

THE LOST PATROL

Andrew Hilton

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WGAw Registered

FADE IN:

EXT. FRENCH VILLAGE - NIGHT

A warm, moonlit night. Late summer, 1944.

The cobblestone streets appear deserted, yet we hear the heavy-breathing of...

MARIE LECLARE (20s)

She hides in the shadow of a doorway. Her eyes closed in anticipation as she twists a metal ring around a finger...

MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)
(American accent)
Wait. Wait... Now!

Marie pulls the pin from a GRENADE, throws it...

KA-BOOM!

Marie whips a Sten Mk II MACHINE-GUN from her shoulder and opens fire. The muzzle-flash lights up the night.

In the distance: *GUNFIRE, EXPLOSIONS, SCREAMING...*

Marie slings her weapon onto her back, helps LT. JACK ALDEN (30s) to his feet. He reloads an M1911 semi-auto with one hand, keeps pressure on a serious GUT WOUND with the other.

MARIE
(French accent)
We go!

They move quickly. Marie propping up this wounded American officer, desperate to get him off the battlefield.

As they turn a corner, Alden spies a YOUNG GI on the other side of the street. He's traumatized, disorientated.

LT. ALDEN
Goddamn it, Russell, get off the
street! Find somewhere to hide!

The Young GI looks up, relief flooding his face.

A bayonet pierces the young soldier's throat. An instant later, two GERMAN SOLDIERS drag the poor GI out of sight.

Alden empties his .45 in frustration, too hurt to go after them. Marie grabs his arm, pulls him along...

EXT. ALLEYWAY - SAME

Marie and Alden turn another corner and stop cold.

JOSEF RICHTER (30s) aims an MP40 at Marie, barks in French...

RICHTER

L'église?

Marie points down the street. Richter lowers his gun, offers a nod of thanks, and runs in that direction.

Marie leads Alden deeper into the alley.

LT. ALDEN

"L'église?"

MARIE

The church.

Marie kicks open a doorway...

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Marie lowers Alden into a chair, slides a bookcase in front of the door. Only now, inside this tiny house, do we get our first real look at her...

The war has taken its toll and her appearance is unkempt, but she's still a natural beauty. In peacetime, she might be singing in a Parisian nightclub. But it's 1944 so she's a hard-as-nails member of the French Resistance.

LT. ALDEN

(shocked)

They're so fast, so brutal. My men--

MARIE

Are dead. Like most of my family,
all of my friends...

Marie moves a small table, pries open a hidden trapdoor.

MARIE (cont'd)

Isabelle!

ISABELLE (8) appears in the crawl space, visibly relieved to see her mother. Suddenly, A NOISE OUTSIDE. A shadow moves past the windows, stops at the door...

MARIE (cont'd)

Quickly!

Alden glances at Isabelle, makes a decision...

LT. ALDEN

You first.

As soon as Marie slides into the tunnel, Alden SLAMS THE TRAPDOOR CLOSED.

Behind him, the door is attacked with an axe.

MARIE

No! What are you doing?!

They lock eyes through the 1/4 inch gap between the old wood.

LT. ALDEN

(fading)

Protect your daughter.

Another ax swing and two GERMAN SOLDIERS storm the room.

MARIE'S POV -- THROUGH THE FLOORBOARDS

Alden is face down on the floor, hiding the trapdoor, his eyes locked on Marie.

LT. ALDEN

(low)

Thank you for trying.

The Germans descend on Alden with their BAYONETS. His blood seeps between the floorboards, drips onto Marie and Isabelle.

Weeping, Marie shields her daughter from the horror and recedes into the dark tunnel.

FADE TO BLACK:

MAIN TITLES

A CROW perched on a tree branch. It takes flight, soars over an ocean of farmland...

At first, the landscape is beautiful. Luscious green meadows. A sparkling brook. Acres of wild flowers.

Gradually, it begins to decay. Long neglected crops scar the hillsides. Crumbling stone walls. Splintered and charred trees. Slaughtered livestock.

We approach a cluster of buildings, the smoldering remains of a small town. Broken bodies lie scattered in the rubble.

Torn and bloodied uniforms hang from twisted limbs. The burning skeleton of an armored vehicle sends a thick finger of smoke into the sky.

The smell of cooked flesh and a thousand spent bullets permeates the air.

The crow lands on another perch. A rifle. Clutched in the hands of a rotting corpse.

END TITLES

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP - DAY

A large camp of American GIs. Every square foot of land is covered with invasion-scarred equipment and war-weary troops. Some play cards, some are eating, a few clean their weapons. Many are smoking. Most are sleeping.

Two MPs approach a tent with an armed GUARD posted outside.

GUARD

He's all yours.

The guard steps aside.

GUARD (cont'd)

But I doubt the son-of-a-bitch is sober enough to go anywhere.

INT. JAIL TENT - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON--

A grimy pair of combat boots, propped up by a helmet that's seen plenty of action...

We pan along the body of this sleeping soldier to reveal the unshaven, grizzly face of TOM STEELE (30s). A face weathered by laughter and fury, thick tattooed forearms, and fists of all-American iron.

Snoring. Loud snoring.

MP #2 (O.S.)

Sir?

MP #2 nudges Steele's leg with his boot. No reaction.

MP #1
You think he's dead?

MP #2
He's snoring ain't he?

MP #2 kneels beside Steele, gently slaps his cheek.

MP #2 (cont'd)
Wake up, sunshine.

Steele's eyes snap open to find two faces peering down at him. Instinctively, he grabs MP #2, pulls him to the ground, and rolls on top of him.

Steele stares down at him.

STEELE
(hoarse)
Coffee.

MP #2
The Colonel wants to see you.

Steele recoils from the volume of the MP's words, places a finger to his lips.

STEELE
Sssshhhh. Too loud.

MP #2
(quieter)
The Colonel wants to see you.

More snoring. Steele has fallen asleep again.

CUT TO:

INT. COMMAND TENT - DAY - LATER

At his desk, hard-nosed COLONEL JAMES MCKENZIE (40s) sits eating his breakfast from a mess tray. A napkin is stuffed into the collar of his perfect uniform.

Steele sits before him, nursing the mother of all hangovers.

COL. MCKENZIE
(without looking up)
General Patton says a good soldier is a man who has discipline, self-respect, pride in his unit, and pride in his country.

Steele suppresses a belch, wipes his mouth with his sleeve. An MP posted by the door eyes him with disgust.

COL. MCKENZIE (cont'd)
Would you say you're a good
soldier, Steele?

STEELE
Not presently. Sir.

COL. MCKENZIE
Do you even remember last night?

STEELE
It's a little foggy.

COL. MCKENZIE
Allow me to refresh your memory.
At twenty-one-hundred last night
you stole whiskey from a first aid
truck, consumed most of it, and
drove an M3 right into enemy
territory. Lucky for you, the half-
track got stuck in a river, or else
you'd be a POW this morning.

STEELE
Least that explains why my boots
feel damp, sir.

COL. MCKENZIE
This isn't a laughing matter,
soldier. I've already taken your
stripes and you could *hang* for
this. You realize that?

STEELE
(under his breath)
Fine by me.

Exasperated, McKenzie explodes to his feet.

COL. MCKENZIE
Goddamn you! The world is at war
and I've lost half the soldiers in
my command--

At that moment, an AIDE pokes his head through the door from an adjoining communications tent.

AIDE
Sorry to interrupt, sir. It's
Lieutenant Alden's patrol.

Steele reacts to the name "Alden."

COL. MCKENZIE
He radioed in?

AIDE
Well that's just it, sir. *Someone* is transmitting from his radio, but it's not one of our boys.

COL. MCKENZIE
What do you mean?

AIDE
The voice is German.

COL. MCKENZIE
I'll be right there.

The Aide exits.

STEELE
Jack Alden?

COL. MCKENZIE
Unlike you, he got back on the horse after Omaha. He's leading a scouting patrol south of here--

STEELE
And now some German is using his radio?

COL. MCKENZIE
That's not your concern.

The Colonel gets up to leave.

COL. MCKENZIE (cont'd)
I'm sending you home, Steele.

STEELE
Excuse me, sir?!

COL. MCKENZIE
I need soldiers on the battlefield, not basket cases. If you hadn't taken that beachhead, I'd tie the noose myself. Instead I'll see to it you spend the rest of the war cleaning latrines at Ft. Bragg.
(to MP)
Watch him until I get back.

The Colonel exits.

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - CONTINUOUS

LT. LEACH (late 20's) and a RADIO OPERATOR are hunched over a bank of radios.

Colonel McKenzie enters.

COL. MCKENZIE

Well?

The lieutenant unplugs a cable and the radio transmission crackles through a speaker. It's a faint male voice, whispering in GERMAN.

COL. MCKENZIE (cont'd)

You're sure this is Alden's radio?

LT. LEACH

Yes sir. It's a coded frequency.

Leach gestures to fresh-faced PRIVATE BILLY CHAPEL (22), who listens with headphones and scribbles on a NOTEPAD.

LT. LEACH (cont'd)

Private Chapel here is translating the entire message.

COL. MCKENZIE

Forget writing it down, soldier. Just tell us what he's saying.

Chapel slides off his headphones.

The RADIO transmission continues in the background. The faint German voice sounds scared...

CHAPEL

He's pleading for help. From either side. Ours or theirs. Doesn't matter. He just wants someone to send bombers.

COL. MCKENZIE

(incredulous)

He wants us to bomb St. Croix?

CHAPEL

Yes, sir. He wants us to level the entire village.

Beat.

LT. LEACH
 Could be some kind of trick. A
 distraction.

Chapel reacts to another stream of German. McKenzie notices.

COL. MCKENZIE
 What is it, Private? What else did
 he say?

CHAPEL
 It's probably the radio, but...

COL. MCKENZIE
 Spit it out.

CHAPEL
 I could swear he said something
 about... "*monsters*," sir.

A BEAT of silence.

STEELE (O.S.)
 I can be in St. Croix by sundown.

McKenzie turns to find Steele behind him. The MP appears,
 out of breath, and grabs Steele by the scruff of the neck.

Lt. Leach eyes Steele with utter contempt.

McKenzie watches Steele return the MP's sidearm. Somehow, he
 snatched it away from the MP and it's a reminder to the
 Captain that Steele is one tough character.

STEELE (cont'd)
 Give me a radio. I'll find Alden's
 patrol and bring 'em back.

LT. LEACH
 Or go AWOL. Maybe crawl into a
 bottle somewhere.

STEELE
 Soon as I get some chow in me, I'm
 gonna bust your mug.

COL. MCKENZIE
 Stow it! Both of you.

The captain stares hard at Steele. His mind made up, he
 turns to Leach...

COL. MCKENZIE (cont'd)
Lieutenant. Take a couple of
jeeps, whatever you need, and find
out what's in that town. I've got
orders to move the Company right
through that area at oh-six-hundred
tomorrow and I don't want to find a
Panzer division waiting for us when
I do.

LT. LEACH
Yes, sir.

COL. MCKENZIE
You don't make it back or you don't
send a radio transmission telling
me otherwise, I'll assume Jerry has
that town and act accordingly.

Leach gathers a map, his helmet...

COL. MCKENZIE (cont'd)
One more thing... Take Steele and
Chapel with you.

LT. LEACH
(stunned)
Sir?!?

COL. MCKENZIE
If you find that German, Chapel can
help interrogate him. The kid's
green so Steele can watch his back.

LT. LEACH
With all due respect, sir, Steele
should be behind bars, not --

COL. MCKENZIE
You have your orders. Now go and
brief your men. Leave within the
hour.

LT. LEACH
Yes, sir.

Pissed, Leach salutes the captain and eyeballs Steele as he
exits. McKenzie turns to Chapel...

COL. MCKENZIE
Wait outside, Private.

Chapel exits, fumbling with his equipment as he goes.

McKenzie turns back to Steele.

COL. MCKENZIE (cont'd)
You know why I'm doing this, Tom?

STEELE
Sir?

COL. MCKENZIE
I don't want to send you home. I only threatened you with that because I know it's the last place you want to go. You're a good soldier. I need you here. But you're out of chances. You step out of line one more time, I won't be able to stop the wave of shit that'll come your way.

STEELE
Thank you, sir.

COL. MCKENZIE
Now go find my men.

EXT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - MOMENTS LATER

Steele emerges from the tent to find Chapel waiting for him. He shields his face from the sun, takes a long swig from his CANTEEN, and lights a cigarette.

STEELE
Smoke?

CHAPEL
No. Thank you, sir

STEELE
Drop the "sir," kid. I'm a no-rank dog-face, just like you.

They start walking. Steele eyes his clean, crisp uniform.

STEELE (cont'd)
This your first dance?

CHAPEL
I shipped in from Dover yesterday.

STEELE
Week Two in France and you've already landed in the shit.

CHAPEL

If you have any advice--

Steele gestures to Chapel's equipment.

STEELE

First chance you get, ditch the M1 and get yourself a machine-gun. Win one, buy one, borrow one from a dead guy. Whatever it takes. Just get a weapon that'll do damage at close quarters. Ditch your rations too and fill your pack with ammo. You can eat your boots if need be, but your gun's gotta have bullets.

Chapel notices a discolored patch on Steele's shoulder. The seams are the shape of Sergeant's stripes.

CHAPEL

You were a sergeant?

STEELE

Not my jacket. Borrowed it from a dead man.

Lt. Leach reappears and beckons for them to follow.

LT. LEACH

Move your feet, you two. We've got a job to do.

EXT. CAMP - LT. LEACH'S SQUAD - DAY

Circled by a handful of pup-tents, a group of soldiers sit amongst piles of equipment packs and weaponry.

