

THE DRESSMAKER'S DAUGHTER

by

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The Dressmaker's Daughter

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FADE IN:

EXT. YEDINITZ, ROMANIA CIRCA 1940 - DAY

PAN a bustling town, a chaos of old and new: motorcars maneuver around donkey carts and horses. Jews in traditional garb and gentiles stroll narrow wooden sidewalks crowded with food markets and tiny shops.

SCREEN TEXT

Romania 1940, on the edge of a war.

EXT. YEDINITZ STREET - DAY

Two pretty Jewish girls, DANIELA BERGSON and PRIVA GOLDSTEIN, 17, walk with linked arms, chattering.

PRIVA

Don't show your mother what we bought!

DANIELA

Why not? I should be ashamed to read a book?

PRIVA

(giggles)
That book...

DANIELA

Grow up, you baby! Love is... *life*.

The girls reach the Bergson home, a pretty two-story house just off the main street, surrounded by trees and bushes, flowers in the yard.

DANIELA (V.O.)

A pretty place, wasn't it... once? But it was atop a volcano. Soon, the Nazi-Soviet pact would deliver our town to the Communists. But Hitler never intended to honor this pact anyway.

(MORE)

DANIELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 He planned to make Romania his ally
 in Operation Barbarossa, his coming
 war with Russia.

CUT TO:

INT. BUREAUCRATIC OFFICE - DAY

A Romanian bureaucrat in business suit sits at a desk. Sharply dressed Nazi MANFRED VON KILLINGER, forties, enters and shakes hands. He sets his briefcase on the table as an aide pours coffee.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 Manfred von Killinger, a veteran
 Nazi, had just become the German
 ambassador to Romania.

Another uniformed Nazi, GUSTAV RICHTER, enters and gives the *Heil Hitler* salute to von Killinger.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 And this charming gentleman is Gustav
 Richter, a friend and colleague of
 Adolf Eichmann. His task is to bring
 Romania's anti-Jewish laws into line
 with Germany's.

The three men sit and shuffle papers, smoking affably.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 Here's a look ahead at what they were
 planning.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Nazis and Romanian Iron Guard herd a small group of Jews, including women and children, to the edge of a freshly dug pit, shove them into lines, and begin shooting them.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 Just an average workday for the
 Romanian Iron Guard and their
 buddies, the Gestapo.

CLOSE ON a young man's haunted eyes looking into the camera. He is shot from behind and topples into the writhing pit. A wounded woman tries to climb out and is shot.

CUT TO:

INT. MUNICIPAL SLAUGHTERHOUSE - NIGHT

In cold, concrete silence, bodies hang from meat hooks.
Written in chalk across the dark coats are words in Romanian.

SUBTITLED TRANSLATION

Kosher Beef.

DANIELA (V.O.)

But why get ahead of myself? The war
is still in the future. The doomed
millions are still alive.

CUT TO:

EXT. BERGSON HOME - DAY

Daniela and Priva run up the front steps, laughing.

INT. BERGSON HOME - DAY

The girls pass through the entryway to the spacious,
comfortable parlor. Sideboards display china and heirlooms;
fine rugs, candelabra, comfortable chairs. A radio.

DANIELA (V.O.)

My mother was dressmaker to our local
aristocrat, the Countess Kanyadi. Her
husband, the Count, owned the land as
far as you could see, and he didn't
like his hunting parties disrupted by
soldiers. So he bribed whoever he had
to, and life was still peaceful here.

The girls hurry through the parlor to the dressmaker's busy
workroom.

INT. BERGSON WORKROOM - DAY

A hive of activity: seamstresses on sewing machines. Others
doing hand work.

Fussy, portly COUNTESS KANYADI, early forties, stands before
a three-way mirror in her corset, surveying herself
analytically, front and back.

COUNTESS KANYADI

I eat too much. My appetite will be
the death of me.

On a chair nearby sits MIRIAM BERGSON, late forties, a faded
beauty. Her worn, graceful hands hold a tiny scissors that
slices the last thread on a beautiful dress. Miriam rises,
shaking out the dress.

MIRIAM
 (with a little curtsy)
 Here, Your Grace, I fixed that seam.
 Try it now.

Miriam expertly drapes the dress over the Countess. An assistant runs to help button and smooth it.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 People said my mother's dresses could
 make a Betty Grable out of a
 broomstick... or
 (giggles)
 ... turn a tank into a temptress.

The gown floats gracefully down and transforms the stodgy Countess into an elegant matron with sexy cleavage. The whole room gasps, cheers as she delightedly models it.

Miriam laughs modestly. The Countess raises the dress to display her hefty but sexy thighs, satin ribbons on her garters.

COUNTESS KANYADI
 (to Miriam)
 Miriam, you *sorceress*! He'll be putty
 in my hands tonight.
 (shakes her finger
 playfully at Miriam)
 But if you ever make a dress for one
 of his mistresses....

All laugh. Miriam looks quickly at Daniela and Priva, gawking.

MIRIAM
 What did you girls waste money on
 today?

DANIELA
 (to Miriam)
 Oh nothing, Mama.

Mama looks skeptical.

DANIELA
 (to Priva)
 Let's go show Papa.

Daniela and Priva stroll toward the back of the house, leaving the Countess primping from all angles.

INT. EZRIEL'S STUDY - DAY

A small room lined with books, where graying EZRIEL BERGSON, fifties, reads at his desk. Daniela's gifted brother JACOB, 9, plays the Elgar's "Salut d'Amour" on his violin.

The girls stand transfixed.

Ezriel seems to be studying a religious book, even *dovening* slightly as he reads, but looking closer we see he is reading *The Communist Manifesto*.

DANIELA (V.O.)

When he was young, my father had studied to be a rabbi. But Communism was now his religion.

EZRIEL

(to Priva)

So, Priva! Your parents let you visit this house of blasphemy?

PRIVA

(smiles)

Mr. Bergson, don't you believe in God at all?

EZRIEL

There is no God. And religion is bool-sheet, pardon my English.

Priva is politely confused.

EZRIEL

(gaining emotion)

Priests, rabbis, wizards, magicians. Bool-sheeters all. They pull the wool over our eyes.

DANIELA

(exasperated)

Papa! Enough!

PRIVA

(dimples)

What is bool-sheeter?

DANIELA

It's... hard to explain.

EZRIEL

So... what mischief have you girls been up to?

Daniela is bold with her indulgent father.

DANIELA
We've been to the bookshop.

EZRIEL
The most dangerous place in town!

The girls laughingly protest as Ezriel takes Daniela's bag and brings out a couple of sexy romance novels. Jacob tries to see. Ezriel turns him around.

EZRIEL
There's plenty of time for that. Go back to your violin. Ladies love musicians.

Jacob plays a few quick notes. Ezriel draws out Emma Goldman's autobiography.

EZRIEL
Emma Goldman, the anarchist. Well, she's lived long enough to see her most precious beliefs land in the trash heap of history.

Daniela looks quickly at the *Communist Manifesto*.

DANIELA
Maybe this will end up there too!

PRIVA
Daniela!

EZRIEL
Never! But now there's a greater evil than capitalism stalking us.

He motions at a newspaper featuring Adolf Hitler.

EZRIEL
And our leaders here in Romania are lining up to kiss that monster's *tuchus*. Go on. Read your romantic trash. At least it's honest.

When Ezriel is not looking, Daniela slips Jacob a sexy romance novel. Priva and Daniela giggle and troop upstairs.

INT. DANIELA'S BEDROOM - AFTERNOON

The girls sprawl across Daniela's bed, reading their novels.

PRIVA

I want to be Lady Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises*. Having affairs with matadors... drinking myself silly every day... doesn't that sound splendid?

Daniela smiles and rolls her eyes.

DANIELA

(laughs, shakes head)
Oh Priva, you have a lot to learn.

PRIVA

What do I have to learn?

Daniela rummages under her bed and draws out *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. Priva gawks.

PRIVA

Daniela, it's against the law to read that!

Daniela opens to a bookmarked spot. Priva covers her mouth as Daniela begins to read...

DANIELA

(reads)
"...And she went with him to the hut. It was quite dark when he had shut the door, so he made a small light in the lantern. 'Have you left your underthings off?' he asked her."

Priva gives a little scream.

DANIELA

Shhhhh!

The girls read, Priva wide-eyed.

PRIVA

People do that?

DANIELA

(laughs)
Yes, and someday you will too!

Priva leans in and they resume reading.

INT. DANIELA'S HOME - EVENING

Miriam bids goodbye to a rich client as Daniela passes through. When the door closes Miriam turns to her.

MIRIAM

Daniela, you could be a little friendlier to the clients.

DANIELA

(teasing)

Oh mama, you're friendly enough for us both.

MIRIAM

(losing patience)

And your skirt is much too short!

Miriam picks up Daniela's blouse. The skirt is rolled up to make it shorter. She yanks the skirt down to its true length.

MIRIAM

Be a lady. This isn't Hollywood!

DANIELA

Who cares about Hollywood? Mama, I've decided to be a doctor!

Entering with little Jacob, Ezriel hears this and grins.

EZRIEL

Could it be? A beam of light pierces the darkness?

MIRIAM

And which actress inspired this decision? Ingrid Bergman? Vivien Leigh?

DANIELA

No Mama, I decided on my own.

MIRIAM

Daniela, be sensible. How is a Jewish girl supposed to get into medical school? They don't even let Jews into grammar school any more.

Miriam puts an arm around her daughter.

MIRIAM

Darling, if you would only show a little interest in dress design...

DANIELA

I can't waste my mind on fashion.

Miriam loses patience.

MIRIAM
No, you'd rather stay in your room
reading pornography!

DANIELA
It's literature!

MIRIAM
(sarcastic)
Oh! 'Literature!'

DANIELA
Don't listen at my door!

Daniela runs upstairs. Miriam sinks into a chair.

EZRIEL
She's young, Mir, full of ideas....

MIRIAM
A doctor now! It's you who puts those
ideas in her head. Meanwhile I have
to hire village girls to sew for me.
She could at least make a buttonhole!
(to Ezriel)
And you and your Karl Marx!

EZRIEL
You have two hopeless dreamers on
your hands, I'm afraid.

JACOB
Three!

Miriam beams indulgently at Jacob.

JACOB
Just wait, I'll make lots of money on
the concert stage like Jascha
Heifetz. And I'll give it all to you.

Miriam hugs him. Ezriel's eye falls on the newspaper with a
photo of Hitler and Antonescu, the Romanian leader.

LATER

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Under a cloudy moon, Daniela wanders alone in the yard.

DANIELA (V.O.)
Hitler's madness was bearing down on
us. What if I died before I had a
chance to live or love?

(MORE)

DANIELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Everyone said I was a strange girl...
what if I lost my mind? What if I
went mad and ran through the streets
naked or chased people with a knife?

MUSIC UP

She whirls around as it begins to rain and raises her face to the downpour.

INT. DANIELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniela enters her room and hurls herself on the rug.

INT. BERGSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ezriel and Miriam hear the "thump" from upstairs. They look at one another, alarmed. Miriam shakes her head.

MIRIAM

(shouts)

Daniela? Did you fall? Are you all right?

There is no answer.

MIRIAM

What's to be done with her?

EZRIEL

She's stifled. She needs something big enough to occupy that mind of hers. Why not medicine? Let's hire her a tutor. She can study at home, pass the entrance exams and go to college in London. Or even New York. Why not?

MIRIAM

It's impossible!

EZRIEL

Like climbing Mount Everest. But you take one step higher and then another and another. Before you know it...

MIRIAM

(interrupts)

You're lost and frozen solid.

Both laugh. Miriam rises.

MIRIAM

I'll go to her.

INT. DANIELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniela, in her slip, lies across her bed sobbing. Miriam enters tentatively. She arranges a knicknack on the dresser.

MIRIAM

What is it, darling? Why should you cry?

DANIELA

(eyes closed)

How can you ask that? Mama, I think I'm going mad. Hitler is on the march... I see things in my imagination, horrible images.

MIRIAM

Daniela, what good does it do to lose hope? To fall apart?

DANIELA

We have to leave. All of us. We can't stay here.

MIRIAM

Leave our home? Where would we go? No country will let us in.

DANIELA

Then it's hopeless! We're all going to die!

MIRIAM

It's never hopeless. We have to just do the best we can and...

(thinks)

The Count will protect us! The Countess says he gets everything he wants. He doesn't want soldiers on his hunting grounds. And he's a powerful man.

DANIELA

Oh mama, you don't know anything.

MIRIAM

I know more than you think.

She sits beside Daniela and kisses her tearstained face.

MIRIAM

When I was young, I feared for the future too. So I decided to do something useful.

(MORE)

MIRIAM (CONT'D)

I designed some dresses for my girlfriends. People stopped them in the street and asked where they came from? New York? Paris? Before I knew it, clients came calling and... you see how it's worked out! Things always work out, somehow.

Miriam smiles. Daniela throws her arms around her mother..

MIRIAM

Daniela, you're so smart. You'll never be a traditional Jewish wife. So your father and I have decided to help you become a doctor.

Daniela looks at her with disbelief and joy.

DANIELA

Really? Oh Mama! I'll study so hard. I'll make you proud, I promise.

Miriam hugs her again.

MIRIAM

Now get out of these wet clothes. We'll talk later.

When the door closes, Daniela dances, eyes shining. She studies herself in the mirror

DANIELA (V.O.)

My hopes soared. I would gain the power to heal, to battle death and relieve suffering! Make medical breakthroughs, even cure cancer! My fears and depression vanished. I knew it was meant to be.

EXT. YEDINITZ ROAD - DAY

A beautiful, sunny day. Seen from a distance a young man, MIHAIL BOROWIAK, 19, walks down the tree-lined road toward the Bergson home, facing away from the camera.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Little did I know then, God sometimes takes away one madness... only to send another.

Mihail continues to walk.

MIRIAM (O.S.)

Daniela, we've found you a tutor!

Daniela squeals with joy.

EZRIEL (O.S.)
 He'll teach you the basics for
 college: algebra, physics, biology.
 He studied in London.

YOUNG DANIELA (O.S.)
 I'll work so hard! You'll never be
 sorry!

CLOSER ON the young male figure walking. He seems to pause
 and begins turning toward the camera.

EZRIEL (O.S.)
 I knew his father, a fine teacher.
 Fired for being a Jew, of course. So
 he schooled his children at home. The
 boy is said to be brilliant. A
 prodigy even.

Just as we are about to see the face of the young man, we...

CUT TO:

INT. BERGSON SEWING ROOM - DAY

The sewing room bustles as usual. Miriam is measuring the
 portly, fuming Countess Kanyadi. Sitting nearby is pretty,
 blonde PHILIPPA McENERY, about 22, British governess of the
 Countess's two children, ANTON, eight, and KATERINA, four,
 who play at her feet.

Philippa has the profile of a cameo, with blue, limpid eyes.
 Fashionably dressed, she sits with bored, catlike poise, half
 listening to the banter around her. Daniela, intrigued,
 lingers nearby, staring at Philippa with awe.

COUNTESS KANYADI
 How did I gain that weight? I've been
starving myself.
 (to Philippa)
 Tell her. I push my plate away. I eat
 a nibble here, a nibble there.
 Nothing!

Philippa nods emphatically, then glances at Miriam and
 Daniela with knowing irony.

MIRIAM
 I'll just move the zipper a tiny
 bit. Nobody will notice a thing.

COUNTESS KANYADI

A pity we can't all be as skinny as Philippa here. Don't people ever eat back in England?

PHILIPPA

(laughs)

They insist on boiling everything until it turns to algae.

She makes a face.

COUNTESS KANYADI

Maybe we should try that for me!

Studying Philippa, Daniela looks at her own plain attire. She touches her hair.

DANIELA (V.O.)

The Count and Countess Kanyadi lived most of the year in London. But the countess always came to my mother for her clothes. She even offered to bring us to England with her.

(sighs)

Her husband, the Count... was known to love the ladies...

CUT TO:

EXT. KANYADI ESTATE - DAY

COUNT KANYADI, late forties, blond, urbane and well-dressed, pulls up to the entrance of his estate in a fancy touring car. The chauffeur gets out and opens the door, and the Count emerges, calm, confident, imperious.

The Countess, Philippa and the two children flood outside to greet and embrace the Count. He kisses his wife dutifully. As she holds up the children to kiss him. He reaches back and squeezes Philippa's ass.

ANTON, his son, holds up a colored picture of a swastika.

ANTON

Papa, look what my friend and I made.

The count takes the swastika with revulsion.

COUNT KANYADI

What is this? Anton!

ANTON

I d... don't know. It's just a flag
we copied from the newspaper.

The count tears it up and grinds it into the ground. Anton
watches and bursts into tears.

COUNT KANYADI

I don't want to ever see this shit in
my house again. It's a disease! It's
the end of the world!

He stalks off, leaving Philippa to comfort the crying boy.

LATER

INT. BERGSON SEWING ROOM - DAY

Philippa chatters; the children play "cat's cradle" at her
feet.

PHILIPPA

(to Miriam)

... And they say she had an affair
with Robert Taylor and Clark Gable
and William Holden. And with the
football team of the California
University...

MIRIAM

Philippa!

Miriam smiles and indicates the children.

MIRIAM

What does she need with those men?
She's a happily married woman! I read
it.

Philippa and the Countess exchange an amused glance.

PHILIPPA

Oh Mrs. Bergson. You're so...

The Countess laughs.

MIRIAM

Old-fashioned, you mean.

PHILIPPA

Well, naïve. A little.

MIRIAM

I know more than you think!

The children suddenly fuss and spat. Philippa expertly separates them and plunks the little girl onto her lap. Daniela comes forward to help distract the children.

PHILIPPA
Anton, be gentle with your sister.

Philippa watches Daniela play with the little boy.

PHILIPPA
Daniela is so beautiful! She's like one of those deep crimson roses.

