

«IN THE CIRCLE OF KUNDUZ»

TV Series

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1. EXT. DZHAMBUL. GERMAN CEMETERY — DAY.

TITLE: DZHAMBUL. THE GERMAN CEMETERY.

BRUNO, a tall, broad-shouldered young man of 25 years old, of military habit, stands at a grave with a maroon marble tombstone with a photo of his father on it. At the top of the plate there are 2 Orders of the Red Star; an INTERNATIONALIST SOLDIER is written. In the center of the plate is the name Konstantin Oskarovich Thevs, below the date of birth and death (1966-1986).

Bruno is serious, his shoulders are straightened, his hands are stacked on top of each other.

The holy father in a pastor's shirt with a Roman collar reads psalms. The priest holds a Bible and a rosary in his hands.

Bruno listens in silence.

The pastor finishes reading the prayer.

Bruno puts flowers on the grave.

Bruno takes a black cellophane bag with a handful of earth out of the pocket of his leather jacket and pours it on the mound in front of the monument.

2. EXT. AIRPORT — DAY.

A large liner lifts off the ground and soars into the sky.

3. INT. BOARD OF THE PLANE — DAY.

Bruno is sitting in the middle row by the window.

The young slender stewardess carries drinks on a trolley and serves them to passengers. Bruno refuses mechanically.

Bruno is looking out the window, thinking about something.

FLASHBACK IN

4. EXT. MEDIEVAL CASTLE — NIGHT.

TITLE: CALV.KARLSRUHE COUNTY, THE LAND OF BADEN WÜRTTEMBERG, SOUTHWEST OF GERMANY. COUNT ZEPPELIN'S CASTLE.

A picturesque landscape, a large pond with century-old oaks, the facade of the castle is illuminated. A Mercedes executive class car arrives at the castle, accompanied by a military

SUV from behind.

Three commandos jump out of the SUV and open the back door of the Mercedes. The head of the KSK Brigadier General MARKUS NEUMANN steps out of it sedately.

5. INT. BUNKER - NIGHT.

TITLE: BUNKER.SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES CENTER. KSK
BUNDESWEHR.

The walls are painted in achromatic color, round lampshades shine dimly, a glass spy "gesella" is mounted in one of the walls.

Bruno with ten-day stubble is sitting in the center, his hands are handcuffed to the seat of a chair.

He is severely exhausted, blinded by the light of a powerful searchlight; two soldiers hose him down with a jet of icy water, deafen him with a loud rock and roll sound.

6. INT. BUNKER - NIGHT.

The observation room. In the center there is an oval elongated table for 8 people.

A little to the side, two officers are playing chess at a square glass coffee table.

From the observation room, three KSK military leaders sitting on expensive office chairs are watching the test. Bruno is behind the glass in profile to them.

Markus Neumann enters the observation room; the officers stand up. Markus Neumann nods his head in greeting, waves his hand, and invites the officers to sit down. Everyone sits down at an elongated table.

Markus Neuman addresses the KSK personnel officer, Oberst - Colonel KURT VOLLMER, without taking his eyes off what is happening behind the glass, where a military man is hosing down Bruno with a powerful jet.

MARKUS NEUMANN

How is he?!

KURT VOLLMER

(To Marcus Neumann)

He's holding up well, Mr. Brigadier
General.

Markus Neumann takes a pencil out of a cup, takes a dangerous "SHICK" blade and begins to sharpen the pencil.

MARKUS NEUMANN

Read me his file, Vollmer.

KURT VOLLMER

Yes, Mr. Brigadier General! Bruno Thevs, born in 1985. He arrived in Germany in 1989 from Kazakhstan, USSR, at the age of four.

Graduated from high school with honors, purposefully prepared for military service.

He speaks Russian and English perfectly.

After graduating from school, he served in the 26th Airborne Brigade in the city of Zweibrücken. From there, Ober Staff Corporal Thevs entered the higher officer school.

In 2008, he received the military specialty of an army intelligence officer and the rank of lieutenant.

In the same year he was selected for KSK.

He served as a group commander in the division of the rapid reaction forces in Stadtallendorf. The rank of Ober-lieutenant was awarded ahead of schedule. Athlete, winner of the Bundeswehr in boxing.

In early January 2009, he appealed to the KSK command with a request to send him to the Task Force-47 as part of the joint forces of the Western ISAF coalition in Afghanistan for further service.

MARKUS NEUMANN

(To officers)

What will be the opinions?!

KURT VOLLMER

In all disciplines and stages of testing, Ober-lieutenant Bruno Thevs is certified with the highest scores, Mr. Brigadier General. The level of professional training gives grounds to consider him one of the best beginning army

intelligence officers of the
Bundeswehr and recommend him for
rotation in Afghanistan.

MARKUS NEUMANN

I agree with you, Kurt!

Markus Neumann signs a document on the castling of Bruno
Thevs in Afghanistan.

7. INT. RESTAURANT HALL— EVENING.

The restaurant is filled with people, the hubbub, the music
is playing loudly. Waitresses in Bavarian folklore costumes
glide briskly between the tables, carrying large mugs of beer
and snacks on trays.

Bruno enters the room dressed in a denim suit. Bruno
confidently walks towards a table with 5 friends, strong
young men who look like military men. The friends are in high
spirits, glad to see Bruno smiling, shake Bruno's hand in
greeting, hug him, and say something loudly in Bruno's ear,
trying to make themselves heard over the hubbub.

Bruno sits at the head of the table. One of the friends gets
up from the table and solemnly begins to make a toast to
Bruno, all the friends sitting at the table look at the
speaker and Bruno with a smile. At the end of the
performance, the friends laugh loudly, they stand up, clink
beer mugs, and sit down.

A panting, buxom WAITRESS with a low-cut folklore dress
deftly pulls herself up to the table with friends with a tray
of glasses of beer. The waitress is accompanied by her lanky
Asian assistant, MUSTAFA, with plates of pork rolls, French
fries and tomato sauce. Mustafa is hesitant. The waitress
begins to lay out glasses of beer in front of each of the six
young men. When the beer is served, the waitress turns and
addresses Mustafa.

WAITRESS

Mustafa, come closer.

Mustafa reaches for the waitress with a tray, but lets the
serving waiters pass between the tables. Mustafa suddenly
loses his balance with the tray and falls with it onto Bruno,
who is sitting in front of him, dumping all the plates with
the contents on him.

Bruno jumps up in a rage, plates clatter off him, drenching
his t-shirt, denim jacket and jeans. Bruno grabs Mustafa by
the front of his shirt, throws him over his shoulder, and

slams Mustafa to the floor.

Bruno looms over Mustafa lying on the floor, glares angrily into the eyes of the terrified Mustafa, and swings his fist. the waitress screams wildly.

WAITRESS
Security! Security!

BRUNO
Mustafa! The ghoul!

MUSTAFA
(apologetically,
frightened)
Sorry, Herr, it just happened.

After a pause, Bruno restrains himself from striking. Friends grab Bruno by the shoulders from both sides and pull him aside. There is a commotion in the nearby tables. From the end of the hall, brave guys from the restaurant's security service rush to the place of the accident.

Bruno's friends, BROWN-HAIRED and BRUNETTE, point Bruno in the direction of the second exit from the restaurant, hurry him to leave.

BROWN-HAIRED
You have a big day tomorrow; you shouldn't get into scandalous stories!

Bruno comes out of his frenzy, starts hurriedly walking away, flashing between the tables of the large restaurant hall. The Brown-haired and the Brunette look after Bruno as he walks away.

BRUNETTE
Well, Bruno has a special love for Asians.

BROWN-HAIRED
It's true.

8. EXT. A NARROW CITY STREET — EVENING.

Bruno hurries out of the restaurant's service entrance onto the street, shaking the leftovers from his jacket and jeans with a napkin as he goes, wiping the tomato sauce with a paper napkin. The street is deserted.

On the other side of the sidewalk is a heavyset Oriental woman in a black niqab, carrying bags of groceries.

Aggressive chanting shouts of skinheads can be heard approaching around the corner. Six skinheads appear from around the corner - with dyed long hair, earrings in their ears, black uniforms with metal chains with swastikas around their necks, and photos of Hitler on T-shirts holding flaming flares in their hands.

The skinheads, screaming wildly, run up to the woman, tear the grocery bags from her hands, and the contents of the bags fall to the ground.

The woman starts screaming in one of the oriental languages, crying for help. The young men get into a frenzy, laugh homericly, and begin to tear off the woman's black outer cape. The woman resists, swears, defends herself, swings her hand at the attackers.

Bruno looks at what is happening, he is alarmed, looks back at the door of the restaurant, waiting for the appearance of the pursuing guards of the restaurant.

Bruno dares. He walks briskly to the opposite sidewalk. Bruno starts pulling the skinheads away from the oriental woman.

The skinheads switch to Bruno and start attacking him together. Bruno defends himself skillfully with hand-to-hand combat techniques and puts four skinheads on the asphalt, while the other two skinheads run away.

Bruno looks around, begins to collect the food scattered on the asphalt back into the bags. Bruno passes the packages to a moaning oriental woman sitting on the asphalt.

BRUNO

Take it, calm down, everything is fine.

9. EXT. CATHEDRAL - DAY.

TITLE: FREIBURG. THE CATHEDRAL OF HOLY VIRGIN MARY.

In the frame is a general plan of the view of the cathedral.

10. INT. CATHEDRAL PULPIT - DAY.

Bruno Thevs is sitting at the organ. The work of J.S. Bach sounds.

Bruno plays with inspiration.

Finishes playing and stands up. Closes the lid.

11. INT. THE INTERIOR OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY.

Bruno goes up to the HOLY FATHER, kisses his hand. The Holy Father baptizes Bruno.

HOLY FATHER

Please, Bruno, revenge and retribution are not the way of a righteous Lutheran. Take care of yourself, the church will pray for you.

BRUNO

Thank you, Father.

Bruno departs from the Holy Father.

Bruno approaches a 45-year-old woman sitting in the front row next to the pulpit - his mother ROSA. Rosa is pretty, with delicate facial features, exquisitely dressed in dark, and has a hat on her head.

Rosa comes out from behind the bench and heads for the exit with Bruno.

12. EXT. CATHEDRAL - DAY.

Bruno and Rosa come out of the Cathedral. Rosa holds Bruno's arm and looks at him. Bruno looks ahead.

ROSA

I am very saddened by your decision. You're breaking my heart. It will be unbearable for me to lose my only son after the death of my husband.

Bruno looks at Rose.

BRUNO

(reassuringly, with a smile)

Everything will be fine.

13. EXT. AIRBASE - DAY.

TITLE: MAZAR-I-SHARIF, AFGHANISTAN. BUNDESWEHR AIR BASE. THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE REGIONAL COMMAND OF THE ZONE "NORTH" OF THE JOINT FORCES OF THE WESTERN COALITION ISAF.

The sun is at its zenith. Hot air rises from the scorching earth. A military transport aircraft "S.160D Transall" lands on the runway. A group of German soldiers descends from the opening ramp. From the military, the camera highlights Bruno in a Gainsborough-colored officer's dress uniform with a branded backpack. Bruno throws his head up, looks at the cloudless sky and takes a deep breath of air.

A Bucher (MOWAG) Duro IIIP ambulance with a flashing beacon turns on smoothly to the aircraft parking lot, to the side of the Bombardier Learjet 55 medical board with a red crescent image and the inscription "Medecins Sans Frontieres" MSF. A group of doctors and orderlies in green uniforms is quickly unloaded from the ambulance and begins to evacuate 3 stretchers with patients to be sent to Germany.

The young girl SEETA, accompanying the last of them, under the force of the air flow of the liner's engine, releases a folder with sheets of "case histories" papers from her armpit. Documents are scattered to the side for several meters.

Bruno leaves his backpack in place, begins to catch up the papers carried away by the wind, helping Seeta to collect them.

Bruno picks up the last sheet, hands the whole stack to Seeta. Bruno looks intently into Seeta's eyes. Seeta is beautiful. Seeta blushes, looks down, nods gratefully.

Bruno and Seeta are distracted by the loud sound of two motorcycles approaching the airfield checkpoint. There is pandemonium at the checkpoint - a group of residents and accumulated civilian trucks. The military of the Western ISAF forces with weapons and service dogs do not allow Afghan civilian equipment to enter the airfield, strictly check documents, inspect cargo compartments of transport.

Bruno focuses on Afghan motorcyclists in turban and Afghan national dress. They both have backpacks on their backs. Both motorcyclists quickly conduct reconnaissance, their readiness for quick action is visible.

The Afghan motorcyclists sharply step on the gas and rush one after the other through the narrow space between the transport and the checkpoint gates, penetrate the airfield territory.

The guards try to stop the motorcyclists; but they filter through the crowd. The guards take aim, but do not use weapons on the motorcyclists.

Bruno and Seeta find themselves in the path of speeding motorcyclists. Bruno abruptly pulls Seeta by the arm, saving her from being hit by the first motorcycle. The motorcyclist drives on. Bruno grabs his GLOCK pistol from the holster with his other hand and shoots the first motorcyclist in the back, an explosion occurs. The motorcyclist is being torn to shreds.

The second motorcyclist directs his motorcycle at Bruno. Bruno abruptly steps aside and strikes the motorcyclist's neck with an outstretched hand, knocks him to the ground and fires a control shot to the head.

Seeta runs up to the ambulance, where a team of doctors is waiting for her. Seeta is quickly seated in an ambulance. The car starts moving.

Bruno remains at the scene of the collision with the motorcyclists; military personnel from the ISAF gather around him. Bruno watches the ambulance leaving the airfield.

14. EXT. AFGHANISTAN GARRISON "TASK FORCE 47" - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ, AFGHANISTAN. GARRISON "TASK FORCE 47" (TF-47).

Bruno Thevs drives on an armored personnel carrier to the TF-47 headquarters. On the porch he is awaited by the TF-47 commander OBERST JUNG, a short, lean man of 40 years old, strict, secretive, distrustful, cynical, cruel, speaks with a characteristic "Nordic" accent.

Bruno waits for the dust to settle, jumps off the armored personnel carrier, dusts himself off, and walks to Oberst Jung to report. Oberst Jung greets Bruno with a smile.

Oberst Jung comes down from the porch, passes by Bruno. Bruno follows him a little behind.

OBERST JUNG

Welcome to Afghanistan!

The TF47 unit is served by the best officers of the Special operations forces and army intelligence units - about 200 people.

Oberst Jung walks between a row of armored personnel carriers and a fence with barbed wire, Bruno follows Oberst Jung, listening attentively to his speech.

OBERST JUNG

In a short period of time, we have developed a good network of agents

in the "North" sector of
responsibility.

The Oberst stops. He stares intently into Bruno's eyes.

OBERST JUNG

I've read your personal file, Ober
Lieutenant. A good start.

Oberst Jung and Bruno continue their leisurely pace, stopping at the site where the instructor officer demonstrates to a group of special forces the technique of hand-to-hand combat with an opponent armed with a knife. Oberst Jung looks from Bruno to the commandos.

OBERST JUNG

Don't you want to show your
abilities?

Oberst Jung nods to the instructor officer.
The instructor officer frees the commando, waiting for Bruno's approach.
Bruno approaches the instructor officer; a handshake takes place.
Bruno and the instructor officer stood ready for battle.
The fight began with the use of punches and combat sambo techniques.
Bruno gets the better of the instructor officer.
Bruno and the instructor officer shake hands.
Bruno returns to Oberst Jung.

OBERST JUNG

Not bad, not bad!
(pause)
Answer me, only frankly! Is your
desire to be in TF-47 somehow
connected with the death of your
father here?

Bruno fades away. Before Bruno could answer, Jung continues.

OBERST JUNG

Remember, Ober lieutenant!
(a little quieter)
The accomplishment of retribution
should not harm the career of a
promising officer.

Bruno nods in agreement.
Oberst and Bruno move along the barbed wire fence, behind which there is military equipment.

OBERST JUNG

By the way, where did this happen?

BRUNO

In the province of Baghlan, Mr. Oberst.

(pause)

Their regiment was stationed here in Kunduz.

OBERST JUNG

I see.