They include:

SGT. HENNEMAN (26) broad-shouldered, fierce-fighter. Weapon of choice: M3A1 "Grease-gun."

O'MALLEY (23) Italian looks, Irish name. His webbing is covered in hand-painted pineapple grenades.

GARCIA (25) wiry, radio guy. Carries a Thompson SMG.

"RABBIT" (22) tall and powerful giant. He carries a Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR).

"FRANKIE" (24) athletic and lean, lop-sided grin. The medic.

TUCKER (22) shifty, always on edge. Carries an M1.

GARCIA

Ha! Those clowns haven't won a pennant in 26 years.

O'MALLEY

Because they didn't draft me.

RABBIT

That's because you can't hit.

O'MALLEY

I could hit *you*, farm boy.

FRANKIE

Please don't start brawling again. I'm tired of patching up you bastards.

GARCIA

Who names a team after underwear anyway? Five bucks says they won't win another one this century.

SGT. HENNEMAN

Now how the hell you gonna collect on that bet? Even *if* we make it out of this war, no way you two knuckleheads live that long.

"MOSES" (30), African American, a giant with a clean-shaven skull, sits next to O'Malley. He's carving a cross into the stock of a SHOTGUN.

O'Malley elbows him.

O'MALLEY

What do you think, Mo?

MOSES

Baseball bores me.

GARCIA

You want boring? Let's talk about that good book of yours.

MOSES

Anytime you want to talk about the Lord, I am here for you.

GARCIA

What if I ripped a page outta the Lord's book and wiped my ass on it? Would you be there for me then?

LT. LEACH (O.S.)

Garcia, how many times do I have to remind you..?

Lt. Leach steps into the camp with Steele and Chapel in tow. His team scramble to their feet.

LT. LEACH (cont'd)

...Don't piss off the preacher.

Garcia offers Moses a guilty smile.

GARCIA

Aw, he knows I love him. Don't you, Mo?

Moses growls at him.

LT. LEACH

All right. Listen up. Pack light and be ready to fight. One of our patrols is missing and we've got orders to go find them.

He gestures to Steele and Chapel...

LT. LEACH (cont'd)

The greenhorn is Chapel. He speaks Kraut so he's tagging along in case we find the Nazi asshole who stole one of our radios.

(re: Steele)

That's *Private* Steele. He's only here because the Captain wants rid of him. Don't expect him to watch your six and don't give him any ammo. He's prone to wasting it.

For the newcomers' benefit, he points to each squad member...

LT. LEACH (cont'd)

Garcia, O'Malley, Rabbit, Frankie, Moses, and Tucker. Don't bother asking what they did before the war because most of 'em were bums. Henneman here just made sergeant.

(to Steele)

You got demoted. Remember that. Whatever he says goes.

Leach pulls a battle-scarred helmet onto his head.

LT. LEACH (cont'd)
 We're taking wheels most of the way, but I wanna get there before dark, so pucker up and let's roll.

The squad starts to load weapons and gear into a DODGE WC-51 (small cargo truck / troop transport) and a FORD GPW (Jeep).

Steele jumps into the back of the Dodge, calmly smoking a cigarette.

Garcia leans into O'Malley and Tucker, gestures towards Steele. Chapel hovers nearby, eavesdropping.

GARCIA
 You know who that is, don't you?

O'MALLEY
 Too ugly to be in pictures and I know he ain't a ball player.

GARCIA
 He's the guy took out those machine-gun nests at Omaha.

TUCKER
 No shit. Doesn't look so crazy.

GARCIA
 Before we left Portsmouth, they told him his wife and kid were killed in an accident. I'da gone nuts too.

LT. LEACH
 Get your ballerina asses moving!
 (to Chapel)
 Greenhorn, ride with me in the Jeep. I want to read those notes you were taking.

As the others clamber into the Dodge, they glance at Steele. But he couldn't care less. He just sits there, smoking.

CUT TO:

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY - LATER

The Ford Jeep bursts through a hedgerow and bounces onto a narrow country lane. The WC-51 follows close behind.

Frankie drives the Jeep. Lt. Leach rides shotgun. In the back, Chapel sits alone.

Rabbit drives the WC-51. Moses next to him. Sgt. Henneman, Steele, Garcia, O'Malley, and Tucker ride in the back.

INT. JEEP - DAY

While Leach pours over his notes on the radio transmission, Chapel soaks in his surroundings. He gestures to a vertical metal bar attached to the jeep's front fender.

CHAPEL

(to Frankie)

What's the bar for?

FRANKIE

The Krauts like to string wire across the road. One time, my buddy Hank was in a Jeep that didn't have one of those bars. He's riding along when he realizes he's got horse shit caked all over his buckle-tops. So he pulls out his blade and bends down to scrape it off. When he sits back up, the jeep's swerving off the road and no one else has a fucking head anymore. Blood spurting all over the place...

Looking a little pale, Chapel sits back and stares at the bar through the windshield, thankful it's there.

INT. DODGE WC-51 - REAR

Sitting by the tailgate, Tucker checks his gun. Nervous, he ejects the mag, slams it back into place several times.

SGT. HENNEMAN

The gun's loaded. Leave it alone.

Steele watches O'Malley as he modifies a GRENADE with the tip of his bayonet. O'Malley realizes he's being watched.

O'MALLEY

The manual says a 5 second fuse is a 3 second fuse. Personally, I like to know when my fastball's gonna blow.

He points at the hand-painted grenades on his webbing. Some are adorned with "stars," others with "stripes."

O'MALLEY (cont'd)
Stars are 5 seconds, stripes are 2.

He points to a single grenade painted like "Felix The Cat."

O'MALLEY (cont'd)
And "Felix" is for me. Tiny fuse,
instant boom.

STEELE
For you?

O'MALLEY
I live to play baseball, pal. If I
lose a limb, I ain't going home.

Steele tosses him a plain grenade.

STEELE
Make me one of those, will ya?

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

The Jeep and Dodge speed along a narrow country lane. The surrounding landscape is picturesque. Hard to believe there's a world war raging.

Suddenly, Frankie hits the brakes. The Dodge skids to a stop behind the Jeep.

The road ahead is impassable. It's blocked by a dozen BURNED-OUT VEHICLES. All of them clearly civilian. Trucks, cars, bicycles, wagons, a farm tractor...

The men hop out of the vehicles to take a closer look.

LT. LEACH
Refugees. Heading North.

CHAPEL
They're civilians. Why would the
Germans do this?

STEELE
To clog up the roads and slow our
guys down.

Leach consults a MAP.

LT. LEACH

OK, ladies, you know what this means. We hoof it from here out. It's only another three miles to St. Croix, so we'll leave our wheels and pray they're still here on the way back.

(to Henneman)

Sarge, take point.

The squad straps on their gear and Henneman leads them through the maze of smoldering wreckage.

Steele looks spooked by something...

STEELE

Where are the bodies?

The others realize he's right. There are no corpses amid the carnage. The odd shoe or hat, plenty of blood-stains, but no dead bodies...

Even Leach looks affected by this realization.

CHAPEL

Maybe someone buried them.

STEELE

The French don't bury each other anymore.

RABBIT (O.S.)

Hey, LT. You'd better see this.

Leach moves over to Rabbit. Off to the side of the WRECKAGE, is a dark red pool of blood, trailing off through a thicket.

LT. LEACH

Jesus.

FRANKIE

Where did they take them?

Leach and the patrol stare at the mess. Frankie follows the trail through another thicket. It leads to a clearing in the middle of a field where the ground is soaked red. No bodies.

About 100 yards away there is a farmhouse.

LT. LEACH

Frankie, get your butt back--

Before Leach can finish, Frankie's CHEST EXPLODES and he's hurled backwards like a ragdoll...

The sniper's bullet CRACKS the air until it fades away...

LT. LEACH (cont'd)

Down!

The squad scramble for cover...

Chapel is frozen. Steele tackles him into the hedgerow.

RABBIT

I got you, Frankie!

Rabbit crawls for the downed man. Steele grabs his jacket, pulls him back.

STEELE

Forget it. He's gone.

Another bullet zips overhead.

Splattered with Frankie's blood, Leach looks panicked.

LT. LEACH

(yells)

Where is he?

Steele points at the farmhouse. More SHOTS ring out, but we can't see the SNIPER.

CLOSE ON STEELE:

STEELE

(sotto)

Fuck it.

With that, he fearlessly strides into the open, blasting his SMG at the farm house.

The rest of the squad can't believe what they're seeing.

Leach isn't impressed...

LT. LEACH

Steele! Get back here! That's an order!

Steele charges forward, still firing at the farmhouse. The SNIPER bullets narrowly missing him.

Lt. Leach notices a foot-wide hole in the roofing tiles, a muzzle flash within.

LT. LEACH (cont'd)
 Rabbit! Garcia! Cover fire.
 O'Malley! Get up there and put a
 fastball in that roof. GO!!

Rabbit and Garcia open up with automatic fire.

Steele miraculously makes it to the farmhouse unhurt. He takes cover next to a doorway, pumped with adrenaline.

The roof of the farmhouse is now being torn apart by gunfire. O'Malley moves up, takes aim... and hurls a GRENADE at the rooftop. It disappears into the hole. A perfect throw.

A split-second later, the attic explodes. Debris and dust rain down. Whoever was in there is toast.

O'MALLEY
 Strike.

Leach and the squad cease fire and it becomes very quiet.

LT. LEACH
 Nice throw, Irish!
 (to the others)
 Move up!

The squad pours out of the hedgerow...

INT. FARMHOUSE - SAME

Steele moves through the farmhouse. It's dark. Quiet. All the windows are blacked out.

The lower floor is clear.

Steele creeps upstairs. From one of the bedroom windows, he can see Leach and the squad approaching the house.

SUDDENLY, the ceiling CREAKS right over Steele's head. He listens, hears a QUIET GIGGLING.

Then... a *Click-Click*. The sound of a rifle reloading.

STEELE
 (shouts)
 Down!!!

EXT. ROAD - SAME

The whole squad hears the warning but Leach is too slow to react and too exposed.

CRACK!!! Another sniper bullet vaporizes his skull and his body crumples to the dirt. The other guys scatter.

INT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Steele turns away from the window. He didn't much like the lieutenant, but now he wants the sniper's blood. Steele aims his Thompson at the ceiling, listens for a target...

STEELE

(low)

Where are you?

CREAK!

Steele adjusts his aim and OPENS FIRE. He blasts a full 20-round mag into the ceiling. It rains wood.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

O'Malley still stares in shock at the dead lieutenant. Hearing Steele's SMG, he regains his focus and lobs another grenade into the attic...

BOOM!!!

INT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The explosion in the attic shakes the building. Pieces of the ceiling rain down around Steele. He reloads as he stalks the landing.

Henneman appears, charging up the stairs.

SGT. HENNEMAN

Leach bought it.

Steele enters another bedroom. There, he finds a staircase which leads to an attic door.

Steele kicks open the door...

INT. ATTIC - CONTINUOUS

Steele and Henneman enter the smoke-filled attic. Shafts of sunlight cut through the haze. Tough to see anything. But there's movement in the shadows... Steele and Henneman fire off a few rounds and the muzzle flashes light up the room...

Lying in the corner is the GERMAN SNIPER. Or what's left of him. Grenades and machine-gun fire have left him BURNED and in BLOODY PIECES.

Steele and Henneman creep closer, weapons ready.

Their attention is drawn to the attic ceiling. It is covered in pages torn from a book.

STEELE

It's a Bible.

SGT. HENNEMAN

Nazis don't believe in God.

STEELE

This one did.

Steele kneels beside the dead sniper. His face and hands are wrapped in strips of clothing, hiding every inch of skin except his eyes.

STEELE (cont'd)

(to corpse)

Why are you all covered up, huh?

Steele uses his foot to roll the body over.

STEELE (cont'd)

Looks like he took a round in the neck some time ago.

Henneman searches the soldier's pockets.

SGT. HENNEMAN

Let's see if he's got any intel on him. Maybe we won't even need--

The German soldier starts CONVULSING...

As the head-covering comes loose and long blonde hair becomes visible, Henneman and Steele come to a startling realization.

The sniper is a WOMAN.

SGT. HENNEMAN (cont'd)

Christ, it's a fucking girl!

The sniper grabs for Henneman's leg. He reels back in terror and knocks out some of the ceiling tiles...

A brilliant shaft of sunlight cuts into the darkness and the German BURSTS INTO FLAMES.

Steele notices a few STICK GRENADES on the sniper's webbing. He shoves Henneman out of the attic...

BOOM!!! A piercing SCREAM echoes.

The attic instantly becomes an inferno. The GIs run for their lives.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - SAME

Safely outside, Steele and Henneman rejoin the rest of the squad and watch the farmhouse burn.

O'MALLEY
(re: the fire)
Did I do that?

SGT. HENNEMAN
No. Booby-trap... I think.

Steele and Henneman exchange a look. Neither man convinced.

GARCIA
Forget the damn fire. Leach and Frankie are dead.

TUCKER
We should head back.

O'MALLEY
Figures you'd say that.

Henneman looks to Steele for his input.

STEELE
With or without you guys, I'm finding Alden.

Steele walks away.

O'MALLEY
(to Henneman)
What's the call, Sarge?

They look at Henneman. But he doesn't have any answers.

Rabbit carries Frankie's body and lays it beside the lieutenant. Henneman removes their dog-tags.

Chapel is transfixed by the two dead soldiers. His first real glimpse of death. Steele walks over.

CHAPEL
I don't get why.

STEELE
No one does, kid.

Steele tosses Chapel a Thompson machine-gun. Aware it was Leach's weapon, he feels weird taking it.