All look at Daniela, who becomes shy.

PHILIPPA
Me, I'm just one of those pale little tea roses. Barely a blush and then they fade away, la la....

COUNTESS KANYADI
(wryly)
Barely a blush is right.

DANIELA
(to Philippa)
Oh no! You're gorgeous!

The little girl Katerina pipes up.

KATERINA
(lisps)
What kind of rose am I, 'Pilipa'?

PHILIPPA
Why, you're a miniature pink rosebud, my darling.

Philippa kisses the child.

ANTON
Am I a rose too?

The women laugh.

PHILIPPA
Not a rose, Anton, but a powerful oaken branch!

COUNTESS KANYADI
(sotto voce)
And his father's wooden head!

Philippa giggles out loud.

COUNTESS KANYADI

(to Miriam)

Speaking of wooden heads, Philippa's own father...

PHILIPPA

Oh Countess, spare them.....

COUNTESS KANYADI

... gambled and drank away a fortune, would you believe? And left his poor daughter to make her way as a governess.

PHILIPPA

(quickly)

Yes, poor little me. Adrift in the cold, cruel world.

The Countess smiles indulgently.

COUNTESS KANYADI

(to Miriam)

Since Philippa arrived, we have been a far happier family, especially my husband.

(significant glance at Philippa)

...who gives me lots of money to buy pretty dresses... and to travel and broaden myself.

Daniela gawks a little, puzzled at these worldly gentiles.

MIRIAM

(flustered)

Daniela, will you please fetch me a... bobbin? And more black thread.

COUNTESS KANYADI

With the war approaching, we should stock up on all things black.

Daniela turns to leave.

PHILIPPA

(rising)

I'll go with my crimson rose. I need to stretch my legs.

(to the children)

Now you both stay right there and don't make trouble.

Philippa puts her arm around Daniela and they walk out together. Miriam watches thoughtfully.

INT. HALLWAY CLOSET - DAY

Daniela and Philippa stand before the closet as Daniela chooses thread, bobbins etc.

PHILIPPA
Perhaps someday you'll be a designer
too...

DANIELA
(shakes head)
I'm going to be a doctor!

PHILIPPA
That's peculiar for a woman.

DANIELA
But why? I want to heal people and...
conquer diseases.

PHILIPPA
Oh that. But what about marriage. And
travel? Don't you want to see the
world?

DANIELA
The world is at war.

PHILIPPA
(sighs)
So what are smart, beautiful,
ambitious girls like us to do?

DANIELA
I guess fate will decide.

Philippa's face clouds. She looks intensely at Daniela.

PHILIPPA
If you let 'fate' decide, you'll
never hold a scalpel.

She clutches Daniela's hand, and they both look at the hand. Philippa closes the hand into a fist and shakes the fist.

PHILIPPA
Grab every chance you get to...

Daniela looks questioning.

PHILIPPA

To live, Daniela, To live. Don't let yourself be controlled by what others think. Your life is yours alone.

Daniela shrinks before Philippa's intensity. Philippa shakes off her mood and opens Daniela's hand, taking it playfully.

PHILIPPA

Come, show me your beautiful garden!

Philippa follows Daniela outdoors.

EXT. BERGSON HOME - DAY

Daniela and Philippa descend the back stairs into the late summery yard, rich with flowers and fruit trees. Philippa has returned to her frivolous, lighthearted self.

PHILIPPA

How splendid! Makes me yearn for England.

Daniela picks a flower and gives it to Philippa.

DANIELA

For the compliments. And advice.

Philippa beams.

PHILIPPA

You'll soon be swimming in compliments. As to my 'advice'... well, you should always do as your parents say, of course.

Philippa winks. Daniela shrugs shyly.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I saw at once that in Philippa, I had a willing fellow conspirator; someone in whom I could confide absolutely anything.

INT. KANYADI BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is lit by candles. Philippa cavorts with the Count in a sumptuous bed. They laugh sensually.

PHILIPPA

I think I may have found us a little playmate, Antonin.

COUNT KANYADI

Yes? Who would that be, my little schemer?

PHILIPPA

A charming local girl, perhaps seventeen. Or younger. Quite striking. An intriguing mix of shyness and curiosity and a rebel to boot!

The Count plays with Philippa's long, silken blond hair.

COUNT KANYADI

(sly)
Why don't we have her to tea?

PHILIPPA

It's not so simple. The family is Jewish. It will take a little time.

COUNT KANYADI

(sobers)
Ah... Time is what we do not have.

The Count reaches for a cigarette.

COUNT KANYADI

(lighting the cigarette)
The war is growing worse by the hour. I don't know how much longer we can hold off the Nazis. With them it's always more more more. They won't be satisfied until all Europe is awash in blood.

(more lightly)
So... if you have any mischief in mind for your little apprentice, you had better put it into play at once.

Philippa covers his hand with hers.

COUNT KANYADI

I'm making plans to leave; there's nothing to be gained by staying any longer. And who knows if there'll be anything to return to after that bunch of Nazi thugs finishes with us. Or *anybody*. They have an appetite for blood that would shame Dracula. Did you know he was a shirttail relative of mine?

He smiles like a mock vampire and Philipps laughs. She reflectively surveys the luxury surrounding her.

COUNT KANYADI

(bitterly)

Yes, take a good look at the past,
Philipa. Yours and mine. Everyone's.

Philipa flings her arms around the Count and they embrace with desperate passion.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN STREET IN YEDINITZ - DAY

A late spring afternoon; the sky is blue, the weather mild. The figure of Mihail the tutor continues walking toward the Bergson home, holding a book. But this time, Mihail stops and turns suddenly to look straight at the camera.

Dark hair, soft and wavy, brushes his collar. A downy mustache on his upper lip betrays his youth, but his gaze is steady and intelligent.

EXT. BERGSON HOME - DAY

He reaches the portico of the Bergson home, pauses a moment, and knocks. Ezriel opens the door. Behind him are Miriam and little Jacob, gawking.

EZRIEL

Do I have the pleasure of...

MIHAIL

(speaking simultaneously)

I..I'm the tutor that...

EZRIEL

Mihail! Ah, you've grown. Quite the man!

Ezriel pumps Mihail's hand. Jacob elbows forward.

JACOB

Do you know math games?

Mihail beams down at Jacob.

MIHAIL

Do I know math games!

JACOB

Yay!

Jacob grabs Mihail's hand before he is even inside. Mihail touches the mezuzah and enters decorously. They almost bump into Miriam, coming forward with her hand extended.

MIRIAM

Jacob! Show some manners!

JACOB

I am, Mama. I'm making him welcome!

Mihail grins. Miriam smiles indulgently.

MIRIAM

Please! Have some cookies and tea.

The family conducts Mihail into the parlor, where a table is set. Ezriel watches Mihail with a little smile as Mihail discreetly looks around for Daniela. Miriam bustles and serves the men. Ezriel gestures to Mihail.

EZRIEL

Eat eat! If you delay for Daniela,
you'll starve.

He rises and goes to the bottom of the stairs.

EZRIEL

(shouts)

Daniela! Your education awaits.

Ezriel looks expectantly at Miriam, who is entering with more goodies. She shrugs. Mihail keeps his eyes down.

CUT TO:

INT. DANIELA'S BEDROOM - DAY

In a frenzy, Daniela whips off a dress and hurls it to the floor to join a large pile of rejected outfits. She has tried to style her hair, with bad results. Her "sophisticated" 1940s upswept hairdo is lopsided and amateurish.

DANIELA

Ohhhhh!

Utterly frustrated, she rips down her hair. She goes to her bureau and pours a pitcher of water over her head.

INT. BERGSON LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mihail takes a bite of a cookie and a sip of tea. The family watches him. Jacob is nearly bursting to talk.

JACOB

(recites)

'Brothers and sisters I have none.
This man's father is my father's
son!' Quick! Who is he?

MIRIAM

What do you mean you have no sister!
God forbid!

Jacob laughs. Mihail grins.

MIHAIL

His own son.

Jacob beams.

MIRIAM

Jacob, leave him alone.

EZRIEL

I confess I was utterly baffled.

He winks at Mihail. As they eat, Daniela appears and descends the stairs, unnoticed. She wears a plain black skirt that shows off her slim waistline and a white blouse. Her wet hair is shaped to her head: She looks beautiful.

Jacob spots her first.

JACOB

Oh there she is. Daniela, come do a
math game! What happened to your
hair?

Slowly, Mihail raises his eyes to meet Daniela's. Their gazes lock. Time stops, though only a moment passes.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Some portray love as a cyclone
wrenching your soul from its
moorings. But for me, love was a
sunrise. From the fierce night of my
isolation, a light glowed, and soon
the horizon was aflame.

Daniela takes her place at the table and looks at her tea, frozen with shyness. Ezriel and Jacob, oblivious, work a math game from Mihail's book on a piece of paper.

LATER

Mihail and Ezriel talk seriously as Daniela helps clear away the teacups.

INT. BERGSON KITCHEN - DAY

Daniela helps her mother dry dishes.

MIRIAM

(calls out)

Mihail, you'll stay for supper after Daniela's lesson, won't you?

EZRIEL (O.S.)

Of course he will.

MIRIAM

(to Daniela, putting away dishes)

He seems very smart. And sensible. I think he has a lot to teach you.

Daniela smiles thoughtfully.

INT. BERGSON LIVING ROOM - DAY

Mihail and Ezriel talk as Jacob listens closely.

MIHAIL

People here talk nonsense. They try to reassure themselves: 'as bad as things are, we're not at war yet.' But right now, right here in Yedinitz, the Gestapo is training the Iron Guard. And they're not training them to catch butterflies.

EZRIEL

What would you have us do?

MIHAIL

At this point, it's too late to run. We must stand and fight.

EZRIEL

Fight?!!
(indicates Jacob)

MIHAIL

He's not too young to pull a trigger.

Jacob beams as Ezriel recoils in horror.

EZRIEL

Violence begets violence, Mihail. You firebrands are talking suicide. You don't know who you're dealing with.

MIHAIL

And I believe it's you who do not know, or wish to know.

Daniela enters and Mihail's gaze rests on her. She avoids his eyes, breathing quickly. Ezriel rises.

EZRIEL

Come, you two. Mother set you up a table in the parlor.

INT. BERGSON PARLOR - AFTERNOON

Ezriel conducts Daniela and Mihail into the parlor. A round table is set up with Mihail's book and writing paper. A lamp. Slowly, as if in a trance, the two sit across the table. Daniela won't raise her eyes.

EZRIEL

(to Jacob)

Stop hovering, Jacob. Daniela has to concentrate.

Ezriel herds Jacob out of the room. Daniela's eyelashes flutter. She sits stiffly.

MIHAIL

(extending a pencil)

Let us start.

Daniela takes the pencil as he opens a book.

LATER

The lamp glows between them. Daniela watches as Mihail explains a math problem. But she watches him, not the paper.

MIHAIL

... So, we factor this trinomial by grouping. First we split the middle term into two terms. And see? There's your common factor...

Mihail looks up at Daniela and catches her eye.

MIHAIL

(smiling)

So you really want to be a doctor.

DANIELA

With all my heart!

She looks at him keenly.

DANIELA

Why... you think I'm slow!

Mihail begins to protest. Daniela seizes her pencil and writes furiously.

DANIELA

Here. I'll factor your polynomial. X equals the quantity two plus A , minus six.

Mihail laughs.

DANIELA

(offended)

Don't worry that I'll be a waste of time for you.

MIHAIL

You could never be a waste of time.

He suddenly leans across and kisses Daniela on the lips, very softly. Shocked, she manages not to make a sound.

In the other room, Ezriel nods in his armchair.

DANIELA (V.O.)

My lips stung and throbbed at that stolen kiss as if bathed in fire. I stood at the precipice, but even so, I tried to cling to propriety, or rather, strategy. Girls who give themselves quickly... lose quickly too.

LATER

MIRIAM

(calls out)

Students! Come have dinner. Everything is ready.

The two rise from the study table and close the books.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Somehow, we finished our lesson. Everything seemed so normal, and yet everything had changed forever. Had that kiss actually happened. Or had I just imagined it?

INT. BERGSON DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone sits around the table as Miriam and Daniela serve.

EZRIEL
 (to Mihail)
 How did she do? Is there hope?

MIHAIL
 She shows great aptitude.

Daniela is silent, looking down, biting her lips.

EZRIEL
 Daniela, go help your mother!

Daniela rises and flees.

LATER

Miriam and Daniela carry dishes to the table. Daniela carefully avoids Mihail's eyes as she balances the food.

EZRIEL
 (to Mihail)
 So, the Jews of Europe are kaput?

Miriam sets down a plate of food and turns on her husband.

MIRIAM
 Ezriel, let us have a peaceful meal,
 at least. How can you speak that way
 in front of these young people with
 their whole lives ahead of them?
 You're talking madness.

JACOB
 We could go to London, Mama, with the
 Countess.
 (to Mihail)
 She wants to take us with her. We
 could go right now.

MIHAIL
 That would be wise.

MIRIAM
 (to Jacob)
 How can we just leave everything
 behind? Our home? My business? My
 clients?

Mihail is silently seething. Daniela notices, meets his eyes.

MIHAIL
 I don't mean to be disrespectful.
 But Jacob and Daniela are all the
 more reason to leave now if you can.

MIRIAM

So you're 'one of them' too. A radical. A Zionist, eh?

MIHAIL

Violence must be met with violence. You can't negotiate with psychopaths.

The family sits in silence.

MIRIAM

Perhaps Hitler will be assassinated.

EZRIEL

We should be so lucky.

Mihail can keep hold back no longer.

MIHAIL

By not preparing for the worst, we ensure it. We've already waited too long to arm ourselves.

MIRIAM

What am I hearing? Armed?!

EZRIEL

But with what? We have no tanks, no guns and bombs...

Mihail brandishes a steak knife as the family recoils.

MIHAIL

Guns, knives, bombs, whatever we can steal or build. Or buy. We are in a fight to the death.

MIRIAM

I can't listen to this.

DANIELA

But Mama, we must listen! We can't hide from the truth.

Under the table Mihail puts his hand on Daniela's knee. She almost gasps but maintains her decorum.

MIRIAM

(to Mihail)

She's high-strung. Mihail. Please! She still has to study tonight.

Mihail nods and smiles. Daniela looks faint.

MIHAIL

I apologize. I didn't mean to spoil this wonderful dinner.

MIRIAM

These are the hardest times, yet we can't give up on the future. We Jews will get by somehow. We always do.

A cloud passes over Mihail's face as he rises.

EZRIEL

Daniela, where are your manners? Show your guest to the door.

Daniela follows Mihail to the front room. They walk outside.

EXT. BERGSON HOME - NIGHT

The moment the door closes, Mihail puts his arms around Daniela and they kiss passionately.

The insects thrum in the garden; the stars glow bright as candles.

DANIELA (V.O.)

... and so, love and desire blazed up inside me like a torch, and I was consumed.

INT. DANIELA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniela lies in bed staring out her window.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I had heard of rivers suddenly changing direction after some cataclysm an earthquake or volcano eruption. I was just such a river, wrenched from my course by the forces of nature. Rushing toward a fate over which I had not the slightest control.

INT. DANIELA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Miriam stands behind Daniela, doing her hair.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Before that night, I had no time for fashion. But now, I could think of nothing but how to make myself alluring.

Miriam twists Daniela's turbulent hair into a fashionable style.

DANIELA (V.O.)
My poor mother nearly sparkled at the
change in me. If she only knew.

Daniela looks up at her mother and they look into the mirror together. Miriam's face shines with love.

LATER

INT. BERGSON PARLOR - DAY

Daniela and Mihail are studying. As Daniela looks down at a book, Mihail watches her. She glances up and catches his eye.

MIHAIL
You're blushing.

DANIELA
And you make it worse!

Mihail laughs, then sobers; a bitter look in his eyes.

MIHAIL
It's all so ...irrelevant.

DANIELA
My education?

MIHAIL
(shakes head sadly)
No... it's just that we're leading
such normal lives in the teeth of
destruction. To be sitting here,
counting... memorizing, munching
cookies while...

DANIELA
You would rather have all the Jews
building bombs.

MIHAIL
Of course I would.

DANIELA
Mihail, there's such violence in you.

MIHAIL
It's our enemies who are violent.
They're monsters; their evil is
infinite.

Daniela looks at him sadly. Mihail puts his hand over hers. She draws a deep breath, as if to dispense with negativity.

DANIELA

Well, we aren't going to solve the world's problems this afternoon. Tell me about your family.

He smiles, also trying to "lighten up."

MIHAIL

I have one brother who attends art school in New York.

DANIELA

And what do you want to do? Certainly not be a tutor forever.

MIHAIL

Somehow I can't think beyond the war.

Beat.

MIHAIL

My father's a communist like yours, but more so. He still carries the card, even after Stalin sold out to Hitler.

DANIELA

How can he?

MIHAIL

Because he's a true believer. In spite of Stalin's lies and murder, my father thinks communism is the only hope for a just society.

DANIELA

What's wrong with democracy?

MIHAIL

For sale to the highest bidder. The tyranny of the rich and corrupt control the capitalist government, just cloaked in noble words.

DANIELA

And tyranny doesn't exist under communism? Stalin starved the Ukraine to death.

They pause, thinking.

DANIELA

Oh, why do people have to worship
anything?

MIHAIL

(grins)

When you say that, I know that you
are the true love that...

DANIELA

That...?

MIHAIL

That God has sent me.

They burst out laughing, try to stifle it, kiss recklessly.

DANIELA

(murmurs)

We'll get caught!

They continue kissing.

INT. BERGSON LIVING ROOM - DAY

Dressed fashionably, Daniela looks out the window and sees
the Countess Kányádi and Philippa with the two children, all
arriving in the Countess's cream-colored Daimler.

DANIELA

It's the Countess! And Philippa is
with her!