(pause)

Baghlan is also our area of responsibility.

Oberst Jung sees a folio with a Russian title in Bruno's hand.

OBERST JUNG

(with curiosity)

What are you reading now, Ober-lieutenant??

BRUNO

"The Great game in Afghanistan."

OBERST JUNG

(suspiciously)

I see.

(pause)

Tell me, Ober-lieutenant.

(interestedly)

When and from what part of Germany your ancestors moved to Russia? Are you aware of this?

BRUNO

(statutory)

That's right, Mr. Oberst! During the reign of King Frederick II of Prussia, according to the manifesto of 1762 of the Russian Empress Catherine II, Princess Sophia Augusta Frederica of Anhalt-Zerbst. Among the first German families, my ancestors settled in the Volga region. They went to Russia from the South-West of Germany, Freiburg, where two centuries later we returned.

OBERST JUNG

Well! It's a long time!
The history of the family and the
people must be known! Commendable,
commendable!

(thoughtfully)

Okay, first solve all the
formalities at headquarters, and
then I'll introduce you to your
group. Tomorrow at 9.00 the meeting
of group commanders in the "Combat
Control Center".

Oberst Jung and Bruno Thevs are splitting up.

15. INT. BRUNO'S ROOM - DAY.

Bruno enters his room, there are two beds, both made up. His
roommate, counterintelligence officer Ober lieutenant Helmut
ZIMMER, is sitting at his desk.

There's a yellowed old photo on Zimmer's desk, framed on a
stand. In the photo, two officers are shoulder to shoulder in
the uniform of Abwehr intelligence officers.

Bruno looks at the photo, then at Zimmer, greets Zimmer with
a handshake. On the ring finger of Zimmer's right hand is a
ring with a black rectangular stone. Bruno puts his backpack
on a chair by the empty bunk.

BRUNO

Bruno Thevs!

ZIMMER

(haughtily)

Helmut, the counterintelligence
service!

BRUNO

Oh! I'm lucky, I'll be under the
protection of counterintelligence.

ZIMMER

(unfriendly)

Don't be pathetic, Ober Lieutenant.

BRUNO

As you wish, Ober Lieutenant.

Bruno continues to look at the photo with two officers from
the Abwehr.

BRUNO

And who are these officers in the photo, Ober Lieutenant?

ZIMMER

Abwehr officers who served in Afghanistan in the 30-40s of the last century. One of them is my great-grandfather.

(the photo of the Abwehr officers and the black stone ring on Zimmer's finger reappear in scene 112)

BRUNO

(interested)

I see.

Bruno takes one of the beds, takes a book out of his backpack, and begins to read.

EVENTS FROM THE BOOK "THE GREAT GAME IN AFGHANISTAN"

FLASHBACK IN

16. EXT. MOSCOW.THE RED SQUARE — DAY.

Red Square, historical paving stones, the high Kremlin wall, the Kremlin Spasskaya clock tower, the Kremlin chimes can be heard.

17. INT. I.V. STALIN'S OFFICE IN THE KREMLIN — DAY.

View of Stalin's office. An official opens the door to Stalin's office.

Soviet officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and major military leaders are standing in the office at a long table and waiting for negotiations to begin.

The General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU (b), STALIN I.V., with a slightly smoking pipe in his hand, gets up from his desk and goes to meet the Afghan delegation entering the office.

STALIN I.V.

(friendly with a smile)

Hello comrades!

The head of the Afghan delegation, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Emirate GHULAM SIDDIQ KHAN Charkhi, welcomes

Stalin I.V. in English, "Good afternoon!"

A warm handshake. Stalin I.V. with a wave of his hand invites the Afghan delegation to sit down at a long table. The Afghans pass by and take their seats. Following them, on the contrary, the Soviet delegation sits down. Negotiations begin. Silence.

Stalin I.V. puffs on smoke from a smoking pipe, slowly looks at the members of the Afghan delegation, stops his gaze at Ghulam Siddiq Khan.

Ghulam Siddiq Khan speaks first, without taking his eyes off Stalin.

GHULAM SIDDIQ KHAN

(pompously)

Honorable Secretary General!
The Emirate of Afghanistan,
represented by His Majesty
King Amanullah Khan was the first
foreign state to recognize the
young Soviet Republic in 1919.

Stalin raises his palm and smiles.

STALIN I.V.

(raising his palm,
smiling)

The RSFSR, as you know, did not
remain in debt - it was the first
to recognize the independence of
Afghanistan from the British
colonialists!

GHULAM SIDDIQ KHAN

(emotionally)

At the moment, Afghanistan has been
beheaded and is on the verge of
civil war.
You are undoubtedly aware that the
power in Kabul has been usurped by
the war criminal Habibullah
Kalakani. We are here to convey the
request of His Holiness Emir
Amanullah Khan: in the name of
peace on the land of Afghanistan,
to form a special detachment on
Soviet territory from among the Red
Army soldiers and Afghan soldiers
of various levels who have left the
country. We assure you that as soon

as the special detachment crosses the Soviet-Afghan border, it will immediately be replenished with thousands of loyal supporters of Amanullah Khan, ready to give their lives for their emir. Consequently, the need for further participation of the Soviet military in the operation will immediately disappear, they will safely return to their homeland.

18. EXT. THE BANK OF THE AMU DARYA RIVER - NIGHT, PREDAWN.

TITLE: SOVIET-AFGHAN BORDER 1929.

It is quiet, only the sound of gurgling water is heard. On an open, elevated place visible from everywhere on the northern bank of the border river Amu Darya stands the international formation of a special detachment of the Red Army (Workers' and Peasants' Red Army) 2000 fighters from national units of the Central Asian Military District (SAVO) - Uzbeks, Turkmens, Tajiks, Kazakhs, Kirghiz, Uighurs, Russians, Cossacks all dressed in Afghan military uniforms.

The commander of the detachment, Vitaly Primakov, with the call sign WITMAR, is dressed in the uniform of an Afghan officer, reading out a combat order.

WITMAR

(in a commanding voice)

The detachment is tasked with infiltrating the adjacent territory to perform a responsible government task. For the duration of the operation, in the presence of the Afghan population, address each other with distributed Muslim names.

19. EXT. THE BANK OF THE AMU DARYA RIVER - MORNING.

The advance group of the Witmar detachment secretly swims through the water barrier of the Amu Darya River and silently removes the Afghan border outpost. The main forces of the Witmar detachment with 4 mountain guns, 12 machine guns, 12 light machine guns, powerful mobile radio stations, a supply of provisions are loaded onto motorboats, barges, kayaks, and force the river.

20. EXT. THE BANK OF THE AMU DARYA RIVER, DESERT — DAWN.

TITLE: SOVIET BORDER AREA, AFGHAN TERRITORY.

Six Soviet airplanes equipped with bombs and machine guns appear in the sky. Together with Witmar's detachment, they cross the Soviet-Afghan border and fly into Afghanistan. Part of the squad is in the water; some are still going down to the water. The camera is behind the squad.

Airplanes fly around the Afghan border post Patta-Gissar twice in a circle and, descending, make a fire raid. The Afghan border post, barracks, and most of the Afghan border guards have been destroyed. The shelling of the Afghan territory from the air continues. In response, the Afghan border guards occasionally shoot at Soviet planes with their rifles, but all in vain, only two of the 50 border guards remain alive.

21. EXT. KELIF-DAY.

Fighting is taking place near the city limits of Kelif. Afghan formations are desperately repelling bayonet and saber attacks by the Witmar's troops.

Witmar's fighters are pushing forward guns, and the first cannon shots and machine-gun bursts destroy and morally break the Afghans.

The Afghans are fleeing from their positions, leaving their weapons.

22. EXT. MAZAR-I-SHARIF, AFGHANISTAN — DAY.

TITLE: MAZAR-I-SHARIF, AFGHANISTAN.

Witmar's detachment attacks the bastion, smashes the gates of the Mazar-I-Sharif fortress with direct artillery fire, and breaks into the city.

The defenders of the garrison are crowding and fleeing. Piles of motionless, bloody bodies lie near the Afghan guns. The losses of the Afghans are great, in the Witmar detachment they are isolated. Witmar's squad has broken into Mazar-I-Sharif, rushes to the attack with the traditional Russian "Hurrah". Russian obscenities are heard everywhere on the streets. Soviet airplanes are raiding Mazar-I-Sharif from the air, dropping bombs on Afghan positions, and additional weapons to the Witmar fighters. Mazar-I-Sharif is occupied by

Witmar's detachment.

Afghan tribal formations dressed in national Afghan clothes - robes, turban - arrived to help the Afghan detachments in Mazar-I-Sharif. Tribal formations immediately engage in battle, trying to knock Witmar out of the city. Large in number, tribal formations are poorly organized, resume attacks in open terrain one after another, advance in a dense formation, but are cut off by oncoming gun and machine-gun fire from Witmar fighters.

FLASHBACK OUT

23. INT. TF-47 HEADQUARTERS - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. TF-47 HEADQUARTERS, COMBAT CONTROL CENTER.

A room with many telephones, military maps, where the borders of provinces and counties are outlined, the names of settlements are marked. Oberst Jung gathers deputies and commanders of special forces groups for a meeting at the "Combat Control Center". The room is filled with officers.

OBERST JUNG

Our agents have revealed the plans of the Taliban leaders - Moulawi Shamsutdin and Mullah Abdul Rahman, to organize a series of attacks on columns of German military equipment and to commit a terrorist attack on the Bundeswehr garrison in Kunduz. Based on strategic expediency, TF-47 begins to develop an operation plan codenamed "Joker". The analysis of intelligence data with a high degree of probability indicates the appearances and permanent residence of the leaders Shamsutdin and Abdul Rahman. The objects are monitored around the clock.

(Jung suddenly turns to Bruno)

Despite your lack of practical experience in the participation and planning of special operations, for a speedy entry into the combat environment, I include you in the list of developers of Operation Joker. I hope it pays off! And now, Ober-lieutenant Thevs,

read the intercepted fresh report.

Oberst Jung pushes a folder of documents towards Bruno. Bruno doesn't hesitate to start reading.

BRUNO

"I, Moulawi Shamsutdin, the leader of the Taliban movement in Kunduz province, order the detachments under my control to attack the German columns in order to seize large-capacity trucks. We will stuff them with explosives and, by means of a suicide driver who will break through the security cordons, we will send them inside the Bundeswehr garrison in Kunduz, to the places of concentration of the German military, their living quarters. We'll blow them up there! The attack on the garrison will be continued by small arms and grenade launcher fire of our mobile groups that will invade after them."

24. EXT. KUNDUZ-BAGHLAN HIGHWAY - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ-BAGHLAN HIGHWAY, ALIABAD DISTRICT.

On the highway near Kunduz, from both sides of the road, the Taliban launch an armed attack on the Bundeswehr convoy. Grenade launchers are the first to hit the head and tail of the column, igniting the first and last cars of escort. Intense shooting can be heard.

Bruno and his group on armored personnel carriers are cut off from other vehicles by heavy fire. The special forces dismount and engage in battle.

One of the commandos is wounded in the neck, blood is gushing from the wound.

Bruno, under fire, quickly crawls up to the commando, grabs his ammunition and hurriedly drags him to shelter. Bruno gives the commando an injection of the painkiller promedol, bandages the wound.

The Taliban capture two large-tonnage 50-ton tankers filled with diesel fuel. The Taliban shoot the drivers of the tankers and dump their bodies in a ditch. The Taliban hijack tankers from a busy highway to a country road in the

direction of the nearest village.

The TF-47 group is blocked by Taliban deterrent fire, remains in place.

25. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - DAY.

TITLE: TF-47 HEADQUARTERS. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE

Bruno, in a dusty military uniform, with a dirty face, enters the office of Oberst Jung.

BRUNO

(to Oberst Jung)

Mr. Oberst, the Taliban attacked our convoy on the Kunduz-Baghlan highway. Part of the equipment was burned; the drivers were killed and there are wounded. Two large-capacity trucks full of fuel were stolen in an unknown direction. The attack confirmed the authenticity of the intelligence information. A wounded Taliban who took part in the attack on the convoy was detained in hot pursuit. According to his testimony, the organizers of the attack were identified, and they were taken into operational investigation.

OBERST JUNG

(to Bruno)

Ober-lieutenant! Urgently send a request to the headquarters of the North group in Mazar-I-Sharif for aerial photography of the area. It is necessary to establish the location of the stolen equipment!

BRUNO

(in a statutory tone)

Yes, Mr. Oberst!

26. EXT. KUNDUZ-BAGHLAN HIGHWAY - DAY.

When crossing the rapidly flowing narrow river Kunduz-dara, the tankers get stuck in the gravel-sand soil. The Taliban brought two Soviet tractors "Belarus" with cables from the nearest village of Omar Kheyl to pull out the tankers.

They cling to the tankers with cables. The Taliban are getting rid of fuel in tankers, inviting Afghans from the village to replenish their personal diesel reserves.

A long queue of local farmers with cans and other containers has accumulated near the tanks.

27. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - DAY.

Bruno, in his field uniform, knocks on Oberst Jung's office.

BRUNO

May I come in, Mr. Oberst?

Oberst is sitting at the table.

OBERST JUNG

Come in, Ober-lieutenant!
What news?!

Bruno comes to the table.

BRUNO

(briskly)

We have received pictures from the location of the tankers. They got stuck in the sandy soil of the mouth of the Kunduz-dara River near the village of Omar Kheyl in Chahar-dara County.

(passes the pictures)

See, here they are. The equipment is surrounded by a crowd of civilians.

OBERST JUNG

(in a commanding tone)

Urgently send this to the aviation support headquarters, let them immediately strike at their location!

Bruno is slightly taken aback.

BRUNO

But there are civilians there, Herr Oberst! There will be great sacrifices!

OBERST JUNG

(dissatisfied, in a strict
tone)

What kind of sentimentality
Ober-lieutenant! There's a war
here!

(pause)

You seem to have forgotten what
happened to your father?!

(disgustedly)

Bruno takes the photographs and leaves Oberst Jung's office.

28. EXT. MOUNTAIN VILLAGE — DAY.

TITLE: HOST-VA-FERENG, AFGHANISTAN.

A small adobe house on the outskirts of an Afghan village, three people are sitting on a carpet in the courtyard in front of the entrance to the dwelling, recording interviews. The interviewee is a former mujahid of the Afghan War (1979-1989), one-armed ISMATULLAH.

The interviewer, reporter OTTO Greenberg, holds a voice recorder and microphone in different hands and asks Ismatullah questions.

An Afghan translator from Dari and Pashto, SULTAN MUHADI, translates Otto's questions to Ismatullah and simultaneously records the interview on a video camera.

ISMATULLAH

(with importance)

I fought in the detachment of the
field commander Kazi Kabir Marzban,
an associate of Ahmad Shah Massoud.

(pause)

I will tell you the story of a
dramatic battle in the mountain
range of Mugulan, Cholbahir and
Tali Gobang in June 1986. Our
detachment inflicted significant
damage to Soviet landing groups
landed by helicopters at the
heights closest to our positions.
It so happened that our firing
points were above the Shuravi
landing site. This gave us a
significant advantage in battle.
For several hours we methodically

hit them with fire. Despite their difficult situation, the Shuravi fought stoutly. At the place where the Shuravi stacked their dead and wounded, under boulders, I found this.

Ismatulla hands Otto a notebook stained with dried blood and two photographs enclosed in it.

ISMATULLAH

They belonged to a Soviet soldier.

Otto opens a brown leather notebook with sticky pages, takes out two photographs. On one, a beautiful girl, on the other - against the background of a Soviet combat helicopter, six comrades were standing in an embrace. Both photos are signed in Russian.

29. EXT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE.

Otto takes a taxi to the teahouse on the "Kunduz circle", the central square of Kunduz with a lot of shops, doucans, eateries and service points.

Positive one-eyed YAKUB KHAN with a black eye sling sees Otto at the entrance, breaks into a smile, fervently puts his palm to his heart, offers to enter with a wave of his hand.

30. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Otto, entering the teahouse, loudly greets the visitors sitting inside - AsSalamu alaikum!