STEELE (cont'd)
If that gun saves your life, then
he didn't die for nothing.

Behind them, an argument erupts between Tucker and O'Malley.

O'MALLEY
What if they need us? You want to
leave our guys out there?

TUCKER
Hell, I don't know any of 'em.
Besides, they're probably dead
already.

O'MALLEY
Or holed up somewhere!

Obviously a decision has to be made and Henneman isn't making it. Steele listens but he keeps his distance. Finally, Henneman speaks...

SGT. HENNEMAN
Zip it, both of you. We've got a
mission to do and we're damn well
gonna do it.
(beat)
Garcia, get on the horn and tell HQ
what happened--

Garcia is kneeling over his radio. He fingers a bullet hole.

GARCIA
No can do, Sarge. Radio's toast.

TUCKER
This is FUBAR. Our C.O. bought it,
the radio's dead, we should--

SGT. HENNEMAN
I ain't warning you again, Tucker.
Now quit belly-aching and start
using the boots Uncle Sam gave ya.
The sooner we search the village,
the sooner we head back.

Henneman looks to Steele for approval. He nods.

Moments later, the company moves out with Henneman in front.

Hanging back, Steele strikes a match on his helmet and lights up a cigarette. He takes a pensive look at the burning farmhouse then follows the others...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FIELD - DUSK

The squad pace single-file up a hill. Steele, Chapel, O'Malley, Rabbit, Henneman, Tucker, Garcia and Moses.

When they reach a ridge, overlooking a valley, Henneman signals for the men to hold their position.

Below them lies the once-picturesque village of St. Croix. It's relatively small, about 50 stone buildings, mostly medieval architecture. Clearly, this village has lived through several wars.

Sgt. Henneman scans the streets with a pair of BINOCULARS.

STEELE

Anything?

SGT. HENNEMAN

Not a soul.

EXT. CEMETERY - DUSK

The GIs creep between the graves, their eyes on the village streets ahead. But the place looks dead.

GARCIA

I don't see any Panzers.

RABBIT

What about French girls? See any of them?

SGT. HENNEMAN

Keep a round chambered and move up. Tucker, take point.

Tucker doesn't move. It's obvious he's too scared to lead the way. Just as Henneman is about to repeat the order...

STEELE

I'll do it.

Steele hops a stone wall, strolls into the village.

EXT. MARKET SQUARE - DUSK

Steele leads the squad into the village square. They sweep their weapons left to right, keeping to the shadows.

A JOAN OF ARC FOUNTAIN sits in the middle of the square, the water stagnant and filthy. A symbol of this hamlet's decay.

There are no curtains in any of the windows, just black squares dotting the grey facades of each building.

TUCKER

Something ain't right. I don't
feel good about this.

O'MALLEY

When do you ever?

SGT. HENNEMAN

Pipe down and keep moving.

The squad continue exploring the village. They go house to house, through alleys, and into a small courtyard.

GARCIA

Hey, what's with all the crosses?

As the soldiers look around, they begin to notice crudely-painted CROSSES on all the doors and walls.

MOSES

Protection.

Even Moses looks unsettled by this. He mumbles a prayer.

Steele reacts to a NOISE. He stops moving forward and signals for the squad to get down. Now some of the other guys hear it too... footsteps... heavy footsteps.

Terrified, Tucker whispers to Henneman.

TUCKER

What the fuck *is* that, Sarge?!

Everyone is tense, fingers on triggers, ready for a gunfight. And the footsteps are getting LOUDER.

Now we hear a BELL, faint at first, but also getting louder.

O'Malley grabs a grenade. Tucker holds his trembling rifle. Steele tightens the strap of his Thompson around his forearm.

Whatever is making the noise is right around the corner...
 After an agonising few moments, a LARGE COW appears.
 Startled, Tucker discharges his gun and the cow bolts away.

TUCKER (cont'd)
 Holy shit! Damn cow nearly gave me
 a heart attack!

O'MALLEY
 Nice going, ya dumb bastard. Now
 the Hun know we arrived.

Vacant windows, empty streets. No signs of life and no
 response to the gunshot.

Steele turns to Henneman, a diplomatic "nudge"...

STEELE
 Gonna be dark soon.

Henneman glances at the setting sun then addresses the squad.

SGT. HENNEMAN
 OK, we'll do this fast so we can
 get the hell out of here. I want
 teams of two to search building by
 building. I'll go South with
 Tucker. Moses, you go East with
 Garcia. O'Malley, Rabbit, go
 North. Chapel, you and Steele
 clear the church and we'll regroup
 there in twenty.

EXT. AERIAL SHOT OF ST. CROIX - DUSK

The eight soldiers split into four pairs and head off in
 different directions.

The light is fading fast.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - DUSK

Sgt. Henneman and Tucker move cautiously through the streets.

A FIGURE watches from a second floor window. He's wearing a
 uniform, but it's too dark to make out the insignia.

Sensing something, Tucker glances up at the window. But the figure is too fast and sidesteps into shadow.

TUCKER

Something ain't right. There's no locals, no Krauts, no sign of the other patrol, and no stiffs.

SGT. HENNEMAN

There's a cow.

TUCKER

I'm serious, Sarge. I reckon we should get the hell out.

Henneman gestures with his head to the building from which the figure was watching. Over the door, there's a wooden sign: "*Boucherie*."

SGT. HENNEMAN

We'll check that place then head back to the church.

TUCKER

Boucherie?

SGT. HENNEMAN

Butcher shop.

Tucker is more spooked than ever.

TUCKER

Aw, come on, Sarge! They ain't laying low in no meat store.

SGT. HENNEMAN

Just keep watch.

Henneman disappears inside the building. Tucker cowers in the doorway, his rifle shaking.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - CONTINUOUS

Garcia and Moses creep along a street towards a CIVILIAN CAR which has crashed into the front of a house. The car is black and charred, bumper to bumper.

His gun raised, Garcia approaches the passenger door.

GARCIA

Whoa! Mo, take a look at this.

There are two hideously-burned CORPSES in the front seat. Their bodies melted beyond recognition. One of the bodies wears a German helmet, the other an American helmet.

GARCIA (cont'd)
A Kraut and a dog-face, side by side.

MOSES
That doesn't make sense.

There are spent shell-casings all over the floor of the car.

GARCIA
Did a lot of shooting together too.

MOSES
Maybe they're both German. Could be a stolen uniform.

Garcia leans into the car and rips a DOG-TAG from the dead driver. He uses a thumbnail to scrape it clean.

CLOSE ON: The name on the dog-tag: Dennis O'Connor.

GARCIA
Dennis O'Connor. Don't sound German to me.

Unnerved, Garcia and Moses move on.

EXT. CHURCH - DUSK

Before the war, this quaint church was probably beautiful. Today, neglect and bomb damage has taken its toll.

With their weapons at the ready, Steele and Chapel approach the main door of the CHURCH.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The solid stone altar still stands, but pews are scattered and most of the windows are broken. A chilling wind howls its way down the aisle.

His .45 drawn for close-quarters, Steele steps into the church. Chapel follows, the machine-gun in his grip.

Steele checks the dark confessional booth. Nothing. He continues towards the altar. Between the pews he notices something -- a battered U.S. ARMY RADIO.

STEELE
 Here's Alden's radio. Where's our
 German disc jockey?

As if in reply, Steele hears something. A faint panting of
 breath. Chapel reacts, scared.

CHAPEL
 What is it?

Steele signals him to be quiet and creeps towards the altar.

STEELE
 What the--?

Behind the altar, he finds a pale, bloody MAN (30s) in a
 tattered GERMAN UNIFORM. The man starts SCREAMING...

STEELE (cont'd)
 It's OK. It's OK. We're not going
 to hurt you!
 (beat)
 Tell him, Chapel! Shut him up!

The rookie repeats Steele's words in German. But the
 terrified soldier isn't listening. He scrambles across the
 floor, holds up an IRON CROSS to ward them off...

STEELE (cont'd)
 What is he saying?

CHAPEL
 (unnerved)
 "Take the head."

STEELE
 Good idea...

Steele raises his gun, ready to knock the German out cold.

RICHTER (O.S.)
 Please don't.

Steele and Chapel spin around, guns leveled. A second German
 emerges from a side-room, his hands raised in surrender.

This is JOSEF RICHTER (30s), the German soldier Marie
 encountered in the opening scene.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOUCHERIE - CONTINUOUS

Tucker is still standing guard, anxiously waiting for Henneman to reemerge. The sound of the SCREAMING carries across the village.

Tucker is freaked. Moments later, he hears another noise coming from inside the building.

TUCKER

Sarge?

No reply.

TUCKER (cont'd)

Hen, did you hear that?

Still no reply.

Tucker hears more screaming in the distance. The sound of running footsteps. Eventually, his nerve breaks.

TUCKER (cont'd)

(sotto)

Forget this.

He takes off, leaving Henneman behind...

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The terrified German soldier has stopped screaming, but he's still babbling in fear as he rocks back and forth.

Steele's gun is now aimed at RICHTER'S HEAD.

RICHTER (CONT'D)

Neither of us are a danger to you.
Not here. Not tonight. Let me
help him. I know how.

STEELE

Go ahead. But any funny business,
I will smoke you.

Richter nods, then approaches the SCREAMING MAN. He gently places a hand on the man's shoulder and starts praying with him in GERMAN. Gradually, the man begins to calm down.

Steele and Chapel watch, their weapons slightly lowered, as the man curls up on the floor, cradling the cross.

At that precise moment, Garcia, Moses, Rabbit and O'Malley enter the church. When they see Steele and Chapel, they relax... a little.

O'MALLEY
We heard screaming.

STEELE
It's under control. They're not a threat.

O'MALLEY
Where's the Sarge?

STEELE
Ain't back yet. You find anything?

Garcia tosses him the DOG-TAGS. He reads the name: O'Connor.

STEELE (cont'd)
I know this guy.

GARCIA
Yeah? Well we found him sitting in Jeep. Next to a Kraut. Both of them chargrilled to the dash.

CHAPEL
That's strange.

GARCIA
No shit. There's something strange about this whole town.

Looking past Steele, Moses spots the radio.

MOSES
The lieutenant said the Germans had one of our radios. That it?

STEELE
Yup.
(points to Richter)
And my guess is that he's our mystery caller.

Richter reacts.

RICHTER
You received my message? The radio is badly damaged. I didn't think anyone could hear me.

CHAPEL

We heard you.

RICHTER

Then why are you here? Why is your
air force not dropping bombs?

STEELE

Sorry, pal. Those bombs aren't
coming. It's just us.

Fear spreads across the German's face.

RICHTER

So you are here alone? You're not
going to destroy this place?!

STEELE

We're looking for some of our guys.
An American patrol.

CHAPEL

Why do you want the village bombed?

RICHTER

Because bullets do not stop them.

CHAPEL

Stop who?

STEELE

To hell with this. I'm going back
out there to look for Alden.

RICHTER

No! You must not go outside. Now
that it is dark, they will come.
They will kill you.

STEELE

"They?" You have more troops here?

RICHTER

Not soldiers. Monsters.

RABBIT

He's as cuckoo as his buddy.

RICHTER

I am telling you the truth. When
they attacked, I brought Karl here
and they would not come inside.
You leave the church, you die.

Steele registers this.

STEELE

Like I said, I'm gonna go look for Alden.

At that moment, Tucker bursts through the door, terrified. Everyone jumps. The German Soldier starts screaming again. Richter goes back to calm him down.

GARCIA

(to Tucker)

Where's Hen?

Tucker looks sheepish.

TUCKER

Uh, he's still checking out a building. He told me to see what the screaming was all about.

Steele doesn't buy it.

STEELE

Then you and me are gonna go find him.

TUCKER

I can tell you where--

STEELE

(stern)

We both go.

TUCKER

Kiss my ass. I don't see no stripes on your sleeve.

Steele holds up a clenched fist, points to his fingers.

STEELE

You see these stripes? You want a closer look?

Tucker cowers.

EXT. VILLAGE STREETS - MOMENTS LATER

The sun has set. We won't see it again for a long time.

Steele and Tucker move cautiously through the streets.

TUCKER

The Sarge wandered off on his own.
He deserves to get lost.

O'MALLEY

He didn't get lost. You *left him*
behind.

They turn a corner and arrive at the boucherie.

MARIE (O.S.)

(whispers)
You should leave!

Steele spins around, pinpoints the source of the voice to a sewer grate. Startled, Tucker aims his rifle at Marie.

STEELE

Hey, you trapped down there? Let
us help--

MARIE

(urgent)
You're in danger. Now that it is
dark, they will awaken. Please!
At least get off the streets and
hide somewhere--

STEELE

Sorry, lady, I don't hide from
Germans.

MARIE

Then you'll die a fool.

With that, Marie is gone.

STEELE

Friendly dame.

Tucker is more scared than ever. Steele scans the empty streets and, for the first time, even he looks unsettled.

STEELE (cont'd)

Let's find our guy and get the fuck
out of here.

INT. BOUCHERIE - CONTINUOUS

Steele enters, gun up, and squints into the darkness.

STEELE

Henneman?

Nothing. No reply.

Tucker falls in behind Steele.

TUCKER
(grimacing)
Stinks in here.

Steele moves deeper inside, past tables and butcher's tools. In the floor, there is an open trapdoor leading to a cellar.

Steele peers down through the floor and signals Tucker to look for himself. At the bottom of a long ladder there is...

A BROKEN LANTERN. Its flames dying, the glass shattered.

TUCKER (cont'd)
Think he fell?

STEELE
(a test)
Climb down and take a look around.

TUCKER
I ain't going down there--!

