QUINCY -- Taken aback. A beat...

JOHNS
 Yeah. Come on.

PRE-LAP: An engine WHINES --

CUT TO:

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

Stomping the pedal! Shifting gears. Demanding the steel beast give him all it's got because --

It's TOWING A TOTALED TANK. Lugging the hunk of steel towards the ANTI TANK DITCH....

(NOTE: We will refer to this tank as, "THE DUMMY TANK")

Carter gets on his comms.

CARTER
(in radio)
How am I looking?

CUT TO:

SMITH, INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

Peering through the gunsight...

SMITH
Hold on...

THE GUNSIGHT POV

Pans from the soldiers shoveling out the anti-tank ditches backwards to find --

The dummy tank.

PANNING UP A TREE TRUNK NOW...

An "X" -- carved into the wood, in PERFECT ALIGNMENT with the dummy tank right below it.

SMITH (CONT'D)
Hold there - you're in position.

CARTER
Let the boys know.

Smith climbs through the Commanders hatch. To his right:

THE THREE REMAINING SHERMAN TANKS

Side by side, all in a line with Carter's and PARALLEL to the anti-tank ditches.

Smith WHISTLES!

SMITH
Cover up!

EXT. CARTER'S TANK - FOREST OUTSIDE BASTOGNE - LATER

The crew works to CAMOUFLAGE the tank. Piling blotches of snow, branches and bark on the steel...

ROGERS (O.S.)
(re: tank camouflage)
Not bad.

REVEAL -

ROGERS, approaching the tank. A FLARE in his right hand.

CARTER
Considering the circumstances,
which are fucked.

ROGERS
(re: Flare)
Found these - should help us un-
fuck 'em a little bit.

CARTER
Those?

CUT TO:

EXT. TANK DITCHES - FOREST - CONTINUOUS

PAN TO SEE -

The anti-tank ditch from before. Now covered with BRANCHES and SNOW...

Stretching fifty yards into the distance....

REVEAL -

Carter and Rogers. Knees plopped in frozen white. Next to a section of the anti-tank ditch.

Carter holds THE FLARE - keeping it in place on top of a PIECE of wood while Rogers secures it with WIRE.

ROGERS
Called a "Trip Flare."

Rogers firmly fastens the flare to the wood. Then pulls the rest of the wire towards THE TRUNK OF A TREE...

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Wire breaks. Flare goes up.

....Rogers TIES the wire together. Keeping it in place.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Krauts'll set it off right before
they roll into the ditch.

Rogers takes a beat. Contemplates THE DUMMY TANK....

Which is now camouflaged like the rest of the Shermans.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
(re:dummy tank)
Think they'll fall for it?

CARTER
If the Lieutenant's green, with a
lot of pride, ego, and looking to
prove a point...then yeah, they'll
fall for it.

ROGERS
I only know one Lieutenant who'd do
some shit like that...

Carter GRINS. Rogers pats him on the back...

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Lets get the rest of these flares
up.

EXT. INFANTRY FOXHOLES - BASTOGNE - NIGHT - LATER

A LINE OF FOXHOLES dug just outside Bastogne. Stretching for
a half a football field in length.

QUINCY -- moving and grooving in one of his PORTABLE
KITCHENS.

He dumps food on Tanker and Infantry plates. But his next
customer...

IS JIM -- KERPLOP! Quincy gives him one helping. Then,
KERPLOP! He tacks on another.

Jim nods, appreciating the gesture...

CUT TO:

SMITH

Alone. Scarfing down his chow by a foxhole. When -- JOHNS, takes a seat next to him.

He has a Helmet on his head, and another in his hand. Johns plops the one in his hand next to the helmet-less Smith.

JOHNS

(re: helmet)

Least this one don't got that dumbass name on it...

SMITH

Thanks.

JOHNS

Shouldn't have said that shit, back in Dieuze. 'Bout Hampton, you...

SMITH

No. You should've. I hesitated.

JOHNS

Not on that bridge you didn't.