Otto makes an order to Yakub Khan on the move, follows him to the back of the hall. There he chooses a corner couch under the cooling air conditioner, takes off his shoes, climbs onto the couch covered with a felt mat, stretches his legs. Otto is very tired.

In the cramped oblong space of the hall, Otto sees three fans slowly rotating the blades from the ceiling, driving air flows. People in Afghan national clothes and traditional headdresses are eating and drinking tea on the couch, peacefully talking. On the wall is a large portrait of the smiling Mujahideen leader Ahmad Shah Massoud.

The guests are served by the son of Yakub Khan - ZALMAY, a

sporty dark-skinned youth of thirteen with an embroidered kandahari (Pashtun skullcap with a domed slit in front), black wavy hair. Zalmay wears a patterned vest over a traditional Afghan shirt (perukhan, an Afghan national costume in the form of a knee-length shirt with trousers).

Otto sprawls on a wide couch resting and waiting for the order to be delivered. Contemplating the street hustle, medieval faces in traditional clothes, brisk market bargaining, donkey and horse-drawn carriage, chaises, carts, a caravan of two-humped giant camels arriving from afar, loaded with huge bales of goods, the noise of incessant street hubbub is heard. Otto takes out the notebook and photographs handed over by Ismatulla, looks at a group photo with six Soviet soldiers. Then puts the photo back in the backpack. He leans back, enters a doze.

Zalmay brings otto on a tray a sizzling lamb rib kebab, just removed from the grill, a hot tandoor tortilla, a pot of green tea. Otto does not react; he continues to doze.

FLASHBACK IN

31. EXT. KAZAN RAILWAY STATION - DAY.

TITLE: MOSCOW. KAZAN RAILWAY STATION, 1984.

There are noisy festivities on the platform - soldiers' send-off. A crowd of relatives and friends, beloved girls and some conscripts. Wives are tipsy.

People are quietly drinking, snacking on chicken legs, singing songs to the guitar. Nearby, drowning out the hubbub, a tape recorder loudly plays the song of the bard Alexander Novikov.

The order "Conscripts to the wagons!" is passed. Conscripts, wanting to take seats in the compartment from above, rush inside the train cars.

32. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

There is a fight in one of the wagons of a group of short-haired conscripts.

Rostov resident Sergey Sidorenko (SIDOR) drops a backpack and warm clothes of Buryat Darkhan Badmaev (MONGOL) from Ulan-Ude from the upper tier and takes his place.

Mongol pulls Sidor from above, the confrontation begins. Herman Streltsov (STRELA) from Leningrad comes to Sidor's

aid. Sidor and Strela are piling on Mongol. Rustam Tukaev (RUST) from Tatarstan, seeing this, jumps down from the opposite upper tier and begins to pull Sidor and Strela away from Mongol. In support of Sidor and Strela, Rust is tied by muscovite Ivan Kostrov (KOSTER). Konstantin Thevs (KOSTYAN) from Kazakhstan takes the side of Rust and Mongol.

The conflict grows into a fight on different tiers - at the bottom and at the top, three on three are fighting. A military patrol walking along the wagon with an officer, a senior lieutenant and two soldiers of the internal troops, abruptly stops the fight. Everyone is taking up empty seats. The train is moving quietly. The sound of the tape recorder is already drowning out the noise of the train gaining speed. The verses of Novikov's song are barely audible.

33. INT. SLEEPING CAR- DAY.

An ensign and a soldier of the clothing service distribute sets of new military uniforms to recruits. Sidor, Strela, Rust, Mongol, Koster, Kostyan and others are located on the lower and upper tiers. View in the window of the sun-scorched Kyzyl-kum and Kara-Kum deserts of Western Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan.

Along the railway track, Kazakh dwellings are visible embedded in the ground. A group of swarthy children looks out of the embrasures at the rushing train, without taking their eyes off. Through the window you can see the cemetery with monumental necropolises and mazars, dunes and double-humped camels.

The sound of the wheels is slowing down. Short-term stop. On the platform, good-natured Asians in national clothes - men and women, sell chureks, eggs, kатык, curdled milk to travelers. From the windows of the train going in the opposite direction, into the open-opposite window of the wagon with recruits, civilian passengers throw canned food, sausage, tea, cigarettes to conscripts.

The train continues running.

34. EXT. TURKESTAN - A FINE NIGHT.

The train with recruits slows down, stops at a quiet stop.

TITLE: SOUTHERN UZBEKISTAN, TERMEZ REGION.

View from the train window: a deserted platform. A carpet of stars spread out in the sky. A lantern with a dimly glowing

lamp swings steadily on a pole, creaking, dimly illuminating the platform of a compact one-story station.

A DEMOBEE in full-dress uniform comes out of the building - a troublesome senior sergeant. Tanned, toned, the cap is pushed back on the back of the head, the tunic with gold buttons is well fitted and well ironed. There are tank emblems in the buttonholes, the medal "For Bravery" sparkles on the chest. The sergeant does not pay attention to the stopped train and the bald faces of the recruits contemplating from the windows. He gets up, spreads his legs wide and lights a cigarette with a match.

The sergeant inhales the smoke with a full chest, throws his head up and, enjoying the beauty of the starscape, thinks about something. The recruits silently continue to look at what is happening. Unexpectedly SIDOR, loudly, as soon as he can, so that the sergeant will certainly hear, shouts.

SIDOR

Hey, demobee, answer me!
Two - these fucking years,
Will they fly by quickly?!

The demobee does not lower his gaze to Sidor, takes a drag again and barely smiling, freezes in thought, scrolls through the events of military service in memory. Seconds later, the demobee comes out of the cycle of thoughts, directs his gaze to the window from where the question followed, proudly pronounces with a non-obvious drawl.

DEMOBEE

"But hell knows!"

35. EXT. TERMEZ STATION - NIGHT.

TITLE: SOUTH UZBEKISTAN, TERMEZ STATION.

Military men in yellow field uniforms for regions with a hot climate are waiting on the platform - they are lean, tanned in wide-breasted panama hats and army boots. The train passes the last meters, stops with a screech. There is a group of officers and soldiers on the platform. The SENIOR OFFICER is slightly ahead, loudly commanding the newcomers who are looking out of the train windows.

SENIOR OFFICER

Fellow soldiers! Listen to my
command: everyone urgently leaves
the wagons and, in two columns,
quickly load into the KAMAZ trucks

waiting on the square in front of
the railway station!

36. INT. SLEEPING CAR— NIGHT.

There is a fuss in the wagons, a hustle, a crush. Newcomers jump off the upper tiers, jump up from the seats of the lower tiers, and urgently leave the wagons.

37. EXT. TERMEZ STATION — NIGHT.

Following the directions of the movement of the welcoming soldiers, soldiers run in two columns through the open high doors of the tiny station and, running out onto the square, deftly jump onto the KAMAZ trucks standing in a row.

All the recruits have already loaded, the soldiers run around the cars and, looking inside, tighten the awnings on all sides. The KAMAZ trucks are leaving.

38. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN TRAINING CENTER (MTC) "SHERABAD" — EARLY MORNING.

TITLE: THE MOUNTAIN TRAINING CENTER (MTC) "SHERABAD", TURKVO.

There is a formation of newcomers at the one-story building of the military unit headquarters. There are six men standing nearby — Sidor, Strela, Rust, Mongol, Kostyan, Koster.

Three military men in camouflage uniforms without military insignia strut along the line. In front, an important man, obviously a senior in rank, walks with a long stride, hands behind his back. Two men follow him, standing on either side, apparently his subordinates, who look a little younger than the senior.

The SENIOR looks at the faces, examines each newcomer.

SENIOR

Masters of Sports, Candidates for
Masters of Sports, dischargers who
want to prove themselves in
military service, as well...

The senior stops moving, turns around, looks at the formation.

SENIOR
 (continuing)
 Having misunderstood conflicts with
 the Law: Step forward!

Sidor, Strela, Rust, Mongol, Kostyan, Koster are out of order.

39. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN TRAINING CENTER (MTC) "SHERABAD" - DAY.

There is a training session - working out the actions of scouts on a raid and an ambush. A reconnaissance patrol of the raid group is advancing along a narrow street between a high adobe fence. There are three comrades in it - Sidor, Strela, Koster. The main group is moving behind the patrol at a distance of twenty meters - ten soldiers. The soldiers are quietly sneaking around, vigilantly looking, pointing the barrels of their submachine guns and machine guns at a likely target.

Mongol throws a lasso from the roof of an adjacent low building at Sidor, who is walking in front, nailing him to the wall, not allowing him to leave his place. Rust and Kostyan jump from behind the fence at lightning speed on the heads of Strela and Koster and begin to strangle them with belts of machine guns.

40. INT. TENT OF THE TRAINING RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY - NIGHT.

TITLE: TWO MONTHS BEFORE BEING SENT TO AFGHANISTAN. TENT OF THE TRAINING RECONNAISSANCE COMPANY.

After the evening verification, Mongol walks around in the tent of 5 friends lying next to each other, preparing for bed: Kostyan, Rust, Strela, Sidor, Koster.

MONGOL

I made an agreement with the foreman, this night he lets the six of us out of the unit into the desert, so that I can perform the traditional rite of exorcism of evil spirits for the end of October. So, be ready to perform at night.
 Everyone in the company will already fall asleep!

41. EXT. MTC "SHERABAD - NIGHT.

A gusty wind is blowing, a fine, dank rain is drizzling. Mongol takes out an oversized bag rattling with contents and three fascines lying at the exit and distribute the load among friends.

42. EXT. MTC "SHERABAD - NIGHT.

Friends reach the border of the MTC, seep through the barbed wire and move away from the location of the military unit.

43. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN RANGE- NIGHT.

Friends follow each other along a narrow mountain path. Strela, coming from behind, overtakes everyone, takes Mongol in front by the sleeve and asks.

STRELA

(on the move,
aggressively)

Mongol! Is there anything you want to tell us?

MONGOL

(with sincerity)

At the end of October, the border between the worlds opens, and I am obliged to facilitate the relocation of the spirits of the dead, hovering among people in the underworld. In this regard, according to tradition, it is urgent for me to perform tailagan - kamlaniya. Simply put, prayer services accompanied by ritual dances around the campfire with a tambourine fight.

SIDOR

(joking)

"You should go to the doctor and say - he will give you medicine if you are sick!"

44. EXT. THE PLACE OF TAILAGAN - NIGHT.

Mongol shows the place where the boards need to be stacked and where to light a bonfire. Friends assemble a bonfire from fascines and light it. The wind quickly blows up the flames.

MONGOL

Tailagan is held in a place of worship – on the shore of a reservoir, at the foot of a mountain, in the desert. We have always believed that the mountain, the big water, the ancient tree and the desert have their own spirit.

Mongol takes out handmade “tonog” – items of shamanic utensils. The friends look at each other in silence and continue to watch.

RUST

(perplexed)

Good! This is an old tradition and ritual! But what are we doing here?!

KOSTYAN

(lazily)

Personally, I'd rather sleep. Tomorrow at the crack of dawn, we should get up at five in the morning and march.

Mongol puts on a Boo “khoyag” – a shamanic dress made from a brand-new raincoat tent. The wings give the shaman a bird-like appearance when wearing a Boo “hoiag”. Bells and tambourines rattle and create noise when moving. Mongol wears a “mayhabsha” on his head—a metal crown made of a rim and two curved cross-sections, with jeyran horns attached to them from above.

MONGOL

(in a faded voice)

But we're friends!
And it is customary to perform the rite in the circle of relatives and friends.

STRELA

(interested)

Let's say. But how did you explain

the reason for our excommunication
to the foreman?

MONGOL

(dodging)

Said it like it is!

SIDOR

(excitedly)

How is it?! That is, you said:
Foreman Tolstoperov!

I don't have any strength; I want
to run around the campfire and
knock on the tambourine to the
point of stupefaction?!

And yet he was deeply imbued and
blessed you on the kamlaniya,
letting you go into the desert at
night with five comrades – so
what?!

MONGOL

(embarrassed)

But why? Not right away.

I found a special approach, and I
was able to agree on many things.
Including tailagan.

Sidor slowly adjusts the firewood in the campfire.

SIDOR

(aggressively)

Come on, Mongol, lay it out, what
kind of a special approach is
this?!

MONGOL

(evasively)

It's not that important!

SIDOR

(without retreating)

But still?

MONGOL

(after thinking about it)

Gold! I gave him gold!

SIDOR

(having played with
feeling)

What kind of gold?!

MONGOL

(serene)

The most ordinary!
Seven gold spools with a total
weight of 30 grams.

SIDOR

(excitedly)

Yes, you, Mongol, are a "luxury
guy"! At the time, eh?! Buryat
Nouveau riche is dragging gold into
the Army!

RUST

(with confidence)

And how else to appease the
foreman? Just like that!

KOSTYAN

(incredulously)

He must be joking!

MONGOL

(sincerely)

Not at all!
I gave him the spools that I took
from home and secretly stored them
in different places.

STRELA

(astonished)

Isn't 30 grams of red gold too much
for the foreman, eh?!

MONGOL

(sincerely)

When I joined the army, I foresaw
that gold would certainly come in
handy for me. This September,
unfortunately, I missed the
"tailagan" of the closing of
Heavenly Gates. Therefore, it is
important for me to do it now.
You understand!

(he explains to his
perplexed friends)

This piece of gold is nothing
compared to my spiritual need to
perform a ritual. It is akin to a
breath of air, the will and the
desire for life.

SIDOR

(he sang amused)

"The fires in my furnaces don't
burn at all, I can't keep a couple
in the boilers".

KOSTER

(indignantly)

What a foreman, eh?!

SIDOR

(with the stem)

What do you want?!

Life as it is! If "taylagan" is
important for our mountain Buryat
guy, then we need to help him let
off steam, look, and we will break
off some gold plate from his
luxury.

RUST

(with a smile)

Mongol, you have shocked us! Soviet
guy, Komsomol member, master of
sports in wrestling! The best
graduate of the Ulan-Ude medical
school! And on you!

KOSTYAN

(ironically)

The best dental technician and
goldsmith of Transbaikalia in the
promised future turned out to be a
primitive shaman.

SIDOR

(shouting through
laughter)

Dear mother! Perish, evil spirit!

STRELA

(smiling)

But what about the ABC of all
materialism, and then Marxism?!
Mongol, are you a Komsomol member
at all?!

The friends are laughing.

SIDOR

(singing)

"He is an enemy of communism, he is, in general, an ascetic! Like everyone else abroad, he goes to pray, and his party card is stored somewhere".

RUST

(seriously)

Mongol! Did the foreman provide you with items for shamanic utensils?

SIDOR

(with confidence)

And who else?! Where would our friend bug all this?! Yes, for 30 grams of red gold, the foreman himself would easily have dressed in a "Boo khoyag" and, putting a mayhabsh with branched horns on his head, he would have danced around the campfire, zealously beating a tambourine!

The friends take a sit around the fire. Mongol takes out of his pocket a harp, an oriental plucked musical instrument the size of a little longer than a matchbox, put it to his teeth and, rolling his eyes, with a light touch of the tip of his middle finger – back and forth, starts a fight on the thin metal tongue of the instrument, making a magical sound.

In the process, Mongol manipulates the lips, tongue and larynx, changing the tone of the bourdon sound and causing articulatory sounds such as: hey-ya, oh-ya, ai-ya, ai-ya. By stretching and interrupting the breath, he lengthens and shortens the sound. Pressing during the fight with the fingertips on the diaphragm causes it to echo.

Mongol takes a tambourine (Uzbek doira) in his hands and, before starting the ritual, undertakes to enlighten the ignorant in shamanic knowledge.

MONGOL

(with a serious look)

To expel hostile spirits and heal myself, first of all, I must infuse them into myself.

This is called "Ongod orood" – immersion in a state of frenzy.

Therefore, I ask you not to be
timid in advance.

Sidor leans back on the sack.

SIDOR

(sarcastically)

Uh, no! It's not for me! What if
you die? You won't care about
anything anymore. And we have one
road - to disciplinary battalion!