With a sardonic smile, Steele climbs onto the ladder himself.

STEELE
I know.

He disappears into the cellar, leaving Tucker with his shame.

INT. BOUCHERIE - CELLAR

Steele drops the last few feet to the ground. He picks up the lantern and explores the cellar.

Dark shapes hang from the ceiling. He moves closer and raises the lantern.

STEELE
(shock)
My God...

DOZENS of BODIES hang upside down from the rafters. Mostly men, some women, a few children. All their throats and wrists have been cut. It resembles an abattoir.

Not even Steele is immune to a horror show like this.

He moves through the bodies, checking the Americans. We recognize Lt. Alden. Steele does too. Silently cursing, he rips one of the two dog-tags from his friend's neck.

Hanging next to Alden is Sgt. Henneman, his eyes closed, skin devoid of color. Suddenly, those EYES SNAP OPEN...

Steele gets the shock of his life and falls backwards.

SGT. HENNEMAN

(weak)

Help me...

The corpses begin to part as something pushes through them, charging towards Steele...

He opens fire with his .45.

BLAM! BLAM! BLAM!

Three hits in the chest.

The ATTACKER is jerked backwards by the force of the bullets and drops to the ground.

ON THE GROUND FLOOR

Tucker is still standing over the trapdoor, but he can't see what's happening.

TUCKER

Steele?!

BACK IN THE CELLAR

Steele edges forward, his pistol trained on the dead attacker. In the glow from the lantern, a German insignia is visible on the man's jacket.

Without warning, the attacker LEAPS at Steele. Fingers grasping at his neck. Steele's handgun clatters to the floor. The figure pins the him to the wall, sharp pointed fingernails dig into his throat.

Steele pulls his BAYONET and plunges it into the attacker's heart. The figure starts shaking, arcing its back, slamming onto the ground in a violent spasm of death.

Steele quickly returns to Henneman, cuts him down.

STEELE

Hang on, Sarge. I got you.

He hefts the sergeant over his shoulder and moves to the ladder as fast as he can...

Tucker peers down at Steele, sees movement behind him.

TUCKER

Hurry!

Steele scrambles back up the ladder. As soon as he's clear, Tucker sprays gunfire into the trapdoor and slams it shut.

STEELE

Go! Go! GO!!!

Together, they sprint out of the building.

A PIERCING scream in their wake.

INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Everyone reacts to the same terrifying noise.

RABBIT

What the fuck was that?

RICHTER

One of them.

CHAPEL

One of *who*?

Richter doesn't answer.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - CONTINUOUS

Carrying Henneman firefighter-style, Steele sprints with Tucker across the square, to the sanctuary of the church.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

At the window, Rabbit sees them coming...

RABBIT

Hey, it's them. And Steele's carrying someone!

Moses and O'Malley hurry to the wooden double-doors and pull them open.

Steele charges inside, Tucker right on his tail.

STEELE

Seal those doors, NOW!!!

Taken aback by the urgency in his voice, Moses and O'Malley slam the doors closed and slide pews in front of them.

Steele lays Henneman at the altar. Chapel moves to help and realize it's too late -- Henneman's dead.

O'MALLEY

Sarge?

Chapel meets O'Malley's gaze, shakes his head.

Angry, Steele kicks a pew over and sits on some steps, the adrenaline rushing from his body. The others stand around him, a collective mixture of shock and confusion.

STEELE

They're dead. All of them. Alden, his men...

RABBIT

You saw them?

STEELE

They're hanging in a cellar, their throats ripped out... Half the villagers must be down there too.

RICHTER (O.S.)

They want the blood.

All eyes turn to Richter.

RICHTER (cont'd)

They kill you and drink your blood.

O'MALLEY

Somebody shut him up. I've had it with his bullshit stories.

The way Steele looks at Richter, it's clear he's starting to believe him.

RICHTER

You saw one of them.

Another WAILING HOWL. Closer. Louder.

Bats explode from the rafters of the church.

CUT TO:

EXT. WIDE SHOT:

The village at night. Moonlit. Deserted.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Steele remains seated on the steps of the altar, processing the horror he's seen.

Rabbit keeps watch at the window. The others mill around, confused, lost, scared...

TUCKER

So what the fuck do we do now?
Just hide out in here until our
boys take Berlin?!

GARCIA

We need to warn HQ. The Old Man
needs to know what's here.

O'MALLEY

First thing we gotta do is figure
out who's in charge. We lost L.T.,
now Hen...

Steele slowly realizes everyone is staring at him.

STEELE

Uh-uh. No way.

Chapel removes Henneman's dog-tag, offers it to Steele.

CHAPEL

You were a sergeant once.

STEELE

I told you. Not my jacket.

CHAPEL

With all due respect, that's
bullcrap.

O'MALLEY

The rookie's right. We all know
the Old Man demoted you. We heard
the rumors about your family, what
you did at Omaha...

STEELE

I came here to find my friend.
That's all.

MOSES

Perhaps God has another plan for you.

RABBIT (O.S.)

Look alive, fellas, we got company!

The others quickly join Rabbit at the windows. Steele stays sitting where he is.

TUCKER

Why are they just standing there?

Steele calmly sips from his water canteen. He glances over and sees Chapel staring right at him, silently urging him to take command.

Steele sighs.

STEELE

How many?

RABBIT

Five.

Steele screws the cap on his canteen, slides it back into his webbing. He grabs his Thompson SMG, arms it.

He walks over to the window, peers outside.

STEELE

O'Malley, Moses, Tucker, move over to that window and cover both sides of the kill zone. Talk to each other, make sure you're aiming at different targets.

(to Chapel)

Use Henneman's webbing and tie up our German friends. Garcia, you've got two lousy radios. See if you can't patch a working one together.

The team readily accept Steele's instructions and quickly move into position.

STEELE (cont'd)

On my signal, we light 'em up.

While Chapel is tying up a resigned Richter, the deranged German eyes his holstered .45.

STEELE'S P.O.V. - OUTSIDE

The five figures remain motionless.

BACK TO SCENE:

The Americans are poised to ignite a firefight.

RABBIT

You think they wanna surrender?

STEELE

Doesn't matter. After what they did to our guys, we're gonna kill every last one of 'em.

RABBIT

Just say the word, Sarge, and I'll mow 'em down.

All of a sudden, the GIs hear a CLATTERING behind them.

CHAPEL (O.S.)

Sarge!

Steele turns and sees the German soldier squeezing through the double-doors. Garcia fires. His bullets tear at the thick wooden doors, but it's too late. The German is gone.

Steele glares at Chapel.

TUCKER (O.S.)

Look!

Chapel moves next to the others, peers outside.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

The German soldier walks towards the five figures, waving Chapel's gun at each of them.

TUCKER (O.S.)

He's turning on his own guys.

The figures close in. The German fires the handgun, hitting one of them square in the chest. It doesn't faze him.

RABBIT (O.S.)

You see that?! He shot him, he fucking shot him and he didn't even flinch!

The five figures leap onto the German.

The doomed soldier fires another round into the air and stumbles forward into the moonlight. This allows us our first real view of his attackers faces, right as they...

...SINK THEIR TEETH into his flesh.

CLOSE ON -- THE FIVE VAMPIRES

Their pale-white faces are splattered with blood as they tear into the German with FANGS. He quickly puts the gun in his mouth, blows his skull open.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The Americans are freaking out. A mix of sheer terror and disbelief at what they've just witnessed.

STEELE
Shoot, goddamnit, shoot!

An instant later, every American gun ROARS and a hailstorm of bullets rip into the five VAMPIRES.

Holes appear in their clothing, but they don't react or bleed. They simply retreat into the shadows...

Perplexed, Steele yells at his squad.

STEELE (cont'd)
Cease fire! Cease fire!

The GIs stop shooting, equally bewildered by the impotence of their weapons.

STEELE (cont'd)
Save your ammo.

Tucker stumbles into a corner, pukes his guts out.

O'MALLEY
They ate him! Did you see that?!
They fucking ate him?!

TUCKER
This can't be real! I didn't sign
up for this...

Steele marches right up to Richter.

STEELE
Start talking, pal. You know more
than you're letting on.

RICHTER
I've told you everything I know.

STEELE
Baloney. What are they?

RICHTER
I swear I do not know. They're not
German. They're not even human.

O'MALLEY
We've seen the newsreels, buster.
Ain't no one human from your neck
of the woods.

RICHTER
Give me a weapon. Let me fight
them with you.

Steele changes tact, takes stock of the situation.

STEELE
Garcia, how's that radio looking?

GARCIA
I need more time.

STEELE
We might not have any.

TUCKER
I say we make a run for it.

MOSES
We'll be safer if we stay here.

TUCKER
Safe?! How do you figure that?

MOSES
This is holy ground. They cannot
enter. Not unless we invite them.

O'MALLEY
Okay, let's *not* do that.

In unison, they all turn to Steele.

STEELE
We send someone back to camp on
foot. Reinforcements will arrive
tomorrow, but we might not last
that long and we can't risk our
boys walking into a bloodbath.

RABBIT
Alone? Out there?!

STEELE

If the rest of us stay behind, make enough noise, maybe they won't realize one of us slipped through.

(beat)

Any volunteers?

MINUTES LATER...

Steele uses two hands to grip FIVE CANDLES. With only the ends visible, each soldier takes a turn to select one.

Tucker is third to choose and he pulls the shortest one. The others avert their eyes, not wanting him to see the relief and pity within.

TUCKER

It's okay. I wanna go.

STEELE

The rest of you, put pencil to paper. If we don't make it out of here, at least Tucker can deliver mail for us. You've got 5 minutes to pour your little hearts out.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VILLAGE STREETS - LATER

In a brief montage, we see the various streets of the village. Ominously empty. Unsettling. Downright scary.

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Tucker has shed his jacket and combat belt. He adjusts his boots as he nervously waits to leave. Moses pulls a crucifix from around his neck and presses it into Tucker's hand.

MOSES

Wear it. Let Him guide you.

Tucker nods appreciatively, puts it over his shirt.

Steele leads Tucker to a small back door. It opens onto a meadow, a forest barely visible on the other side.

TUCKER

(guilty)

About the sarge, I should never have left him--

STEELE

Then you'd probably be dead too.
Focus on the task at hand. You
make it back to camp and you can
save everyone else.

He hands Tucker several LETTERS.

STEELE (cont'd)

When you hear a boom, start
running.

Tucker nods his thanks. Steele turns, out.

STEELE (cont'd)

O'Malley! You're up!

IN THE MAIN HALL

O'Malley pulls a pin from a grenade and hurls it outside,
into the village square. It drops into the fountain and
explodes, sending a geyser of brackish water into the air.

BACK ON STEELE AND TUCKER

STEELE

Show time.

Tucker nods, vanishes into the night. Steele pulls the door
closed, bolts it...

INT. CHURCH - LATER

Steele is refilling his canteen in the church font. Richter
approaches, talks low so the others can't hear.

RICHTER

(re: Henneman)
He has a bite mark.

STEELE

So?

RICHTER

Somehow they take control--

Steele pushes Henneman's upper-lip back, checks his teeth.

STEELE

The man's dead. Leave him be.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Heavy breathing. A pair of feet running through the dense forest. We PULL BACK to see it's Tucker, cutting a path through the trees. Low branches claw and tear at his face.

Hearing a noise behind him, Tucker slows, pulls a .45. He turns in a circle, sweeping the gun in every direction.

When nothing lunges out of the darkness, Tucker takes off running again...

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT - LATER

Rabbit and O'Malley are posted at the windows, weapons ready.

Moses sits with his back to the wall, using his bayonet to carve more CROSSES into his SHOTGUN.

RABBIT

This is crazy. I came here to fight Nazis, not monsters.

O'MALLEY

What's the difference?

Steele watches Garcia working on the two radios. He's taken parts from his pack to repair the one Richter was using.

A LOUD KNOCKING at the back of the church.

Steele grabs his SMG and hurries to the back door.

TUCKER (O.S.)

Unlock the damn door! Hurry!!!

Steele trains his gun on the door, gestures for Chapel to unbolt it. A breathless Tucker bursts through the door and Chapel slams it closed behind him.

TUCKER (cont'd)

I couldn't get through. There must be hundreds of Germans camped in those woods. I'm sorry.

Steele studies Tucker, unsure if he's lying.

RABBIT (O.S.)
They're back!!!

INT. CHURCH - MAIN HALL - CONTINUOUS

Steele rushes to join the others by the windows.

STEELE
I don't see anything.

RABBIT
They were standing right there by
the fountain, just watching us...

Moses eyes Tucker suspiciously.

MOSES
Where's the cross I gave you?

Tucker puts his hand to his neck.

TUCKER
(nervous)
I fell, it must have--

Moses pulls his bayonet, points the tip at Tucker.

The others are watching now.

STEELE
Take it easy, Moses.

MOSES
They got to him.

TUCKER
You're out of your mind.
(to the others)
You guys seeing this? He's finally
lost it.

RABBIT
Easy, Mo.

Rabbit takes a step forward to intervene, but O'Malley grabs his elbow and holds him back.

O'MALLEY
Wait.

Moses inches towards Tucker, his bayonet still stretched out in front of him. With his other hand, Moses points to the large CRUCIFIX that dominates the front wall of the church.

MOSES

Look at the cross.

Tucker is starting to sweat.

TUCKER

Fuck you.

MOSES

You can't, can you?

TUCKER

I'm not playing your game.

MOSES

What happens if you look? Does it hurt? Does it burn?

TUCKER

I'm warning you.

Moses suddenly grabs Tucker. He twists his head, forces him to look at the crucifix.

MOSES

LOOK AT THE LORD!!!