MIRIAM

Why so excited? The Countess has put
on weight, so we have alterations to
make. Her appetite exceeds her
control.

Daniela looks opens the door, curtsies to the Countess, then
seizes Philippa's hands.

DANIELA

(excited whisper)

Philippa! I have news!

PHILIPPA

(to Daniela)

I hardly recognized you.

(to Countess Kanyadi)

She's grown up overnight.

(to Daniela)

And I love your hair!

The countess is preoccupied with Miriam and barely notices.

COUNTESS KANYADI

(to Miriam)

Look at me. A fat pig!

MIRIAM

Please don't speak of yourself that way!

DANIELA

(sotto voce to Philippa)

I have to talk to you.

She begins to lead Philippa out of the room. Philippa turns and throws yarn to the children.

PHILIPPA

Be good and don't move.

The children grab the yarn to play cat's cradle.

MIRIAM

Daniela! Make tea.

PHILIPPA

I'll help her.

The two hurry toward the kitchen.

MIRIAM

(calls out)

Jacob, where are you? Come play your violin for the Countess. She finds your music relaxing.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Daniela and Philippa encounter Jacob.

JACOB

(fuming)

Relaxing?! My music is 'relaxing'?

He is startled at the sight of Philippa.

JACOB

Oh... Excuse me.

PHILIPPA

(gently)

Your playing is not a bit 'relaxing' Jacob. It's quite thrilling.

Jacob smiles shyly; he has a crush on Philippa.

JACOB
In that case, I'll play. For you
only.

Daniela grins at Philippa as Jacob instantly plunges into a turbulent virtuoso piece.

INT. BERGSON KITCHEN - DAY

The moment they are alone, Daniela grabs Philippa's hands.

DANIELA
I have to tell you. I... I'm in love!

Philippa laughs.

PHILIPPA
I knew it the moment I saw you.

DANIELA
I've never felt this way. I don't
know... I'm going crazy.

Philippa smiles knowingly. She takes Daniela's hand, her eyes dancing with intrigue.

PHILIPPA
Tell me everything.

Daniela fusses with tea things.

DANIELA
I can't tell anyone else how I feel.
He's the most brilliant, the
handsomest...

PHILIPPA
(slyly)
Are you lovers yet?

Daniela looks searchingly into Philippa's eyes.

DANIELA
(shocked)
Oh... no. We've only kissed. But
Philippa. I... want to be lovers.
Every part of me cries out for him.

PHILIPPA

(mock pout)

I'm jealous that you have someone to love so passionately. But I'm really happy for you. Who is he?

DANIELA

His name is Mihail. Mihail Borowiak.

Philippa freezes. Her mouth drops open a bit. She stares at Daniela searchingly.

DANIELA

Do you know him? What have you heard?
Please! Tell me!

A smile crosses Philippa's face, but with difficulty. She tries to match Daniela's grin of conspiratorial glee, but she cannot entirely conceal her surprise.

PHILIPPA

Mihail. I should say I know him.

Daniela looks confused, questioning.

PHILIPPA

Don't worry. You've chosen well.

She embraces the confused Daniela.

MIRIAM (O.S.)

(calls in)

Daniela! Make some watercress sandwiches and bring up the new apricot jam. Her grace would like a snack.

Philippa rolls her eyes.

DANIELA

How do you know Mihail? Tell me!

DANIELA

There is something between you and him?

PHILIPPA

Was. Once. Long ago.

DANIELA

You weren't here 'long ago'.

MIRIAM (O.S.)
 (from the other room)
 Daniela! Did you hear me? Where is
 our tea?

PHILIPPA
 (shouts out)
 It's all right, Mrs. Bergson. I'm so
 clumsy today! We'll be right there.

Philippa arranges the tea things with shaky hands.

PHILIPPA
 (to Daniela)
 You are... in the hands of a very
 capable tutor. He will educate you
 quite... thoroughly.

DANIELA
 Philippa. I... I love him.

Philippa grasps Daniela with slender hands like claws.

PHILIPPA
 (restrained passion)
Do so. Love him with all your heart!

She laughs a little hysterically. For a moment, they almost
 glare at one another. Then Daniela grasps Philippa's arms.

DANIELA
 I don't care about the past. But I'm
 like a prisoner here. I only see him
 when my parents are watching us...

Philippa laughs.

PHILIPPA
 I can give you both all the privacy
 you will ever need.

Daniela looks into Philippa's eyes; an agreement is
 wordlessly forged.

DAYS LATER

INT. BERGSON HOME - DAY

Daniela puts on a light coat and prepares to leave. Miriam
 enters, sewing a garment as she walks.

MIRIAM
 Where are you going this morning?

DANIELA

Just... on a bicycle ride, Mama. I need some fresh air.

MIRIAM

The best thing for you, a little exercise. You spend way too much time cooped up in your room reading books!

Miriam lovingly buttons Daniela's coat and kisses her on both cheeks. Daniela avoids her eyes, but suddenly hugs her mother, turns and dashes out, eyes filling with tears.

EXT. MAIN STREET IN YEDINITZ - DAY

Daniela rides her bicycle toward the outskirts of town. Count Kanyadi's large estate and outbuildings loom in the distance.

EXT. COUNT'S ESTATE - DAY

Walking her bike, Daniela ventures down a path, looking for the groom's quarters, which she finally spots near the stables. She lays her bike aside and walks toward the doorway. Philippa springs out and beckons Daniela inside.

INT. GROOM'S QUARTERS - DAY

DANIELA (V.O.)

Philippa was as good as her word. She arranged a meeting between Mihail and me a few days later in a groom's quarters on the Count's estate.

The room is neat, with a closet, hooks for tackle and a small desk. The bed is made. Beside it is a small stand with a bottle of wine, two glasses, fruit and crackers, etc.

Mihail is standing at the window and turns at their entrance, looking only at Daniela. She smiles uncertainly, shyly looks around the room. When her eyes encounter the bed, she quickly looks away. She meets Mihail's gaze and becomes flustered. He and Philippa exchange a glance.

PHILIPPA

You won't be disturbed. Don't worry.

She embraces Daniela, refusing to look at Mihail, and leaves.

Alone together, Daniela and Mihail are silent. They stand a little apart. Daniela keeps her eyes down. Mihail takes Daniela's hand and kisses it.

DANIELA

Well... So here I am, it seems.
Here...we are.

Mihail says nothing, only watches her closely.

DANIELA

Perhaps...I don't know...this is a...
mistake. We should not be alone.

Slowly, Daniela raises her eyes to meet his. Suddenly, they embrace with desperate passion.

MIHAIL

My darling.

They kiss, nearly tearing the clothes from their bodies, and begin to make love.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I fell totally into a world of
passion that I could not have
imagined only a day before.

Love scene.

LATER

EXT. COUNT'S ESTATE - DAY

Daniela and Mihail walk side by side, leaving the Count's estate and back into town; she is pushing her bicycle.

DANIELA

(lightly, looking around)
You must admit, the aristocracy comes
in handy sometimes.

Mihail stops, shakes his head with contempt.

MIHAIL

Nobles. They do nothing but waste
resources. They take up land that
should belong to the people.

DANIELA

You mean the peasants? They hate us.
All *they* want is for Jews to suffer.

MIHAIL

They blame us for their poverty.
That's how the upper classes
manipulate them.

(MORE)

MIHAIL (CONT'D)

They use us Jews to collect their taxes and run their estates while they stay in London or Paris.

Mihail shakes his head, full of bitter passion.

MIHAIL

The Count lets his estate lie fallow so the quail and deer can multiply for his hunting parties. Meanwhile, children in the town don't get enough protein, so they are sickly and stupid. If their parents are caught poaching, they rot in jail. Or pay fines from their wretched wages. They used to be executed.

He lights a cigarette and puffs.

DANIELA

But how would my family live without the income we get from the Countess and her rich friends?

MIHAIL

(wry smile)

Such a little bourgeoisie.

Daniela bridles.

DANIELA

Don't call me that!

MIHAIL

We beg for the crumbs they toss us. We lick their boots in the hope that they'll kick somebody else in the ass. Oh, and we 'pray' for the messiah.

(mocks)

Please God, send us a *benevolent* tyrant. One who will only oppress and not murder us.

DANIELA

Mihail, stop!

MIHAIL

I just hope there are enough Jews left alive to start over after this war.

Daniela shakes her head.

DANIELA

Oh, you're so dark and bitter! What have I done? If this is your love, take it back!

MIHAIL

I can't. I love you more than life itself. Never be afraid.

Mihail takes her in his arms and holds her.

MIHAIL

(quotes)

Love has no habitation but the heart.
On the dark flood we catch awhile,
cling, and are borne into the
night...

BEGIN MONTAGE

To music:

EXT. TOWN STREET IN YEDINITZ - DAY

Daniela races to the Count's estate on her bicycle.

DANIELA (V.O.)

As the weeks passed, that estate became my second home. I no longer recognized myself. When I think of our joy --- in the very teeth of destruction...

Shots of Mihail and Daniela running through the woods, embracing, laughing, talking.

END MONTAGE

INT. BERGSON DINING ROOM - NIGHT

It is Shabbat, and the warm, convivial table is surrounded by guests, including Mihail. Daniela gives him "secret" smiles as she helps her mother bring food and serve.

Mihail's parents, the Borowiaks are there; the communist father in his cap, and the mother, a bohemian with long hair and wild eyes.

The other guests, a conservative elderly couple, stare at the communists with disbelief.

Miriam smiles knowingly at Ezriel, who is watching Daniela and Mihail as they try to restrain their giggles.

EZRIEL

So Mihail, how would you grade our student?

MIHAIL

(smooth as silk)
She learns very quickly.

EZRIEL

So she'll make a good doctor?

ELDERLY DINNER GUEST #1

A doctor!
(to Daniela)
Is that what you want to be?

DANIELA

More than anything.

The elderly couple nods to each other.

DINNER GUEST #2

How can people make plans for the future with war around the corner?

DINNER GUEST #3

Now that Romania's forged this unholy alliance with the Nazis, they're very thirsty for Jewish blood.

Miriam overhears and shakes her head.

MIRIAM

Mendel, not here. Just for tonight, let there be peace and plenty.

She looks around as the guests nod and agree.

DINNER GUEST #3

Yes, let's take our pleasure without limits.

Daniela and Mihail's eyes meet for a brief, intense moment.

MIRIAM

God will not allow our destruction.

EZRIEL

(drunk)
Woman, there is nothing that 'God' will not allow. Get it through your head!

Ezriel drains his glass.

EZRIEL

Come on! Your glasses and plates are too full!

He sloshes wine into his glass; all begin to eat and drink.

LATER

INT. BERGSON DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Daniela clears the table, where Mihail sits alone, smoking.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Suddenly, for the first time in my life, I yearned for tradition. I wanted to be Mihail's wife, celebrate the holidays together, bear his children.

Daniela's and Mihail's eyes meet as she picks up plates and condiments. Daniela returns to the kitchen, her eyes dancing.

INT. BERGSON KITCHEN - NIGHT

Miriam stands at the counter, putting away dishes, overseeing the cleanup.

DANIELA

Mama, go sit with your guests. I'll take care of the kitchen.

Miriam puts her arms around Daniela.

MIRIAM

(speaks softly)

My little girl. You're in love. I can see it.

Daniela embraces Miriam.

DANIELA

Would it be so impossible...to be his wife?

MIRIAM

Be careful, my darling. I know how strong a young person's feelings can be. But Mihail is a man... Even against his own best intentions, he might try to... take advantage...

Daniela begins to protest.

MIRIAM

Now now, Papa and I know a thing or two. It's why we keep a close eye on you. You, my darling, have been very sheltered, despite all your racy novels. Being with a man is different from what you read.

Daniela turns her head, her face a canvas of conflicting emotions: shame, humor, confusion.

MIRIAM

(whispers)

And Mihail for a husband, I just don't know. Look at them. His family is so sacrilegious...I heard the only holiday they celebrate is May Day.

Daniela laughs. Miriam is serious.

MIRIAM

Everyone says those boys are *vildeh chaiyeh*. Wild animals. Brilliant, but not the best husband material.

Daniela turns away.

MIRIAM

Oh sweetheart, you're still so young. There'll be time for love, marriage, children....

FADE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET IN YEDINETZ - DAY

SCREEN TEXT: July 5, 1941

Very early morning, the shops closed, the street deserted. Slowly, far in the distance, shapes are moving. A dog begins to bark.

INT. DANIELA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Daniela's eyes pop open. She rises and looks out her window but sees nothing. She stretches and yawns.

Suddenly, there is cannon fire. Daniela startles, and her face dissolves into terror.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Under the 1939 Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact, our town had been under the dominion of the Russians.

(MORE)

DANIELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

But now that Hitler had attacked Russia, we were quickly retaken by the Germans and their Romanian allies.

Seconds later, Ezriel and Miriam enter Daniela's room, wild with fright.

MIRIAM

Daniela, get dressed. The Germans are here. They're shooting people everywhere. God help us.

Ezriel is wrenching clothes out of Daniela's bureau.

EZRIEL

Get dressed!

Jacob, sleepy in pajamas, enters and Ezriel takes him out to his room, leaving Daniela and Miriam alone.

DANIELA

Mama, what are we to do?

Miriam closes her eyes, searching her mind for the answer. Then she opens her eyes, strong and in control.

MIRIAM

We... are going to get dressed and... leave.

DANIELA

To go where?

MIRIAM

Papa says east, to Russia. Just hurry up. Take only what you absolutely need.

She departs. Daniela looks around her room and begins to dress. She pulls off her nightgown and puts on a blouse, a skirt.

Suddenly, downstairs, loud banging is heard. The doorbell rings and rings. Daniela flies down the stairs and looks outside. It is Philippa. She opens the door as Miriam, Ezriel and Jacob hover. Philippa is wild with fright, hair uncombed.

PHILIPPA

The peasants have been mobilized to dig graves for the Jews!

(to Miriam)

The Countess is leaving with the children. The car is waiting.

(MORE)

PHILIPPA (CONT'D)

We can take Daniela now.

(to Daniela)

Come with me.

MIRIAM

Is it possible?

PHILIPPA

The Count is one of Antonescu's hunting buddies. And Antonescu still wishes to be considered a friend to the English. So he is letting us leave. In a couple of days, all this will be a bloodbath.

Miriam nearly sinks to the floor.

MIRIAM

Oh my God!

PHILIPPA

(to Daniela)

You're dressed. Come now.

She indicates the window. Outside, a car sits.

PHILIPPA

That's the runabout. The Daimler is back at the estate. They're loading it down. I'm telling you, there won't be room unless you leave now.

DANIELA

But my family?

PHILIPPA

We can't wait! Not another minute!

MIRIAM

Daniela, I... order you to go. And take Jacob.

She thrusts the little boy forward, holding his violin case.

PHILIPPA

(looking away)

The Countess says only Daniela.

MIRIAM

What?!

JACOB

(cries)

I... can't leave Mama and Papa.

Philippa grabs Daniela.

PHILIPPA

Now! We can get to London. Then you can... bring over your family.

Daniela sways, overwhelmed.

EZRIEL

Go. With my blessing.

MIRIAM

And mine. Please!

DANIELA

(to Philippa)
Where is Mihail?

MIRIAM

Forget Mihail!

PHILIPPA

The partisans came and got him last night. There's fighting all over Romania. Daniela, now!

Daniela turns slowly. She wrenches her hand from Philippa's

DANIELA

I can't leave without my family.

PHILIPPA

(hisses)
I do just fine without my family! You little fool! They'll rape you, and then they'll shoot you.
(to Miriam)
Is that what you want for her?

Miriam shakes Daniela. Philippa grabs Daniela too and tries to drag her outside. Daniela resists. Philippa grabs her arms violently.

PHILIPPA

This town is doomed! Do you doubt it?

Daniela shakes her head.

PHILIPPA

(feverish)
Do you love Mihail? Then live! For him!
(to Miriam and Ezriel)
(MORE)

PHILIPPA (CONT'D)

He is her lover. Yes! They are lovers!

EZRIEL

Philippa, stop!

DANIELA

(to Philippa)

My dear Philippa. Go. It's all right. I'll always be grateful to you.

PHILIPPA

Go!?!? Oh you fool, you little fool! What do you think the Iron Guard will do to you? The Nazis!

She grabs Daniela.

PHILIPPA

Daniela, I love you. I don't want you to die.

DANIELA

I won't die. Goodbye, Philippa.

PHILIPPA

(crying)

Mihail... said he will find you. He will come for you.

DANIELA

Then he will.

With a cry, Philippa turns and slams the door behind her. Daniela and her family throw their arms about one another. As they cry, the house suddenly shakes violently with a nearby artillery shell. The noise begins and does not stop. Miriam screams and trembles. Daniela squares her shoulders.

DANIELA

Mama, we have to pack your equipment away, or it'll be looted.

MIRIAM

(shaking)

Yes... Yes.

DANIELA

And Jacob and Papa need to eat.

EZRIEL

Yes.

(to Jacob)

You will need your strength.

JACOB
 (shakily)
 Yes, Papa.

EZRIEL
 (tears in his eyes)
 Perhaps a little music..After all, we
 are still alive, still together. It
 is warm. Let's eat breakfast and then
 we will face the day.

Jacob takes his violin out and begins to play a trembly
 classical tune. As the moments pass, the music gathers
 strength. Daniela opens cabinets and hauls out supplies.
 Miriam goes to the kitchen to cook. To the music, the family
 sits down to eat.

LATER

A banging at the door. When Ezriel goes to the door to open
 it, a couple of German soldiers are standing there.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1
 (jovial but scary)
 Guten Tag. We thought perhaps you
 might make us a meal. We've come a
 long way.

Without a pause, he throws open the door, and more soldiers
 burst through and take over the house. They grab food and
 eat. They find wine and drink, passing it around. They sprawl
 on the furniture. They throw half-eaten food on the floor.
 They go through the house looking for valuables. One very
 young soldier addresses Miriam, looking ashamed.