MONGOL

(keeping serious)

Before I go out on a "yabdal"
journey and start moving around the
campfire, hitting the orb with a
mallet in the "hese", I will cover
my face with a bandage. This is
necessary so that the evil spirits
don't suddenly recognize me and
take me with them. At this time, it
is necessary that you stretch out
your arms to the fire and, in the
rhythm of the battle, waddling from
side to side, exclaim: "wa, wa, wa!
When I stop the movement, I will
stand in one place, I will raise
the "hese" over my head and bring
the fight to a fraction.

(shows how it would be)

At this moment you shout and stamp
your feet

(shows how it should look)

He's showing his friends what to do again. Friends look at
each other, laugh.

MONGOL

But before the "hese" - magic horse
is in my reins, and I start hitting
him, I must summon his spirit to
descend to me and become my "ongon"
ally. In the meantime...

Mongol holds out a "hese" and an orb with a fur tip and a
curved handle to Koster.

MONGOL

It will be good if you, Koster,
knock on it ahead of time. This is

not my whim.
 (putting on airs)
 Such is a necessity!

Friends chuckle, looking at Koster. Koster is slightly embarrassed, but he fulfills the request. Mongol stands in front of the blazing fire, turns his gaze to the sky, stands waiting for the spirit of the tambourine for a few seconds. Kostyan and the Strela throw firewood into the fire.

RUST
 Mongol, I'll stay that way! But I
 will not participate in your
 tailagan!

MONGOL
 (silently nodding)
 Good!

Mongol covers his face with a protective bandage and goes on a "journey". Mongol, rolling from one foot to the other and shaking his head, slowly moves around the fire, striking a tambourine and leading a throat singing.

SIDOR
 (with chuckles)
 That's it! The parikrama has begun!
 "He starts a sad song, sings
 something about his Homeland".

The rhythm of Mongol's battle in here, identifying the clomp of the hooves of the magic horse, gradually increases, combined with the cries of "wa, wa, wa" and the rattling of bells on the "Boo khoyag", creating a general background noise and allowing Mongol consciousness to unite with the spirits. At the climax, the spirit of the tambourine completely took possession of the Mongol's consciousness, controlling the speed of his movements and the rhythm of his strokes, smoothly plunging him into a state of "Ongod oood" – deep trance.

Having increased the fight to a fraction and loudly shouting inarticulate, Mongol falls near the fire and begins to convulse. This throws friends into confusion. Friends become numb. Rust holds Koster back by the sleeve, who jumps up from his place, wanting to bring Mongol to his senses. Seconds later, Mongol abruptly freezes.

RUST
 (looking at Mongol)
 Let's wait!

KOSTYAN
 (with relief)
 Flew away!

STRELA
 (exhaling)
 Yes, indeed!

SIDOR
 That's all!
 (and sings)
 "I saw the illuminating light for a
 moment, I fell, my heart was no
 longer beating."

Friends look intently at the sprawled motionless body of Mongol. Rust and Strela are rampaging. Kostyan, Koster and Sidor amuse themselves in a friendly way.

The wind in the desert suddenly subsides. The embers of the fire, covered with gray ash, have already burned down. Mongol is beginning to show signs of life.

Mongol opens his eyes, moves, stretches, slowly gets up. As if nothing had happened and not remembering what happened, Mongol, beaming with happiness, silently takes ten cans of condensed milk out of the bag and, reinforcing gratitude with a strong handshake, begins to distribute two pieces to each. Mongol reaches Rust.

RUST
 (indignantly)
 Fuck you!

He turns away.

SIDOR
 (reassuringly)
 Don't worry, Mongol, the treat
 won't be lost! We will divide it
 among ourselves.

Sidor happily sings an old 1916 song:

SIDOR
 "Oh, why was this night so good?!
 My chest wouldn't hurt, my soul
 wouldn't suffer..."

45. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN RANGE- NIGHT.

Friends return in silence - they walk through the desert. Everyone thinks about his own. Ahead, Rust and Strela are climbing the mountain at a rapid pace, followed by Kostyan and Koster. Barely standing up, a blessed Mongol with a bag of tonog behind his back and a happy Sidor, humming, walk in an embrace:

SIDOR

"Through the wild steppes of
Transbaikalia,
Where gold is washed in the
mountains,
The tramp, cursing fate,
dragged himself with a bag on his
shoulders."

46. EXT. AIRFIELD, CONTROL CENTER (KDP) - DAY.

TITLE: AFGHANISTAN, KUNDUZ AIRFIELD, FEBRUARY 1985

Helicopters with newcomers from the Union land on the runway. They are met by the commander of the reconnaissance company, Senior Lieutenant Boris NALETOV and the company foreman, Ensign KISELYOV. Kiselyov orders the newcomers to line up.

Privates - Sidorenko (Sidor), Badmaev (Mongol), Streltsov (Strela), Rust (Tukaev), Thevs (Kostyan), Koster (Kostrov) are called out by name. Ensign Kiselyov leads all 6 in an organized formation through the runway to the regiment standing nearby.

47. EXT. AFGHANISTAN. LOCATION OF THE REGIMENT - DAY.

TITLE: AFGHANISTAN. LOCATION OF THE REGIMENT

The young replenishment, friends - Sidor, Kostyan, Rust, Mongol, Sterla, Koster arrive at the location of the military unit.

Pale green faded tents, arranged in a straight line, appear to the eyes of friends. Against their background, a group of out-of-step, exhausted soldiers and commanders slowly stretches, showered with yellow dust, with devastated looks and cracked lips. The warriors are hung with a pile of weapons and machine gun belts. The regiment is returning from combat operation.

Ensign Kiselyov brings the newly arrived 6 young soldiers to the tent of the reconnaissance company standing in the center of the first row.

48. EXT. RECONNAISSANCE TENT - EVENING.

TITLE: AFGHANISTAN. SCOUT TENT.

At the entrance to the tent a bald-haired, sturdy man incessantly performs upheavals with a bare torso on the horizontal bar. Next to him, shuffling an enameled mug from an iron bucket, a fighter from a height pours a thin trickle over his comrade, soaped to the waist. When they see a young addition, they interrupt. The washing straightens up, wipes the soap foam from his eyes, silently looks at the arrivals for a second, then waving his hand to the watcher, continues washing.

49. INT. RECONNAISSANCE TENT - DARKNESS.

Ensign Kiselyov and the newcomers - Kostyan, Sidor, Strela, Rust, Koster, Mongol enter the tent. The space is illuminated by a lamp hanging on a long wire, 5 kerosene lamps standing at random. At the entrance there is a cylindrical stove with a chimney going up and two buckets filled with coal. There are bunk beds on both sides of the aisle from the entrance. Everyone in the tent is doing something.

In the near corner, sitting at the sewing machine "Zinger", an ADROIT TAILOR, is sewing a demob jacket. Vis-a-vis, the 2nd dense warrior, resting his feet on the legs of the bed, forcibly pulls the ends of a canvas belt wrapped in a circle, grinding a leather belt tightly wound on a curved steel pipe at the foot. Sitting on the same bed, the 3rd, with a piece of felt, with "Goya" paste, gilds the curved soldier's buckle. Behind the stove in the center of the aisle is the 4th - in long blue underpants and white sneakers. A ceremonial overcoat is worn over his body, he personally brushes it with a metal comb.

Next to him, the 5th, putting a "kirza" boot on a stool, mows down the extended demobee heel with a knife. Two Tajik translators - the 6th and 7th (translators from Dari) play backgammon with detachment, communicate quietly in their own language. The 8th is lying next to them and reading a book. 9th, lying at a distance, smoking something and thinking about something, listening to a portable Japanese transistor.

In the back corner, isolated from everyone, the 10th impales a tattoo on the 11th with a fitted shaving machine at the

heart level - the blood group against the background of the cartridge. Vis-a-vis across the aisle, in the other corner, 7 people sitting on the near lower bunks and lying on the upper tier, listen to the 12th, playing guitar, reciting the liner notes to the song by Mikhail Smurov "I am an internationalist warrior".

ENSIGN KISELYOV

(loudly)

Guards! I brought a young addition to the company!

Explain to them what and how. Look only without assault.

Armand, you're already a civilian, make sure!

(turns to the one lying on the bed, reading a book)

Armand looks lazily at the newly arrived young fighters, says nothing, turns away. Kiselyov smiles slyly, leaves the tent. The warriors in the tent openly ignore the appearance of the six newcomers, continue to go about their business. The attention of the young people is drawn to the two bunks standing in the middle of the left row.

The bunks are neatly made, white edging is stretched diagonally from the headboard to the foot of the blankets. At the top, two photographs are fixed on iron backs in wooden frames behind glass. From the photos, two smiling young guys look at the background of armored vehicles.

KAPUSTA

(for newcomers)

So, young people! We don't sit on these beds for another twenty days!

(the athlete who came in after physical training warns)

until forty days are up. The tradition here is like this!

The young look at each other, there is silence. The silence is broken by a fighter with a nasal voice, a puny, short stature with a high forehead, a duck nose, a lower jaw pushed forward - LEPECHA.

LEPECHA

Hang yourself, spirits!

(with a malicious smile, reducing the sound of the transistor)

KAPUSTA

Fuck off, Lepecha!
According to our tradition, they
have ten days free.

He wipes himself with a colored towel.

KAPUSTA

Guys, it's okay!
Take a look around for now, get up
to speed. I am Kapusta!

Looks kindly into the faces.

KAPUSTA

Is there anyone from the Altai
Territory?!

The young are silent.

KAPUSTA

Is there no one from there?!
(asks again)
Well, maybe it's for the best. Make
yourself comfortable. Now this is
your home!
(kindly continuing)
If you're lucky, then for twenty-
one months and up to two years!

ADROIT TAILOR

That's if you're lucky!
And if you're not lucky, then less!

The young, feeling awkward, sit down on the pairs of stools standing at the foot of the bunks, fastened together. Lepecha notices a large backpack stuffed to the brim in the Mongol's hands.

LEPECHA

And what is this?!

Lepecha pulls the backpack on himself, Mongol holds tenaciously, does not let go of his hands. Lepecha pulls the backpack with effort. A scuffle ensues, Mongol frown and throw Lepecha, like a piece of fluff, through the torso with a turn, spreading it on the concrete floor.

In an instant, everyone who had been busy with something hitherto come from different ends of the tent, except 2 tarjimons who continue to play backgammon and serene Armand, who had withdrawn from the worldly bustle. A tough battle

begins, more than thirty people attack 6 young men - Mongol, Strela, Rust, Kostyan, Sidor, Koster.

The newcomers successfully resist, the old men are using paired stools. Kapusta stops the skirmish with a loud cry of "Amba". Kapusta squeezes between the opposing sides, step up tightly to Mongol and, pulling down, adjust his tunic with the top buttons torn out. Five shamanic copper mirrors, the size of a 5-kopeck coin, hanging on a black leather cord, flash on the Mongol's bare neck.

KAPUSTA

(for newcomers)

I see that you are all athletes,
bone crackers, and even shamans
among you

(in a mentoring tone)

I say occasionally! We will not
waste time and effort on education!
And we will ask the company to
remove you from the unit - serve in
another place!

(he pauses for a moment,
looks at the young people
intently, and continues)

In the intelligence department, the
entire responsibility lies with the
old-timers. Our requirements are
simple - the equipment must be on
the move, the weapons are working
properly, ammunition and provisions
are in abundance, the tent is
clean, the scouts in the regiment
are bold and welded together.

50. INT. RECONNAISSANCE TENT - DAWN.

Kapusta comes into the tent.

KAPUSTA

(with piety)

Armand, your "Military ID" is
ready. So, quickly put on a uniform
for the parade, go out to say
goodbye to the regiment's banner.

Armand, feeling excited, begins to change clothes in a hurry. The Order of the Red Star and the Medal for Bravery sparkle on Armand's ceremonial tunic. The young people are watching Armand with envy. The whole reconnaissance company pour out to see Armand off.

51. EXT. AFGHANISTAN. THE LOCATION OF THE REGIMENT - DAY.

More than 2 dozen demobilized soldiers with ceremonial overcoats and the same type of dark gray briefcases have accumulated. The orders of the "Red Star", medals "For Bravery", "For Military Merit" shine on their chests. Two soldiers carry out the Combat Banner of the unit from the headquarters. A fit officer of the regiment HEAD OF STAFF, with the rank of major, who came out behind them, distributes military IDs to the demobee and gives the order to build up. The demobilized soldiers put their briefcases, overcoats aside, standing in two rows.

HEAD OF STAFF

(loudly)

Be equal! Attention!

(pause)

Unfurl The Battle Banner!

Get ready to say goodbye to the regiment's Banner!

The demobilized soldiers in turn, with a clear marching step, approach the red flag and, kneeling, apply their lips to it. At the end, from the horn loudspeaker above the door of the regimental headquarters, the march "Farewell of the Slavs" begin to play loudly.

The demobilized soldiers, holding the alignment to the banner, striking a step with a high lift of the leg, begin their march. The solemnity of the moment makes friends - Kostyan, Mongol, Rust, Strela, Sidor and Koster - tremble.

52. EXT. AFGHANISTAN. THE LOCATION OF THE REGIMENT- EVENING.

The day is fading, the sun is sinking. The green tent city, faded under the scorching sun, stretches 10 steps from the airfield runway, against the background of a dozen Mi-8MT and Mi-24 helicopters. Their propellers wearily bent their blades.

53. EXT. THE LOCATION OF THE REGIMENT - DAY.

The reconnaissance company formed up before going on a combat operation in the provinces of Kunduz, Takhar and Badakhshan.

In front of the formation opposite the tent are the company commander, Senior Lieutenant Boris Naletov, slightly behind his replacement - Senior Lieutenant Leonid PETROV, the head of the regiment's intelligence, Captain Vasily PROKHOROV, Senior Lieutenant KHROMOV, platoon commanders, Senior

Lieutenant DEMICHEV and Lieutenant VIKULOV.

Company commander, senior lieutenant Naletov, tall, with an oriental type of face, pitch-black hair, mustache, orders:

NALETOV

(addresses loudly)

Company! Straighten up, attention!
Freely.

Fellow scouts!

I present to you Senior Lieutenant Petrov – from today he is your new company commander.

I am proud that I went through this war with you. The difference in ranks did not prevent us from saving each other's lives, eating from the same pot, sharing the last sip of water in the mountains.

As a commander, I considered my main task in a combat situation to be saving the lives of my subordinates!

Let the relatives and friends of our fallen comrades, whose lives I could not save, forgive me. I wish that, like me, each of you has a happy moment of farewell to Afghanistan at the stage of service. When we return home, we will be proud to say: We defended the southern borders of our homeland and helped the Afghan people build a just society. But!

(pauses)

Even though I am no longer the commander of the reconnaissance company, I am going out with you on the last operation. This will allow us to introduce the new company commander, Senior Lieutenant Petrov, to the course as soon as possible.

Company – disperse! We are heading in 10 minutes! Everyone be ready!

The company is dispersing. The chief of the regiment's intelligence, Captain PROKHOROV, approaches Naletov and speaks softly.

PROKHOROV

Boris Alekseevich!

It is a bad omen to go to the "combat" when the substitute is already in the regiment - time has checked.

NALETOV

Comrade Captain!
Petrov is in Afghanistan for the second day, and it would be useful to share the accumulated experience with him in a few days. Perhaps this will save the lives of our fighters.

PROKHOROV

You are already behind the staff, so I will not order you! But they don't joke with omens at war.

54. EXT. AFGHANISTAN. HIGHWAY - DAY.

The armored vehicles of the reconnaissance company - 5 infantry fighting vehicles BMP-2, 3 combat reconnaissance vehicles BRM-1, stand in the vanguard of the regimental column and, having smoked with black clouds of working engines, begin to move. Fox tails are tied to the long tower antennas of the armor units, and the fighters sitting on top of the armor are dressed in various ammunition - camouflage suits, mountain overalls, sweaters, "Olympians", and colorful Afghan woolen knitted socks worn over knee-length trousers. Various hats from panama hats to sports hats are on their heads, and white PUMA and ROMIKA sneakers are instead of the usual army boots.