For a moment nothing happens and Moses begins to doubt himself. But then Tucker's face contorts into a SNARL, revealing two large FANGS.

A deep inhuman GROWL rises up through his throat and his skin loses its pigment, the veins becoming visible.

MOSES (cont'd)

How did you enter God's house?

TUCKER

(inhuman; smiling)

You let me in.

Moses lunges with the bayonet but Tucker is too quick. He catches Moses' wrist then hurls him across the room onto a rack filled with candles.

RABBIT

Everyone down!!!!

Rabbit opens up with the BAR. The sound is deafening...

A bullet punches a huge hole in Tucker's abdomen. Another rips open his thigh as he runs up the wall and scurries into the rafters.

Rabbit releases the trigger. The gun's muzzle bellows smoke.

What once was Tucker looks down on the American soldiers. Smiling, mocking their weakness.

O'MALLEY

What happened out there, T? Why you doing this?

RICHTER

Your friend is dead. He's nothing more than a puppet now.

Tucker hisses, bares his fangs.

The GIs nervously circle the floor, guns aimed at this monster in the rafters.

Steele looks up at "Tucker" with disgust. He then notices a tall metal CANDLESTICK with a speared end. He grabs it and calls to Moses.

STEELE

(re: Tucker)
Get that thing down.

Tucker's smile disappears.

Moses fires his SHOTGUN at the rope attaching the chandelier to the ceiling. The rope severs and it crashes to the ground. Tucker desperately tries to scramble clear, but Steele drives the candlestick right through his chest.

Tucker is staked to the floor.

TUCKER

I will see you again.

The possessed Tucker writhes and hisses in pain as these others debate his fate.

RABBIT

I don't understand. Was that Tucker or not?

MOSES

They're evil spirits that take over your soul. You destroy one body, they can move into another.

GARCIA

Then how do we kill them? How do we stop whatever was inside Tucker from taking one of us?

Steele looks up at his terrified squad. He's got a hunch about what needs to be done...

STEELE

We cut off the head.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE STREETS - NIGHT

We track over the cobbled and desolate streets towards the CHURCH. Standing alone at the edge of the square, it is starting to look increasingly vulnerable.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Steele sits, smokes a cigarette. Chapel, O'Malley and Rabbit remain vigilant by the windows.

Moses reappears. In one hand he holds his blood-covered bayonet, in the other he clutches the soldier's LETTERS and Tucker's DOG-TAGS. He hands them to Steele.

MOSES

It is done.
(off Steele's look)
It wasn't a man anymore.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

Everyone spins around, leveling their guns at the front door.

Slowly, the doors start to swing open on their own.

On the steps of the church stands a LONE FIGURE, dressed in an ankle-length German SS coat. His head is bowed.

Steele edges forward, machine-gun raised.

STEELE

You got five seconds before I start putting holes in you.

The alpha vampire, ASH (30s), raises his head revealing distinctive YELLOW EYES. His complexion is similar to the possessed Tucker: blue veins visible under translucent skin.

He speaks in a calm, soothing voice.

ASH

You're not afraid of us.

Steele is surrounded by his men, each of them ready to start a firefight.

ASH (cont'd)

Your friends are frightened. But you... You are different. Don't you fear death?

STEELE

No, not really.

Ash smiles, giving Steele a glimpse of his fangs.

STEELE (cont'd)

And they call us Dogfaces... What the fuck kind of animal are you?

The vampire puts his palm over the barrel of Steele's gun.

ASH

Pull the trigger. See for yourself.

Steele doesn't hesitate. He fires a single round, blasting a gaping hole right through Ash's palm. It tears through the edge of his neck too.

But the vampire doesn't even flinch. He merely licks the congealed blood from the quarter-sized hole in his flesh.

The GIs react with shock and disgust. Steele is unfazed.

ASH (cont'd)

This shell was getting too stale for my tastes anyway. You look strong, healthy. Perhaps I'll take you next.

Moses stands to the left of the church door, out of Ash's line of sight. He PUMPS his shotgun, feeds another shell into the chamber with a CLICK.

Steele keeps his machine-gun aimed at Ash's forehead.

STEELE

I don't know how many soldiers you've gone up against, but we're American so you and your monster pals got a goddamn fight on your hands.

ASH

"Monsters?" No, no, no. My family and I kill for food, sustenance, survival. Whereas your kind kills each other for a thousand reasons. Land, money, power, hatred. You should see what's happening in Austria. Your species is killing millions of its own. No, it is ordinary men, *you*, who are the real monsters.

Ash takes a step closer. Steele jams the barrel of his gun into Ash's neck. His skin sizzles as it makes contact with the hot barrel.

STEELE

That was a neat parlor trick with your hand, but my boys know how to kill you. And I won't lie, after bagging two of you scumbags, I'm getting a taste for it.

Ash darkens.

ASH

Two?

STEELE

I assume the blonde with the sniper rifle was one of yours.

ASH

(stricken)

Lucia.

Something snaps in Ash. He swings at Steele's face with a fistful of razor-sharp talons...

Moses shoves Steele aside, fires his shotgun...

BOOM!

Ash is blown backwards, shot in the face.

MOSES

In the name of Jesus Christ...

BOOM!

Another blast, center-mass...

Ash is catapulted backwards into the street. He crumples on the ground, his skull blown open, his chest a gaping mess.

MOSES

...I cast out thy evil.

Moses moves to finish Ash off, but Steele pulls him back.

Impossibly, Ash's head whips up and he glares at Steele. He explodes from the ground, lunges again. Whomever Lucia (the sniper) was, she must have meant a great deal to Ash.

Steele opens fire, sprays Ash with bullets, and retreats into the church...

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The doors are slammed shut.

STEELE

Nobody goes outside.

MOSES

The Lord is my light and my
salvation. He will protect me.

At the windows, the GIs watch as Ash attempts to stand up.

STEELE

God ain't out there tonight.

Rabbit racks his BAR, ready to fire.

STEELE (cont'd)

Save your bullets.

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Three other vampires melt from the shadows and quickly pull Ash out of sight.

STEELE (O.S.)

...They'll be back.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT (MONTAGE: "ASH'S NEW BODY")

We follow a WOMAN as she runs down an alley. She glances back over her shoulder, bares her fangs in urgency, and throws open a door. This is SERENA.

Two other vampires, REZA and CALEF, carry the bloody body of Ash. It's mangled with buckshot, the head barely attached.

CALEF

Sending Drago inside to flush them out got him killed. And you heard the American: they killed Lucia too. We are all that's left. Only four of us.

(re: Ash's condition)

Maybe three.

Serena ignores him.

SERENA

Stay with us, brother.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Serena throws a huge kitchen table aside, as if it's made of balsa, and clears a space on the floor.

Calef lays Ash's broken body on the cold stone. He glares at Serena.

CALEF

I warned him. This century is different.

Ash coughs black blood.

Calef roughly pries open what's left of his jaw. He peers down at his brother with contempt.

CALEF (cont'd)

Last time we woke, we faced cavalry, bayonets. But war has changed.

Serena finds a kitchen knife and slashes her own wrist. She allows blood to drip into Ash's mouth.

CALEF (cont'd)

We need to adapt or accept our own extinction. He doesn't understand that, he *refuses* to understand it.

SERENA
Enough! Go help, Reza.

Calef hesitates.

SERENA (cont'd)
(hisses)
Go!

Calef exits. In his wake, Serena gazes down at Ash as she affectionately strokes his blood-matted hair.

INT. CELLAR - NIGHT

Reza pushes his way through the hanging bodies, searches for one in decent shape. He selects Lt. Alden, cuts him down.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Reza and Calef position Alden's body beside Ash. Blood still flows from Serena's wrist into Ash's mouth.

Ash's arm suddenly lashes out and digs razor-sharp nails into the pale wrist of Alden's corpse.

SERENA
Our brother rises again.

We pull back from this grim tableau and the door closes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT - LATER

Steele sits on the steps of the altar; the others are gathered around him.

STEELE
This is the hand we were dealt and
we're damn well gonna play it.

O'MALLEY
But how do we get close enough to
take their heads?

STEELE
We disable 'em first, then cut the
neck or make 'em swallow grenades.

RICHTER
Or we stay in here until dawn.

STEELE

And that would give them six hours
to find a way to get at us.

In the background, Garcia is still working on the radio.

GARCIA

Hey, I've got power!

Steele goes over to him.

STEELE

You get through to HQ?

GARCIA

Not from here. The battery is
damaged and the signal's weak. If
I climbed on the roof--

A split-second later, Garcia is ENGULFED IN FLAMES. He
SCREAMS in unimaginable pain.

More projectiles of burning fuel -- Molotov Cocktails -- are
tossed through the broken windows.

Steele grabs a rug and takes Garcia to the ground, rolling
him. Moses and Richter rush to help.

Chapel drags the radio out of the blaze.

Rabbit OPENS FIRE out the window.

Another fire-bomb soars into the room and explodes against
the far wall...

The church is now a raging INFERNO, the air filling with
thick, choking smoke.

Garcia is dead. Steele curses, turns to Chapel...

STEELE

Check the back door!

Moses and O'Malley move to the windows and BLAST AWAY. Empty
shells PING on the stone floor...

Steele dampens a rag in the font and ties it around his
mouth. The others take turns and do the same.

CHAPEL (O.S.)

(coughing)

It's barricaded shut!

Steele looks grim as he considers their options.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

The FOUR VAMPIRES stand in the square, watch the church burn.

Tall and gangly REZA wears a Wermacht uniform, Raven-haired SERENA has the appearance of a French peasant, and hulking CALEF wears the black uniform of an SS soldier.

ASH now inhabits the body of Lt. Alden. He pokes at his dried stomach wound and pulls his German trench coat tight.

ASH

You chose well. This body was an old friend of the American who leads them.

SERENA

Does it know anything useful?

ASH

It knows time is running out for us here. We will feed on these last few and move on.

CALEF

The Allies are coming?

ASH

Thousands of them.

CALEF

We go East then, and find a place to sleep until the next--

ASH

No. We go West. To the Americas. It is time we find the rest of our family.

Calef shoots a look to Serena: *You hearing this?*

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

More burning beams fall. The entire squad gather at the FRONT DOOR, prepared to make a final grab for freedom.

O'MALLEY

They'll be waiting--

STEELE

We fight or we burn. Personally,
I'd rather go out fighting.

Chapel STUMBLES forward. He looks down in shock at the floor where he was standing.

CHAPEL

They're coming through the floor!!!

The GIs aim their guns to see a beautiful, tough French woman emerge from a trapdoor. The last thing they expected.

Marie locks eyes with Steele.

MARIE

You should have listened.

Steele grabs the edge of the trapdoor and holds it open. He aims his gun at Marie's head.

STEELE

Smile.

Marie gives him a fangless smile.

STEELE (cont'd)

(to his men)

In the hole. Go!

Steele shoves Chapel into the hole then Moses leaps down after him. O'Malley, Rabbit, and Richter follow.

The trapdoor slams closed. Seconds later, a fiery wooden beam crashes on top of it.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

The roof of the church collapses, sending a cloud of glowing embers soaring into the night sky.

CALEF

They aren't coming out. They're
going to burn. Your leadership has
failed us again, brother.

Lightning quick, Ash slashes Calef's face. slicing open his cheek.

ASH

You've questioned me for too long.

Calef cowers, holds his face together. Ash moves to strike again but Reza grabs his wrist.

REZA

We must not fight each other.

Ash glares at Reza, ready to fight them both.

Serena is ignoring the sibling rivalry. She sniffs the air.

SERENA

We would smell their burning flesh
by now. They've escaped.

Ash takes a sniff for himself.

ASH

Our sister is right.

CALEF

But how?

SERENA

We have found tunnels in other
towns. They must be here too.

CALEF

If our prey has gone underground,
we should forget them and--

ASH

We've stayed hidden for centuries.
We cannot risk leaving a handful of
humans alive to tell of our
existence. They'll hunt us to the
ends of the Earth.

Ash growls as he stares into the flames.

ASH (cont'd)

They must also pay for Drago and
Lucia with their blood.

CUT TO:

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Using a torch to light the way, Marie leads the GIs along an underground tunnel. The dirt ceiling is barely tall enough for the men to stand.

Marie ushers the soldiers through a thick oak door and bolts it shut behind them. When she sees Richter, she tenses up.

RICHTER

I am on your side tonight.

Marie SLAPS HIM. Then she calmly returns to the front of the squad and leads them deeper underground.

Steele moves past his troops to talk with her.

STEELE

We owe you our lives. Thank you.

He offers his hand and they shake.

MARIE

Marie.

STEELE

Tom. Are you from this village?

MARIE

I live on a farm nearby. At least I did before the blood-drinkers arrived. Now I live down here.

STEELE

The resistance built all this?

MARIE

My father and his friends. They helped many Jews escape and English pilots find their way home.

STEELE

And those... *things* up there don't know about the tunnels?

MARIE

Not yet.

They are approaching lights. A chamber.

MARIE (cont'd)

Please, be quiet now. Your voice will frighten my daughter.

STEELE

Daughter?!

INT. UNDERGROUND LIVING QUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Marie leads them into a large, candlelit chamber. Four rickety bunks and the bare necessities: wash bowls, dried food, water.

Isabelle is asleep on a cot. The soldiers hang back while Marie gently wakes her. The poor girl opens her eyes to see six flame-broiled soldiers carrying weapons.

ISABELLE

Mamma! Mamma!

MARIE

(subtitled French)

It's okay, baby, it's okay.

(in English)

These men are Americans. They are friends. We must help them okay?

Isabelle silently nods her head, eyeing the soldiers with a mixture of fear and awe. Marie turns to them...