Both men go silent for a moment...

JOHNS (CONT'D)

Reckon' we got a chance?

SMITH

With you drivin' and me shootin'.
Come on...

Johns puts a slice of tobacco between his gums.

JOHNS

When we back, and I get my farm,
ain't gon' be raisin' no normal
tobacca'. Gon flavor it. Be the
first one to do it too.

SMITH

Like what?

JOHNS

Thinkin' peach....Maybe Cherry.

SMITH

I love peaches.

JOHNS

Peach it is then.

EXT. TANK DITCHES - FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Rogers, flare in hand, is drawn to the distant noise of:
TANKERS AND INFANTRY -- Eating at the foxholes.

He impatiently waits on Carter...who LIMPS his way.

ROGERS

Last one. Faster you limp, quicker
we go eat.

Carter flips him off...

ROGERS (CONT'D)

That leg gonna hold up once the
fireworks start going off?

CARTER

Does a Klansman have white skin?

Carter, holding the flare now. Rogers, setting up the wires,
mulling on a thought...

ROGERS

You get your card pulled or you
enlist?

CARTER

I enlisted. Why?

ROGERS

Was about to ask you that same
question...

Carter adds the finishing touches on the trip flare. Gets up.

CARTER

Because being born with darker skin
doesn't make me any less of a man
than you.

EXT. FOREST OUTSIDE BASTOGNE - LATER

Our THREE CAMOUFLAGED SHERMANS...

Occupying the blanket of white that is the forest floor.
PARALLEL to the anti-tank ditches.

CARTER'S TANK

LAST in the formation. Closest to the INFANTRY FOXHOLES that
lay in the distance.

CARTER

Outside the commanders hatch. Relishing the final moments of peace.

...A DISTANT GRUMBLE....echoes through the void.

KA-DUNK! Carter secures the hatch, ducking --

INSIDE THE TANK

Maneuvering to the EMPTY CO-DRIVER seat; HANGING Hampton's Dog Tags at his old station.

A moment, then...

Carter takes his place **INSIDE THE TANK**, manning the turret basket near Smith.

He inspects each of his men...Clenched jaws. Chests rising with raw emotion.

CARTER
Everyone good?

And this time, every one of them....*READY FOR THE FIGHT....*

QUINCY
Yup...

KERCHACK! Quincy slams a shell in the tank canon...

QUINCY (CONT'D)
Fuck Hitler.

Smith squeezes the handles of the tank gun...

SMITH
...Fuck Hitler...

Johns sits up in his chair, with each crack of his neck...

JOHNS
Fuck. Hitler.

And finally...

CARTER
Fuck Hitler.

CUT TO:

EXT. INFANTRY FOXHOLES - CONTINUOUS

Fifteen shallow holes dug in the earth. A couple soldiers in each.

Their backs less than a mile from the southwest corner of BASTOGNE they're protecting...

ROGERS

Sharing his foxhole with JIM and a WIRY PRIVATE.

Rogers peers into the forest -

Only to see a void of FOG and HAZE. But *the same GRUMBLE* from before reaches Rogers's eardrums...

His heart begins to THUMP...

CUT TO:

CARTER'S PERISCOPE POV

Stares into FOG. It's EERIE...

The thick clouds twisting through branches. Wrapping around tree trunks. BEGGING to be parted. It's wish answered as...

A 120,000 POUND behemoth lurches through the mist...

THE GERMAN TIGER TANK - Wider. Taller. A GOLIATH in comparison to the DAVID that our tankers occupy.

What was once a GRUMBLE is now a ROAR. Panning from LEFT to RIGHT we now see...

Not one. Not two. But THREE...Tiger Tanks.

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

Carter pulls away from his periscope. Every set of eyes inside the tank glued to their leader...

JOHNS

They here?

CARTER

Almost....

Carter talks into the company network via helmet.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Captain.

ROGERS, AT THE FOXHOLE

The wiry private hands Rogers the radio.

ROGERS
Go for Rogers.

