

THE WAR FILM

By

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DRAFT 5.5

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INT RUINED WAITING ROOM DAY

The sound of distant shelling fills the air.

RALF (25) sits in the doorway of the waiting room, one leg either side, staring down the track towards the tunnel. There's a dead bottle of champagne next to him, a rifle slung across his chest. In the Waiting Room, WILL (19) sits amongst the rubble on a comfortable piece of regency furniture, staring out through a blast-hole through binoculars. Bottles of champagne and bullet casings line the ground. Both men's uniforms are dirty and in disarray.

A shell explodes loudly nearby.

RALF
Maybe we should go.

WILL
(ironically)
What? And leave all this?

Will returns to his view.

WILL (CONT'D)
Our friend is back.

Ralf looks towards the tunnel, sighs, and goes over to an adjacent hole in the wall. On the floor by the hole lies a piece of chalk next to nine chalk tally marks. Ralf makes himself comfortable on the cushions carefully stacked up against the wall.

RALF
Fat men should not play by windows.

Ralf steadies his rifle on the hole. He calmly takes in a deep breath and holds it, making an infinitesimal adjustment with his rifle. His finger squeezes the trigger slowly and softly.

BANG. Ralf and Will immediately drop to the floor out of sight. Ralf puts down the rifle and idly picks up a small piece of chalk from the floor, whilst Will returns to the hole with the binoculars.

Ralf looks over at Will in expectation. Will turns to his colleague, deliberately expressionless, but Ralf merely smiles and strikes the tenth notch on the ground.

RALF
Clean?

WILL
Never knew what hit him.

Will stands up and winces, he looks down at a small black bullet hole in his stomach, before staggering back onto the floor.

The silence is broken by the sound of a whistling shell. Ralf scrambles over to Will and grabs him by the back of his jacket collar. Ralf drags him out through the doorway as an exploding shell causes dust and debris to fall from the partly collapsed ceiling.

EXT BOMBED OUT TRAIN STATION - DAY

Ralf lays Will onto the station platform, away from the line of fire. Ralf struggles to undo Will's shirt buttons in an attempt to tend to his injuries.

There is a blast of gunfire at the opposite end of the platform. Ralf looks up to see a figure falling clumsily down a bank of rubble by the railway tunnel. It is another GERMAN SOLDIER (40).

RALF

Don't move.

Ralf drops down onto the twisted tracks and races towards the soldier, stumbling over dislodged sleepers.

The soldier struggles to untangle his bag straps from his leg. Ralf grabs him by the arm and pulls him up.

RALF (CONT'D)

I need a medic, where's your unit.

The soldier, bald, shell-shocked and deathly pale, stares back blankly. Ralf shakes him.

RALF (CONT'D)

Where's your unit?

The soldier does not respond, Ralf released his grip and the soldier runs into the tunnel and disappears.

Ralf returns to Will, pulling himself back up onto the platform.

Sweating and now very pale, Will clutches at the growing bullet wound.

RALF (CONT'D)

I spoke to someone.

Beat.

RALF (CONT'D)

I'm supposed to put you on your side. Someone's coming.

Will accepts this information, but as Ralf rolls him onto his side, blood from the exit wound in his back pours out onto the platform.

Ralf recoils in horror.

Will half-turns, and stares helplessly at Ralf before laying his head on the platform floor.

With a terrible resolve, Ralf retrieves the rifle from the waiting room and points it at the back of his friend's head. But Will is still horribly alive and Ralf can only dry-retch, lowering his gun.

Ralf backs away and lowers himself silently back onto the track. As he leaves Russian voices can be heard by both men.

WILL

Ralf?

Ralf takes a furtive, guilty, glance at Will and bolts towards the tunnel. Will can hear Ralf's running footsteps, as the sounds of Russian voices become more immediate.

Will's agony suddenly gives way to terror.

WILL (CONT'D)

Raaalllf!

Hearing this desperate howl, Ralf stops by the tunnel entrance, turns and raises his rifle. Shadows of Russian soldiers can be seen behind the station's frosted glass.

WILL (CONT'D)

Raaaalf!

Ralf fires at Will hitting the station platform behind him. At the sound of breaking wood, Ralf turns and flees into the tunnel.

The sound of raised voices and laughter can be heard in the background. Will's screams of agony echo through the tunnel. The feet of unseen uniformed Russians kick his wounds.

In the darkness of the tunnel are Ralf's eyes. There is the sound of a shot, the screams finish and only the sound of Russian voices remain as Ralf's haunted face disappears back into the dark.