As soon as the armor of the reconnaissance company passes the checkpoint, experienced scouts point the barrels of their weapons up, take them off the fuses, pull the bolts. Young fighters Sidor, Strela, Rust, Mongol, Kostyan, Koster repeat after the experienced. The column descends from the plateau, rides along a long fir alley with high crowns, goes to the highway. Old-timers with serious faces point to young people with their hands - keep your eyes open, order to be on the alert. The young are imbued with the seriousness of the situation, mobilize.

Young people are looking with interest at the light-yellow mud-brick dwellings spread along the highway, man-made aqueducts irrigating land plots, donkeys and diligent dehkans pulling loaded carts by the shafts. There are poor Afghans at the highway, waiting for the arrival of vehicles, crowding by the road on a gender basis. Men, talking to each other, standing proudly, some holding donkeys by the bridle. For the

most part, Afghans look complacently, curiously at the "Shuravi"'s armor passing with the roar of engines and the clang of tracks.

Women, who attract the attention of "shuravi", sit in a close circle, retreating a dozen meters from the gang of men. Unmarried girls always have their backs to men, to the road and to "shuravi". The attention of the vigilant women to the unmarried ladies weakens, the unmarried look in the direction of the "shuravi", catching their glances through the mesh of the burqa. When new people approach, as if on command, the women jump up together, they also sit down soon. Women in different colors of burqa, blue color prevails on ladies with graceful figures of young-middle age. Burgundy, dark blue burqas - on short, heavy, elderly women.

55. EXT. FOOTHILLS - EVENING.

TITLE: JARM. SAR-E-SANG DISTRICT, AFGHAN BADA KHSHAN

A military operation, armored reconnaissance vehicles arrive in a given area. Senior lieutenant Naletov, Senior Lieutenant Petrov with platoon commanders conduct reconnaissance of the area.

NALETOV

(teaching Petrov)

In the probable direction of the enemy's approach - in the ditches communicating with the winding log, we will hide eight units of our company armored vehicles with large-caliber "DShK" on the towers with trunks forward.

(To Kapusta, pointing to the ditch closest to the foothills)

Your BRM-1 will stand here!

(smiling)

If the "spirits" go at night, they will definitely not miss you.

(grin)

Naletov and Petrov are going away.

56. EXT. FOOTHILLS - NIGHT.

Kapustin's BRM-1 is in a combat position. Mongol is on guard duty; his shift is over. Mongol pushes Strela, who is fast asleep.

MONGOL

Strela, get up! Your turn!

Strela barely wakes up, shakes his head to finally wake up.

Strela slowly moistens his eyes with water from a flask, takes out a fully equipped machine gun belt, loads his PKM machine gun with it. He takes over the guard shift. Strela is tending to sleep, shivering, begins to circle around the BRM-1 armor, changing directions. Squats, dances.

A fine rain drizzles incessantly, Strela climbs onto the tower, covers his head with a raincoat tent and takes the place of the gunner-operator (left hatch), hangs his legs into the hatch. Strela activates himself in the fight against sleep, takes hold of the handle of a large caliber "DShK" mounted on a tripod to the tower, begins to drive its heavy body from edge to edge, counting the number of times in a whisper. When the number 95 is reached, the eyelids of Strela close, he slowly drops his head to the handle of the machine gun.

A rebel caravan is approaching along the dry riverbed to the positions of the BRM-1, where Strela is on duty. It is getting closer and closer, already very close. The snorting of a horse, the roar of a camel are heard.

Strela is suddenly awakened by an electric shock - in an instant he opens his eyes wide, sees in front of him a caravan of more than 3 dozen pack animals - camels, horses, accompanied by 20 armed rebels, lets them go deeper. The caravan serenely continues to move along the log, does not notice "Shuravi"'s armored vehicles. The "DShK" machine gun in the hands of Strela is ready to fire, he opens non-stop shooting.

With fire at point-blank range, having red-hot the barrel of the "DShK", Strela stacks the rebels and animals (horses, camels) squeezed in a tight space until the machine-gun belt ends. In an instant, Kapusta, Mongol and others are connected to the shooting of the caravan from the BRM-1 cannon, the PKT turret machine gun.

The fire stops, there is silence. Sidor approaches Kapusta's BRM-1, wearing a headset, wrapped with machine gun tape, with a "PKM" machine gun at the ready. Sidor quietly sings Mikhail Smurov's song "I am an Internationalist Warrior":

SIDOR

I'm tired of being nervous,
after all, nerves are not a knot,

I gently pull the trigger,
and coolly tracers fly through the
air, and I want the same,
what they want!

(with admiration)

Yak zhah! Well, you, Strela, have
hammered! As much as a whole bunch!
I'll take a closer look.

The whole company is being pulled up to Kapusta's BRM-1.

57. EXT. FOOTHILLS - IT'S GETTING LIGHT.

NALETOV

Inspect the contents of the
caravan!

The company begins to actively open unaffordable coolies and
baskets.

SCOUT SOLDIERS

Comrade Senior Lieutenant, except
for the weapons that the escorts
were armed with, there is no other
in the caravan. But a large amount
of rock with large blue-purple
inclusions.

Naletov approaches, picks up a large stone, illuminates it
with a flashlight, carefully examines it. Approaches a
soldier with a radio station, communicates with the command.

NALETOV

01, how do you hear?! Reception!
The caravan was slaughtered! There
are stones with blue inclusions in
it. Weapons are missing!

On the reverse side of the communication: wait for arrival!

58. EXT. FOOTHILLS - DAY.

The head of the division's intelligence, Lieutenant Colonel
ZAKHAROV, and the head of the regiment's intelligence,
Captain Prokhorov, fly up to the place of the caravan's
liquidation by Mi-8MT helicopter.

NALETOV

Company - line up!
Straighten up, attention!

Alignment to the middle!

Naletov marching to the chief of intelligence division, reports.

NALETOV

Comrade Lieutenant Colonel! A reconnaissance company has been lined up on your order!

ZAKHAROV

At ease!

NALETOV

At ease!

The officers of the company stand behind the backs of the big bosses, listening to their speech.

ZAKHAROV

I declare gratitude to the crew of the BRM-1!

I order the commander of the reconnaissance company to present the crew to the government awards. A young fighter who let the caravan get close and opened fire on it

(turns to Naletov)

Where is he?! Take him out of the regiment!

NALETOV

(loudly)

Private Streltsov, get out of the row!

STRELA

(clearly)

Yes, to get out of the row!

Strela comes out, turns to face the formation.

ZAKHAROV

(with pathos)

Private Streltsov,

(the lieutenant colonel

puts his hand on the

Strela's shoulder)

for timely detection of enemy forces, endurance, composure and bravery during the liquidation of the caravan, I order you to submit

to the Order of the "Red Star"! Upon arrival from the operation – a reward sheet for my signature!

NALETOV

I obey to submit the award list for signature!

ZAKHAROV

Fellow scouts!

I bring to your attention: in the destroyed caravan belonging to the Islamic Society of Afghanistan (IOA) party, Afghan lapis lazuli extracted from the depths of Sar-e-Sang was transported. I note: the best in quality in the world! From here, from the Jarm district of the Afghan Badakhshan province, the detachments of Ahmad Shah Massoud and Abdul Khalid Basir, who control the development of raw materials, transport it through the Dora Pass to the Chitral Valley in Pakistan.

There lapis lazuli is extracted from the rock and sent to Peshawar. From there it spreads all over the world.

The leaders of the Islamic Society of Afghanistan party, Burhanuddin Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Massoud, direct the proceeds from the sale to purchase weapons, equipping their group in the Panjshir Gorge and the regions adjacent to the valley with them. Thus, the situation in Afghanistan is being destabilized.

Lieutenant Colonel Zakharov ends his speech, Naletov is dissolving the formation. The old-serving scouts immediately disperse, proudly evading the congratulations of the young warrior. Kapusta approaches Strela first.

KAPUSTA

(with joy)

Well done!

(claps in handshake)

Respect!

Strela is warmly congratulated by Kostyan, Sidor, Rust,

Mongol, Koster. Sidor looks at the blushing Strela with a smile.

SIDOR

(with joy)

"Like Christ - both calm and quiet!"

59. EXT. THE ROUTE "FAIZABAD-KUNDUZ - DAY.

TITLE: AFGHANISTAN. JARM AND KISHIM COUNTIES OF AFGHAN BADAKHSAN PROVINCE. THE ROUTE "FAIZABAD-KUNDUZ"

The armor column of the reconnaissance company is rapidly moving along the Faizabad-Kunduz highway. The first, raising clouds of dust, is the commander's BRM-1 of Lieutenant Boris Naletov with 3 crew members, 5 scouts sitting on top of the armor. Among them Senior Lieutenant Petrov, company foreman Ensign Gennady Kiselyov, 3 old-time sergeants. On the armor of the young - Sidor, Koster, Rust, the rest of the armored vehicles of the company are moving behind them.

The column passes the village of Kishim. An explosion is heard, the commander's BRM-1 is blown up by a land mine. The warriors sitting on the armor of the BMP-2 (second car) are stunned, they are pelted with fragments of human bodies, pieces of cloth, faces and uniforms are flooded with blood, a prolonged hum hangs in their ears. A tall black mushroom rose above the BRM-1 car engulfed in flames.

Dense fire opens on the column from 2 sides. Gunners' operators of armored vehicles dive into hatches, respond from turret guns, machine guns. The scouts sitting on the armor jump off, join the fire. Captain Prokhorov is requesting aviation support via communication.

A pair of Mi-24 helicopters fly to the site of the explosion, beginning to process with jet missiles the abandoned mud-brick buildings adjacent to the highway, from where the rebels are firing. The shooting stops.

Sidor, Mongol, Strela, Koster, Rust, Kostyan are in a depressing impression, they collect torn body parts thrown many meters away, personal weapons of the dead, in a tent cloak, put in Mi-8MT helicopters. 8 scouts were killed - Senior Lieutenant Naletov, Senior Lieutenant Petrov, Ensign Kiselyov, 5 scout soldiers.

60. EXT. RECONNAISSANCE TENT - DAY.

Kapusta, Sidor, Koster, Kostyan, Rust, Mongol and Strela are unloading from several sanitary UAZ-452 8 zinc coffins with the dead scouts. A fine rain is pounding on the coffins installed in a row on stools, flooding the frames of their glass windows with water.

The reconnaissance company is built to say goodbye to comrades and is waiting for the approach of the regiment's command. Senior Lieutenant Khromov, platoon commanders, Senior Lieutenant Demichev, Lieutenant Vikulov are standing in front of the formation and talking quietly. Someone shouted from the line - They're coming! The officers are alarmed, hurriedly correcting their uniforms, turn in the direction from which the regimental commander, Lieutenant Colonel OSTROUMOV, and the chief of intelligence of the regiment, Captain Prokhorov, are approaching.

KHROMOV

(loudly)

Company! Straighten up, attention!
Alignment to the left!

Marching towards the commander of the regiment.

KHROMOV

Comrade Lieutenant Colonel!
The personnel of the reconnaissance
company have been built to say
goodbye to the dead!

Khromov takes to the right and, turning around, stands sideways to Lieutenant Colonel Ostroumov, facing the formation.

OSTROUMOV

At ease!

KHROMOV

At ease!

OSTROUMOV

(mournfully, bitterly)

Fellow scouts!
We are seeing off our comrades-in-
arms on their last journey: senior
lieutenants Naletov and Petrov, the
foreman of the company of ensign
Kiselyov, five valiant soldiers-
scouts.

They fulfilled their military and international duty with honor, sacrificing their lives. For them to be in our hearts forever!

Captain Prokhorov speaks, his eyes are filled with moisture, a lump has risen to his throat.

PROKHOROV

Fellow scouts!

(with a tremor in his voice)

Today we have a heavy loss, we grieve for our comrades who died. Eternal memory to them!

The scouts lift 8 zinc coffins on their shoulders, carry them to the airfield to the waiting cargo-200 "Black Tulip".

61. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY.

TITLE: JARIY-AB. PANJSHIR GORGE, JUNE 1985.

Reconnaissance groups with Koster, Strela, Kostyan, Mongol, Sidor, Rust on Mi-8MT helicopters land at a height in the lower reaches of the Panjshir Valley. Since ancient times, there have been abandoned silver mines in the rock, they are equipped with powerful support and observation posts of Panjsherites.

Combat reconnaissance patrol: Kapusta, Strela, Sidor and a machine-gunner-Koster in the closure, lead the main group: company commander captain Sereda, interpreter of the regiment from the Dari language, lieutenant Abdullo Kodirov, attached to the reconnaissance company, Lepecha, Mongol, Rust, tarjimons Akhmedov and Kurbanov, platoon commanders Demichev, Vikulov, the rest part of the reconnaissance company. The machine gunner Kostyan is in closure.

The company is moving along the ravine encircling the steep slope of the mountain. The patrol comes across a storage cave.

62. INT. MOUNTAIN RANGE. CAVE - DAY.

The reconnaissance company enters a mountain cave, there are smoldering embers of the hearth, a hot kettle, cooked food. In the depths of the cave, Kostyan and Strela see two dozen English "Lee Enfield" & "Lee Metford" rifles from the Anglo-Boer Wars of 1880-1881, 1899-1892 with a large number of

boxes of 7.74 caliber cartridges; 2 large-caliber "DShK" machine guns, several boxes with loaded belts to them.

SEREDA

We're taking weapons with us!
Detonate ammo!

Rust, standing apart at the far drawer filled with weapons, begins to take out drills from there. He notices a black matte box lying among the rifles with a silver "BERETTA 92" crowding. Rust opens a crack, sees a brand-new gun and hastily shoves the box into his bosom.

The scouts take the cave arsenal with them; they blow up the main part of the ammunition when leaving. "BUR" rifles are added to the personal weapons, ammunition, heavy weapons transported by scouts. On the necks and shoulders of Rust, Sidor, Kostyan, pairs of boxes from the "DShK" with equipped tape, connected with a linen rope, and a pair of "BUR" rifles appear.

63. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE. DOME OF THE MOUNTAIN - DAY.

There is a transfer of scouts by helicopters to another height. Those who jump out with a heavy load stand up heavily, crawl away. Jumping after them fall on their heads. The landing is completed; Senior Lieutenant Sereda points the scouts to the top, where they should ascend. Young - Kostyan, Sidor, Rust, Mongol, Strela, Koster, Kostyan, loaded with a mountain of weapons, look at the top - saddling seems incredible to them. The eyes of the old-timers are riveted to the young, they are watching their overcoming. Young fighters overcome hardships.

With a firm step, maintaining pace, measuring step by step, a thousand times, the young whisper the phrase from the textbook of the mountain training center "Sherabad": "You're lying, you won't take it!", slowly climb the mountain. Minutes of a general halt - Rust, Sidor, Mongol, Kostyan, Strela, Koster do not sit down, put the "BURs" with butts on the mountain firmament, push the bodies forward, distributing the weight of the load from the feet to back, putting their palms on the mountain steep. They rest the allotted time standing.

The company has reached the top, the scouts throw off their backpacks, "DShK" boxes, "BURs", personal weapons, lie down to rest, throwing their heads back.

64. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY

The reconnaissance company is advancing in the mountainous area. The crossings are long and difficult. The young have got into a rhythm, got used to the heaviness, move more easily. The flasks of the scouts are empty. On the way there are yellow puddles of unknown origin, raindrops that have not had time to evaporate, traces of emptied donkeys.

Kostyan, Mongol, Koster stop; they suffer from thirst, their lips are dry, cracked. They collect liquid with mud into flasks, throw disinfectant Pantosept, citric acid from a dry ration into flasks; drink it a minute later.

65. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY.

TITLE: UPPER PANJSHIR GORGE, PIRYAH DISTRICT SOUTH-EAST OF PISHGOR.

Helicopters are dropping scouts to a new height. The commander of the reconnaissance company, Captain SEREDA, leaves one platoon led by Lieutenant VIKULOV at the top of the mountain, and himself, with Senior Lieutenant Abdullo Kodirov and two platoons with senior lieutenant Demichev, go down into the valley to reconnoiter the area and collect water. They are approaching the rocky rapid of the Panjshir River.

SEREDA

(loudly)

Don't drink a lot of water,
otherwise it will be hard to walk!