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

CARTER
They're rolling in...

ROGERS, AT THE FOXHOLE

Looks back out into the FOG - his visibility limited.

ROGERS
Copy. You lead I follow,
Lieutenant.

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

CARTER
Copy.

CUT TO:

THE TIGER TANKS

Approaching the ANTI-TANK DITCH in a staggered formation.

Their canons trained on the DUMMY TANK. Sizing up the
decoy....

The move in, CLOSER and CLOSER until -- *BOOM! BOOM! BOOM!*
They unleash a hailstorm of artillery!

FALLING for the decoy. They keep at it, going for the kill!

The Tiger FUNNELING into the exact position our Sherman's
intended them too as we:

We watch from a LOW ANGLE -- The forest floor at the BOTTOM
of our frame....

VIBRATING as the tank in front, which we'll call TIGER 1 -
barrels towards us...

Closer. And CLOSER....

RACK FOCUS. The tanks go BLURRY. Sharp in the lens now:

THE TRIP FLARE WIRES

Just SECONDS away from being ROLLED OVER BY TIGER 1....

WE PULL OUT --

WIDE on the forest..

THE SHERMAN TANKS - hiding amongst the trees. Waiting to strike...

INFANTRYMEN - sliding BAZOOKAS on their shoulders...

A beat.

- CLINK! TIGER 1 ROLLS OVER THE WIRE -

PHEWWWWWWWW!!! The flare goes off! BLAZING a dazzling REDDISH PINK! A split-second after -

KA-THUD! Tiger 1 falls head first into the anti-tank ditch!

PHEWWWW! PHEEEEEWWW! PHEEWWWW! More FLARES come alive in the darkness. REVEAL -

TIGER 2 AND TIGER 3

Nose down. Ass up. *STUCK exactly like Tiger 1* just further down the ditch line. Which is when -

THE SHERMANS BOMBARDE THE TIGERS!

Lighting the forest up like the fucking FOURTH OF JULY!

TRACER ROUNDS from Sherman machine guns zing like **GREEN** lasers through the night!

Shells glow **YELLOW** as they erupt from Canons!

SMASH TO:

CARTER'S TANK

KA-BOOM! Smith rifles off a shot! HITTING TIGER 1 -- *but the thick armor deflects the round into the trees!*

CARTER

Stay on him! We'll get through -

KERCHACK! Quincy loads - *KABOOM!* - Smith fires!

KERCHACK! KABOOM! The cycle on REPEAT as Smith dumps rounds in the enemy!

SMASH TO:

ROGERS, AT THE FOXHOLE

Bazooka on his shoulder. *FWOOSH! He lets the rocket fly!*
 Prompting us to -

RACE DOWN THE LINE OF FOXHOLES in *motherfucking Michael Bay fashion to see -*

FWOOOOSH!FWOOOOSH!FWOOOOSH! -- Streaks of **ORANGE** as Bazooka rounds RIFLE out of each passing foxhole!

SMASHING INTO --

ALL THREE TIGERS

PINK - YELLOW - GREEN - ORANGE!

A dazzling light show ERUPTING as various weapons collide into the Tiger Tanks!

SMASH TO:

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

Smith sends off another shell -- *KA-BOOOM!* It tears through the engine and into the fuel tank of TIGER 1!

Setting it ABLAZE.

CARTER -- in his periscope watching:

GERMANS

Flailing out of Tiger 1's hatches when --

BOOOM! Tiger 2 EXPLODES like a giant blow torch! The blast tosses the fleeing Germans from Tiger 1!

But they get back up! SCAMPERING through the snow. However, the escape is short lived because --

JOHNS, INSIDE THE TANK

ROARS as he JACKHAMMERS long bursts into the German troops!
Ending their shit!

Johns smashes in a new AMMO CAN -- *THA-DINK!*

SMASH TO:

TIGER 3

Hanging on by a thread. The superior armor has withstood the firepower, but it's luck is nearly up...