MARIE (cont'd)

You can rest here. It is safe.

CUT TO:

INT. UNDERGROUND LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT - LATER

Steele's men rest, rehydrate, reload.

O'Malley notices Isabelle staring at him from her bunk. She cranks the handle of a tiny handheld MUSIC BOX. It chimes with the gentle rhyme of *Frere Jacques*.

O'MALLEY

Wanna see a magic trick?

Isabelle watches as he pushes a cigarette up his nose, pulls it from his ear. She giggles.

Across the room, Marie is huddled with Steele. She smiles as she watches her daughter.

MARIE

She hasn't laughed in a long time.

Steele is affected too. Heartbroken.

STEELE

I had a daughter. She would have been about the same age.

MARIE

"Had?"

STEELE

She died in a bus crash back home.
My wife too.

MARIE

I'm sorry.

Steele changes the subject. He clearly doesn't want to talk about his dead wife and daughter.

STEELE

Why haven't you tried to escape?

MARIE

And go where? Between the Germans and the monsters, I prefer to take my chances down here.

STEELE

But in the daytime. Our German pal said they only come out at night.

MARIE

They never sleep. When the sun is up they hide in the attics with rifles. I watched them shoot my best friend.

STEELE

When did all this start?

MARIE

A week ago, four refugees walked into the village. They spoke perfect French. Told us their village had been destroyed and everyone killed. So we took them in, gave them food and a place to stay. The next day, our priest disappeared...

Steele is smoking. Marie pulls the cigarette from his lips and draws hard on it.

MARIE (cont'd)

...Most of the villagers thought he was crazy so everyone assumed he had wandered off or gotten lost. Then they found his body dumped in the well. When they pulled him out, he was all dried up, the blood sucked right out of it. Of course, everyone suspected the newcomers so a mob went looking for them.

(MORE)

MARIE (cont'd)

But they were nowhere to be found.
Until the sun went down...

(beat)

I woke up and heard my sister
screaming. At first, I thought the
Germans had finally come for us.

Marie's eyes are moist and red. This is the first time she's
relived that night.

MARIE (cont'd)

But when I looked in the hall I saw
one of them biting my sister.

STEELE

How did you get away?

MARIE

There is a secret room behind my
wardrobe. We built it for
Isabelle, to hide her from the
Germans. Luckily, there was room
for us both and we were never
discovered.

STEELE

Have you seen any other soldiers?

MARIE

A group of Germans came through
here 3 nights ago. They managed to
kill one of the blood-drinkers.

STEELE

What about Americans?

Marie avoids his gaze, she looks ashamed almost.

MARIE

They arrived the next night. I
tried to help them, but there's no
tunnel under the schoolhouse and
the blood-drinkers trapped them
there with another fire.

Marie wipes away a tear.

MARIE (cont'd)

A few managed to escape and I
helped an officer to my house. But
he sacrificed himself to hide me
and they killed him.

STEELE
We'll get you out of here, I promise.

CHAPEL
Steele?

STEELE
What's on your mind, kid?

Chapel holds up the RADIO PACK.

CHAPEL
It still works.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Ash stands on the steps of the church, surveying the blackened remains of the prayer hall. He stares at a charred crucifix with disdain.

Another vampire appears behind him.

ASH
Well?

It's the female, Serena.

SERENA
We are still looking. But the light will be here soon. Perhaps brother Calef is right, perhaps we should leave before it is too late.

ASH
And do you share his desire to sleep once more?

SERENA
The Westerners are in Europe now, brother. This war will not last much longer.

ASH
Then we'll find food in the Americas, in one of their cities. They never missed the poor and the lame when we took them from the streets of Berlin, Paris--

SERENA

But peace time is too dangerous.
You know that. Our appetite is far
too strong to conceal.

(an admission)

And I'm tired, brother. I
sometimes fear I will suffer the
madness that befell Lucia and drove
her from us.

The weight of Lucia's loss weighs heavily on Ash. He turns
to face Serena.

ASH

You *all* feel this way?

SERENA

It is true that everything is
changing. For most of our lives we
fought swords, arrows, slings. Now
we face armored machines, bullets,
bombs. Our family has suffered two
losses in as many days. We should
preserve what's left.

ASH

Very well. We will kill these men
tonight and speak of this further.

SERENA

And if we cannot find the tunnels?

ASH

But the fire is out, dear sister...

Ash turns back to the smoldering church. One of the walls
collapses inwards, an explosion of burning embers.

ASH (cont'd)

...And the church is no more.

Ash walks right into the smoking remains of the church.

INT. UNDERGROUND LIVING QUARTERS - LATER

Steele has gathered the surviving squad members to brief them
on what's next. Isabelle clings to Marie's leg.

STEELE

We need to transmit from a high
vantage point. Marie tells me one
of these tunnels leads to a three-
story house.

(MORE)

STEELE (cont'd)
 We'll secure the building and radio
 HQ from the attic.

RABBIT
 And tell them what? Our own
 soldiers are coming back from the
 dead and trying to eat us?

STEELE
 I'll lie. Tell the Colonel the
 streets are crawling with Germans
 and to send every tank he has.

RICHTER
 You should tell him to drop bombs.

STEELE
 In case you haven't noticed, those
 things have us trapped here and
 these tunnels ain't deep enough to
 ride out an air assault.
 (beat)
 Anyone else have something to say?

The men are silent.

STEELE (cont'd)
 Good. O'Malley, I want you to stay
 with the kid. That OK with you?
 (O'Malley nods)
 The rest of you, gear up, let's go.

While the soldiers pull on their packs, grab their weapons,
 Marie picks up a lantern.

Isabelle peers up at her mother.

ISABELLE
 I want to come, mamma.

Marie looks down, brushes a hand through her daughter's hair.

MARIE
 It is safer for you to stay here.
 We'll be back very soon.

Steele hefts his SMG onto his shoulder, turns to Marie.

STEELE
 Lead the way.

Isabelle watches as her mother leads the GIs (and Richter)
 into a tunnel. The light from her lantern is swallowed by
 the darkness...

INT. TUNNEL - MINUTES LATER

Marie's lamp illuminates a long, cramped tunnel. Eventually, it comes to a dead end and a ladder leads to a trapdoor.

INT. HOUSE - DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The TRAP DOOR opens.

Steele climbs out of the hole and looks around. The front door is smashed open and bangs in the wind; broken furniture and shattered glass litters the room.

There is a large bloodstain on the floor. Lt. Alden's blood.

Chapel passes the radio up to Steele. The rest of the squad quickly surface. Rabbit, Richter and Moses take up positions at the windows.

STEELE

You see anything out there?

RABBIT

All clear.

Marie leads Steele and Chapel to a staircase.

STEELE

Watch the streets. We'll be quick.

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

Marie enters the attic, Steele and Chapel right behind her.

Chapel sets up the radio near a small window and dials in a frequency.

CHAPEL

(into radio)

King 2 to King 6, King 2 to King 6,
do you copy?

The radio squawks loudly. Too loud. Steele shoots Chapel a look as he scrambles to dial it down.

A reply comes back, but it's garbled. The signal is clearly very, very weak.

HQ OPERATOR

This is King 6. Go ahead, King 2.

Chapel offers the mic to Steele. He takes it...

STEELE

Be advised there is an armored division hiding in the village of St. Croix. Estimate nine Panzers hiding in the buildings and approximately one hundred infantry.

HQ OPERATOR (V.O.)

Please repeat, King 2.

Steele and Chapel exchange an anxious look. HQ can't hear what they're saying. Steele tries again.

STEELE

King 6, be advised...

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. COMMUNICATIONS TENT - NIGHT

Steele's transmission is mostly static. Just a few incoherent words...

STEELE (V.O.)

...Armored... hundred infantry...

COL. MCKENZIE

(to radio operator)

That's Steele. Fix it. I need to hear what he's saying.

RADIO OPERATOR

It's their radio, sir. I'm not picking up a strong signal.

COL. MCKENZIE

Can they hear us?

RADIO OPERATOR

Possibly.

McKenzie snatches the handset from the RADIO OPERATOR.

COL. MCKENZIE

(into radio)

Steele. If you can hear this, you need to get clear of the area. At oh-six-hundred tomorrow morning...

INT. ATTIC - NIGHT

The Colonel's voice is crackling but audible.

COL. MCKENZIE (V.O.)
...I'm dropping hellfire on the
whole damn town.

Steele and Chapel exchange a look of alarm.

STEELE
(into radio)
Negative, King 6. We are pinned
down. We cannot get clear. Over--

Clearly, HQ can't hear him.

COL. MCKENZIE
...I repeat. Artillery incoming at
oh-six-hundred.

A light on the radio begins to fade. Chapel bangs the
battery unit with his palm.

CHAPEL
No, no, no. Come on...

Steele drops the handset, stares out the window.

MARIE
So your army is going to destroy my
village?

CHAPEL
Yup. With us in it.

Steele isn't listening. He's focused on something outside.

STEELE
Not exactly.

CHAPEL
Sir?

STEELE
We're getting the hell out of here.

Steele points outside. Chapel and Marie move to the window.

P.O.V. FROM WINDOW:

A rusty old RENAULT TRUCK sits on a dirt road, 50 yards from
the house.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

Steele, Marie and Chapel descend the stairs and rejoin the others (Rabbit, Richter, and Moses) on the ground floor.

STEELE

Change of plan. HQ plans to shell this place in a few hours, so we're out of options. We need to bug out. There's a truck fifty yards from here. I'll get it started and pull it around front--

CHAPEL

No. I'll go.
(off Steele's look)
I don't have the combat skills you guys have. If the monsters show up, you'll need every sharpshooter you have.

STEELE

You don't have to do this, kid.

CHAPEL

I want to.

Steele nods his gratitude, turns to the others.

STEELE

Moses, Rabbit, you two get cozy upstairs and lay down cover fire if he needs it.

Moses tosses Steele his SHOTGUN and unslings an M1 Garand. He follows Rabbit upstairs.

STEELE (cont'd)

(to Marie)

Fetch your daughter. Quickly.

Marie climbs back through the trapdoor, disappears.

Chapel strips off his gear, hands his Thompson to Richter.

CHAPEL

(in German)

It's low on bullets. Make 'em count.

RICHTER

(in German)

Good luck.

Steele pulls open the back door, scans the dark backyard. The truck sits on a dirt road, on the other side of a low stone wall, a field beyond.

Chapel joins him.

STEELE

Keep low, move fast, and don't look back. You hear shooting, you'll know they're coming.

Chapel eyes Steele's handgun.

CHAPEL

Can I take your .45?

STEELE

Sure, but these rounds won't even slow these things.

CHAPEL

It wouldn't be for them.

Steele pulls the gun from his holster and hands it to Chapel.

STEELE

It won't come to that. You're gonna make it.

Chapel psyches himself up, then slips through the cellar doors into the night...

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Chapel sprints across the backyard. He nervously surveys his surroundings as he runs. It's almost too quiet.

The truck looks impossibly far away.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

In one window, Rabbit tracks Chapel with his BAR. In the other, Moses aims his M1.

A gentle breeze blows through the net curtains creating a surreal image as the two GIs stand there, ready to wage war on the undead.

RABBIT

(whispers)

Kid's got balls.

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Chapel climbs over the stone wall to reach the truck. He carefully tries to open the driver's door without making a sound. But the rusted metal door GROANS LOUDLY...

CHAPEL
(cringes)
Shit.

Chapel's calm exterior is starting to crack. He looks back at the house but can see nothing; he can't even tell if Steele and the others are still watching.

Chapel slides into the driver's seat.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

Steele and Richter watch for any sign of the vampires. The tension is palpable.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Chapel nervously glances in the rearview mirror, thumbs the starter switch. The absolute quiet is shattered by the GRINDING of the engine as it struggles to turn over...

CHAPEL
Come on, girl!

Chapel glances down at the fuel gauge. EMPTY.

CHAPEL (cont'd)
No, no, this is not happening.

Chapel peers into the bed of the truck and spies a GAS CAN.

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Chapel jumps out of the cab and reaches for the gas can.

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Rabbit squints at the truck.

RABBIT
What is he doing?
(realizing)
Holy smokes, it's out of gas!

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

Steele watches incredulous as Chapel fumbles with the can of gasoline and starts filling up the truck.

RICHTER
He is taking too long.

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Chapel nervously cradles the upturned gas can: *glug-glug-glug*.

CHAPEL
Come on, come on, come on...

The suspense is nerve-wracking.

INTERCUT:

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Marie hurries back through the tunnel. As she nears the light of the living quarters, she can hear Isabelle's music box playing *Frere Jacques*...

INT. UNDERGROUND LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Marie enters to see O'Malley slumped into a chair, his back to her. *Frere Jacques* still plays...

MARIE
(uneasy)
Isabelle?

She slowly approaches O'Malley, reaches for his shoulder...

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Chapel tosses the empty can and jumps back into the truck. He pumps the gas pedal, thumbs the starter.

The engine GRINDS again, ROARS to life.

CHAPEL
Yes!!!

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

In the distance, the old truck jerks forward.

STEELE
Drive, kid, drive.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Chapel looks back in the rearview mirror, clearly relieved to be underway. He shifts gears with a CRUNCH...

INT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Rabbit and Moses watch the truck moving along the lane.

RABBIT
Yeah!

INT. UNDERGROUND LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Marie covers her mouth in silent horror. O'Malley's throat has been slit open, his entire chest coated in blood.

The music box sits on his lap.

Crying, Marie realizes he's still alive. Barely.

MARIE
Isabelle?

O'MALLEY
(almost inaudible)
Trap.

A split-second later, Serena lunges from the other tunnel.