LEPECHA

(looking contemptuously at
the young)

Spirits, this concerns you!

Rust stands upstream of everyone, slowly washes his hands, face, picks up water for drinking in the palm of his hand. Rust notices the redness of the water, shakes off his palms, stands up, looks upstream.

RUST

(pointing upward with his
hand.)

Comrade Captain, look!

All the scouts look up the Panjshir River at once. In a stormy stream across the entire width of the riverbed, the

river carries a huge number of bodies of executed Afghans. Bodies turn over, briefly cling to boulders, pile on top of each other, float on.

SEREDA

(with regret)

This is the Afghan Commando
battalion, led away by Ahmad Shah's
men from the captured garrison in
Pishgor – so, they are found!

The scouts are stunned. After waiting for the current to carry away the bodies, they collect water in flasks, leave the cut.

Scouts go to the area where they encounter mud-brick buildings of an abandoned Afghan village and a volleyball court. Benches for players, observers, the referee's tower, the net not removed from the racks, everything is in perfect condition.

KAPUSTA

Here it is a bandit base! Here they
lick their wounds.

There are 10 donkeys tied to a pole at the mud-brick barracks. A flock of twenty sheep is slowly flowing across the field, bleating and grazing the grass. The scouts are hungry. Kapusta does not take his eyes off the sheep, turns to Captain Sereda.

KAPUSTA

Comrade Captain, it would be nice
to taste fresh meat!

SEREDA

(barely thinking)

Who is our craftsman to skin sheep?

SIDOR

(briskly)

Thevs Konstantin! He is from
southern Kazakhstan; he is a master
of this.

SEREDA

(to translator Abdullo
Kodirov)

Kodirov, you take an ordinary
Thevs, catch a medium-sized ram,
hastily skin it and leave the area!

LEPECHA

(to Sereda with
perplexity)

Comrade Captain! And why - a small one?! Let's do the opposite - a stupid one! If we don't, the spirits will eat them.

KOSTYAN

(to Mongol)

Mongol, give me a silicone tube.

Mongol takes out a silicone tube wrapped in a circle from a sanitary bag and makes two segments. Kodirov and Kostyan are heading to the sheep. It is impossible to catch up, grab some sheep - the flock escapes, taking it deep into the gorge, moving away from the company's forces.

Kodirov fires from his AKMS-47 with a PBS silencer at the tail of the flock, hits a large ram. Kostyan takes out a knife, cuts the throat of the ram, waits for the blood to flow out, puts the ram on its back, starts skinning. Kostyan, with a dexterous movement of the knife, makes incisions in both lower parts of the lamb's shin, thrusts IV tubes under the skin, begins to blow air into each with his mouth. The ram quickly inflates, the air accumulated under the skin separates it from the carcass. With light pats, Kostyan evenly distributes air throughout the carcass. Quickly with a sharp knife blade, separates the skin from the meat.

Single shots can be heard striking from afar, which escalate into short bursts. Kodirov and Kostyan rush to the nearest shelter 150 meters away in the opposite direction, running, holding the legs of the ram tightly. Rebel fire reaches a high density.

KODIROV

(loudly)

Throw the ram!

Kostyan unclenches his fingers, throws the ram, rushes with a PKM machine gun at the ready to the nearest fallen duval. He runs around the corner and, resting his palms on his knees, tries to catch his breath, waiting for Kodirov, who is still not here. Kostyan looks out from behind the duval, sees the wounded Kodirov lying on the ground, raising his hand behind the clouds of settling dust.

Kostyan looks around, absorbs more air into his lungs, breaking into short dashes, falling and turning over,

crawling to the wounded Kodirov. Kostyan loads Kodirov on himself, beginning to move quickly with him. The rebels with restraining fire do not allow the reunion of Kodirov, Kostyan with a group of scouts.

The rebels are shooting at Kodirov and Kostyan, who are crawling into cover in the open area, from two sides. The rebels are hitting the scout platoon with steady fire, not letting them raise their heads. Kostyan and Kodirov crawl behind a dilapidated adobe wall, there is a short pause. Kostyan cuts Kodirov's camouflage with a bayonet-knife, examines the wound, and pokes Kodirov with promedol.

KODIROV

(exhausted from pain, with
difficulty)

Well, what's there?!

KOSTYAN

(after examining the
wound)

The bullet entered the lower back,
hid deep!

Kostyan takes out an individual dressing bag from the AKMS-74 frame stock, quickly applies a bandage. Rebels are hurriedly descending from opposite slopes to Kodirov and Kostyan, who are cut off from the main forces. Kostyan pressed the butt of his PCM to his shoulder, aiming, saving ammo, hitting the rebels with short bursts.

Restrained by the fire of the rebels, a platoon of scouts conducts continuous fire at the foot, does not allow them to descend from the slopes and capture Kodirov and Kostyan in a tight ring. Sereda calls aviation to help. 2 pairs of combat Mi-24s arrive, begin to process the nearest slopes with rockets, forcing the rebels to retreat urgently. The fire stops. Under the cover of a pair of Mi-24s, a Mi-8MT helicopter lands in the valley. The wounded Kodirov is being evacuated. The ram remains lying in place. The scouts fill the flasks with water, return to the height held.

66. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY.

Clouds are floating in the sky above the peaks of the mountains. A huge golden eagle is floating smoothly in the sky. The golden eagle causes alarm among scouts resting on the top of the mountain. The old-timer Lepecha takes the eagle at the sight of his sniper rifle.

MONGOL

You shouldn't do that!
The eagle is the creator of the
earth's firmament, his murder
portends death!

LEPECHA

(arrogantly)

I'm spit on your shamanic notes!

Lepecha with an accurate shot fights a bird, Mongol shakes his head sadly, remains silent....

67. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - TWILIGHT.

The scouts are resting, two soldiers are on guard duty. The silence is broken by a series of muffled explosions in the bowels of the mountain. Platoon commander Lieutenant Vikulov addresses Sereda.

VIKULOV

What is it?!

SEREDA

(serenely)

Beryllium is mined in the area; it
looks like rock is being blown up.

VIKULOV

What is being mined?!

SEREDA

Emeralds!

VIKULOV

(excited)

Comrade Senior Lieutenant! May I go
down with a platoon under cover
from above and reconnoiter the
situation?

SEREDA

(strictly)

Stand down! I understand - soldiers
always have a pain in the ass! But
you're a very experienced officer!
Do you want to find adventures on
our heads?!

VIKULOV

(excusing himself)

I'm not after the loot!
Think for yourself! Would the
miners tear up the rock if they
knew that at this moment "shuravi"
are above their heads?! Of course
not! Therefore, we will certainly
catch them by surprise. You see,
we'll take trophy!

SEREDA

(cautioning)

The extraction of emeralds is led
by the people of Ahmad Shah Masud.
This is an extremely dangerous
idea!

Sereda thinks for a second and agrees.

SEREDA

Okay, check that the radio station
is working! Be sure to take
experienced fighters and two
machine gunners. And we'll cover
you from above.

TWO HOURS BEFORE DAWN

Lieutenant Vikulov raises the fighters - Kapusta, Lepecha,
Sidor, Mongol, Rust, Kostyan, Koster, Akhmedov and Kurbanov,
orders to take personal weapons.

The group descends at a rapid pace, noiselessly. There are
less than 50 steps left, strips of glowing headlights of a
white minibus are seen aimed at the wide entrance to the mine
and five unarmed people loading something into the car. Three
of them are dressed in European clothes. Vikulov shouts to
Akhmedov.

VIKULOV

(loudly)

Shout to them to stay where they
are!

AKHMEDOV

(loudly)

Dar joyaton biisted!

The Afghans turn around, but when they see the "Shuravi"
coming down, they jump into a minibus and give it a go. The
movement of the vehicle is stopped by shots at the wheels and

at the back door. Having heard them, Sereda gets in touch with Vikulov.

SEREDA

(strictly)

What kind of shooting?!

VIKULOV

(excitedly)

Comrade Captain!

A minibus with people was detained. They are unarmed, we will search them quickly, interrogate them and let them go. Allow me to inspect the drift superficially, without going deeper, and go back.

SEREDA

Let's not be long!

(out of touch)

The scouts approach the shot vehicle, pointing the barrels at the people sitting in it. Three Europeans hurriedly pour out of the cabin, shouting something in German, a very timid Afghan driver, a stately Asian. The Asian is dressed in a traditional Afghan perukhan made of expensive dark blue fabric, a richly embroidered felt vest, a Pashtun headdress in the form of a cap made of silver caracul fur.

The Asian is cold-blooded, holds himself with dignity. TOYOTA minibus is a mobile gemological and mineralogical laboratory equipped with modern West German equipment. Maps of the area, measuring instruments, gemological microscopes, various geological instruments, branded sleeping bags made of eiderdown, canned food and portable Japanese radio stations "Yaesu" are found in the trunk of the TOYOTA.

VIKULOV

(loudly)

Fighters! Listen to my command! Streltsov and Badmaev, direct the barrels to the entrance of the mine! Tukaev and Thevs, stand behind me and keep all the detainees at gunpoint! Kostrov and Sidorenko, you are monitoring the opposite slope! Akhmedov and Kurbanov, interrogate the driver! Thevs! You're a German here?! Translate what they say!

Kostyan briefly interviews the Germans and reports to

Vikulov.

KOSTYAN

They claim that they are surveyors
– mining engineers from West
Germany. They help the Panjshir
people to develop ore!

VIKULOV

(pretentiously)

Let them show their passports!

Kostyan translates, the Germans at once take out maroon books with the image of an eagle, pass them to Vikulov. Inspired by the detention of Europeans, Vikulov immediately contacts Sereda.

VIKULOV

(with joy)

Comrade Captain! We took the
Germans! Mining engineers!

SEREDA

(without emotion)

Good! Don't linger, go away!

Vikulov and Thevs are dealing with the Germans. Akhmedov and Kurbanov are interrogating an Afghan driver. Kapusta inspects the interior of the mobile laboratory. Koster, Strela, Mongol, Rust and Sidor hold the detainees at gunpoint, conduct surveillance.

Lepecha, sensing the Asian's agitation, leads him to the open rear door of the car and, forcing him to put his palms on the edge of the roof of the body, begins to search. The Asian fidgeted, firmly grabs Lepecha's hand squeezed into the inner pocket of his vest, not letting him take something out. Lepecha, enraged by the resistance, hits the Asian with the butt of an SVD rifle in the chest, forcibly pulls out a thick leather wallet with a bright green book with the inscription "ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN PASSPORT" and, putting the barrel of the SVD to his forehead, hisses.

LEPECHA

Ystad bash!
STAND STILL!

LEPECHA

(complacently to Vikulov)

Comrade Lieutenant, we have a
Pakistani in our hands!

(continuing to hold the

Asian at gunpoint)
Here's his passport!

Lepecha passes the document to Vikulov, keeps the wallet for himself. Lepecha loses interest in the Pakistani, pushes him aside, starts fumbling in the trunk of the minibus, throws out a geological instrument, measuring instruments, sleeping bags, other belongings.

Lepecha finds a small aluminum box 40/30/20 hidden in the corner, tied in loops with a thin cable, its tips are connected, sealed with wax. On the drawer is a large thick envelope with accompanying documents with a wax seal.

Sidor stealthily watches Lepecha, sees his profit. Lepecha smells a big jackpot, pierces the Pakistani with his gaze, sees his excitement, smiling cunningly reaches for the box. Lepecha rips off the seals, opens the drawer. It's filled with emeralds. Satisfied, Lepecha closes the drawer.

The Pakistani rushes at Lepecha, pushes him aside, lifts the dense felt flooring in the trunk, takes out the AKM-47 hidden under it. A struggle ensues between Lepecha and the Pakistani. The Pakistani pushes Lepecha to the trunk of the car, twitches the shutter, gives a short burst at Lepecha.

With the same automatic burst through the back door of the minibus, the Pakistani hits Kapusta in the cabin. Lepecha clutches his stomach and, moaning softly, collapses at the back wheel of the minibus, immediately entering agony.

Fire from several barrels of scouts is concentrated on the Pakistani, who is killed on the spot.

The Afghan driver can't stand the drama, breaks down the gorge, but is overtaken by a short machine-gun fire of Koster.

Mongol feels the pulse of Lepecha on the carotid artery, it is not there. Mongol reports to Vikulov.

MONGOL
(about Lepecha)
This one is ready!

Mongol proceeds to examine the Kapusta's wound. Kapusta is wheezing, breathing heavily. Mongol injects Kapusta with promedol, makes a dressing.

MONGOL
(to Vikulov)

The bullet passed a centimeter
above the heart! The condition is
urgent!

Vikulov immediately gets in touch with Sereda.

SEREDA

(ahead of)

Why is there shooting again?!

VIKULOV

(briefly)

Comrade Senior Lieutenant!

We have one 200th, and one 300th!

SEREDA

(scurrilous)

Japanese transistor!

(to the scouts leading

observation on the slope)

Take two raincoat tents, go down

into the gorge to evacuate the

wounded and the dead.

VIKULOV

Kostrov, Streltsov!

Keep the Germans at gunpoint!

Sidorenko, Thevs! Take a rope from

the trunk of a TOYOTA, tie their

hands tightly.

(ordered to soldiers)

Let's go!

The scouts shift Kapusta and Lepecha onto the raincoat tents,
let the Germans escorted ahead, start hurriedly lifting them
up. Sidor wraps an aluminum box in rags and follows in the
rear of a group of scouts and captured Germans.

68. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE. DOME OF THE MOUNTAIN — IT'S GETTING
LIGHT.

Scouts rise to the height, Sereda calls helicopters. The
state of Kapusta is critical, the scouts are dejected.

MONGOL

(to Sereda)

Comrade Captain!

He won't make it to the hospital!

May I try our method?

SEREDA
 (displeased)
 What is it yours?!

MONGOL
 Shamanic witchcraft.

SEREDA
 (forced)
 The choice is small, try it!

Mongol sits down next to the motionless body of Kapusta. He removes the leather cord from the neck, holding 5 round five-kopeck copper "toli" - shamanic mirrors on the loops soldered on the reverse, wraps the cord to the limit, releases. While the tholes are spinning, he is ecstatically praying to the spirits, asking for the gift of life to Kapusta. He takes a flask of water out of his backpack, puts 5 "toli" on the obverse.

Pulls out the "toli", pulls the cord out of the loops, puts all 5 along the axis of the wounded Kapusta's body from the throat to the waist and, with the obverse of each copper circle, begins to apply it alternately to the wound, and, in the same order, folds the "toli" on the ground. Takes out 3 slices of cedar bark rolled into a rag, each the size of a palm, ignites them with 3 different matches and, lifting Kapusta's head with the palm of his hand, begins to blow out clouds of acrid cedar smoke behind the neck.

Smoldering embers of cedar bark envelop Kapusta with smoke; at this time Mongol puts a harp to his teeth and, rolling his eyes, with a light touch of his finger, starts a fight, making magical sounds: hey-ya, oh-ya, ai-ya, ai-ya. Then he picks up one of the embers of the smoldering cedar, fanning Kapusta's body 3 times. The cedar is burning down, Mongol collects all the ashes, pours them into a flask of water, shakes it and, lifting Kapusta's head again, pours it into his mouth.

The sound of approaching helicopters is heard, the Mi-8MT themselves are shown, the scouts are firing flares with an orange smoke trail, indicating their location. The scouts are loading the dead Lepecha, the wounded Kapusta, 3 captured Germans, a captured arsenal, piled up on a mountain with 10 loaded donkeys, taken away from the rebel base into Mi-8MT hanging in the air, barely touching the wheels of the mountain firmament. Flying away, donkeys are shot.

69. EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ AIRFIELD.

Helicopters with scout groups land on the runway in succession. In the portholes, two sanitary UAZ-452s can be seen waiting on the runway, Lieutenant Colonel SKVORTSOV and the head of the special department, Major SEMENOV, are standing back.

Kapusta is unloaded first, he came to his senses, the scouts were delighted - the foreman is getting out! After Kapusta, they take out the deceased Lepecha. Captured arsenal is unloaded from other helicopters, as well as scouts and captured Germans are unloaded.