And so is our unit's. AS WE REVEAL -

A NEW PLATOON OF TIGERS

THREE MORE OF THEM. Racing into the fight in SINGLE FILE formation. *Think of a 90 DEGREE ANGLE* -

The Tigers are the HORIZONTAL LINE of that angle -

"-----"

Punching through the forest. Riding in ABOVE OUR SHERMANS who represent -

The VERTICAL LINE of the 90 degree angle in this analogy -

" | "

And our heroes are unaware of the whole situation as:

THE THREE NEW TIGERS

Currently wrap around a CLUSTER OF TREES -

Their CANONS now pointed straight down the same VERTICAL PLANE as the Shermans...

Ready to destroy.

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

Carter's nuzzled up to his scope. Barking -

CARTER (CONT'D)
End that sonofabitch Smith!

KABOOM! Finally, the last standing Tiger, Tiger 3, meets it's maker...

The barrage of shells subsides...

The battlefield falls quiet for a moment...

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

Our crew erupts with emotion. BANGING the steel! Whistling! Roaring -

SMITH
Ohhhhhhweeee! That's what I'm talking about boy!

A beat.

CARTER
 (into radio)
 Tigers are destroyed.

ROGERS, AT THE FOXHOLE

Grinning as he listens to Carter on the radio but the cheerful moment comes to a screeching halt when --

- WHAAA-BAAMMM! Shards of shrapnel and steel CLANG into:

CARTER'S TANK

Carter swivels the periscope to his RIGHT where the blast came from, seeing -

THE TANK NEXT TO HIM

...GUSHING yellow smoke. It's been hit with an 88 cannon shell!

ROGERS, AT THE FOXHOLE

The explosion rocketing chills down his spine...

THE TANK NEXT TO CARTER

WHAAAAA-BAMMM! Getting hit again! Fissuring the vehicle in two!

REVEAL -

THE OTHER THREE TIGER TANKS

All SIDE BY SIDE...

TIGER 4 - TIGER 5 - TIGER 6.

|

V

The Calvary...Coming right for our Shermans.

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

CARTER (CONT'D)
 Reverse! Reverse!

Johns doesn't waste a beat -- on the gas, revving the tank BACKWARDS!

CARTER (CONT'D)
 (into radio)
 Rogers - we got contact! Three new
 Tigers!

Which is when, *BOOOM!BOOM!BOOOM!* Shells catapult from the
 Tiger canons --

Just MISSING CARTER! Cracking trees in half! Blowing craters
 in the ground as big as swimming pools!

WIDE ON -

Our TWO remaining tanks, REVERSING through the snow.

THE TIGERS

Turning LEFT in pursuit!

Shifting their TURRETS to be straight on with the Shermans
 who are bee-lining in the opposite direction.

ROGERS, AT THE FOXHOLE

On his feet now --

ROGERS
 (into radio)
 Love one-three-five we're on the
 move!
 (then)
 Both you, with me!

Jim and Wiry Private spring from the foxhole, following a
 hellbent Rogers....

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

CARTER
 (into comms)
 Button hook around these bastards,
 get on those fuel tanks!
 (beat)
Punch it!

Johns CRANKS - PULLS - STOMPS and --

THE SHERMAN TANKS

In synchronized swimming-like elegance, yanking themselves
 one by one into INVERSE U TURNS --

Moving COUNTER CLOCKWISE! Their turrets now SQUARE with the
 sides of the Tigers!

BRAP!BOOM!BRAP!BROOM! Our Shermans UNLOAD a fury of strikes in rapid succession!

SWALLOWING the enemy in canon fire! And - *BOOOM!*

Tiger 4 grinds to a HALT -- Done for. But...

....*CLICK!CLICK!CLICK!* Tiger 5 swings it's Turret around, takes aim and -

RIPS one of the good guys in half.

TWO TIGERS vs. CARTER'S SHERMAN now....

JOHNS, INSIDE THE TANK

In his periscope -- seeing their last ally reduced to smoldering steel...