With his last ounce of strength, O'Malley lifts a .45 and drills Serena with an entire clip. She's reels backwards, hits the dirt.

Blood seeping from his throat, O'Malley pulls the "Felix" grenade from his tunic, utters one last word...

O'MALLEY (cont'd)
Run.

As Serena struggles to her feet, Marie starts running back the way she came.

Once Marie is clear, O'Malley pulls the pin...

KA-BOOM!

The tunnel collapses.

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

The truck is kicking up dust in its wake and shaking violently as it negotiates the bumpy road.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Chapel glances again in the rearview mirror...

A fist SMASHES through the windshield and sharp fingernails grab him around the throat.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

The explosion underground shakes the house. Steele glances at the trap door in alarm.

From upstairs, Rabbit yells...

RABBIT (O.S.)
Something's wrong!

Steele looks back outside.

STEELE'S P.O.V.:

The truck veers off the road, crashes into a ditch.

Through the rear window of the truck's cab, Reza's pale white face is visible. His mouth BLOODY.

STEELE
Fuck! They got him!!!

Steele charges outside with his Thompson. Richter grabs Moses' shotgun and gives chase.

EXT. HOUSE - UPSTAIRS - NIGHT

Rabbit and Moses open fire, strafing the ground around the truck.

Steele leaps the stone wall. Richter right behind him.

INT. TUNNELS - NIGHT

Marie lies near a collapsed section of the tunnel. She shakes off the concussion, pushes debris off her body.

The path back to the living quarters, back to Isabelle, is completely impassable. Undeterred, she claws at the rubble...

MARIE
(panicked)
Isabelle! Hold on, bebe! Mama is coming!

Marie is ripping her hands apart on the jagged rocks and many are simply too large. As she becomes aware her efforts are futile, she slumps in defeat and sobs.

EXT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Steele is first to reach the truck.

The rear window is splattered in BLOOD. A hand slaps against the glass, smearing the blood, struggling...

A single GUNSHOT from the .45 reverberates inside the cabin.

Reza appears above the roof of the cab, standing on the hood of the truck. The blood around his mouth glistens in the moonlight.

STEELE
Hey!

Fueled by rage, Steele starts BLASTING his SMG.

Richter opens fire with the SHOTGUN...

Rabbit and Moses continuing firing from the house too.

Reza's chest explodes in a cloud of red and tumbles off the hood out of sight.

RICHTER
Watch out!

Calef suddenly lunges from the hedgerow, arms outstretched, fingers shaped like claws.

Steele turns and sprays Calef with lead. But the hulking vampire keeps coming, slams into him.

Calef gets Steele in a chokehold, his jagged fingernails drawing blood on Steele's neck.

ON RICHTER

Reza springs onto the roof of the truck.

RICHTER
You want more?!

Richter lifts the shotgun and blows off Reza's RIGHT ARM. The impact spins him into the rear window of the cab, SHATTERING the glass.

Reza staggers to his feet so Richter blows off his LEFT ARM. The armless vampire drops to the truck bed, writhes in pain

ON STEELE

Fighting for breath, he places the muzzle of his machine-gun against Calef's cheek.

STEELE
(choking)
Heads up, asshole.

Steele pulls the trigger and a short burst rips off Calef's jaw, scattering his fangs and teeth across the dirt road.

Calef stumbles backwards, clutching at his missing mouth.

Steele pulls the pin from a GRENADE and tosses it after the crippled vampire.

KA-BOOM!

ON RICHTER

Ignoring the explosion behind him, he jumps into the bed of the truck and pins Reza's head to the cab wall with his boot. He pumps his shotgun, places the barrel against Reza's neck.

RICHTER
This is for the kid...

BOOM!

Richter's shotgun blast tears through the vampire's throat.

RICHTER (cont'd)
...And my friends...

PUMP, CLICK...

BOOM!

A second blast severs Reza's head from his body. Richter withdraws his boot and the decapitated head rolls around the bed of the truck. The headless body goes into spasms and shakes the chassis.

Richter jumps back onto the road. Steele hurries past him and pulls open the door of the cab.

Steele recoils in horror at whatever he sees inside. He reaches into the cab and grabs Chapel's bloody dog-tag. He then turns and pushes Richter back towards the house.

STEELE

Go!!!

RICHTER

No! We take him with us!

STEELE

There's nothing left to carry! GO!

Steele and Richter start hauling ass back across the yard. As they leap the wall, Rabbit's BAR opens up again...

INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT

Marie limps back through the tunnel, a .45 in her hands. She walks with a purpose.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Steele is yards from the house when he notices Richter isn't beside him anymore. He looks back to see the German kneeling on the grass, FIRING his shotgun at something approaching.

STEELE

Fall back, damnit!

Richter isn't listening. Instead, he keeps pumping and firing the shotgun. Ash emerges from the darkness, moving fast, closing on Richter...

BOOM!

A round from the shotgun tears at his side. But Ash is so angry it doesn't even slow him down.

He leaps through the air, his clawed-hand pulled back...

CLICK! Richter's out of ammo...

STEELE (cont'd)

NO!!!

Ash's claw tears into Richter's neck and the shotgun hits the ground, splashed in BLOOD.

Heavy rounds from above rip into Ash and we can hear Rabbit SCREAMING as he fires.

Steele shoulders his Thompson and fires until he runs dry.

Kneeling, Ash looks up at Steele with a grim smile.

BANG-BANG-BANG!!!

Steele turns to see Marie right next to him, screaming in rage, her .45 spitting bullets...

Steele pulls a pin from a grenade and hurls it. But Ash scrambles to his feet and slips away as it EXPLODES...

Marie glares at Steele.

MARIE

They took my baby.

INT. HOUSE - DOWNSTAIRS - NIGHT

Steele and Marie carry Richter into the house. Moses and Rabbit meet them at the door, slam it closed behind them.

Steele lowers the corpse to the floor. Moses places a hand on the dead man's chest, says a prayer.

RABBIT

What the hell do we do now? We just lost two more guys and we're trapped here until our own army blows this place to kingdom come.

MARIE

Three men. The man you left with my daughter is dead. He sacrificed himself to save me.

RABBIT

O'Malley too?! Goddamn!

Steele is silent as he stares into space.

RABBIT (cont'd)
 Well then that's it, they win. We
 might as well slit our wrists and
 invite 'em to drink up!

Steele turns and roughly shoves Rabbit against the wall. The
 look in his eyes is deeply unnerving.

STEELE
 We ain't licked yet and you're
 gonna help me kill every fanged
 motherfucker left in this village.
 You hear me?

He releases Rabbit, turns to Marie.

STEELE (cont'd)
 And I'll bring your little girl
 back. I promise you that.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - NIGHT

In the center of the burned-out main hall, Isabelle sits
 TREMBLING with fear on a small fire-damaged chair. Someone
 paces behind her, tracing a sharp fingernail around the
 girl's soft neck.

We pan up to reveal a grenade-disfigured Serena, her gaze
 lingering on Isabelle's throat. She sinks a fang into her
 lip to quell her hunger.

SERENA
 Hush. Your soldier friends will
 come for you soon.

ISABELLE
 They're going to kill you.

Serena grabs the girl's face. She squeezes, hard.

SERENA
 Little girl, I've walked this earth
 for almost a thousand years. I'm
 not dying tonight.

Isabelle cries a single tear. The vampire wipes it from her
 cheek with a razor-sharp thumbnail, draws blood.

She sucks her thumb. Shudders in ecstasy.

ASH (O.S.)
Stop playing with the child...

Serena turns to see Ash carrying Calef's broken and bloodied body into the room.

SERENA
Where's Reza?!

ASH
They took his head.

ISABELLE
(smiles)
I told you.

Infuriated, Serena spins on Isabelle and opens her mouth wide. She hisses, shows off her fangs. It's terrifying for us, let alone a little girl.

A gurgling sound emanates from Calef's missing face.

ASH
We must find another vessel for
Calef. Or we lose him too.

They both turn and stare at Isabelle...

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

An array of weaponry lies on the kitchen table: two Thompson SMGs, a BAR, two .45s, two bayonets, and three grenades.

MOSES
Two mags for the Thompsons, six
bullets for the .45s, and the BAR
is out.

RABBIT
(grim)
It's not enough. We got heads to
remove.

Marie pulls open some drawers, finds a large BREAD KNIFE.

RABBIT (cont'd)
(re: knife)
We need those. Only bigger.

Steele's eyes light up.

STEELE
 (to Marie)
 Where I first saw you, in the
 street, can you get us safely to
 that building?

Marie slides the knife in her belt, gives Steele a curt nod.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOUCHERIE / ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Steele, Marie, Rabbit, and Moses reach the mouth of an alleyway and stay hidden in the shadows. On the other side of the street, the front door of the Boucherie.

MARIE
 I'll stay here and watch for them.

STEELE
 Rabbit, you stay with her.

RABBIT
 Fine by me. Just find me something
 big and sharp.

Steele and Moses dart across the street, exposed momentarily in the moonlight, and disappear inside the building.

INT. BOUCHERIE - NIGHT

Steele and Moses are staring off-screen at the far wall of this butcher shop. We pull back to reveal an armory of BUTCHER'S HAND-TOOLS: knives, hand hooks, larding tubes, meat saws, cleavers, etc...

Steele grabs a heavy AXE. He gives Moses a big smile.

EXT. BOUCHERIE / ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Rabbit scans the dark streets, itching to cut down a vampire with his Thompson SMG.

Marie across from him, her mind focused on her daughter.

MARIE
 (whispers)
 You think he's right? You think
 she's still alive?

RABBIT
I haven't known him long. But if
Steele believes she's okay--

Rabbit goes quiet. He heard something.

MARIE
What is--?

RABBIT
Ssshhh. Listen...

A faint BELL.

Rabbit's eyes narrow.

RABBIT (cont'd)
Stay here. Watch my back.

Marie watches, anxious, as he edges along the wall towards the mouth of another alleyway.

The sound of the bell again. It's a familiar noise.

RABBIT (cont'd)
Stupid fucking cow...

Rabbit turns the corner and comes face to face with Serena. She clutches the COW BELL, rings it with a sinister smile...

Before Rabbit can lift his gun, Serena slashes his throat with her claw. Blood sprays across her face and Rabbit collapses to his knees.

MARIE
Noooo!

INT. BOUCHERIE - NIGHT

Steele is filling a canvas bag with various sharp tools when he hears the scream. He runs outside with the axe. Moses follows, sporting a meat cleaver and hand-hook.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Marie runs at Serena, stabs the kitchen knife into her heart, and drives her into another doorway.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Marie and Serena crash inside and grapple on the floor in a growing pool of blood. It's an epic fight.

Serena tries to drive her fangs into Marie's shoulder. Marie pushes her away by twisting the knife, but the tip of Serena's fangs gouge two lines in her flesh.

Despite the vampire's strength, Marie is a mother possessed. She ignores her own injuries and fights with abandon.

They break apart, circle each other. Marie now with the knife clenched in her fist.

MARIE
(pissed)
Where's my daughter?

Serena merely LAUGHS, her mouth covered in crimson.

MARIE (cont'd)
WHERE IS SHE?!?

Marie lunges, Serena grabs her arm, swings her into a wall.

EXT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Steele is first to find Rabbit. He's slumped against a wall, throat torn open, lifeless eyes wide open in shock.

Hearing the battle inside the cottage, Steele and Moses charge inside...

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Serena is distracted by the arrival of the two GIs. This buys Marie a split-second and she uses it to drive her kitchen knife into the vampire's temple.

Marie's momentum, pushes the blade right through Serena's skull, into a wooden post. She is staked in place.

The vampire SQUEALS with pain and claws at Marie. Ignoring the swipes, Marie keeps a grip on the knife, holding it there. Steele and Moses hang back, ready to help...

MARIE
Where's my daughter?

Serena continues to struggle.

Marie turns to Steele, gestures to the AXE in his hands.

MARIE (cont'd)
 (re: axe)
 Give it to me.

STEELE
 You don't have to, I can finish...

MARIE
 Give it to me!!!

Marie snatches the axe from Steele and pulls it back over her shoulder, ready to strike.

MARIE (cont'd)
 Where's is she?

SERENA
 (wicked smile)
 She's waiting for you in the schoolhouse.

MARIE
 Have you hurt her?

SERENA
 You will see.

Marie closes her eyes and SWINGS THE AXE.

SLICE!!!

We hear the THUMP of the headless body hitting the floor. The decapitated skull stays pinned to the beam.

Marie drops the axe and stands there sobbing. Steele reaches out to comfort her.

CUT TO:

EXT. COTTAGE - LATER

Steele kneels by Rabbit and snaps off a dog-tag. Moses covers the dead GI with a tablecloth.

MOSES
 Go with God, soldier.

Steele slings the axe over his shoulder, notices Marie staring at a building with a tall clock tower.

The SCHOOL HOUSE. After the church, it's the largest building in the village.

MARIE

You can see the whole village from the tower.

STEELE

Good place to hole up.

MARIE

Hard to get up there. The Germans hid inside the school until the monsters burned it. Most of the interior is gone, the staircase...

STEELE

The clock's still ticking. If it's right, we're almost out of time. We'll go after Isabelle, you should get clear before--

Marie ignores him, starts marching towards the school.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOLHOUSE - NIGHT

Ash stands silhouetted in one of the shattered windows.

Isabelle stands beside him. His hand rests on her shoulder.

ASH

They will come for you now, brother.

We pan down Isabelle's slender arm to discover her nails have grown into razor-sharp CLAWS...

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

Our hero shot: Steele, Marie and Moses stroll across the square in SLOW-MO, ready for the final battle.