SOLDIER
 I... I apologize for my comrades. I
 was not....raised this way. We...
 have been fighting.

Miriam, terrorized, does not reply.

SOLDIER
 Someday, all this will be over.

GERMAN SOLDIER #2
 (shouts at Jacob)
 That's the Schubert impromptu, nicht
 var? Play! You're not bad!
 (to the soldiers)
 What do they speak? Romanian?

EZRIEL
 (in German)
 I speak German.

GERMAN SOLDIER #2
 Like a Jew. But at least somebody
 here talks understandably.

The soldier leers at Daniela and reaches out to pinch her.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1
 (indicating Daniela)
 Perfectly ripe!
 (to his buddies)
 She won't last.

They all laugh.

GERMAN SOLDIER #3
 (chewing, to Ezriel)
 Old Jew! Are you rich?

Ezriel shakes his head.

GERMAN SOLDIER #2
 Of course he is.
 (to Miriam)
 You make dresses? My mother runs a
 dress shop in Munich. Perhaps you
 could send her dresses to sell.

Miriam nods, drooping with terror. Suddenly, German soldier #1 rises from the table and grabs Daniela. He kisses her and feels her roughly up and down. Miriam shrieks and a soldier slugs her silent. Jacob screams too. Ezriel rushes to protect him and is beaten and kicked.

GERMAN SOLDIER #3
 (to Jacob)
 Play, little Jew bastard!

Jacob cries. The soldiers are disgusted. One draws his gun.

GERMAN SOLDIER #4
 (to Jacob)
 Play, or your father dies.

He holds his gun to Ezriel's head.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1
 (to the others)
 Oh leave off, Heinz. We're trying to
 have a good time here.

More soldiers enter, and the house is jammed with them.
Soldier #1 grabs Daniela again.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1
Come on, you. Time to have some fun.
Before the others find out how much
you love me!

He hauls Daniela out of the front room, kicking and biting.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1
Why you little vixen!

The soldier casually slugs her.

INT. EZRIEL'S STUDY - DAY

German soldier #1 drags Daniela in and throws her across
Ezriel's desk. At the door, other soldiers appear. Shouting
and cheering erupt.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1
(to Daniela)
You should have been nicer to me. Now
I cannot protect you.

Daniela's face is a mask of terror and hopelessness.

CUT TO:

INT. BERGSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The soldiers have moved on. The figures of the Bergson family
move slowly in darkness. Outside, shouting, gunfire and
explosions. Everybody shudders at the noise. Jacob sobs
softly in Miriam's lap as she rocks him back and forth.

EZRIEL
(to Miriam)
Make a little light in Gehenna.

MIRIAM
If they see a light they'll come
back. Or others...

She starts to rise.

MIRIAM
I must go to Daniela.

Daniela's voice comes from Ezriel's study.

DANIELA (O.S.)
Stay away, Mama.

MIRIAM
My child...I....

DANIELA (O.S.)
Leave me alone!

INT. EZRIEL'S STUDY - NIGHT

In the moonlight coming through the window, Daniela, bruised and in shock, rises and tries to cover her body with her torn dress. She limps from the room and past her family. Ezriel averts his face. Miriam covers Jacob's eyes.

EZRIEL
We're trapped here like rats.

MIRIAM
Ezriel, take Jacob and go now. Just run.

EZRIEL
No, we must stay together, no matter what. Grab whatever food is left. We'll head for Russia.

A soft tapping at the door. Miriam and Ezriel look at each other in terror. Softly Miriam rises and listens at the door.

MIRIAM
Who is there?

VOICE OUTSIDE
Mrs. Bergson, it's Priva.

MIRIAM
Priva. Come in. Come in.

She opens the door and Priva stumbles in, disheveled, her face swollen from crying.

PRIVA
They shot my parents. My sister ran off with her boyfriend. I'm alone.

Miriam embraces her.

MIRIAM
Evil is unleashed.

PRIVA
Daniela... Is she...

Miriam shakes her head. From upstairs come the sounds of water running. Miriam looks at Priva and shakes her head. They cry and embrace.

PRIVA

The pigs.

Miriam buries her face in her hands.

PRIVA

They're gathering everybody in the town center. Tomorrow they're going to kill all the old people. The rest, they're taking to work camps.

MIRIAM

Oh God.

INT. BERGSON BATHROOM - NIGHT

Wrapped in a towel, Daniela stares at herself in the mirror. Her eyes, lips, nose, bloodied and swollen. Rivers of blood run down her legs. She stands at the full tub and drops the towel and gingerly lowers herself, wincing in pain as she bends to sit.

DANIELA

(softly)

Don't think, don't think, don't think.

She sits slowly in the tub and closes her eyes in agony. She pounds her fist onto the tub and cries out.

INT. BERGSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Everyone hears Daniela's cry. Miriam and Priva start to rise, but Ezriel stops them, shaking his head.

Suddenly the front door crashes open. Romanian Iron Guard soldiers come in and strut around.

SOLDIER #1

(unslinging his pack)

We'll stay here tonight.

SOLDIER #2

(to German soldier #3)

You're on guard duty.

SOLDIER #5

I'll go see what's left.

His eye falls on Priva.

SOLDIER #6
 (to Priva)
 Well well! Come on, you.

He hauls Priva screaming and pleading out the front door.
 German Soldier #5 comes out of the kitchen eating.

SOLDIER #5
 (to others at the door)
 No liquor at all. We were lucky to
 get this. And the girl, of course.

They all exit.

MIRIAM
 Dear God!

EZRIEL
 (to Miriam and Jacob)
 Don't tell Daniela.

EXT. STREET IN YEDINITZ - DAY

The once-neat and lively town is now a dismal ghetto. Crowds wander in shock amid the rubble of buildings. Barbed wire and heavily armed Nazis and Iron Guard are everywhere, shooting and beating. People cower.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 Within days, Yedinetz was a
 concentration camp of 12,000
 miserable souls.

INT. BERGSON HOME - DAY

The family is still sitting in the living room.

MIRIAM
 Why didn't they come to get us?

EZRIEL
 They'll be here any moment.

There is a knocking at the door. Miriam shakes her head.

MIRIAM
 Who knocks anymore?

She rises and a group of gentile women are standing there.

GENTILE WOMAN #1
 (timidly)
 Mrs. Bergson, you have cloth here.
 And sewing machines.
 (MORE)

GENTILE WOMAN #1 (CONT'D)

The soldiers don't know. The commanders told us to take whatever we wanted from the Jewish homes.

MIRIAM

What's stopping you?

GENTILE WOMAN #1

Mrs. Bergson, we don't hate you. You made warm clothes for our children without charge. And toys. You have been kind.

MIRIAM

Of course. We are neighbors.

GENTILE WOMAN #2

Mrs. Bergson, we... don't know how to sew with the machines. We would only ruin the cloth. Can... can you show us? The soldiers will smash everything. Or send the machines and fabric to Germany.

Miriam closes her eyes and nods.

MIRIAM

Come in. I will show you how to use the machines. And then you can take the fabric and the buttons. Everything is still locked away. The soldiers didn't know it was there. They only took our food.

WOMAN #1

We will bring you food. We don't want this war. We don't understand why they are fighting.

The women crowd in. They walk around handling and staring at the furnishings, strangely reticent. Two women get into a tug-of-war over a mirror.

MIRIAM

Please. Take what you want, but don't fight. It will bring the soldiers. If you share the machines amongst you, you can all use them.

WOMAN #1

Show us. Show us how.

Miriam pulls out a chair from a machine. She brings a bolt of pretty woolen fabric, scissors and thread. The women ohhh and ahhhh, fingering the fine wool.

WOMAN #1

(showing her torn and worn skirt)

Can... you make me a skirt?

MIRIAM

Of course.

BEGIN MONTAGE

Miriam measures the woman while the others stand watching. The women start to enjoy themselves. Outside, guns are going off, screams and men shouting orders. But Miriam sits steadily sewing, the women crowded around her.

A Romanian soldier appears at the door and the women drive him away, shouting fiercely and waving their fists, threatening him.

Miriam fits the skirt to the woman.

WOMAN #1

So fast! How do you do this?

Miriam takes the skirt from the machine and bites off a dangling thread. The woman puts on the skirt and everybody gasps. It fits perfectly.

WOMAN #1

So beautiful. Look how it fits! How did you do that?

WOMEN

Make me one too!

The woman in the new skirt strokes the fabric with awe. She turns to Miriam and tears run down her face,

WOMAN #1

I have never had anything so beautiful in my life.

MIRIAM

The wool came from France. The Countess was going to have a dress from it but she is gone now.

DANIELA (O.S.)

So for a couple of days, my mother made clothing for the women in the village. They guarded our home from the soldiers and even brought us food. It was an island of sanity. We sat and drank tea and ate bread while my mother worked without pause. She showed them how to use the machines and they divided up the fabric and all of the beautiful buttons and decorations intended for countess's beautiful dresses. They carried off the thread and the machines my mother used.

END MONTAGE

INT. BERGSON HOME - DAY

The house is denuded of furniture and rugs. A woman carrying a sewing machine pauses at the door.

WOMAN #1

Mrs. Bergson, I spoke to the major but he says he cannot protect you any more. You have to go to the ghetto.

MIRIAM

Can you protect my little boy? My daughter?

WOMAN #1

If we could, we would. But more Germans are coming. It would be safer for you to leave here. They will kill you if you stay. Take what you can and go.

Miriam nods.

MIRIAM

There is nothing left anyway.

WOMAN #1

You have your lives. For Today. May god protect you. I will pray for you.

She turns and leaves.

CUT TO:

PAN THE YEDINITZ GHETTO.

Dispirited, frightened people are crowded into the center of town with their possessions. Soldiers guard the barbed wire and menace them with guns.

EXT. GHETTO ALLEYWAY - DAY

Priva lies hidden away, huddled in an alley under a tattered blanket and near death. Daniela walks past and spots her.

DANIELA
Priva! My God.

Priva looks blankly at Daniela, who stoops next to her.

PRIVA
(whispers)
I am dead. One of the lucky.

She smiles a ghastly smile. Her teeth have been knocked out.

PRIVA
See what they did? With a pistol.

DANIELA
Come with me. We'll take care of you.

PRIVA
You can't, Oh Daniela, you are so strong. Live! Live for me.

Daniela tries to carry Priva from her hiding place.

PRIVA
(hoarse whisper)
Leave me.

DANIELA
Never.

She lifts Priva to her feet, kisses her sunken cheek and helps her into the crowded street.

EXT. COURTYARD OF THE SYNAGOGUE - DAY

Before the synagogue stands a crowd of miserable men, Ezriel among them. He is in terrible shape, his beard overgrown, his eyes blank with fear and suffering. He looks around and sees the other men fussing with their belongings, some arguing.

EZRIEL
 Jews! Don't bother with your silly
 belongings. We are dead men. They are
 going to kill us all.

Others move away from him as if he is mad.

MAN
 (to Ezriel)
 Communist!
 (to a nearby man)
 He doesn't know any more than the
 rest of us.

Ezriel overhears and turns away bitterly. A middle-aged man,
 MOSHE runs up to him.

MOSHE
 Ezriel...

Ezriel looks up.

EZRIEL
 Moshe.

The two men hurriedly embrace.

EZRIEL
 How is your family, my friend?

MOSHE
 (shakes his head)
 They took away Ida and the children.

EZRIEL
 (shrugs)
 We ran at first, we thought we could
 get to Russia, but we got only a few
 miles. They found us and they shot so
 many. May the murderers all drown in
 the blood of their victims.

MOSHE
 I hear we men are going to be
 deported now to Transnistria, to the
 Dniester River to work...
 There's a tire factory there... or is
 it shoes? I know something of
 cobbling.....

EZRIEL
 (sadly)
 My old buddy. We had a few good
 times, didn't we?

Moshe cries in racking sobs.

MOSHE
I could die with a happy heart if I
only knew my family was safe.

Ezriel thinks of something.

EZRIEL
My daughter's tutor, Mihail Borowiak?
Any news?

MOSHE
Oh them! They were all armed to the
teeth when the Germans showed up.
They blew up two cars and shot a few
soldiers.

EZRIEL
Ha ha! So he did what he said. Were
they all killed then?

MOSHE
No. They escaped in the melee. But
the Germans shot so many in
revenge....

EZRIEL
They would have shot them anyway.

As they speak, a couple of large vans pull up to the gates of
the compound in front of the synagogue.

MOSHE
This is it, our transport to the work
camps.

Iron Guard and Nazi troops begin shoving men towards the
vans. Prodded by machine guns, the men stumble up the ramps.
One man resists and is shot on the spot.

EZRIEL
Lucky one.

MOSHE
Stay with me, Ezriel. We'll work as a
team. Together we can....

Ezriel puts his arm around his friend.

EZRIEL
Yes, Moshe. Together. Always.

Moshe begins to pray as they line up. After a moment, Ezriel too chants the ancient Hebrew words.

EXT. FOREST CLEARING - DAY

The vans loaded with their human cargo come to a stop and park, idling. Three Nazi soldiers immediately descend on them, running pipes from the engines into the crowded vans. As the exhaust begins to fill the vans, shouting and pounding erupt, shaking the vans.

INT. CAB OF A VAN - DAY

The fat, mindless driver sits looking out the window, smoking a cigarette. He tosses the cigarette away, bored. Beside him on the seat is an apple.

As the men within shake and pound the walls of the van, the driver munches his apple. He presses down the gas pedal and revs the engine to send more exhaust into the van.

Suddenly, his head explodes; blood spatters the windshield.

In the other van, the cab bursts into flames. The driver exits, on fire and shrieking.

Partisans, Mihail among them, swarm into the clearing, shoot three Nazi soldiers and bash open the doors of the two vans.

The prisoners inside spill out, gasping, some unconscious or already dead.

The partisans quickly wade among the prisoners. They grab the stronger, living men, drag them to their feet, pound their backs, give them water.

Ezriel and Moshe, already dead in one another's arms, stare with open eyes.

Mihail pauses for a moment and looks at Ezriel. Then he reaches down and closes his and Moshe's eyes. Another partisan shoots dying, gasping men who are not strong enough to leave.

PARTISAN #1

Mihail! Get your ass out of here!

MIHAIL

(gesturing to Ezriel)

I knew this man.

PARTISAN #1

You'll know your maker in a minute.
Come on!

Mihail takes to his heels. The partisans dash into the woods.

MIHAIL
(to Partisan #2)
We were too late.

PARTISAN #1
Only by a minute or two. We'll get
better.

He smiles jovially with missing teeth.

PARTISAN #1
It was a good raid. Five pigs dead
and we gained a few good stout
fellows.

Mihail smiles grimly.

MIHAIL
If only I'd been able to save the old
man.

PARTISAN #1
We're not here to rescue and ride off
into the sunset. We're here to kill.
It's a good day for killing Nazis and
Iron Guard swine! Eh?

He slaps the back of a former prisoner, stumbling along dazed
and coughing.

PARTISAN #1
Look sharp, you lucky man. You're
going to kill some Nazis before you
die! Ho!

He laughs again with his toothless, scary smile as they
trudge into the woods and disappear.

INT. YEDINETZ GHETTO CAMP - DAY

A wasteland of makeshift tents and lean-tos. Most women and
children simply sit on the ground, too weak to move. Miriam,
Jacob and Daniela tend to Priva, who is near death.

JACOB
Mama, I still have some food.

MIRIAM
Hush!

DANIELA
Give her.

MIRIAM

(sotto voce)

We have to save it for ourselves.
People are desperate here, God help
us all.

She leans closer to Priva.

MIRIAM

She's gone, the angel.

Daniela's face crumples.

An Iron Guard soldier pauses at the sight of Jacob. He is a
lusty, blond, cruel-looking soldier. His eyes are prominent
and blue. His lips are gross, thick and red.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1

What's this little shit doing here?
He belongs in the men's compound.

(to Jacob)

Don't you want to be a man, little
piglet?

He laughs coarsely.

MIRIAM

Please! He's a child. Just nine years
old. A little boy.

JACOB

I... I can play for you.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1

Shut up! I don't want your filthy
meowing in my ears.

He grabs Jacob and kicks away Jacob's violin case. Miriam
runs up and grabs the soldier's arms.

MIRIAM

(screaming)

Please! I beg you. You have a mother.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1

Don't talk about my mother, Jew
whore!

Daniela comes running up as the soldier bashes Miriam's face
with the butt of his gun. When Miriam picks herself up and
goes at him again, bleeding, the soldier casually shoots her
in the chest. Miriam is blown backward into the arms of
Daniela.

DANIELA
 (screams)
 Mama!

JACOB
 (screams)
 Mama!

The stunned crowd sobs in terror, turns away as Miriam coughs blood, dies. People start forward and are restrained by others.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1
 Oh for Jesus' sake. Can't a man get a little peace and quiet around here?

He notices Daniela.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1
 Have we met before, darling?

He drops Jacob. As Daniela stoops to help him, he shoots Jacob in the head. Daniela, screaming, is hauled away.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1
 Now don't give me any trouble or you'll meet the same fate.

The soldiers gather around, some laughing, one or two taken aback.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1
 Who ever thought we'd find a pretty one here among these 'Raggedy Ann's'?
 (to Daniela)
 Hold still, you. I don't want to spoil your face.
 (to the others)
 You see what a nice guy I am?

He throws the struggling Daniela to the ground. The other soldiers laugh, but one SS soldier is uncomfortable.

SS SOLDIER
 Leave off. You Iron Guard are a bit much. You have no discipline.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #2
 (laughing)
 Why, you German aristocrat, you. You come here and try to tell us how to behave in our own country?

He starts to unbutton his pants. The soldiers laugh.