JOHNS

Charlie's down! Both of 'em comin' for us!

CARTER

Stay on that gas Johns! Smith -- I'll tell you when!

SMITH

Copy!

CUT TO:

ROGERS AND HIS MEN

Boots flinging up snow! SPRINTING into --

THE FOREST

At least TWENTY of them. Digging in behind trees, setting up shop on the TIGER'S FLANK...

CUT TO:

TIGER 5

Picking up speed! Nudging out in front of Tiger 6! Nearly *NECK AND NECK* with Carter's tank now...

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

Eyeing the threat, *deciding to punch first* --

CARTER
(re: Tiger 5)
Fire!

KA-BOOOOM! The shot THUMPS TIGER 5 but MISSES the fuel tank!

INSIDE THE TANK

SMITH
FUCK! Quincy -- Gimmie another!

QUINCY -- lightning like agility as he re-loads the main gun for Smith!

TIGER 5

PHEEEWWWWW-BOOOM! Volleying a shot back at our tank! JUST MISSING!

Way. Too. Close.

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

Understanding -- their end could be in seconds.

CARTER
Take the shot! TAKE THE SHOT!

SMITH
I can't get on him!

SMITH'S GUNSIGHT POV

Fighting through the turbulence; trying to get Tiger 5 in it's crosshairs when....

BOOOM!BOOM!BOOM!

REVEAL --

THE INFANTRY

-- LIGHTING TIGER 5 UP! Ripping BAZOOKA ROUNDS from the enemy's flank!

The german vehicle sputters, sliding...STOPPING.

One of it's TANKERS -- throws himself from a hatch! Screaming, engulfed in flames! And it's --

ROGERS

Sending an anti-tank round rifling through THE GERMANS CHEST! SPLAT!

Rogers re-loads. Hollers to JIM, on the other side of the tree trunk --

ROGERS
(re: Tiger 5)
Fucker needs one more and he's
down!

Jim hears. Listens. And EXECUTES -- KA-BOOOOM! Tiger 5, down for the count.

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

In Hell right now, but managing a smile upon seeing Rogers's actions.

JOHNS
That the infantry!?

CARTER
Johns - stay focused!

-- KERCHUNK! Quincy punches another one in the breech!

QUINCY
Clear!

CARTER
Smith -- back third! Under his
tracks!

Smith yanks back the trigger! SMASH TO:

TIGER 6

SCCCCRECHHHHHH! Breaking!

Clearly, *foreseeing* Smith's shot, allowing it to avoid the 75mm round completely!

ROGERS AND JIM

Bazooka's on shoulders; FIRING away at Tiger 6 --

Wide right. Wide left. Both of them gritting teeth with each miss!

QUINCY, INSIDE THE TANK

Plucking another shell from the ammo rack, noticing:

QUINCY
We're runnin' low!

He punches a new shell in the breech JUST AS --

TIGER 6

Recoils in fury! HURLING a shell right into --

CARTER'S TANK! Busting it's TRACKS! Whipping the armored vehicle 180 degrees! SMASH TO:

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

SPARKS bursting! Eardrums RINGING! We sift through a murky haze....

CARTER
Everyone alright!?

QUINCY
Yup.

SMITH
Good here.

CARTER
Johns!?

A COUGH. A WHEEZE. It's...

Johns. Pieces of steel and shrapnel turn his stomach RED. He fights through pain; grabs levers, checking --

JOHNS
-- Tracks are fucked.

CARTER
Johns...You hurt?

JOHNS
...Eh...jus a lil' flesh wound.

Dust settling now....

Our crew able to clearly see Johns. *Understanding his fate....*

TIGER 6

Under the impression Carter's tank is taken care of...

It spins, rearing it's ugly head right for: THE INFANTRY

The cannon swings around, locking in, and -- BOOOOOM! A third of the Infantry....

GONE with a single blow!