Steele grips his blood-stained AXE with two hands, his machine-gun slung over his shoulder.

Marie wields two HUGE KNIVES, a murderous look in her eye.

Moses has the other SMG and carries his HOOK and CLEAVER.

Ahead of them, the school house looms. Looking ever more ominous as they approach.

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE - NIGHT

Steele directs Moses to the back door, then uses his axe to push on the main fire-damaged doors. They slowly swing open, inviting Steele and Marie to step inside...

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - NIGHT

Steele walks forward into the charred and blackened main hall, Marie beside him. There is nothing in the room, only a single burned chair sitting in the center of the hall.

Steele nods towards a door positioned in the far wall.

STEELE
(re: door)
What's through there?

MARIE
Teacher's office and washrooms for
the children.

Marie points her knife at a door in the wall facing them.

MARIE (cont'd)
That's the back door...

An open doorway in the rear wall.

MARIE (cont'd)
...And that's the entrance to the
tower.

Steele moves towards the door in the far wall.

STEELE
Wait here for Moses. You see or
hear anything, make some noise.

Steele disappears, leaving Marie on her own.

Suddenly, a CHILD'S VOICE filters through the entrance of the tower. The child is singing *Frere Jacques*.

MARIE
Steele?!

There's no answer. Steele can't hear her. Marie heads towards the sound of Isabelle's voice...

MARIE (cont'd)
Isabelle?

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - OFFICE - NIGHT

The door bursts open and Steele appears, having just smashed his way in using the axe.

He scans the room. Satisfied Ash and the child couldn't be in there, he walks back out.

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Moses enters the back door. No sign of Steele or Marie.

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - TOWER STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Marie is climbing what's left of the staircase. She tests each step underfoot, grimacing each time the burned wood threatens to disintegrate.

The child's voice drifts down the eerie tower, still singing the unnerving rhyme.

MARIE
Hold on, baby, I'm coming!

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - RESTROOM - NIGHT

Steele uses the flat edge of the axe-head to bash in each stall door. When he reaches the last one, he turns and curses. Then he hears someone coming and quickly ducks into the nearest stall.

The footsteps enter the restroom.

Steele holds his breath, adjusts his firm grip on the axe.

MOSES
(whispering)
Steele?

Steele exhales deeply, emerges from the stall.

STEELE
Jeez, Mo, you damn near scared the piss out of me! Didn't Marie tell you I was in here?

MOSES
She's not with you?

Steele pushes past him.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - TOWER STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Marie is now high in the tower, steadying her advance by sticking the point of a knife in the crumbling mortar of the stairwell wall.

As she reaches the final step, a pale outstretched hand appears and grabs her by the hair. Marie looks up to see Ash smiling down at her...

The knife slips from Marie's grasp and she's pulled from sight. The blade gleams in the moonlight as it spins its way towards the ground, clattering on each of the steps.

The singing has stopped.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Steele races into the room with Moses close behind. Marie is long gone.

STEELE
Dammit. Not again.

Suddenly, Marie's knives hit the ground in the stairwell and the noise echoes around the hall.

STEELE (cont'd)
Marie!

Steele and Moses sprint for the stairwell.

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - TOWER STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Steele peers up into the spooky tower.

MOSES
You think she went up there?

ISABELLE (O.S.)
The scary man took her.

Steele and Moses spin around to see Isabelle standing in the center of the hall.

Her stark white dress contrasts sharply with the fire-blackened room, making her appearance all the more ghostly and startling.

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - MAIN HALL - NIGHT

Moses steps out of the stairwell and moves to Isabelle.

MOSES

Are you okay? Did they hurt you?

ISABELLE

I'm okay. But he took my mamma.

(re: tower)

He took her up there.

Moses locks eyes with Steele who remains in the stairwell.

STEELE

Wait here with the kid. And don't disappear.

Moses nods, puts a protective arm around Isabelle.

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - TOWER STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Steele slides the axe through his combat-belt, starts climbing. He's careful to balance his weight but the wood bends and creaks as he ascends.

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - MAIN HALL - NIGHT

In the center of the room, Moses cradles the young girl in his arms. He looks up at the tower through the damaged roof.

MOSES

Don't be scared. He'll find your mommy and bring her down.

Isabelle has her face buried in Moses's shoulder.

ISABELLE

He's not coming back.

MOSES

Have faith, little girl.

ISABELLE

He's going to die up there.

Suddenly, Isabelle rears back and reveals a MOUTHFUL OF FANGS. But before she has a chance to bite, Moses hurls her tiny body across the room...

Obviously possessed by Calef, Isabelle now stands 20ft away. She stares at Moses, licks her lips.

MOSES

God have mercy! Not you too!

Isabelle leaps towards Moses, claws outstretched. Her white-gown flowing behind her.

Moses drops to the floor, shields himself with the meat-hook.

Isabelle soars overhead, slashes at his face.

Moses rolls to a crouch, his cheek slashed open.

Isabelle shuffles her feet like a mischievous child.

ISABELLE / CALEF

I can hear every pump of your heart. I can smell the blood coursing through your veins.

Moses slices the air with his cleaver.

MOSES

Smell all you want, demon, 'cause you ain't drinking it.

Isabelle charges again, growling, baring her fangs.

But this time, Moses doesn't try to avoid her advance. He drops the cleaver and grabs her around the neck.

Isabelle scratches and claws Moses' forearms. With one arm holding her firm, Moses uses to the other to pull out his Bible. He presses the book to her forehead...

The effect is instantaneous. Isabelle violently convulses, kicks, and screams.

MOSES (cont'd)

Take me!!!

Blood is streaming down Moses' arms as he holds the struggling child above him.

Calef looks down at Moses through Isabelle's wide eyes.

MOSES (cont'd)
 Leave the child! TAKE ME!!!

Suddenly, Moses releases Isabelle and scrambles backwards across the floor. The child drops to the ground, and looks up at Moses through terrified eyes.

Isabelle's fangs are gone, her nails returned to normal.

In contrast, the veins in Moses' neck start to bulge and the skin of his face tightens as he fights something inside.

With every ounce of strength he speaks through gritted teeth.

MOSES (cont'd)
 Run, child... RUN!!!

Isabelle clambers to her feet and sprints for the door...

Moses pulls the pins from TWO GRENADES and flicks off the arming-levers...

MOSES (cont'd)
*Yea though I walk through the
 valley of death...*

He places the two grenades either side of his own NECK and holds them there.

MOSES (cont'd)
*I will fear no evil: for Thou art
 with me...*

KA-BOOM!!!

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE - NIGHT

Isabelle is knocked to the ground as the interior of the schoolhouse explodes in an orange flash.

Those few windows that were intact are blown out across the square, showering the child in broken glass.

Something metallic hits the cobbles beside Isabelle. She picks up Moses' DOG-TAGS, places them around her neck.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - TOWER STAIRWELL - PRE-DAWN

Steele has reached the top but clings on for dear life in the wake of the explosion. He pulls himself into an attic space over the main hall of the school.

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - ATTIC - PRE-DAWN

A cavernous room, dominated at one end by the huge clock mechanism. The skeletal roof is riddled with holes and huge portions of the floor are missing.

STEELE'S P.O.V. -- THE MAIN HALL

Looking down through the rafters, Steele sees what's left of Moses lying in a pool of red.

ASH (O.S.)

We're even, you and I. You killed
my family, I killed yours.

Steele turns. Ash appears in a small doorway which leads to a narrow ledge encircling the clocktower.

It's the first time Steele has seen him inhabit ALDEN'S BODY.

STEELE

Jack?

ASH

It must be strange, seeing us
reanimate the dead and walk in the
skin of someone you once knew. You
know the memories linger in the
brain, you'd be surprised the
things I know about you...

STEELE

Where is she?

Ash drags Marie into view. She's bloodied, but alive.

STEELE (cont'd)

You let her go, I let you walk.

ASH

Answer me one question, Thomas.
Why is it every woman in your life
dies before her time?

Ash responds by shoving Marie into the broken stairwell. She plummets...

STEELE

No!!!

Marie crashes through the rotten steps. The stairwell fills with black dust and the only indication that Marie has reached the bottom is a loud THUMP.

Steele glares, hungry for revenge. Ash grins.

Steele pulls the axe from his belt.

STEELE (cont'd)

I'll take your head for that.

They begin to circle one another. Steele ducks under a beam, his ax ready to strike.

ASH

I've lived for centuries. I've seen things you cannot imagine. And I've fed on the blood of a thousand men. What makes you think you can destroy me?

STEELE

Something your little blonde friend taught me.

ASH

Oh, what's that?

STEELE

You hate the sun.

Steele punctuates his point by bashing another hole in the roof tiles. On the horizon, the black sky is turning red.

STEELE (cont'd)

I'm gonna see you *burn*.

Ash bares his fangs, snarls.

Suddenly, the building is rocked by a THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION.

A split-second later, more explosions, all over the village. St. Croix is being shelled by an American armored division.

Ash reacts with surprise. Steele smiles.

STEELE (cont'd)

Cavalry's here.

Ash charges Steele and they CLASH TOGETHER like gladiators. It's a fast, brutal fight...

INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

Isabelle crawls into the stairwell to find Marie twisted among the debris. She's battered but alive.

ISABELLE

Mama!

As dust and debris showers from above, they share a tearful embrace. But as bigger pieces begin to fall and more explosions shake the ground, Marie is jolted back to reality.

MARIE

The tunnels! Quickly!

INT. SCHOOL HOUSE - ATTIC - PRE-DAWN

Steele and the vampire slam into each other again. Bones cracking on impact...

As man and beast hit the floor, the building shifts and the roof collapses even more. The first RAYS OF LIGHT appear in the dust, forcing Ash into the shadows.

They stalk each other. The American soldier in the light, the vampire in the dark. Steele invites Ash into the sun.

STEELE

Come here.

Ash growls.

BOOM!

A direct hit on the school house roof. Steele is blown across the attic, slides into a hole in the floor. He hangs precariously over a 40ft drop.

Ash stands over him, presses a boot onto his hand. With his free arm, Steele swings the SMG off his back, blasts it through the floor...

Ash recoils, allowing Steele to climb back into the attic.

His Thompson empty, Steele draws a bayonet. Ash pulls a bayonet too.

They run at each other, blades slashing, cutting.

More SHAFTS OF SUNLIGHT pour into the attic.

Ash SHRIEKS as his skin blisters, turns black...

Despite the flames covering his back, Ash grips Steele in a chokehold. But Steele uses his legs to power them both into a pool of sunlight. Ash SCREAMS LOUDER then hurls Steele across the room and scurries back into the shadows...

Steele's been shot, stabbed, and bombed.

His bones hurt. His flesh is torn. And there's a bayonet jammed in his thigh.

But he gets back up.

ASH

Enough.

The vampire steps out of the shadows, clutching the ax. He slowly approaches Steele.

ASH (cont'd)

You fought well...

Steele appears resigned to his fate. He drops to his knees, beckons Ash to get it over with.

It's quiet now. The shelling has stopped.

Ash smiles and raises the axe overhead. He's about to bring it down on Steele's skull...

ASH (cont'd)

(contempt)

...For a man.

STEELE

Bite me.

Ash pauses for a split-second and Steele strikes.

He barrels into Ash, drives him right through the roof in an explosion of tiles...

EXT. SCHOOL HOUSE - ROOF - DAWN

Man and vampire slide across the tiles, hurtling towards the edge, towards a 50ft drop...

Ash fumbles for a hand-hold but all of the tiles come loose and don't even slow him down. At the last second, Steele yanks the bayonet from his leg and stabs it into the roof. It shatters a tile and digs into the wood beneath...

Steele hangs on, his legs dangling over the drop...

Ash goes sailing off the edge and plummets towards the statue of Joan Of Arc in the center of the fountain.

He's IMPALED on the sword.

CUT TO:

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - MOMENTS LATER

Steele limps across the cobbled square towards the fountain, using the axe like a walking crutch.

Marie appears, clutching Isabelle's hand.

MARIE

Is it over?

STEELE

Almost.

(re: Isabelle)

Cover her eyes.

Impaled on Joan of Arc's sword, Ash hangs upside down. Blood trickles from his chest, into the fountain.

Steele steps over the short wall surrounding the pool and walks through the water to Ash's body.

ASH

I've never seen the sun.

Steele looks towards the horizon where the SUN is starting to peek above the edge of the Earth.

The line between light and shadow moves across the square and washes over Ash. His skin continues to BLISTER and SMOKE as the darkness fades.

ASH (cont'd)

So beautiful--

Steele brings down the axe. Lops off his head.

Exhausted, Steele drops the axe.

A deep RUMBLING noise fills the air.

Steele climbs from the crimson-colored water and sits on the fountain wall. He fishes a pack of Lucky Strikes from his pocket, hunts for a light...

Marie approaches with Isabelle in tow. She strikes a match and holds it out for Steele.

STEELE

Thank you.

MARIE

What now?

Steele reaches into his tunic for the LETTERS the men wrote in the church. He also pulls out the DOG-TAGS he's collected during the night.

STEELE

I've got mail to deliver.

A SHERMAN TANK rolls into the square, its tracks squealing on the cobbles. Behind it: more tanks, jeeps, soldiers...

Steele stares at the dog-tags in his hand. The loss of so many lives weighing heavily on his mind.

Isabelle hands him Moses' tag.

MARIE

Will you tell them what really happened here?

Beat.

STEELE

I'm gonna tell 'em we got heroes to bury.

Isabelle climbs onto the wall and sits next to Steele. He throws an arm around Marie. Together, they watch American infantrymen pour into the village.

And it is, indeed, a beautiful sunrise.

END TITLES