SS SOLDIER

Barbarians. No, I mean it. You are!
Right in public, you do your
business? I was raised in a decent
home. Take yourself out of my sight.

Iron Guard Soldier #1 grabs Daniela and pretends to saunter
daintily away. Now the soldiers laugh even harder.

BEGIN MONTAGE

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD OUTSIDE YEDINITZ - DAY

Nazi and Romanian motorized and foot troops zip up and down a
dusty, littered road, herding a long column of refugee Jews.
Children wander without parents. People are shot and thrown
on the side of the road. Peasants stalk the column of Jews
and pounce to rob the bodies or snatch suitcases from the
living.

DANIELA (V.O.)

We were deported to an area between
the Dniester and Bug Rivers known as
Transnistria. The Germans had pulled
out and were handing control over to
the Romanians through one of their
Satanic pacts. But what did it matter
who pulled the trigger?

Words do not suffice to describe what
took place, so I will simply tell you
that in 1930, there were about
207,000 Jews in our region. In 1942,
there were 227 miserable souls left
alive. I was one of them.

END MONTAGE

Among the crowd trudges Daniela, alone. She is thin, bruised,
her hair matted. Her eyes dull with suffering. Two Romanian
soldiers pass and eye her. They look at each other.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #3

That one... I used to fancy her.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #4

Ugh. I wouldn't touch her with your
filthy hands Radu!

(to Daniela)

Hey you!

Daniela turns, stumbles.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #3
 Go wash in the river. You want to
 have some fun tonight? We've got
 vodka. Come on. We aren't so bad.
 Give a soldier a good time.

They laugh coarsely. Daniela tries to walk on, but Iron Guard
 soldier #4 grabs her by her matted hair.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #4
 Jew whore! You snub my buddy here?
 Who do you think you are? You want to
 die right now?

DANIELA
 Yes! Shoot me now!

She tries to grab his gun and point it at her head. The Jews
 scream. The soldiers wrench the gun away, laughing.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #4
 Phew! She's crazy.
 (to Iron Guard soldier #3)
 You want her, you bring her.

He pretends to brush his hand off. They drag Daniela away.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #4
 What we put up with out here. A
 soldier's life is hard!

EXT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The Iron Guard soldiers have taken over a large country home
 as field headquarters. Above the door are words in Romanian.

SCREEN TEXT TRANSLATION
 Field Headquarters, Hotin Legion

As the two soldiers pass dragging Daniela, an attaché comes
 out and hails them.

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ
 Hold up, you two.

The Iron Guard stop.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #4
 What, you front office types want in
 on our fun now?

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ
 I can't believe it. You've done my
 work for me. Saved me a trip.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #4
Glad to oblige. Now what are you
talking about?

The attaché holds up a picture of Daniela in happier times.

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ
(to Daniela)
What's your name?

DANIELA
Daniela Bergson.

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ
Come with me.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #3
Hey! We saw her first. We even got
her cleaned up for a little party.

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ
Better find another.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #3
Why? She's just a Jew.

The attaché gives them an ironic look.

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ
(to Daniela.)
Come on.

He takes her away from the puzzled soldiers. They mount the
steps of the headquarters.

INT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The half-ruined house was once elegant and comfortable but
has been trashed and casually abused. Windows are cracked,
walls are scuffed. A fire burns in a fancy fireplace that is
now scorched and stained. The turned legs of antique
furniture protrude from the blaze. Broken chairs and tables
are stacked nearby as firewood. Sofas and armchairs are
stained with beer and food.

Daniela stands dazed and brutalized before a long dining
table that is serving as a desk. Behind it sits the
commanding officer, MAJOR DRAGULESCU. He is nearly bald, with
slack skin, high cheekbones and thin lips. His colorless eyes
widen as he surveys Daniela with the gaze of a connoisseur.

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ
Sir, I found her. Bergson.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

So fast?

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ

She... happened to be passing by.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(assessing Daniela)

This is her, eh?

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ

Yes Sir! The picture is outdated...

The attaché hands the picture to the Major, who holds it up and compares it with Daniela standing before him. He makes a dismissive motion to the attaché.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

It's her, all right. Leave us.

IRON GUARD ATTACHÉ

Yes sir.

He clicks his heels and vanishes. The Major continues to write. Daniela edges closer to the fire.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(without looking up)

Go ahead. Warm up.

He looks up at her keenly.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

You look like hell. You were pretty once.

Daniela stares.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

I don't understand the aristocracy. They think it's still the 19th century.

Daniela shakes her head slowly.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

We are carrying out a campaign of *curatirea terenului*. The cleansing of the ground. Get rid of the Jews, the cripples, the morons. This is what you have been caught up in.

Daniela continues to stare.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
 You've just been handed your life
 back, and all you can do is stand
 there staring like a cow?

He gets up and walks around Daniela.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
 So, you were once a little diversion
 for Count Kányádi?

Daniela looks at him in shock.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
 You must have been quite a dish. HE
 was quite the connoisseur of local
 pussy. The count's English mistress
 has convinced him to intervene on
 your behalf, if you were still alive,
 which you appear to be. Barely.

Daniela's knees begin to buckle.

DANIELA
 (whispers to herself)
 Philippa.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
 What did you say, Jew?

DANIELA
 She...

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
 We have two problems, which I will
 explain. Sit down. Sit down.

Daniela stumbles toward an armchair.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
 Not that one. That's a good chair.
 There.

He motions to a wooden chair. Daniela sinks into it like a
 cornered animal.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
 Two issues. In the first place, we
 Romanians are not capable of handling
 so many Jews. The Germans ask too
 much of us. Tens of thousands arrive
 while we cannot bury the corpses we
 already have. The corpses are burying
 us!

He guffaws.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Secondly, did we ask for this war? Roosevelt and his Jew financiers manipulated international politics to bring America out of its depression. Yes, the Germans will lose, but do not fool yourself.

He points his finger at Daniela, shivering.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

You Jews will all die nevertheless. Stop that shaking.

Daniela stares numbly.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

And now you are my responsibility. Not that I care if you die. But if I give you back to the Count, I will perhaps earn a bonus. On the other hand, if I harbor a lazy Jew, they will think I am favoring you, and I will get demoted. You see?

Daniela slowly nods, staring at him.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Anyway, for better or worse, there we are. So I am sending you to our field hospital as a nurse. Perhaps you will put in a word for me with the Count, yes? He is living in London and still a very rich man. Perhaps after the war, I can take a position with him, yes?

The Major walks to the fire, stoops, and throws in some papers and boards.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Now, strip! At least you will not get chilblains on your ass!

He begins to unbutton his pants.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

You heard me! Or are you ungrateful? Hm? Maybe you want to go back out there.

Daniela slowly shakes her head.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Show your gratitude or I'll give you
to the soldiers. If you die, I'll
just tell the Count you could not be
found.

Daniela slowly begins to remove her tattered blouse. The
Major sidles toward her.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

That's better. You little minx.

He feels her body.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Ptu. Skin and bones.

He pushes her up against the wall.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

I'm a powerful man. I can help you.
Tell me how strong I am. I'm your
darling boy, am I?

The Major begins to choke Daniela.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

You want me to kill you?

DANIELA

Yes.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Ah, you can't fool me. You still want
to live. So you can kill me, eh? Ha
ha ha ha!

He strolls to his desk, looks through his papers, almost
forgetting she is there. Daniela cowers near the fire, teeth
chattering.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

We'd better get you some food, you
bag of bones.

Daniela looks at him, not knowing what to do next.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Well? What do you want, a royal
chariot? Oh, you're no fun at all.
Give me a good, plump little whore
who knows how to laugh.

He picks up a bottle of vodka and shoves it at Daniela.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Here, drink. We've got a long night
ahead of us, my sweet.

Daniela tries to drink, gags and dry heaves. The Major comes over and tips the bottle up to her mouth. The liquor dribbles down her face.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Come on. Come on. You're wasting good
liquor! Lap it up like a dog. Come
on!

Laughing, he throws Daniela to the floor and forces her to lap up the spilled liquor.

INT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The Major shoos Daniela through the large mansion as lounging soldiers watch and elbow each other.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #6

The officers always get the best ones
for themselves.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(to men, jocular)
Who touches my little honey, I'll
shoot.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #6

(sotto voce)
Who'd have his syphilitic seconds?

The soldiers laugh snarkily behind his back.

INT. MAJOR DRAGULESCU'S QUARTERS - DAY

Major Dragulescu's bedroom is on an upper floor of the headquarters. He hurls Daniela onto the bed and leaves.

Daniela steals a glance around the bedroom. She spots a revolver and picks it up and puts it into her mouth.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(entering)
Don't play with that. It'll go off
and I have no decent maid to clean
up.

The Major takes the gun from Daniela and puts it back on the bedstand. He tosses some food at her.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Here. Put this in your mouth instead.
It'll give you energy, and you're
going to need it.

He laughs and begins to unbutton his uniform.

INT. MAJOR DRAGULESCU'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

The Major snores beside her. Daniela lies staring into the darkness, eyes wide. Tears roll down her cheeks. She bites her lips to stay silent.

INT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

Daniela, cleaned up and dressed in a nurse's uniform, enters the packed hospital. She stops, astonished as she surveys a scene of indescribable suffering and inadequate resources.

DANIELA (V.O.)

And so I entered the medical
profession after all, caring for my
mortal enemies, any one of whom could
have been the murderer of my family,
the rapist of my darling Priva.

New arrivals are stacked up bleeding in the decrepit hallways. A wounded soldier on a makeshift gurney grabs at Daniela.

WOUNDED SOLDIER

Nurse... Please... water.

SECOND WOUNDED SOLDIER

Morphine. If you have a soul, get me
morphine.

Daniela looks at his terrible wounds and gasps, begins to recoil, then nods.

DANIELA

I...I'll find some.

She looks around, at a loss and spots two nurses, tough, hefty, disillusioned LENUTA, forties, and ILEANA, thirties, not unattractive but thin and beaten down.

DANIELA

Please... they are asking for water
and...morphine.

(indicates soldiers)

ILEANA

Outside is a pump. Take one of those.
 (indicates a large
 pitcher)
 You have to boil it, or it will kill
 them surer than Russian bullets.

Daniela glances helplessly at the pleading soldiers.

DANIELA

Wh... Where do I boil it?

ILEANA

Outside. There's a fire. But you
 probably have to gather wood.

DANIELA

...and the morphine?

ILEANA

Ha ha. Ask God.

Daniela exits, clutching the pitcher.

LENUTA

(to Ileana)

That's the Jewess the Major has a
 fancy for.

ILEANA

A 'fancy'?!' He's obsessed with her,
 the old fart. I'll bet he's part
 Jewish.

LENUTA

Not likely. My friend Stefan saw him
 shoot twenty Jews outside Kishinev.
 It was like s sweeping the floor for
 him.

WOUNDED SOLDIER

Water... Water. Please!

LENUTA

(to the soldier)

She's coming! You'll dry your mouth
 out shouting at us.

(to Ileana)

Even Jewish hands are welcome here. I
 haven't slept in three days.

The two nurses look at each other.

ILEANA AND LENUTA
 (in chorus)
 Bedpans!

They laugh.

DR. TOMESCU strides past the nurses. He is tough,
 authoritarian, forties.

DR. TOMESCU
 I'm glad our wounded and dying are
 doing so well that nurses have time
 to stand around making jokes.

ILEANA
 We're waiting for the Jewess to fetch
 some water.

DR. TOMESCU
 Oh that one. I hear she's the Major's
 new bed-warmer.

LENUTA
 (flirting)
 The whole hospital knows. You are
 always the last.

DR. TOMESCU
 Well, unlike others I have more
 important things on my mind than the
 sex life of Major Dragulescu. She was
 a medical student, I'm told, so let
 her take care of patients not just
 slop bedpans.

LENUTA
 Some of them would rather die than be
 cared for by a Jew.

DR. TOMESCU
 Then we'll respect their wishes. By
 the way, take care. There's typhus
 about. All we need now is an
 epidemic. They're dying in droves of
 it, the Russian prisoners.

He lingers for a moment.

DR. TOMESCU
 No matter how many Russians die,
 there are fresh waves of them to take
 their place. They're like the ocean.
 The Germans are taking a beating and
 us Romanians with them.

(MORE)

DR. TOMESCU (CONT'D)

How could Hitler have been so stupid?
Didn't he ever hear of Napoleon? The
whole country is one gigantic frozen
trap. Only Russians can live in it.

The nurses nod.

DR. TOMESCU

And our beloved Antonescu, throws in
his lot with the Nazis. Our lot.

(indicates the patients)

Their blood is on his hands. Did he
really think Hitler could win this
war? Against America? It's madness.

ILEANA

The Romanians are trying to make a
deal with the allies.

DR. TOMESCU

Don't let anyone hear you say that.
They'll shoot you dead as a rabbit.

(beat)

Might as well die for one side as the
other.

LATER

Daniela re-enters with a pitcher of boiled water. She goes up
to the bed of the soldier who had been pleading for water. A
sheet has been pulled over his head.

WEEKS LATER

EXT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Amid the freezing snows of winter, Daniela stands outside
shivering in her uniform, watching in amazement as vehicle
after vehicle pulls up bearing wounded. She hails an
ambulance attendant lifting out a stretcher.

DANIELA

What has happened?

ATTENDANT

Huge battle. Stalingrad.

(laughs bitterly)

The Germans fought their way in and
now the Russians have linked up and
encircled them. They're trapped
inside. Hitler won't let his generals
surrender. So they're getting a taste
of the medicine they dealt out.

(laughs bitterly)

He pauses, surveying her.

ATTENDANT

Jew?

Daniela nods.

ATTENDANT

All this makes you happy, I suppose?
(indicates the ambulances)

DANIELA

Nothing makes me happy.

She follows the stretcher inside.

INT. MAJOR DRAGULESCU'S OFFICE - DAY

Several soldiers and aides are hanging around doing various chores: stoking the fire, delivering communiques, smoking and chatting. Daniela walks in with a sheaf of papers. She is cold and aloof, but every male eye is on her. Major Dragulescu looks up with his usual scowl of irritation.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

What is it?

DANIELA

The casualty reports for the week
from Dr. Tomescu.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(taking the papers)

I'm surprised there's paper enough to
list them all.

(glances around)

I'm ready for a break. Good you came
along.

Daniela's face remains calm, but her eyes betray her desperation. The Major takes her arm and walks her away from the room into his upstairs quarters under the stares and winks of the soldiers.

INT. MAJOR DRAGULESCU'S QUARTERS - DAY

The Major gets out a bottle of liquor and pours himself a glass.

DANIELA

You might show some decorum out
there.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(laughs coarsely)

For who? Them? They'll be dead soon anyway.

(drinks)

And so will I and so will you. So let's have a little fun while we can.

Daniela does not respond. The Major pours her a glass.

DANIELA

Please no... I'm on duty. Doctor Tomescu will...

The Major stands and turns away, rummaging in a drawer.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

I had children, you know. Yes, even a brute like me can have a family.

He takes out a family picture: a boy and a girl about 8 and 10, and a woman, on a Black Sea beach. He shows it to Daniela.

DANIELA

A very nice family.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(stares at the picture)

Yes it was. Once. My wife is dead and my daughter... ran off before the war started. Probably a whore by now.

(beat)

I was a boat builder.

-DANIELA

A boat builder?

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

I was raised in Constanta on the Black Sea. A beautiful port. My father and grandfather before him were boat builders. I married a local girl. It was a good life.

He looks sharply at her.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

And you? You had a good life before this hell?

Daniela nods slowly.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
All dead, I assume?

DANIELA
Yes. All dead.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
Then we have something in common
after all. Where did you come from?

DANIELA
From Yedinitz. It was a beautiful
town... once. I didn't appreciate it.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
So we all say. Your family was rich,
yes?

Daniela smiles in spite of herself.

DANIELA
Not in money but in love.

He drinks again and fills his glass.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
My wife Crina, she got that.. that
cancer... of the glands.

DANIELA
The lymph glands?

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
(nods)
Yes, that was it. She was cursed, the
poor girl. They couldn't do anything
for her. We took her everywhere. Even
to Berlin.

DANIELA
I'm sorry.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU
I can still hear her screaming at the
end. Nothing helped the pain. Not
even morphine.

He pauses, then hurls his glass at the wall. Daniela
flinches.

DANIELA
Where.. is your son now?

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

In the army, if he's still alive. He was a rascal, that one. Like I am.

(smiles a little and
shakes his head)

But I was no father after Crina died. I was never there. The neighbors had to feed and dress my children. I spent my time drinking and fighting. For years they won't talk to me.

Daniela gently pushes her full glass in front of him, and he seizes it and drinks. He jerks his head at the door.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Go on, get back to your blood and death, you're eager, I can see.

Daniela rises and leaves the Major staring out the window.

INT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

BEGIN MONTAGE

Amid the chaos of wounded soldiers being dumped in the hallways, Daniela holds instruments at an amputation.

Daniela changes bandages.

Daniela gives shots.

Daniela feeds a soldier. She dips her spoon to give him more, and looks up to see that he has died between spoonfuls, the food drooling from his mouth.

A gravely wounded young soldier reaches out and takes Daniela's hand, sobbing. He looks into her face pleadingly. After a moment, Daniela holds his head against her uniform, her face a map of conflicting emotions.

END MONTAGE

EXT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

As Daniela walks down the hall, holding a tray of medications, Ileana falls into stride with her.

ILEANA

So... You are from Bessarabia.

DANIELA

Yes. From Yedinitz.

ILEANA

Oh? You had it bad there, I hear.

DANIELA

Very bad. They killed so many.

ILEANA

But not you?

DANIELA

I wish they had.

ILEANA

And what did your family do in Yedinitz?

DANIELA

My mother was a dressmaker. She was...

ILEANA

Oh yes. She made clothes for the Countess, that is why you are so 'lucky' now.

Daniela starts to protest, then sees that Ileana is making an ironic, biting joke.

