

# THE LIBERATORS

Written by

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Inspired By True Events

1/31/18

*"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 -- ZHOOMP!*

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....

...*KAAAABOOOMMM!* 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

*Weeellllll....I come from Alabama  
with my Banjo on my knee - I's  
goin' to Louisiana 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 Niqqerrrrrr!

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 BELLYFLOPS 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: THAAAAAA-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**

*CREAKKKKK! 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!* -- Clasping 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  
'Gratulations buck.

Hampton processes. Unable to find words...

JOHNS  
Jus' think...Couple months time  
Hampton gon' be back in Detroit  
changin' 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 *VR000OM!* 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 sumabaitches 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 saut s 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! MPHMH!* 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.

*WHOOSH!* 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 fiddles 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**

*BRAAAPP! 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-blanks of an eye from detonating now!

HAMPTON (CONT'D)  
Get down!

-- HAMPTON THROWS HIMSELF on the grenade! PFFFFT-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....*BOOOOOM!* 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-BOOOMMM!* 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!

*BBRAAAPP! 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 - QUAINT 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. QUAINT 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.

...SHIIINNNKKK! 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, chuck's it -- KA-DUNKKK!

MATCH TO...

**INT. QUAINT 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 temper 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 --  
-- *BRRRRRAPPPPPP!* .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 --

*BOOOOMMM!* 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!?

*PHEWWWWWWWW!* 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 HELEMNT, 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 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...

Close. 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 -

*PHEWWWWWWWWWW!!!* 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! PHEEEEEEWWWW! 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-BOOM!* 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 --

*BOOM!* 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  
*Ohhhhhweeee!* 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**

*WHAAAAAA-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**

*PHEEEWWWWWW-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**

SCCCCCRECHHHHHH! 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....**FIRE!**

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.**