JIM AND ROGERS

Wide-eyed at Tiger 6's power. Then we see:

THE WIRY PRIVATE FROM EARLIER --

Coming up on their right! Fleeing from his post in fear of:

TIGER 6

Swiveling that deadly canon in a hurry, right up towards --

ROGERS AND JIM

Fuddling to re-load....*CLICK-CLACK!* All set now.

Jim goes for it -- MISSING!

Rogers follows up -- *PLUNKKKK!* Too high! The shot careens off Tiger 6's heavily armored hull!

Oh....fuck....

Both men -- DROP their weapons! Sprint upward, following in the tracks of the wiry Private but --

KA-BOOM! The Tiger unleashes another rocket! Crashing close enough to --

TOSS Rogers and Jim like rag dolls! *KA...THUDING* them into the hard earth! Unconscious.

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

Stomach wrenching as he watches TIGER 6 reduce the Infantry to mince meat.

CARTER

Quincy, how many we got left?

QUINCY -- checks the rack; only...

QUINCY

Two.

Carter takes a beat. Looks to:

THE ESCAPE HATCH BENEATH HIS FEET.

CARTER

Quincy. Smith. Go out the escape hatch.

(MORE)

CARTER (CONT'D)

(beat)

Me and Johns'll take care of him.

A beat.

CARTER (CONT'D)

Both of you - Out. Now. That's an order.

Smith...Stiffens up. Grabs the gun.

SMITH

Seen you behind the gun Sarge. If our boys are gonna make it out this forest, you'd need twenty shells.
Not two.

Quincy plops the second to last shell in the breech. They're both staying...

And Carter knows it.

TIGER 6

A Bazooka round WHIZES past it's backside! The Tiger pivots back where it started, finding --

A COUPLE OF STRAGGLING INFANTRYMEN

Battered. Beat up. But giving it one last Hoo-rah! Until --

The Tiger takes cares of business! Fissuring the earth! Sending the stragglers to the next life!

ROGERS

Ears bleeding. Eye-lids fluttering open....

The forest floor around him -- RIPPED to pieces.

He wobbles to his feet. Searching through smoke and ash...

FINDING --

JIM...bloody, leg and shoulder lacerated.

ROGERS

Jim! Jim!

Jim eases back into consciousness...

Rogers, a sigh of relief. SHORT LIVED THOUGH BECAUSE --

TIGER 6

CLICK-CLICK!CLICK...

The menacing maw of it's canon inching their direction...

ROGERS

Helping Jim up -- the two, interlocking shoulders.

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Come on!

Hobbling to the nearest TREE where:

WIRY PRIVATE lays idle. Half his body gone. But....

HIS BAZOOKA -- relatively unscathed; cradled in his cold arms.

And that weapon is the only fighting chance Rogers has got.

TIGER 6

Stopping. Setting....

It's not looking good for Rogers and Jim!

The German tank....FIRES!

But holy shit, SIMULTANEOUSLY --

The Tiger gets walloped by an armor piercing shell! Knocking it off axis!

And most importantly, *MISDIRECTING IT'S SHOT which:*

SAVES ROGER AND JIM from certain death!

The Tiger whips back around, finds the perpetrator

CARTER'S TANK

That's right....Shit. Ain't. Over. Yet.

ROGERS

Eases Jim to the ground.

GRABS the Bazooka from dead Wiry Private's arms! But it's EMPTY!

His pupils scatter across the landscape, frantically searching for ammunition...

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

Quincy loads THE LAST SHELL.

Carter, in his periscope -- tracking The Tiger's movement...

CARTER
Smith....only one place we can end
him from here.

SMITH
I know.

Smith gets serious. Pressing his eyeball right to the
gunsight as WE CUT TO:

OUTSIDE THE TANK

The Sherman's turret twisting past...

A battlefield A BLAZE. Orange crawling over steel and tree
trunks...

Smoke coughing into the night sky. The pink hue of flares
coming to a calm....

Finally coming eye to eye with: THE TIGER'S ROTATING TURRET.

Both of the monsters now staring each other in the face...

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

CARTER
Fire!