DANIELA

(smiles a bit)

Yes. I am fortunate.

ILEANA

I too was 'fortunate' with Major Dragulescu when I first came here. I was not so skinny and ugly then.

DANIELA

You and he....?

ILEANA

He has made the rounds. The only one he skipped was Lenuta. She's plenty mad about it too.

Daniela is startled, then sees the Ileana's mischievous smile. She relaxes a little.

DANIELA

Yes, she is missing out on a lot.

ILEANA

Especially his 'little woolly bear' routine.

Daniela cannot repress a smile. The two laugh together.

ILEANA

Did you sew dresses too?

DANIELA

(shakes her head)

Believe it or not, I wanted to be a doctor.

ILEANA

This has cured you of that, eh?

DANIELA

Not... exactly.

ILEANA

You're not so bad, for a Jew. Watch yourself with the Major. If he gets bored with you, he may send you East.

DANIELA

He wouldn't get the chance. I will kill myself first.

Ileana stops. She puts a hand on Daniela's wrist.

ILEANA

Don't.

DANIELA

Why not? I'm no Catholic like you. Do you think I fear hell? I live there.

ILEANA

But you never know what lies ahead.

DANIELA

Yes I do. Worse. Always worse.

ILEANA

But perhaps something better.

DANIELA

Oblivion would be something better.

ILEANA

Perhaps hope. Hope is what keeps me alive from day to day.

DANIELA

Hope of what?

ILEANA

(shrugs)

Of something different. Maybe even
peace. Maybe love.

DANIELA

You keep your hope and I will
keep.... Major Dragulescu.

They both smile cynically.

LATER

Her medicines delivered, Daniela walks past Ileana and Lenuta
talking. They stop, and both wave to her. Daniela walks on,
smiling a little.

END MONTAGE

INT. MAJOR DRAGULESCU'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Daniela endures the rutting and grunting of Major Dragulescu.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Come on! At least pretend you like
it. Why do I put up with you?

Daniela begins to rise.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Whaaa... Where are you going now?

DANIELA

I have to wash bandages tonight. It's
my turn.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Do it tomorrow. Come back to bed.
It's cold out there.

DANIELA

If I don't clean them, we will run
out tomorrow.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

I have news for you. The Romanian
government has changed its Jewish
policy.

Daniela turns her head slightly as she dresses.

DANIELA

How can they kill us any faster?

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

No, it's good news --- for you that is. Antonescu knows the Nazis are beaten, and he's trying to chat up the Allies. He'll make a separate peace if he can, but as long as the Iron Guard is murdering Jews, Roosevelt will never deal with him. So you see? Peace lies before you.

DANIELA

All that lies before me is a pile of blood and pus-soaked bandages.

Major Dragulescu subsides, pouting. He thinks.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

I don't know if I should even tell you this... you may decide to leave me, haw haw. Antonescu is letting some Jews from Transnistria emigrate to Palestine.

Daniela's eyes light up for a moment.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Come now, show some kindness toward your 'little woolly bear'...

The Major grabs her roughly by the hair and bends her neck backwards.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Or he will rip your pretty face off.

Daniela smiles teasingly at the Major.

DANIELA

I thought you like when women play hard to get.

The Major's face softens, distorts with lust.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

So that's your game. Yes, tease me. That's the little Jewgirl I like.

LATER

INT. ROMANIAN ENCAMPMENT - DAY

In the freezing dawn, Daniela hurries through the encampment toward the hospital. Two officers are talking as she passes.

OFFICER #1
The Russian front is finished. For my money, the war is over.

OFFICER #2
Yes, but the killing will go on for years.

OFFICER #1
Don't be so sure. Antonescu is a fool, but not an idiot. My money, the war'll be over by the new year.

OFFICER #2
It's a bet.

OFFICER #1
May we both live to collect.

The two officers fumble in their pockets for coins as Daniela walks on, thinking.

INT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

Daniela enters the moan-filled hospital. She goes to a supply area and hauls out huge sacks of bloody bandages. She loads the sacks into a wheeled canvas carry-all. As she is tugging the carry-all toward the laundry area, her eye falls on some medical instruments set out for a surgery, including a scalpel. She suddenly halts and eyes the scalpel.

Daniela picks up the scalpel and looks at her wrists. Slowly, she traces the scalpel across the blue veins. She closes her eyes.

DANIELA (V.O.)
Ha ha ha ha! You may not believe this, but... I feared infection! Not death, but germs! This proves that I had gone completely mad.

Slowly, Daniela replaces the scalpel.

DANIELA
(sotto voce to the scalpel)
Just wait for me, my friend. Stay sharp.

As Daniela is turning away, she hears moaning from a stretcher crowding past her and her load. Looking down, she sees, to her shock, Romanian soldier #1, who killed her mother and little brother.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. GHETTO CAMP - DAY

The wasteland of makeshift tents and lean-tos with weak, traumatized people lying in the dust.

In Daniela's fevered memory she once again sees her mother falling backward coughing blood; Jacob lying in the dust writhing and gasping his last. Dying Priva raises on her arms, cries out.

END FLASHBACK

INT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - DAY

Daniela nearly reels as she gazes upon the face of the monster. His tortured eyes gaze back at her without recognition. His jaw is bandaged with a bloody rag, his uniform covered with blood.

ATTENDANT

Hey, nursing sister! Get your cart out of my way. This fellow is bad off.

Daniela, dazed, slowly moves the cart aside and continues down the hallway with it.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I knew then that God had put him in this place, in my hands.

As Daniela moves away, she snatches up the scalpel and puts it into her pocket, then moves resolutely after the stretcher with her cart.

INT. HOSPITAL LAUNDRY - DAY

Daniela pulls bags of bloody bandages from the carry-all and dips water from a steaming cauldron into a tub-sized basin. Around her, other nurses are laundering blankets, bandages and sheets by hand. Daniela mixes ashes from a barrel with bleach and other chemicals and concocts a harsh, primitive detergent. She begins to launder the bandages. As the water turns bloody, she dumps it into a massive drain in the floor and refills it.

As she works, she stops once and touches her pocket with the scalpel in it.

LATER

Daniela wrings out bandages and hangs them on a line. As she is hanging them, Ileana comes up behind her.

ILEANA

Little one, I need you to take my overnight shift tonight.

Daniela turns in surprise. Ileana strokes her hair.

ILEANA

I have a.... rendezvous with one of the soldiers. He leaves in the morning.

DANIELA

But... The Major. He's expecting me. *

ILEANA

You're okay. There's a Nazi big shot arriving tonight from the Russian front. A German general or something. The Major will be entertaining late into the night. *

Daniela nods.

DANIELA

Of course. I'll work your shift.

ILEANA

Now listen, little rabbit. There's one more thing. I told my man that I would do his wash for him. But if his buddies find out, we'll have no peace, they'll all want their filthy drawers laundered by hand.

Daniela smiles.

ILEANA

So he is leaving his bundle outside his barracks D-4 near the woods. You go pick it up for us, all right?

DANIELA

(nods)
Of course.

Ileana hugs her delightedly.

DANIELA

(shyly)
Who is your boyfriend?

ILEANA
His name is... Antonin.

Ileana busies herself measuring out medications.

ILEANA
Have... you ever been in love?

Daniela smiles.

DANIELA
(softly)
To the depths of my soul.

Ileana looks deeply into Daniela's eyes.

ILEANA
Yes, I can see you have.

Daniela's eyes fill with tears.

ILEANA
You believe him to be dead?

DANIELA
Everyone I love is dead.

Ileana gives Daniela a searching look, then hurries away.
Daniela continues counting pills, crying.

EXT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

In the sunset, a polished Nazi car pulls up to the headquarters.

Romanian brass flood out to greet the car's occupants as they emerge: veteran Nazi, Manfred von Killinger and SS officer Gustav Richter.

Major Dragulescu emerges from his headquarters to heartily shake hands. Glasses of brandy are brought out on trays to the men before they are even inside headquarters.

INT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

From a window facing the courtyard, Daniela watches the Nazis greet Major Dragulescu. Her eyes narrow with contempt and disgust.

INT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

In what was once a beautiful library, spruced up but degraded, the visiting Nazis relax with Major Dragulescu before a cheerful fire.

Romanian Iron Guard officers chat in small groups.

The bookshelves are half emptied of books --- the reason becomes clear when an aide grabs an armful and feeds the fire.

Aides bring in platters of fresh fruit and cheese. The Nazis and Iron Guard nibble at the platters.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

So. Standartenfuhrer Killinger,
explain to me why you remain
confident....

MANFRED KILLINGER

I won't insult you with hopeful
fabrications, Major. Stalingrad
was... a setback. But the German
people have vast resources in
reserve, plus weapons in development
that will more than even the score.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Ahhh, 'secret weapons' now! A
Hollywood movie! Forgive a country
bumpkin, but why didn't you unleash
those weapons at Stalingrad before
the Russians destroyed your Sixth
Army?

Killinger bridles.

MANFRED KILLINGER

There's a lot you don't know. But
your excellent brandy perhaps
convinces you that you do.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

In other words, you are telling me to
shut up, and I defer.

(raises his glass)

To heroes fallen.

They drink the toast in silence.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

And where does all this leave
Romania?

MANFRED KILLINGER

Where she has always stood, Major. As
a valued ally and trusted friend.

(MORE)

MANFRED KILLINGER (CONT'D)

I hope your Herr Antonescu doesn't let himself be cowed or stamped by this transient setback...

The Major starts to speak, but Killinger speaks over him.

MANFRED KILLINGER

...into losing faith and making a separate peace with the Allies. It would be the worst possible thing for Romania.

GUSTAV RICHTER

(breaks in)

...particularly when you are nearly *Judenrein*. Cleansed of your Jewish infestation.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(edge to his voice)

Yes.. You've been quite efficient at *that*.

GUSTAV RICHTER

(edge to his voice)

And your own Iron Guard have been, shall we say, ahead of the game? Very effective at purging the Jew from your midst.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

(losing patience)

With all respect, there are other issues in this war than the Jews.

GUSTAV RICHTER

But don't you see, Major, the Jew is what this war was always about?

Major Dragulescu does not answer.

GUSTAV RICHTER

The Jews and their American banker friends were not satisfied with wrecking Europe's entire economy in World War I. It wasn't enough that their greed plunged the world into the worst depression in history, causing millions to starve while they lined their pockets.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

And how is that the fault of Jewish cobblers and... schoolteachers...

GUSTAV RICHTER

You are yourself needing a teacher!
The Jews are parasites, all of them.

Dragulescu starts to speak but instead gulps down the rest of his drink and pours another glass. He watches the fire.

GUSTAV RICHTER

(ranting)

And now their leaders start yet another war, so that they can profiteer from arming America to slaughter the German --- and Romanian --- people. Forcing Britain to fight her German cousins when both countries wanted only peace. There's no end to their evil.

Richter grows more excited.

GUSTAV RICHTER

The Jew has simply got to be stopped, Major, and if the German nation does nothing else, we will have accomplished that! The destruction of that foul race

(pounds his fist)

Down. To. The. Very. Seed.

Major Dragulescu shifts uncomfortably on his chair. He catches the eye of Killinger, who looks away quickly. Richter struts, enjoying his own ranting.

GUSTAV RICHTER

...or like the choking weeds they are, the Jews will spring back up and continue along their path toward world domination. Just as if our martyrs had not given their heart's blood, the sainted mothers their only sons. My God, Major, your hospital is filled with the flower of Romanian youth. And why?

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Yes. Why?

GUSTAV RICHTER

The Jew, Major. The cursed Jew!

Killinger, looking bored, rises and peruses the remaining books in the shelves. He removes a couple, opens and reads.

MANFRED KILLINGER

Major, you have some excellent first editions here. English authors. And a few Americans. With your permission, before you burn them *all*, I would like to go through and bring a few of them back with me to Berlin. To what's left of Berlin I should say once the Russians descend.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Be my guest, of course.

INT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Daniela bustles about tucking in patients, giving shots and medications, adjusting catheters etc. She pauses by the bed of the delirious Iron Guard Soldier #1 and reads his chart hanging at the foot of the bed. A nearby soldier looks up.

NEARBY SOLDIER

He needs his pain medicine badly, nurse. He did not want to bother you.

Daniela nods, walks to the nurses station and goes through the medications. She takes a couple of pills from a bottle and returns with a glass of water. Iron Guard Soldier #1 rouses and sits up on one elbow to take his medication gratefully.

IRON GUARD SOLDIER #1

Thank you. You are an angel.

Daniela does not reply, but moves away.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I was trying to think of a way that I could kill him without arousing suspicion. I was so busy thinking that I almost forgot about the favor I promised Ileana.

Daniela glances at the clock, then pauses by a coat-rack and puts on a light coat. She moves toward the door and stops at the desk of the supervising nurse, an older woman.

DANIELA

Excuse me, I... have a small errand I must run.

SUPERVISING NURSE

At this time of night? You'll get yourself killed!

DANIELA
 Something I promised, I'll only be
 gone a few minutes.

Daniela puts her hand on the door.

SUPERVISING NURSE
 (shrugs)
 Watch yourself out there. Don't get
 shot.

EXT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS COURTYARD - NIGHT

Daniela lets herself out the hospital door and is immediately shrouded in darkness. In the distance, in the courtyard, she can see the headquarters lit up where Major Dragulescu is entertaining the visiting Nazis. Daniela's feet crunch on the frozen ground.

SENTRY
 Halt! Who goes?

DANIELA
 It's Daniela the nurse.

SENTRY
 What are you doing out here?

DANIELA
 (shyly flirtatious)
 A... favor for a friend.

SENTRY
 (sly)
 Ahhh. A boyfriend?

DANIELA
 No, you 'naughty boy.'

SENTRY
 Not getting enough action from the
 Major? Come here, you little minx and
 do us a quick favor. We won't tell.

Daniela's feet crunch away.

SENTRY
 Don't get lost. You should have
 brought a torch.

DANIELA
 I know where I have to go.

The soldiers snicker among themselves. Daniela makes her way toward the barracks, which are closer to the forest. In the silence, a hand suddenly covers her mouth and she is dragged off struggling into a dark copse of woods.

MIHAIL

(sotto voce)

Daniela. It's me, Mihail. Don't make a sound.

Daniela gasps and strains her eyes to see. In the darkness, she barely makes out Mihail's features. Her knees buckle. He holds her up.

MIHAIL

(harsh whisper)

I'm with the partisans. We're here to shoot Richter and Killinger.

Daniela's mouth falls open in shock. She is too dumbfounded to speak.

DANIELA

(mouths)

Mihail.

Mihail scans her face greedily.

MIHAIL

You don't have to talk.

She clings to him desperately.

MIHAIL

Daniela, tonight, there's just one mission. Richter is working with Eichmann to deport Romanian Jews to Auschwitz before Romania makes peace with the Allies, which could happen any day. He must die now.

DANIELA

How can I help?

MIHAIL

We need a way into headquarters. You have to let us in when you go to the Major.

Daniela turns her head aside in shame.

DANIELA

I am corrupt. I am a dead person.

MIHAIL

You are my Rose of Sharon.

He embraces Daniela, and they kiss passionately. But Mihail pulls back.

MIHAIL

We have a job to do.

Daniela takes Mihail's hands and kisses their palms.

DANIELA

Whatever you ask.

MIHAIL

Ileana is one of us. She sent you out here. You must never give her away even by the slightest recognition.

DANIELA

I understand.

MIHAIL

Are you ready?

DANIELA

(nods briefly)

Yes. I use a servant's entrance when I come back from hospital duty. I will bring your people in that way.

MIHAIL

You know where Richter and Killinger are sleeping?

DANIELA

I think so. The aides were preparing their rooms.

MIHAIL

Here.

He thrusts a package into her hands.

MIHAIL

That is the dirty laundry you were sent to collect. Go back.

Daniela clasps Mihail desperately and they kiss again.

MIHAIL

Someday.

DANIELA

Someday.

He slips away and disappears. Daniela re-emerges from the bushes holding the satchel of laundry. The moon has come out and illuminates the grounds.

She hurriedly returns along the path, her feet crunching on the frozen ground.

DANIELA

(calls out to the
sentries)

It is only I again, fellows.

SENTRY

Did you give as good as you got,
baby?

DANIELA

I did my... duties.

The sentries laugh coarsely.

SENTRY

What are you carrying? Let me see.

He takes the package and opens it.

SENTRY

Ho ho! You do his laundry too! I want
some of this pampering!

The sentry roars with laughter.

SENTRY

Come back by when you're off, baby.

DANIELA

I just might.

They laugh coarsely as Daniela nears the hospital.

INT. ROMANIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Daniela tugs open the door and enters, face flushed.

SUPERVISING NURSE

You got a touch of frostbite. Go put
some salve on your cheeks.

DANIELA

I'm fine, really.

SUPERVISING NURSE

What do you have there? No, don't tell me. And no more sneaking around at night. Your patients need you.

DANIELA

Yes Ma'am.

SUPERVISING NURSE

You watch yourself. You know which side your bread is buttered on.

DANIELA

Yes, Ma'am.

Daniela passes among the beds. Iron Guard soldier #1 is sleeping peacefully. She sits nearby and begins to roll bandages, but her hands shake so violently that she cannot control them. Ileana appears.

ILEANA

Did you get what you went for?

DANIELA

Yes. I... I

ILEANA

(makes a quick warning motion)

When are you off duty?

DANIELA

An hour.

Ileana busies herself rolling bandages.

ILEANA

(whispers)

You know what you have to do? *

Daniela nods.

ILEANA

We are relying on you.

Daniela nods. She begins rolling the bandages with steadier hands.

LATER

Daniela glances at the clock, which says 2:30 and rises to go off duty. She makes a last check of the soldiers and notices one of them is considerably worse.

She bends over his bed, sees blood on his stomach bandages, and runs down the hallway.