Sidor delays the moment of departure from the Mi-8MT, remains among the last. He is alarmed, annoying out loud: "Damn it, they've already informed!". He turns to Lieutenant Vikulov standing in front.

SIDOR

(ingratiatingly)

Comrade Lieutenant!

I was the last one to leave the mine and took the trunk with three sleeping bags. Do you know the price of sleeping bags in the mountains?! When I had already climbed to the top, I found this aluminum box inside one of them, some other documents.

Sidor hands everything to Vikulov. Vikulov lifted the drawer by the handle and, appreciating the weightiness, grinned through a thick blond mustache.

VIKULOV

(with a grin)

Discovered, you say?!

Well, of course, it's completely weightless! Okay, the equilibrist! You'll explain everything after!

SIDOR

(without emotion)

That's right!

Vikulov clutches an envelope with documentation under his arm and, taking a stuffed box, jumps off the Mi-8MT. Unloading of the captured arsenal continues. Vikulov, approaches German

prisoners standing on the sidelines, waiting for further instructions, hands one of the Germans a box, shakes his finger, ironically warns.

VIKULOV
(ironically to the German)
Look, don't lose it!

Vikulov addresses Koster and Strela escorting the Germans.

VIKULOV
(with irony)
And you make sure that this Hans
doesn't hide the box somewhere!

Vikulov keeps the envelope with the documents for himself. Sereda gives instructions to the company and goes to report to Skvortsov and Semenov. Sereda gets cross-examined by Skvortsov and Semenov, begins to justify himself. Sereda orders Koster and Strela to bring 3 captured Germans.

VIKULOV
(to Skvortsov)
Comrade Lieutenant Colonel! May I
address Captain Sereda?!

SKVORTSOV
Permission granted!

VIKULOV
(to Sereda)
Comrade Captain!
We were returning by different
helicopters; I didn't have time to
report to you about the discovery
at the mine.

Vikulov hands over an envelope with documents to Lieutenant Colonel Skvortsov and, smartly taking an aluminum box from the German's hands, puts it on the metal fabric of the runway. Vikulov pulls aside the two ends of the cable, sealed together with a wax seal, opens it. The box is filled with green stones of different sizes and shapes. Skvortsov and Semenov are amazed at the trophy. Sereda calms down, looking at their joyful faces, exhaling with relief.

70. INT. THE OFFICE OF SOKOLOV S.L. - EVENING.

TITLE: KABUL, AFGHANISTAN. THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE 40TH ARMY,
THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF THE OPERATIONAL GROUP OF THE USSR
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE IN AFGHANISTAN, MARSHAL OF THE SOVIET

UNION SOKOLOV S.L.

A large office, a desk lamp is lit on the table, the Marshal of the Soviet Union SOKOLOV is sitting at the table, working with papers. The phone rings.

There's a knock on the door. Colonel NEFEDOV enters with a dark red folder.

NEFEDOV

May I come in, comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union?

SOKOLOV

Come in!

NEFEDOV

Comrade Marshal of the Soviet Union.

This afternoon, when returning from a work shift, 16 of our civilian specialists who worked under contract at a bakery in Mazar-I-Sharif were abducted and taken to an unknown destination.

In hot pursuit, a bus was found on the southern outskirts of the city, in which their transportation was carried out. There are traces of blood inside the cabin.

According to preliminary data, the driver was connected with the kidnappers. During the search, the body of one of our specialists was found 5 kilometers south of Mazar-I-Sharif.

Apparently, he was injured and could not move. Obviously, in order not to waste time transporting him, the rebels decided to shoot him. The collected data suggest that the specialists were taken away in the direction of the Marmol mountain range.

SOKOLOV

What measures have you taken?! The identity of the kidnappers has already been established?!

NEFEDOV

Not yet now, Comrade Marshal of the

Soviet Union!

We have set up a headquarters in Mazar-I-Sharif and formed an operational group to search for them. The group included representatives of the Afghan State Security Service KHAD, the DRA Armed Forces and the "Tsaranda" People's Militia. We collect intelligence and intelligence data. We check their authenticity.

SOKOLOV

Well. I will order the commander of the 40th Army, Lieutenant General Generalov, to urgently develop an operation plan and begin its implementation.

The head of the operation will be Deputy Chief of Staff of the 40th Army, Major General Shevchenko. Establish interaction with him.

71. EXT. MARMOL MOUNTAIN VILLAGE - DAY.

TITLE: MARMOL, BALKH PROVINCE. AFGHANISTAN

The commander of the rebel detachment, Mullah MIRSAID, presents at the outskirts of the village to the local population the Soviet civilian specialists abducted by his detachment in Mazar-I-Sharif.

MULLAH MIRSAID

(emotionally)

Here are Soviet military pilots shot down by our Mujahideen. They bombed our villages! The "Shuravi" came to Afghanistan to turn us away from our faith, age-old traditions. All of us - as one should rise to the holy jihad with the kafirs and expel them from our sacred land!

A pair of combat Mi-24s and four Mi-8MTs with amphibious reconnaissance groups under the command of Captain Sereda are in the sky above the village. Mi-24 helicopter pilots cut off a group of rebels and a ferocious crowd eager to lynch Soviet citizens with bursts of their onboard 4-barrel YakB-12.7 heavy machine guns. Mi-8MTs flying up behind them hover in the air, begin landing combat groups on the mountain terraces

above the village. The scouts entering the battle destroy the rebels, but most of them retire to the mountains.

The rebels managed to shoot 6 Soviet specialists. The other 9 specialists were repulsed by scouts. The scouts are filled with rage, an impulse to get even for the murder of compatriots, seize the initiative and, having broken the resistance, begin to pursue the rebels. Scouts climb to one of the peaks, meet with dense machine-gun fire of the rebels.

From the thickness of the mountain folds, hollowed out in the rock of the strongholds, the rebel strongholds are firing. Sereda calls combat Mi-24s by communication, directs strikes at the rebel defenses. The resistance of the rebels has been suppressed. The scouts continue to move along a meter-wide ravine, pass over a mountain steep, break into a cave.

72. INT. MOUNTAIN RANGE. CAVE - IT'S GETTING DARK

TITLE: MARMOL. CAVE IN A MOUNTAINOUS AREA

Long labyrinths connect several caves. Scouts find an extensive arsenal, food depots, a prison with medieval racks and cells, the corpses of tortured Afghan soldiers lie. Sidor approaches Sereda, shows a jar of stew with an inscription in Arabic script.

SIDOR

Comrade Captain! You can live with this wealth!

SEREDA

(strictly)

Take no more than 2 cans with you!
Blow up all the provisions with
ammunition and weapons!

THE SUN IS GOING DOWN, IT'S DANGEROUS TO MOVE IN THE DARK.

SEREDA

(by order)

We'll camp in a cave for the night!

SIDOR

(to Sereda)

Comrade Captain! There's nothing to breathe inside. The stench is from ptomaine.

SEREDA
 (strictly)
 Throw the corpses into the abyss!

SIDOR
 (dissatisfied with Sereda)
 Is not a pleasant share!

SEREDA
 (positive)
 And you cast lots!
 Just decide as soon as possible!
 Otherwise I will appoint
 personally.

SIDOR
 (excited)
 Yes, sir, to cast lots!

73. EXT. MARMOL CAVE - IT'S GETTING DARK.

Sidor and Koster take out of the cave and dump the decomposing corpses of tortured Afghans into the gorge. Finished. Sidor sat down at the entrance to the cave.

SIDOR
 (to Koster)
 Pulled the devil to turn to the commander! I have created a problem for myself.
 (having smelled the sweet corpse smell attached to the camouflage)
 Picky, at least take off the clothes.

74. INT. MARMOL CAVE - NIGHT.

Sereda put a machine gun and a bag on a boulder and gave the command to the unit.

SEREDA
 Company! Distribute the time of night duty - two sentries, go to rest!

The scouts lit sticks with tarred tow left by the rebels and, having gone deep into the labyrinths of the cave, lie down to rest.

75. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE – NIGHT.

Rust and Mongol took up guard duty, replenished the weapon stores with cartridges from packs in backpacks and, pulling fascines out of the cave in order to sit comfortably on them, began to enjoy the landscape. A myriad of bright stars and a crescent moon illuminate the neighborhood.

The friends saw a high sheer wall that filled the entire horizon, hanging from the other side of the gorge – a smooth blue canvas similar to the habitat of swallows-shorebirds riddled with thousands of primitive dwellings cut into the rock, hearths shine in them. The narrow ravines that cut through the rock are the only communication connecting the cave inhabitants – Hazaras, Uzbeks, Turkmens and Tajiks with the outside world. An ancient cave city, located in a cleft of the rocky mountains, stretched for many kilometers, medieval authentic.

RUST

(to Mongol)

Marmol is an epic place, here in countless caves and labyrinths during the Greco-Bactrian kingdom, the campaigns of Arab conquerors, the conquest of the region by the horde of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane, many ancient peoples and armies found shelter and shelter. Due to the geographical location and the inaccessible mountain landscape, Alexander the Great quartered his troops in the caves of Marmol, waiting out the harsh winter.

MONGOL

(to Rust)

And also in these places, according to scientists, the Zoroastrian prophet and priest Zarathustra was born, to whom the revelation of the deity Ahuramazda appeared and the main part of the holy scripture of the Avesta was written here. Our shamans, like the Zoroastrians, have a cult of fire. According to our beliefs, fire arose at the moment when the land separated from the sky, and remained to us as a gift for

communication between the worlds.
Rust, have you noticed the Afghans
with Mongoloid faces?

RUST

The Khazars! The Mongolian people
- descendants of Genghis Khan.

MONGOL

Right!

Mongol, distracting from the topic of conversation, sniffs.

MONGOL

(alert)

Rust! Someone is smoking!
And good cigarettes!

Soft female voices are heard, speaking in French.

MONGOL

Did you hear that?!

RUST

(French)

Cherchez la femme!
Mongol, let's get to Sereda!

Sereda with a group of scouts - Lieutenant Vikulov, Kostyan, Sidor, Koster, Strela, Mongol in a matter of minutes resort to Rust.

SEREDA

Listen to my command!
The machine gunners Thevs, Kostrov,
Streltsov will go first!

By order of Lieutenant Sereda, the scouts are moving from the cave further along the ravine. They follow in the dark, without taking their palms off the mountain steep, so as not to leave the path, not to fall into the abyss. They discover the entrance to the cave, electric light comes from there.

76. INT. MARMOL CAVE - NIGHT.

Kostyan and Strela, enter the cave first, followed by a Koster.

Through the noise of the working diesel generator, they hear the male speech in Dari becoming more and more distinct. Kostyan and Strela are confronted by a group of armed rebels

carrying stretchers with wounded. The rebels hurriedly lower the stretcher, take up arms, prepare to shoot. Kostyan, Strela, Koster are ahead of the rebels, mowing them down with bursts of their machine guns. The rebels are falling at the stretcher with the wounded.

A group of scouts is at the entrance, waiting for the order of Senior Lieutenant Sereda to enter the cave. The fire has stopped, male and female voices are heard in French. A man comes out to meet the scouts in a green medical uniform – caps and masks, with his hands raised, followed by 3 women.

Blue medical gloves of a man and one of the women in the blood. The doctor loudly grasses in French, actively gestures. The rest of the scouts are entering the cave.

SIDOR
(it's gratifying)
Here's happiness rolled in!

Sidor is delighted with the rendezvous with the French ladies, begins to look at them, hums softly.

SEREDA
(irritably)
Shut up, Sidorenko!

RUST
(translates to Sereda from French)
He says that they are doctors from the international organization MSF "Doctors without Borders".

FRENCHMAN
(emotionally)
Oui! Oui! IL en est ainsi! Nous sommes des medecins de Medecins sans frontieres! –
"We are doctors from the MSF organization Doctors Without Borders.

SEREDA
(orders Rust to translate)
It is necessary to present passports!

Rust translates the requirement. The doctor turns to one of the women, she presents maroon books with the inscription "PASSEPORT REPUBLIQUE FRANCAISE". Sereda carefully examines each passport and, having read out a man's name in one,

addresses.

SEREDA
 (with pathos)
 Lucien!
 I'll keep this for myself!

Sereda puts all the passports in the pocket of his vest. Vikulov approaches, having examined all the premises.

VIKULOV
 Comrade Captain! There is an operating room with the latest Western medical equipment, a warehouse of medicines, 3 hospital wards with clean linen, showers. Most of the wounded were obviously evacuated. Three seriously wounded people remained in the ward. Another one is in critical condition lying on the operating table.

SEREDA
 (ordered to Rust)
 Tukaev, translate to the doctor: let him take his women and continue to operate!
 The wounded who were carried out by the rebels on stretchers and those who survived the shootout, bring them to the ward. Let them get medical help!

Sereda comes out of the cave, communicates with the regimental command on the radio station, reports the situation.

SIDOR
 (To Rust and Mongol with annoyance)
 Such a case! By again.
 I was already hoping to get to know the French madams more closely. And then we look at the local khanums in the eyes through the mesh of the burqa, and by their bare heels we determine their years and prettiness. And also
 (pause)
 by a sinful deed, we drag the corpses.

(he sniffs at the
camouflage again and turns
his nose away)
That's the trouble - it doesn't
wear off!

77. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - IT'S GETTING LIGHT.

The foggy haze dissipates, the scouts notice vehicles abandoned by the rebels in the lowlands: two UAZ-469 all-terrain vehicles, KAMAZ and TATRA trucks.

SEREDA

(by order)

Vikulov! Take 4 fighters, anti-tank mines from the rebel warehouse, blow up all their equipment to hell.

Lieutenant Vikulov, Sidor, Koster, Kostyan, Strela are descending into the hollow under cover from above. All the equipment of the rebels is on the move. Vikulov, with a squint, stubbing out his cigarette, turns to Sidor, Koster, Rust Strela, Kostyan.

VIKULOV

We will not mine equipment, but a narrow passage in the gorge! Why ruin the equipment in vain!

Vikulov points the fighters to the places inside and outside the narrow neck with a width of 3.6 meters, where anti-tank mines should be installed. Fighters do everything, Vikulov orders.

VIKULOV

Everyone leaves the hollow!

Sereda orders the scouts to blow up the entire arsenal in the caves, food warehouses, disable power sources, medical equipment of the hospital.

78. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY.

The scouts take with them four Frenchmen with wounded rebels, beginning climbing to the top of the mountain. They reach the top. The reconnaissance company, including Sidor, Kostyan, Rust, Strela, Kostyan, Mongol, are waiting for the arrival of helicopters, sitting on the sidelines, lit a small fire.

Mongol takes out a harp and, putting it to his teeth, begins to make theurgical sounds: hey-ya, oh-ya, ai-ya, ai-ya. From the top of the mountain, friends see a beautiful Marmol.

In the distance, chirping helicopters appear, scouts are taken from the height along with prisoners.

79. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE. GORGE — DAY.

TITLE: MARMOL. MOUNTAIN GORGE, THE NEXT MORNING.

The rebels returned to the area for the surviving vehicles. Five armed rebels, unaware of anything, dive into the UAZ-469, start the engine. A powerful explosion occurs, the car is thrown into the air, the bodies of the rebels are torn to shreds.

80. EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE — DAY.

TITLE: MULLAH GHULAM VILLAGE, KUNDUZ PROVINCE, JUNE 1986

Military transport convoys are constantly moving along the highway. The crew of the BMP-2 combat vehicle with Sidor, Rust, Strela, Mongol, Kostyan, Koster and other scouts, following the order of the commander of the reconnaissance company, Captain Sereda, stands at a checkpoint in a dangerous section of the Kunduz-Faizabad highway, in order not to allow the rebels to infiltrate the highway, mine, make fire raids.

The BMP-2 of the scouts is installed close to the mud-brick buildings of the village of Mullah-Gulyam. Commander of the BMP-2 Rust, driver-mechanic Pavel Grishin, gunner-operator Semyon Negoda, tarjimon (translator) Azim Akhmedov, friends - Sidor, Kostyan, Koster, Strela, Rust, Mongol. The friends have already served in Afghanistan for almost a year and a half. There are fields of wheat between the armor and the village. Harvesting is underway, the sun is mercilessly scorching + 42C.