WE SMASH OUTSIDE TO SEE -

Both tanks SHOOT at the same time! Shells screaming across
the forest!

And Smith's is RIGHT ON TARGET -

- KA-BOOM! The Tiger's canon explodes! Mangled metal stripped
backward like a banana peel! Officially..

Out. Of. Fucking. Order.

BUT....

WHHHHAM! The Tiger's shell punches into the ass end of the
Sherman!

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

A violent, bloody mess...

Quincy PINNED by the ammunition.

Smith's leg is torn open. Red leaking everywhere...

Carter WHEEZES. Looks to his shoulder....a piece of steel is punctured through the muscle.

ROGERS

Watches The Tiger go up in smoke....Carter and Crew got him.

He deflates. Looks to Jim...

ROGERS
You alright?

JIM
I'm good.

THE RADIO -- nestled between poor wiry Private's ribcage and the tree.

Rogers gives it a go...nervous.

ROGERS
Carter....It's Rogers - over?

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

CARTER
Go for Carter, over.

ROGERS

Breathes a sigh of relief...

ROGERS
Everyone alright in there?

CARTER, IN THE TANK

Before he can answer --

WHOOSH! The sound a match makes when struck. The Tiger's armor piercing shell and gasoline SWIRL TOGETHER and....

SPARKS cackle in the engine of the tank. A FIRE quickly coming to life...

ROGERS

Stomach dropping as he sees:

Carter's tank BILLOWS SMOKE...*Urgency lining his voice now.*

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Carter you're smoking...

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

Choking on smoke...

CARTER
Yeah. I know.

ROGERS

ROGERS
Well then get the fuck out!

Carter doesn't answer. Rogers, heart fluttering now!

ROGERS (CONT'D)
Hold on - I'm coming over!

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

The sparks now budding into EMBERS that build on one another...

CARTER
Rogers...Relax brother. It's all good.

ROGERS

Lip quivering; Holding the emotion back...

A beat.

ROGERS
Copy that.
(then)
Hey Doc...Appreciate you getting us out that jam.

CARTER, INSIDE THE TANK

CARTER
Over and out Captain.

ROGERS

Lost for a long moment...

Finally, putting down the receiver.

Jim drops his head. Disheartened. Knowing all he needs to from Rogers's face....

INSIDE CARTER'S TANK

The heat SWELLING. Our crew CHOKING on smoke.

The end is inevitable. And every man in here KNOWS IT...

Carter finds the MACALLAN 1940. Twists it open. THUMPS Smith on the shoulder...

Smith smiles. Nods. Takes a swig, then passes it...

To Johns, who does the same, offers it back to Carter...

Who opts to make sure Quincy gets a taste before he does. Quincy takes a long pull. Finally...

The bottle gets back to Carter. A moment, as he rubs his thumb over the label -- *satisfied*...

Lieutenant Carter "Doc" Williams raises the bottle to his own lips...

WOOOOSH! Embers BURST into flames! And before it gets graphic...

OUR SCREEN TURNS WHITE.

A void of white nothingness hangs in between four corners for long moments until...

It dissipates, BECOMING...

EXT. BASTOGNE - FOREST - DAY

...SNOW. Flurrying through the air...

Coating the wreckage from the night before in a thin blanket of white.

WE FIND - PATTON. Taking a long look at:

CARTER'S TANK. Now a hunk of molten steel in the snow...

ROGERS stands behind him.

ROGERS

Without them, Tigers would've
punched clear through the city sir.

A beat.

Patton turns back to Rogers.

PATTON
 Captain...
 (then)
 I want the name of every man in
 that tank.

THE END.

The 761st tank battalion were one of the most prolific units during the course of World War II, fighting for 183 continuous days, inflicting more than 130,000 casualties and earning 391 decorations for heroism.

Their efforts challenged the myth of racial superiority and were a key factor that led to President Harry S. Truman signing Executive Order 9981.

The order abolished racial discrimination in the United States Armed Forces and eventually led to the end of segregation in the services all together.