SUPERVISING NURSE

What is it now?

DANIELA

The patient, Hans, with the shrapnel in his abdomen, he is hemorrhaging.

SUPERVISING NURSE

His liver. I'll get Doctor Tomescu.

She hurries away. Daniela returns to the soldier's bed and sees blood dripping now onto the floor.

HANS

(terrified)

Help! Help me!

The other patients are rousing. Daniela tries helplessly to staunch the blood. She looks desperately at the clock as Dr. Tomescu and the supervising nurse come running.

DR. TOMESCU

(leans over the patient)

He needs emergency surgery. No time for the operating room. We'll do it here.

(to Daniela)

Go get the plasma.

Dr. Tomescu grabs the partition and wheels it to shield the bed. The supervising nurse arrives with a cone of ether and holds it over Hans's face. Daniela returns with the plasma bottle and sets up. Another nurse wheels up a cart of instruments. Dr. Tomescu exposes the boy's stomach, swabs hurriedly, then cuts down into the abdomen as Daniela stands by to assist. The clock now says 2:36. Moments pass as Dr. Tomescu works desperately.

DR. TOMESCU

More plasma.

Daniela begins to switch the bottle.

DR. TOMESCU

I'm losing him. Is there a pulse?

Daniela is still setting up the plasma bottle. She stops in confusion and feels the boy's wrist.

DR. TOMESCU
 (shouts)
 Well? Am I operating on a corpse?
 Does he have a pulse?

Daniela steals another look at the clock. She closes her eyes and nods.

DANIELA
 Yes. He has a strong pulse.

DR. TOMESCU
 (beams)
 These farm boys. They're impossible to kill. Come on, Hans!

The clock says 3:00

DR. TOMESCU
 I'm closing. The hemorrhage has stopped. Now only time will tell. Daniela, you stay with him tonight.

DANIELA
 But the Major....

DR. TOMESCU
 To hell with the Major. This boy needs a nurse by his side. I'll answer to the Major.

Daniela stands speechless. Dr. Tomescu thinks.

DR. TOMESCU
 On the other hand, you really don't have the training....
 (to the supervising nurse)
 You stay with him. Let the Major have his fun.

The supervising nurse nods and takes over.

DR. TOMESCU
 (to Daniela)
 Go on. We don't want to upset the Major.

Daniela takes to her heels and hurriedly leaves the hospital.

EXT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Daniela flees from the hospital, crosses the compound and reaches the headquarters. She waves to the sentry in front of the headquarters.

DANIELA

(loud)
Hallo. Who is on duty tonight?

SENTRY #3

It's your best boyfriend Tadeo.

DANIELA

Hi Tadeo.

SENTRY #3

You're late getting off.

DANIELA

We had a hemorrhage, but I think Dr. Todescu has saved him. It was touch and go.

SENTRY #3

Dr. Todescu is a miracle worker.

DANIELA

I am exhausted.

SENTRY #3

Sleep well... If he lets you.

DANIELA

(laughing)
Hush, you!

Daniela walks around to the servants' entrance. As soon as she is there, Mihail is beside her. Two other partisans, armed and in black, are with him. Quietly, Daniela opens the door and they enter. An elderly female servant LIZABETA calls out.

LIZABETA

Daniela?

DANIELA

It's me.

LIZABETA

You're late.

DANIELA

Dr. Tomescu had to do emergency surgery right in the ward.

LIZABETA

I don't know how you do it. If I see a single drop of blood I grow faint, old as I am.

(MORE)

LIZABETA (CONT'D)

Come have a little snack with me, darling. The guests left over some food. If we don't eat it, the soldiers will tomorrow. I've made you tea.

DANIELA

Oh Lizabeta, I am all in. I cannot even drag my feet upstairs. I hope the Major is asleep.

LIZABETA

Go ahead and hope, for all the good it'll do you. Well, I'll put away a little bit for your breakfast tomorrow. But don't be too surprised if it's gone. They had stuffed eggs. Potatoes with cream. I licked their plates, I can tell you.

DANIELA

Good night, Lizabeta. You can eat it all.

The partisans steal through the semidark hallways of the old house.

INT. LIBRARY - NIGHT

Hugging the walls, the partisans and Daniela pass through the library; their tense faces shine in the dying glow of the fire's embers. They ascend a staircase, completely exposed.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

As they pass down the hallway, Daniela slowly and quietly opens the door of one of the rooms. In the bed, Manfred Killinger is snoring. She points to the room.

Mihail signals silently to a partisan, who noiselessly enters the room with a garotte.

INT. KILLINGER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The partisan slips the garotte around Killinger and strangles him as he awakens and tries to fight. After moments, he succumbs. The partisan emerges, coiling the garotte.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

*

They walk a few more paces down the hallway. In the silence, they hear footsteps coming up the stairs and a male voice humming a tune.

Daniela desperately opens a door, looks inside and pushes the young men in. Major Dragulescu appears at the head of the stairs and spots Daniela.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

What are you prowling around for? Why aren't you in bed?

DANIELA

We... had an emergency at the hospital. Dr. Tomescu had to operate. I ran back as soon as I could.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Well I had quite a night listening to those Nazi bores. You'd think they had single-handedly won the war. The truth is, they're on the ropes. Hitler's house of cards is crumbling.

He slaps her rear.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Now get to it. I need some comforting tonight. Whew. I'll be glad to see the last of their arrogant Prussian asses.

DANIELA

I'll be right there.

The Major stops.

*

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

What now?

DANIELA

I need to... wash myself. The surgery was very bloody.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

And I'm squeamish about blood?

He pinches Daniela's cheek.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

Dainty little tease. I should throw you down on the floor and have you right here.

DANIELA

That would spoil all the fun.

MAJOR DRAGULESCU

All right all right. But hurry up.

He continues down the hallway, finds the bedroom and slams the door. Daniela lets out Mihail and the partisans. They continue down the hallway. Daniela opens another door. The room is empty. They are nearly at the end of the hallway. The next door, she opens very quietly and looks in.

INT. GUSTAV RICHTER'S ROOM - NIGHT

Richter is sitting on his bed, masturbating to a photo of a naked young man in heavy makeup and silk stockings. He startles and tries to hide himself.

GUSTAV RICHTER

Who are you?

He grabs for a knife on the bedstand, but before he can stab Daniela, Mihail fires a burst of bullets into his chest from the doorway.

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT

Major Dragulescu enters the hallway with his gun out, Mihail turns and shoots him. The corpses slump amid the smoke.

Elizabeta appears looking up from downstairs.

LIZABETA

What is this? Help! Help!

Her eyes meet those of Daniela. Daniela shakes her head and stops Mihail's gun. The partisans run down the hallway and leap from the second story window. After a second, Daniela follows them out.

EXT. ROMANIAN HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

The partisans and Daniela land at the side of the house and run toward the woods at the back of the house.

Shots follow them as they run.

Mihail is hit and slumps to the ground.

Mortally wounded, he waves the rest on. Daniela tries to turn back, but the others grab her and drag her along.

Mihail covers the escape of the others, killing the two sentries and a small group of soldiers who also materialize.

Mihail is shot dead.

The partisans enter the woods as the rest of the camp springs to life in the melee. Bullets begin to land all around them as they flee deeper into the woods.

Searchlights illuminate the woods as bullets chip at the tree trunks. Sirens go off. Daniela runs grimly. A partisan is hit badly, and another shoots him in the head as they run on. They sprint across a river and into a field in the dark. Gradually the firing and shouts fade away.

PARTISAN #1

They'll be after us at first light.

PARTISAN #2

(pointing)

There we are!

A small truck awaits them on a remote road. They pile into the truck bed and take off. Daniela is numb with shock.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

The partisans clutch at the slatted sides of the truck as best they can as it flees down the rutted road.

DANIELA

(mouths)

Mihail!

She buries her head in her arms and sobs. The partisan beside her watches for a moment, face contorted with brute cynicism.

PARTISAN #2

What are you crying for? He died fast and well. That's all we can ask. And he accomplished the mission.

Daniela does not reply. Partisan #2 turns away to hide the tears streaming down his face. Daniela sobs violently as the truck jolts. Partisan #1 offers her a cigarette; she shakes her head.

PARTISAN #1

(smoking)

Leave off. Save your strength for killing Nazis.

He smokes, looking into the dark.

LATER

As the sun begins to rise, the truck is rolling more smoothly. Over the roar of the engine, somebody is murmuring a Jewish prayer for the dead.

Daniela, who has been dozing with her head on her chest, suddenly jerks awake. Partisan #2 is sleeping against her shoulder. Her face shows her anguish as she recalls the events of the night. Her reddened eyes watch the road pass numbly.

DANIELA
(to Partisan #1)
Where... are we going?

PARTISAN #1
Over the Russian border. They won't follow us there. The Romanians don't have the stomach for this war anymore. They're licking Roosevelt's boots. Pleading for a separate peace.

He leans forward and bellows to the truck's driver.

PARTISAN #1
We got the bastards. And a Romanian general to boot!

The driver pumps his fist in the air.

DANIELA
He was... a major.

Partisan #1 lapses back and sprawls against the side of the truck.

PARTISAN #1
(to Daniela)
So you were a nurse? Did they know you're a Jew?

Daniela nods.

DANIELA
Of course.

PARTISAN #2
Of *course*? How did you get that job? How did you avoid getting killed?

DANIELA
It's a long story.

PARTISAN #1
You nursed Nazis? And Iron Guard?

Daniela looks straight at him.

DANIELA
I did worse than that.

The partisans are silent.

PARTISAN #1
We all do what we must. Now you can
help us rid the world of this filth.
I'm Jonah.

Daniela nods slowly.

PARTISAN #2
How could you nurse them? Didn't you
want to kill them instead?

Daniela suddenly remembers something. She feels in her pocket
and brings out the scalpel.

DANIELA
They brought in the soldier who
murdered my mother and brother.

PARTISAN #2
So? You got him?

DANIELA
I... didn't have a chance.

PARTISAN #2
Ha ha! You had the chance, all right,
you just didn't know how to use it.
We'll train you up, don't worry.

PARTISAN #1
(laughs)
You'll have plenty NOT to tell your
grandchildren.

The partisans laugh roughly as Daniela jolts along, her face
weary but determined.

LATER

EXT. PARTISAN ENCAMPMENT - SUNSET

Daniela sits on a rough blanket on the ground staring up at
the sky. Around her are the vague forms of other partisans.

DANIELA (V.O.)
At last, it's getting dark. All day I
watched the sky impatiently even
though I could be wishing away my
last hours on earth.

(MORE)

DANIELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

I've checked my weapons countless times; my orders are branded on my memory.

She hears murmured Hebrew prayers.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Probably Jonah. He believes in it all. Papa was an atheist and I had no knowledge of Hebrew. But now I recognize certain prayers. I even say them sometimes, for what it's worth.

PAN the woods. Partisans are rising, checking their weapons, talking softly. SHOT of wildflowers in the moonlight.

DANIELA (V.O.)

The forest still welcomes the future. Wildflowers offer up their hopeful buds, although a battle could rip them apart and bury them before they can bloom. We are the same.

JONAH, about 20, a lanky partisan, appears and nods to Daniela. He sits against a dead tree and checks his gun.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Our chances of living through this attack on the German supply lines are not worth calculating. Worst than death, we could be captured. We are all each other's archives, so that whoever lives can tell the world who our comrades were if they no longer have a voice.

GEORGI walks into the center of the clearing and summons the partisans, who move in close. Jonah stands beside Daniela and nods. She nods back. Their eyes meet.

DANIELA (V.O.)

A surge of renewal courses through my body—so changed after just two years from the pampered girl I was.

CLOSE ON her hands.

DANIELA (V.O.)

My hands are strong and skilled, trained both to heal and to kill. Each scar tells a story. I am grateful that Mihail had been my first lover.

(MORE)

DANIELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

What other men I've known - Jonah,
the major, and the outrages of
Romanian and German soldiers... They
have passed through me like the wind
through the forest. Only Mihail
remains in my heart.

They touch fists in the center before breaking apart and
melting into the forest. Daniela reflexively touches her gun
yet again.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A small group of partisans, Daniela among them, runs toward
the railroad tracks. They quickly lay down explosives and run
west toward a small copse of woods.

Seconds tick by as a partisan arms the bomb. The partisans
melt into the woods.

Suddenly, the railway tracks explode.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I learned later that Ileana was
betrayed and tortured to death.

LATER

EXT. THICK WOODS - NIGHT

Rain now pours down. Daniela and two male partisans sit
shivering while enemy troops a few feet away try to free a
vehicle stuck in the mud. They cannot move. Daniela closes
her eyes; her teeth chatter.

DANIELA (V.O.)

It sounds insane to say that I am
happy here, but I am. Even if I die,
I helped destroy the loathsome enemy.
I heard that the Iron Guard who
murdered my mother and brother made a
full recovery. I should have killed
him when I could.

LATER

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP - DAY

Daniela and the two partisans trek into camp, still soaked,
holding their equipment. Everyone looks shocked that they are
alive.

PARTISAN #1

We thought you were dead. This place is crawling with Nazis. We've got to move. Hurry up.

LATER

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Daniela and the partisans carry their equipment and crude tents as they slog through the dripping woods.

PARTISAN #2

Be sure to clean your gun. This rain will rust the shit out of it.

EXT. NEW PARTISAN ENCAMPMENT - DAY

Daniela sits cleaning her gun expertly.

Jonah crouches beside her. He kisses her and she responds.

JONAH

(smiling)

You have a chance now to avenge your family.

DANIELA

I?

JONAH

Yes you. Come see the Schmeissers.

Daniela looks confused.

JONAH

We got a couple of them. And bullets too!

Daniela rises and follows him. The partisans are passing around the "Schmeissers" --- light submachine guns. And a couple of handguns, too are stacked near the cooking fire. Two women are busy cooking groats in a pan. VITKA, a blonde woman in her early thirties, smiles at Daniela. MIRA, 16, with curly black hair, deep brown eyes, and a flushed, rosy complexion smiles too. They beckon her over.

VITKA

I've heard your story, you might as well hear mine. I was a society matron in Warsaw married to a gentile man, a professor of medieval literature.

She speaks dispassionately.

VITKA

At first my husband tried to lie for us when the Nazis came, but then he renounced me to save his job. They took our two children because they were "mischlings" --- half Jewish and half gentile. They went straight to Treblinka to be gassed. My little Wojciech was only four. But his sister Zofia looked after him, I know. Right to the end. She was very good that way.

DANIELA

How did you come to be here?

Vitka laughs bitterly.

VITKA

I ran. I wanted only to die, but somehow I ran.

DANIELA

I understand.

VITKA

I speak fluent German and I was able to pass as a gentile and make my way here. I flirted and fucked my way through checkpoints.

Innocent Mira blushes and turns away, Daniela and Vitka laugh.

VITKA

Mira is a baby.

Mira giggles.

Jonah comes over with the Schmeisser.

JONAH

It fires five hundred rounds a minute across two hundred meters. What we can do with this!

He gestures to another weapon.

JONAH

This is a Sarc. To lose one is a court martial offense for a German.

DANIELA

What unlucky bastard lost it? And how did they get here?

Jonah jerks his head left, and Daniela sees two battered German soldiers tied with their backs to a tree.

JONAH

The Russians captured them while they were taking a pee last night and brought them back.

DANIELA

Alive? Why on earth?

The partisans stand staring at the two Germans as if at some creatures that had crawled up from the bowels of the earth. They are very young ordinary soldiers, very frightened.

JONAH

They got knocked on the head and woke up here. Pretty sight, eh?

DANIELA

(laughs, rolls her eyes)
A beautiful sight.

JONAH

Do you recall what we said when we were escaping in the truck from the Hotin Legion headquarters, leaving Mihail dead in the woods?

DANIELA

We said a lot of things.

JONAH

We said we would teach you how to kill? After you missed the opportunity to kill the murderer of your mother and brother?"

DANIELA

What do you mean?

JONAH

Cheetahs capture a baby antelope alive and bring it back so their cubs can learn how to kill it.

DANIELA

I don't understand.

JONAH

Choose one of them and shoot him.

RUSSIAN PARTISAN

No! We cannot waste bullets or make noise. Our nurse will have to do it the old-fashioned way.

He takes a knife out of his belt and passes it to Jonah. Daniela recoils in horror.

DANIELA

I... in cold blood?

RUSSIAN PARTISAN

You want us to release them to fight some more?

Everyone laughs. The Germans look at their captors, guessing what is transpiring. They know they are doomed. They look pleadingly at Daniela.

RUSSIAN PARTISAN

This delay is more cruel than the killing.

JONAH

If you cannot do this then you are no good. You might even get us killed. You want others to do the dirty work. Are you one of us or not?

The Russian puts his knife in Daniela's hand.

RUSSIAN PARTISAN

Get it over with.

DANIELA

It's one thing to defend yourself...
but

RUSSIAN PARTISAN

Your yammering only prolongs their suffering. We can't feed them or take them with us. And we certainly can't turn them loose.

JONAH

Think of your dead family. Think of your friend Priva. And think of Mihail. You were a nurse. You know better than we do where the vital organs are. Now go over there and do your duty.

Daniela begins to cry. One German soldier is crying too.

Suddenly Mira strides up. She takes the knife from Daniela's hand and walks to the Germans. She slashes both of their throats as Daniela gawks. The Russians laugh with amazement.

MIRA

(sotto voce to Daniela)

I do you a favor. Someday you do for me.

Everybody turns away from the strangling Germans but Jonah stands close and watches them die. The partisans burn the Germans' identity cards and the contents of their wallets, including photos of smiling relatives.

Daniela walks away and cries. Jonah comes up behind her.

JONAH

You'll be all right.

In the firelight, Daniela's face is tough and determined.

DEEP NIGHT

Daniela is sitting apart, staring into the woods.

JONAH

You need to sleep.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I often stared into the darkness and let the trees reassure me; I would think about their roots reaching deep into the soil, year after year. The lives of us humans are stunted. But the trees endure and grow. They protect other living things. . . .

JONAH

Did you hear me? Do you see something out there?

DANIELA (V.O.)

I wouldn't have told him, but I did indeed see things. My old fear of madness, never far, had returned, but this time I sensed spirits among us.

As Daniela watches, a shape slips past among the trees. Then others.

DANIELA (V.O.)

I scolded myself that they were a hallucination. I tried to occupy myself with some chore.

But soon, I began to sit apart, beckoning them. Spirits or demons or golems – whatever they were. I didn't fear the unliving anymore. After all, the people I loved the most were dead. And what demon could commit any act more evil and cruel than humans did? Perhaps my senses were overwrought. But what if the dead had only assumed another form? Would millions of dead souls just lie quietly forever? That didn't seem possible.

DANIELA

(whispers)

Come closer. It's all right.

Daniela tries to focus on the shape, but it dodges her eyes and reappears a few feet away.

DANIELA (V.O.)

An outline defines it, but it has no substance within. How is that possible?

JONAH (O.S.)

Are you talking to yourself?

DANIELA

I am talking to the unliving.

JONAH

Then you are going off your head.

DANIELA

Why? You talk to a God that doesn't exist. Why can't I talk to people who once had bodies and minds and voices?

JONAH

I have something you can come talk to.

Daniela laughs and drowns. Suddenly she awakes to a voice.

VOICE
 (friendly young man speaks
 Ukrainian in subtitles)
 Hello Daniela.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 I spoke no Ukrainian at all and yet I
 understood him. I was learning a
 little Russian. But now, somehow, I
 understood all of it. .

DANIELA
 (whispers in Ukrainian)
 Who . . . are you?

ALYOSHA
 I am Alyosha. From Ukraine.

DANIELA
 (in Ukrainian)
 I am dreaming you.

ALYOSHA
 (in Ukrainian)
 If you say so.

Daniela raises herself on one elbow and looks around. She
 turns over and tries to sleep, but something touches her.

DANIELA
 (gasps)
 What do you want with me?

ALYOSHA
 I get lonely. Is it allowed?

DANIELA (V.O.)
 I knew that this was not a living
 soul.
 (aloud)
 How did you die?

ALYOSHA
 I starved to death in 1933. My last
 meal was a toad my father found in
 the marsh. We died in Stalin's
 famine. Stalin exported the wheat we
 grew to England.
 (laughs)
 He wanted to prove his collective
 farms were making Russia prosperous.

DANIELA

Now Stalin is leading Russia to victory.

ALYOSHA

Does that excuse his crimes? My father was a Kulak, a private farmer. This made us Stalin's enemies. They took all of our animals and seed and farm tools. When we objected, Stalin set out to destroy us.

DANIELA

My father was a Communist, but he didn't mind my mama making dresses for the aristocrats.

ALYOSHA

Ha! Some Communist!

Daniela laughs softly. Now Daniela can make out Alyosha's arms and legs. He comes closer.

ALYOSHA

We had a beautiful little farm. The earth was so rich that you could watch the wheat grow. They took all the food we had buried. They tore up our floorboards. We had not a crumb left. But Stalin would not allow food to be shipped in, not a morsel. The famine was only for Ukrainians. My sister and brother and mother all starved.

DANIELA

I lost my whole family too. The Iron Guard shot . . .

ALYOSHA

(interrupts)

We ate their corpses, my father and I. We knew they would want us to live. But we died anyway.

DANIELA

I would die before I became a cannibal.

ALYOSHA

That's what you say, but we were good people. Our neighbors killed and ate their baby. We would not have done that.

DANIELA
I don't know what's true.

ALYOSHA
It is all true.

Jonah's voice breaks in sharply.

JONAH
Daniela, go to sleep. I worry about
you. Come over here and keep me warm.

EXT. PARTISAN CAMP - DAY

Vitka and Daniela are cooking at the fire. Mira walks by holding hands with YEVGENY, a strapping blond Russian partisan.

VITKA
(laughs)
Look at those two lovebirds.

DANIELA
He doesn't mind that she's Jewish?

VITKA
Women are all the same in the dark.

DANIELA
(laughs)
Vitka!

Mira smiles says something to Yevgeny and breaks away to speak with Daniela and Vitka.

MIRA
I need help. I'm pregnant.

DANIELA
My biggest fear.

MIRA
How can I care for an infant out here
in hell? I need to stop it.

VITKA
The peasant women have herbs. We'll
get some tomorrow.

MIRA
Yevgeny wants the baby. After all he
has been through.

Yevgeny, standing nearby, comes over.

YEVGENY

We will have this baby!

He drops and caresses Mira's knees. When he looks up his eyes are filled with tears.

YEVGENY

Amid all this death, a child is our only hope for the future. A new life.

He takes Mira in his arms..

DANIELA (V.O.)

I saw how tenderly he spoke and I thought of Mihail.

Jonah never showed such affection toward me. He envied Mihail because my heart could belong only to him.

I had grown apart from my body; how else could I have survived the death march and the German and Romanian soldiers. And Major Dragulescu?

Yevgeny prods the fire with a stick.

YEVGENY

My family was murdered in the first wave of Operation Barbarossa. They roared into our village, where we were celebrating my father's birthday. I was out hauling water from the river. When I came back, they had killed both of my parents and my sister, who was close to giving birth. And her husband too, my childhood friend. The Germans sat down to eat our meal amidst their bodies.

DANIELA

What did you do?

YEVGENY

I hid and escaped. I lived in the woods surrounded by tanks and soldiers. After the soldiers moved on, the Einsatzgruppen, the killing squads murdered whoever was left alive. They came straight from hell.

DANIELA

They killed all the Jews.

YEVGENY

Yes, they killed the Jews first. I made my way here and joined the Russian partisans.

(to Mira)

Then you came along.

Mira and Yevgeny embrace.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Daniela is gathering wood when she hears a voice. Suddenly.

BEGIN MONTAGE

Daniela sees the woods are teeming with shapes and shadows. She rubs her eyes and shakes her head.

A woman cries out for her dead baby. Another woman sings.

An old grizzled man approaches her.

OLD MAN

You are a pretty girl. What are you doing alone out here?

DANIELA

Gathering wood. Who are you?

OLD MAN

A murderer.

DANIELA

Oh? Who did you kill?

OLD MAN

My business partner. We had a paper factory in Odessa in 1913. I caught him embezzling so I shot him and buried his body. After he was dead I grew rich, life was good...

His voice fades away.

Another man approaches and holds Daniela by the waist. She gasps.

VOICE

Don't believe that liar. He was the embezzler. He murdered me and married my widow too. Nobody ever found out.

DANIELA

Let me be!

She turns away as another shape approaches.

DANIELA

Who are you?

NIKOLAY

Don't make noise. I'm a Cossack. My name is Nikolay. Don't be shy. Let me hold you just a moment.

DANIELA

When did you die?

NIKOLAY

In 1857. I was wounded in a skirmish in the Caucasus.

DANIELA

I am going mad.

NIKOLAY

My wound was not severe. I was laughing. But they could not stop the bleeding. I was tall and very handsome. The girls were devastated.

(laughs)

Do you feel my heat? Who says the dead are cold?

DANIELA

P...please. Go away.

NIKOLAY

Why do you hold yourself back?

DANIELA

Why must men constantly battle?

NIKOLAY

To prove ourselves, to prevail. What other way is there?

DANIELA

What a question! There are a thousand ways to...

NIKOLAY

There's nothing like the glory of warfare. To risk one's life against a mortal enemy... to show daring and courage. That's what life is all about!

DANIELA

It didn't work out very well for you,
though, did it?

NIKOLAY

(laughs)

I was a great lover. Stop! Don't move
away.

Nikolay comes close and kisses Daniela on the ear. She
shivers.

NIKOLAY

(murmurs)

I could have you in a trice. You
would be my easiest conquest ever.

DANIELA

Leave me. I am damaged goods. And I
belong to another.

NIKOLAY

We are all damaged goods. And how
many 'others' has your body belonged
to, eh?"

He runs his hands over her. She becomes helpless and shudders
under his touch.

NIKOLAY

I enjoy giving pleasure. It is all
that is left to me.

He caresses her. Daniela backs away, gasping.

DANIELA

I make love to the dead. I am insane.

NIKOLAY

(laughs)

Perhaps I will come visit you again.
You are a welcome diversion in this
bleak eternity.

Daniela cries as she gathers up her kindling.

DANIELA

Oh Mihail, where are you? Perhaps if
I kill myself I can find you.

LATER

Jonah sits next to Daniela.

JONAH

Daniela, you have to make a decision. The war will soon end, and you are a stateless person. The Romanians will allow Jews to emigrate to Palestine.

DANIELA

Yes, I heard.

JONAH

Or you can return to Romania now, if you wish.

DANIELA

Never.

JONAH

Some are going back. Perhaps there is still a life there.

DANIELA

Everyone I loved is dead. The Daniela who lived there is dead as well. Yedinitz is a cursed place. I would see everywhere the murderers and plunderers of my family and our people.

JONAH

The Zionists are building a new life in our biblical homeland. The American government is pressuring the British to allow the Jews in.

DANIELA

What about the people living there now? Will they simply pack up and let the Jews take their land?

JONAH

It's a desert, much of it.

DANIELA

Ha! The 'Land of Milk and Honey?' People still consider it home. There will be more war. I guarantee that.

JONAH

Then we will fight for Israel. I will fight again. And die if I have to.

Jonah puts his head in his hands as Daniela cries.

JONAH

Think of your people, Daniela.
Haven't we suffered enough?

DANIELA

I know what it's like to be deported.
How could I deport others?

JONAH

Don't you believe in the Jewish
homeland? The Jews have occupied
those lands since biblical times.

DANIELA

So the Bible is dispensing land now,
from thousands of years ago?

JONAH

I see you are your father's daughter
after all. Go be a Soviet then. Help
build Stalin's Communist paradise.

Daniela sits silent.

JONAH

You will go to a Displaced Persons
camp. They are building them right on
the sites of the death camps. Do you
want to live in Bergen Belsen?
Come to Palestine with me. Daniela.
Mihail is dead. Can't you love me
even a little?

DANIELA

It's because I do love you that I
can't go with you, Jonah. You need
somebody who is willing to spend
their whole lives in an endless war.

JONAH

I can think of nothing sweeter than
to build the Jewish homeland.
Daniela, you are a lost soul.

Daniela takes Jonah in her arms.

DANIELA

I know that you will find the right
partner in Israel, Jonah. Somebody
who believes in your God and your
religious observances. I can't be
that person. Especially after what I
have seen and been through.

JONAH

You aren't the only one who has suffered.

DANIELA

I would have to give up the independence that my father instilled in me; to become somebody other than who I am. My life would be a charade. I would go through the motions of religious observance but my life would be empty, all lies.

JONAH

You might find your faith.

DANIELA

I hope I never do. I would lose myself.

Tears fill Jonah's eyes.

JONAH

Daniela, I will never forget you. I will love you till I die.

DANIELA

And I will love you too, Jonah.

SHORT MONTAGE

Stock footage of Nazis surrendering; concentration camps. Crowds dancing and cheering in the London streets.

Stock shots of warfare: the fall of Berlin, Russians mopping up.

EXT. DISPLACED PERSONS CAMP - DAY

Daniela lies on a cot among crowds of displaced persons.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Romania made a separate peace in 1944 and entered the war on the side of the Allies. The Jewish agencies were then allowed to come in and rescue what was left of the Jews.

An official approaches Daniela with a paper.

OFFICIAL

It looks like you are going to England. Your friend Philippa has found you.

Daniela sits up.

DANIELA
 Philippa! She reads the letter
 greedily.

OFFICIAL
 You are lucky. She has connections.
 Pack and get ready to leave.

DANIELA
 I have nothing to pack.

DANIELA (V.O.)
 Philippa had spent the war in London
 with the count and countess. They got
 me passage and a job helping nurse
 British soldiers and POWs.

CUT TO:

INT. LONDON PUB - DAY

A different world. Signs of victory and celebration are everywhere. The pub is full of servicemen; people wave British and American flags. Daniela, in a nurses uniform, sits at the bar with a drink and friends.

Americans in uniform enter, including a handsome American flyer, ZIGGY. He sees Daniela right away.

ZIGGY
 This seat taken?

DANIELA
 Do you see anybody there?

The nurses scoot over for Ziggy, who orders drinks all around, smiling at Daniela.

ZIGGY
 You're Jewish?

DANIELA
 Of course. You are a captain?

ZIGGY
 Close. A First Lieutenant. I fly a B-
 24. I should say 'flew'.

DANIELA
 Will you miss flying?

ZIGGY

(laughs)

I kissed my ass goodbye so many times
you wouldn't believe it.

DANIELA

Oh yes, I would.

Ziggy looks closely at her, flirting.

ZIGGY

You're a cheeky one.

DANIELA

What means that? Cheeky?

ZIGGY

I think you need some lessons in
American slang. I can be your
teacher.

DANIELA

Is that so?

ZIGGY

Do you learn fast?

DANIELA

Fast as you like.

Ziggy throws his head back and laughs. The drinks arrive and
Ziggy hoists his glass.

ZIGGY

Drink to... what, Romania?

DANIELA

Not as long as I live.

ZIGGY

How about drinking to peace?

Daniela looks thoughtfully into the distance.

DANIELA

To the... fallen.

She looks back at Ziggy and he too is serious.

ZIGGY

To the fallen.

They smile sadly but meaningfully at each other.

ZIGGY

And now drink to the future. So... I might have a chance with you? Is that possible?

Overhearing, the nurses tease and nudge Daniela, laughing.

NURSES

'Everything is possible!'

Ziggy toasts the nurses and all laugh. Ziggy raises his glass

ZIGGY

(to the nurses)

Here's to the possibilities!

CUT TO:

INT. TRADER VIC'S TIKI BAR - NIGHT CIRCA 1950

Daniela, in an elegant cocktail dress and fashionable hairstyle, walks into the restaurant with Ziggy, accompanied by laughing friends. They seat themselves at a booth. Daniela wears a fox stole, which she thrusts aside as drinks arrive.

DANIELA (V.O.)

Ziggy started a contracting business with his brother Mel after the war. He had a real talent for it.

A photographer positions himself to snap the whole table. After the flash, Daniela's eye falls on the fox stole. Then, she looks more closely. The foxes seem to be staring at her.

DANIELA (V.O.)

It was as if they recognized me. After all that's happened, they cried out, you end up eating Polynesian shrimp and drinking Mai-Tais!

Daniela turns the fox stole over so she does not see their eyes. She drinks her Mai Tai quickly as Ziggy lights two cigarettes and gives one to her. The young couples laugh and toast one another.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEEP WOODS - NIGHT

POV moves quickly through a dense forest. Close to the misty ground, the speed and momentum of the stalking grow.

Suddenly there is growling and thrashing as unseen predators pounce and tear at something.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Daniela awakens with a scream. Ziggy quickly sits up.

ZIGGY
What is it? What's wrong?

DANIELA
(half awake)
They're eating him!

ZIGGY
Whaa... who are...

DANIELA
The foxes are eating him! Stop them!

Ziggy holds her close, rocks her.

ZIGGY
Shhh... You'll wake the baby.

Daniela controls herself, begins to cry more softly.

DANIELA
I cannot stand to live another minute
with what I see in my mind!

ZIGGY
Shah... It's over.

DANIELA
It will never be over.

ZIGGY
They are at peace now. Every one of
them.

DANIELA
If only they were.

Gradually, Daniela stops sobbing. Holding her, Ziggy looks grimly into the dark.

DANIELA
Oh God, why did you ever marry me?

Ziggy rocks her soothingly. He gives her a pill and a sip of water.

ZIGGY
Because I loved you the moment I saw
you.

DANIELA
I was a bad bargain.

ZIGGY
You think I'm sorry?

DANIELA
You ought to be.

ZIGGY
I'd do it all over again. All over
again.

LATER

INT. MODERN SPLIT-LEVEL HOME - NIGHT

As Daniela sleeps, Ziggy gets up and walks down the shadowy hallway. He quietly opens a closet door and removes the fox stole. He walks outside.

EXT. MODERN SPLIT-LEVEL HOME - NIGHT

Carrying the fox stole, Ziggy walks through the back yard to a couple of trash cans. He opens the lid and puts the stole into a can. The foxes seem to gaze up at him from the trash. Ziggy pauses a moment and closes the lid on them. He turns and walks back inside, a lonely figure in the moonlight.

SCREEN TEXT to music

In the grey tumult of these after years,
Oft silence falls, the incessant wranglers part;
And less-than-echoes of remembered tears
Hush all the loud confusion of the heart...

----- RUPERT BROOKE

CREDITS ROLL TO MUSIC

Hymn of the Partisans: *Zog Nit Keyn Mol!*

<https://yiddishsongs.org/zog-nit-keyn-mol-2/>

CHORUS

(sings)

Never say that you are going your
last way.
Though lead-filled skies blot out the
blue of day.
The earth shall thunder 'neath our
tread that we are here.
The hour for which we long will
certainly appear.
From lands of green palm trees to
lands all white with snow, we are
coming with our pain and with our
woe.
And wherever a spurt of our blood did
drop,
our courage will again sprout from
that spot.
For us the morning sun will radiate
the day.
The enemy and past will fade away.
But should the dawn delay or sunrise
wait too long, then like a codeword
let all generations sing this song.

This song was written with our blood
and not with lead.
This is no song of free birds flying
overhead.
But a people amid crumbling walls did
stand, they stood and sang this song
with pistols held in hand.
So never say that you are going your
last way.
Though lead-filled skies blot out the
blue of day.
The hour that we long for will
certainly appear.
The earth shall thunder 'neath our
tread that WE ARE HERE.