In the high thick of the golden field, the bent backs of 2 adult Afghans appear sporadically and disappear again, they diligently reap with a sickle, tie the ears into sheaves. This is a bearded, wrinkled-faced man of about fifty, a hunched old woman with a colorful cloth sling on her back over her shoulder, there is a baby there. From time to time, the Afghan and the old woman straighten up, take their hands on the loins and wipe the sweat from their faces, continue the harvest. 2 boys of 8- and 10-years old help them in the field, they skillfully stack sheaves into piles. Casting

unkind glances at the Shuravi sitting on the armor at the edge of their field, the Afghans continue to work.

KOSTYAN

(to Rust)

Yes, our visit clearly did not please them!

Rust gets out of the commander's hatch, removes the headset.

RUST

(serene)

What to do?!

(pause)

Guys! Sereda ordered to dig in! Warned, the site is dangerous, we must be prepared for the deterioration of the situation. Therefore, the trenches are swarming in full growth.

81. EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - TWILIGHT.

The crimson glow of sunset. The head of the family, Afghan SHERAGI, completed the harvest day, gathered courage and, accompanied by 2 young sons, goes to Rust, who was sitting on the ribbed sheet of the transmission compartment of the BMP-2.

Sheragi considered Rust the main one, timidly approaches Shuravi's armor. Rust's silver portable transistor SANYO at this time is playing the song "Vernissage" performed by V. Leontiev and L. Vaikule. Rust sees in front of him a dehkan Sheragi - taller than average, lean, swarthy, with bright green eyes, a thick, gray-streaked beard, in a light brown turban faded in the sun, a pale-yellow perukhan, where white wavy streaks of sweat stand out. RUST muted the sound of the transistor, got up according to oriental etiquette, and greeted the Afghan first.

RUST

AsSalamu Alaikum!

Sheragi skips Rust's greeting.

SHERAGI

(visibly nervous)

You will start shooting towards the village, you will burn all our bread. As a result, we will starve to death!

In agitation, Sheragi grabs his beard with gnarled, shaking fingers, wipes tears from his eyes with a piece of turban hanging on his shoulder.

SHERAGI

I have four children:
three sons, one of them is
disabled, a baby girl - they were
orphaned after the death of their
mother during childbirth, and an
old woman. Give us at least 2 days
to complete the harvest.

Sheragi has finished but does not receive a promise from Rust that the shuravi will not open fire. Sheragi waved his hand with hopelessness, walked away in resignation.

STRELA

They can't do it in two days!

KOSTYAN

(with conviction)
That's for sure!

RUST

(thoughtfully)
And what if we still take a
chance?! We will discharge the
magazines from the tracer
cartridges and replace them with
regular ones.
We will open fire in case of urgent
need and not on the field.

SIDOR

(excitedly)
Rust, this is a whim!
You know - if there were no
disturbing fire at night, we risk
letting the rebels get close.
Yes, and the probability of falling
asleep will increase a lot.
With shooting, it's quieter, both
for the guard and for the sleepers!
And in general, - how do you
imagine it: they will shoot from
other cars, but we have peace and
quiet?! The company officer will
immediately smell something amiss.
Finally, there may be a danger that
the dushmans will choose our site

to break through to the highway.

Mongol rubs the plucked ear in his palms, begins to chew the grain.

MONGOL

And I support Rust's generous thought! Why don't we do good?!

SIDOR

(getting excited)

Mongol! You're always with your shamanic virtue!

Did you hear that the company commander was on the phone?!

On the BMP-2 of a separate brigade that arrived for this operation from a remote region, the rebels slaughtered every single one, the crew and the landing group. Apropos, it happened here nearby.

Here are the bitter consequences of avoiding the foundations.

STRELA

Their sentry fell asleep!

SIDOR

(with conviction)

That's right! But if he had been shooting constantly, he would hardly have fallen asleep!

MONGOL

(serenely)

Sidor, and you divided the question into two parts! To sleep on duty and night shooting.

You don't have to shoot.

At least, if there is no urgent need for it.

Instead of the 1 sentry, you can set 2, take 2 times more time on duty: not an hour, but two.

RUST

Guys, I suggest we still remove all tracer cartridges from the magazines, replace them with ordinary ones!

We will open fire in case of acute urgency.

STRELA

(invitingly)

Who is in favor of not opening
fire?! Raise your hand! Rust,
Mongol, I see Kostyan. Sidor and
Koster are against.
I'm on the side of the former.
There are four of us against two!
Decided! We do not open fire unless
it is necessary!

82. EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - TWILIGHT.

There are a lot of stars in the sky, a shining crescent moon. Rust is awake, is half asleep, constantly calls out to the guards - checks if they have fallen asleep. Time passes slowly, retreating from the BMP-2, the incessant polyphony of the prolonged cries of a pack of jackals is heard.

83. EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - DAY.

In the morning, a deep trench is being dug around the BMP-2, the terrain is being monitored. The song "Lavender" is heard from the transistor standing on the armor tower.

On the field, the Afghan family is vigorously reaping, hurrying to meet the specified two days. Sidor and Mongol, in front of the BMP-2, have lit a hearth, and Rust is using an axe to disassemble a wooden box from zinc with cartridges for firewood. The song "Komarovo" comes from the transistor.

RUST

(calling out to the Afghan
head of the family, who
was tying the compressed
ears into a sheaf, waving
an axe at him)

Eh, Bacha! Injo bie!

A man! Come here!

Sheragi raises his head anxiously, looks against the sun from under the palm of his hand towards the BMP-2, understands that they are calling him. Sheragi throws a phrase to the old woman, goes to Rust.

RUST

(courteously and kindly)

AsSalamu Alaikum!

(to Mongol)

Mongol! Please pour some tea on our guests!

Mongol puts more wood on the hearth, fulfills Rust's request - fills a small porcelain bowl with hot jasmine tea from a captured Chinese tea set with cobalt blue-white painting in the Chinoiserie style, and deftly pours tea back into the teapot. Mongol fills half; holds out the Sheragi. Sheragi takes a cup of tea with one hand, barely bows his head and traditionally putting the other palm to his chest, takes a sip.

RUST

(in dari respectfully)
What's your name, Ako?!

SHERAGI

Sheragi! My name is Sheragi!

RUST

(in the oriental manner)
I am Rustam, son of Farhad!

RUST reads Sheragi a one-faith prayer

RUST

"La ilaha illaLlah, Mohammadun-rasuluLlah."

(pause)

Far to the north, in the very center of Russia, where there is a lot of snow in winter, is my Homeland - Tatarstan. Tatars live there. They, like the Afghans, are Muslims. Our language is very close to Uzbek, Turkmen languages spoken in Kunduz, Takhar, and other northern provinces.

(nodding at Azim Akhmedov)

My friend from Samarkand and I speak Uzbek and Tajik.

Sheragi listens attentively to Rust.

RUST

There are many Muslims among the Shuravi!

(pause)

We are waiting for you at 21.00 with your sons for pilaf!

Sheragi nods humbly, heads into the field.

STRELA
 (with pessimism)
 He won't come!

KOSTYAN
 (with conviction)
 He wouldn't dare!
 Our goodwill is at stake - don't
 shoot at night.

84. EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - TWILIGHT.

In the crimson glow of sunset, the Afghan family has completed their working day and is going to the village. Sheragi arrived at the appointed hour, but alone.

RUST
 (affectionately to
 Sheragi, smiling)
 We are waiting for you!

Rust covered the cauldron with pilaf with a lid, rice absorbs the remaining moisture from the zirvak. Rust noticed that Sheragi was alone.

RUST
 (surprised)
 And where are your sons, Sheragi?!

Sheragi hesitated, out of the corner of his eye he looks under the canopy tightly stretched between the hundred-year-old plane trees, spliced from several raincoat tents. There Sheragi sees a long table lit by a kerosene lamp made of wooden boxes from artillery shells, set with dishes, cutlery.

RUST
 (strongly)
 Follow your sons,
 we will be waiting for you!

Sheragi understands the hopelessness, is removed.

Sheragi arrives with three sons.

A party at "Shuravi"'s - there is a mechanic-driver Pavel Grishin, a gunner-operator Semyon Negoda, tarjimon Azim Akhmedov, friends - Mongol, Rust, Strela, Kostyan, Koster, Sidor. The dish of the evening is a soldier's pilaf cooked in a large cast-iron cauldron over a fire. Rust lifts the lid of the cauldron, lets off steam, begins to

put pilaf on two large flat plates. On top of the rice is toasted beef stew. Koster passes large aluminum spoons to Sheragi and his sons. The scouts are looking at the Afghans, waiting, as the senior guest, Sheragi should take off the first spoon. Afghans are experiencing discomfort. Rust catches the fear of Sheraga "is there pork meat in the pilaf?!"

Rust dispels doubts, shows an image of a beef head on an opened tin can of stew. Everyone is smiling. Sheragi, having played up the spirit, takes a sample, the scouts and his sons begin to eat after him. The pilaf turned out to be excellent. Everyone is happy. After the pilaf, everyone is poured hot tea.

The scouts pull out a large bag of captured rice from the BMP-2 bins, put it on the back of the Sheragi. Sheragi does not believe his luck, takes the goodies to the village.

85. EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - MORNING.

Sheragi brings hot tortillas to the scouts from tandoor, 2 full cans of cool curdled milk. Friends eat everything with an appetite.

86. EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - DAY.

An excited Sheragi appears at the BMP-2, runs under the canopy, warns Rust.

SHERAGI
I'll be right back!

Sheragi returns with 3 bearded Afghans of strong physique, parliamentarians.

SHERAGI
Rustam! I trust you and I want you
to talk to these people.

Rust and the scouts standing nearby understand that these are rebels.

Rust with a wave of his hand, invites the rebels to go under the canopy, and sit down. Rust calls the mechanic-driver Pavel Grishin and the gunner-operator Semyon Negoda.

RUST
Keep an eye out!
In case someone leaves the village,

or the BMP-2 company commander
 Captain Sereda approaches, inform
 immediately!

Sidor, Mongol, Kostyan, Strela, Koster, Azim Akhmedov are pulling together to the canopy. Senior parliamentarian Halfutdin, a statuesque mujahid with a stern face in a pale-colored turban and beige perukhan, addresses Rust.

HALFUTDIN

We'd like to talk to you in
 private.

Rust exchanged glances with his friends, nodded in agreement.

SIDOR

We will not let them go!

RUST

(to Sidor)
 Don't rush things!

On one side of the smoldering hearth, under a canopy, sit Sheragi, 3 rebels, on the other - Rust and Azim Akhmedov. Rust catches a whiff of the smell of acrid smoke of burnt brushwood inherent in insurgents. Their faces are dark and lean.

Rust, silently looking around at everyone, nods to Azim Akhmedov. Azim Akhmedov slowly turns half around, reaches for the teapot and fills up to half of the bowl and, fervently putting his hand to his chest, passes it to each rebel. Rust took a sip of tea, looking invitingly at Halfutdin to start a conversation. Halfutdin begins to speak in the Katagan dialect of the Uzbek language with sporadic interspersing of words in Dari, gazes intently into Rust's eyes.

HALFUTDIN

(with a pause - proudly)
 I am Halfutdin from the village of Mullah Ghulam. We know, dear Commander Rustam, that you are a Muslim and a good person. We have come here to invite you and those you trust to come with us. We will provide you with shelter, help you get an Afghan family. Think about it, why do you need to die here?! This is not your land! Here, for example, is the last case.

(nodded at the rebel, on

the right)
 Two of his relatives were found
 nearby in a ditch with their heads
 shot through. Answer me, what can
 we do?!

RUST
 (with perplexity)
 Why are you sure that this is the
 work of shuravi?!

HALFUTDIN
 (with conviction)
 And who's else?!

RUST
 (competent)
 This could have been done by
 Mujahideen from other parties.
 As you know, there is an
 internecine war going on between
 the detachments of different
 Islamic parties.

HALFUTDIN
 (with conviction)
 No, the "Shuravi" did it!

RUST
 (with confidence)
 Then I will assume with a high
 degree of probability that these
 people were armed.

HALFUTDIN
 And what does it matter?! They are
 on their own land, and they have
 the right to decide for themselves
 how to walk - with or without
 weapons.

RUST
 Great value! There is an undeclared
 war, Soviet soldiers are dying! We
 are here to help the Saur
 Revolution free the Afghan people
 from oppression and enslavement.

HALFUTDIN
 (with a haughty smile,
 mentoring)
 We don't need to be freed from

anyone! Leave us alone! Our way of life has remained unchanged for centuries.

We don't know how to live differently! And most importantly – we don't want to!

The most precious thing we have is our Islam.

Your top leadership, before sending troops here, should have studied the history of Afghanistan: Emir Zahir Shah, deposed in 1973 after 40 years of rule, repeated the fate of another Afghan ruler Amanullah Khan, who lost power in 1929 and, like him, is living out his life in exile.

In both cases, reforms are to blame for everything: the desire to build a secular society, blind imitation of the West or the USSR with its communist ideology, rejection of the age-old way of life, ancestral traditions, including the abolition of the wearing of the veil by Afghan women. We don't want such an Afghanistan!

Rust attentively listens to the speech of the rebels.

RUST

My house is far to the north beyond the Amu Darya. All Shuravi are my brothers! I'm one of them myself! I came with them, and I will leave with them, if I stay alive, of course.

HALFUTDIN

(grandiloquently)

This is your decision!
The only thing we can guarantee is that nothing will happen to you at the village of Mullah-Gulyam.

The conversation ended, Rust raised his palm and pronounced loudly so that they could hear outside the canopy.

RUST

Guys, we're done! Everyone refrains from action! The guests should leave quietly!

The rebels stand up at once. Rust thanks the rebels for the conversation with a handshake. The rebels let Halfutdin pass ahead, slowly, with dignity, they head to the street leading into the depths of the village.

Sidor comes in at the curtain, follows the departing rebels with his eyes as they disappear into the narrow passage of the village.

SIDOR

(with amazement)

I don't believe my eyes! Rust, did you let them go?! Get into their hands, do not bring the creator, they would not let you go!

RUST

(serenely)

If they were in the mountains, I would not hesitate to do my soldier's work, as I have done it more than once. But when they went to talk to us, it was like they were putting their heads in the lion's mouth. After all, they risked overestimating us, right?! Well, how not to give credit for their bravery, and allow yourself to be overestimated?!

Sidor thought about it, said nothing.

87. EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - DAY.

Sheragi works with his family on the field, he is not cheerful. Sereda announces on the radio to Rust - all crews wait for the order to remove from their posts!

RUST DECIDED TO FINALLY BRIGHTEN UP SHERAGA'S LIFE WITH A ROYAL GIFT.

88. EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - DAY.

Rust gets on the BMP-2, goes to the field car kitchen PAK. He finds an ensign Pritula, changes the captured BERETTA-92 pistol obtained in Panjshere for 2 bags of rice and flour, 2 boxes of butter and condensed milk, loads everything on the BMP-2 armor.

89. EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF THE VILLAGE - DAY.

Rust calls on his comrades to form up, calls Sheragi with his 3 sons from the field. Rust solemnly hands over to Sheragi and his sons the products that he exchanged for a BERETTA-92 pistol. The eyes of the astonished Sheraga fill with tears, he wipes his tears with an awkward movement of his hands, finally embraces Rust, each scout.

Sheragi plunges the gifts handed to him onto the ridges of the donkeys attracted for transportation, takes the remaining baggage in his own and 3 sons' hands, goes to the village. On the way home, a happy Sheragi turns back, waving goodbye.

90. INT. TENT - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. SCOUT TENT

The reconnaissance company returned from ambush operations. Friends, showered with yellow dust, enter the tent. Sergeant major Kapustin (Kapusta), who arrived from the hospital with a sickly look, is waiting for the fighters at the entrance.

SIDOR

(enthusiastically)

Kapusta!

Emaciated beyond recognition.

STRELA

(with joy)

We knew that you survived!

KOSTYAN

We were informed that you were sent to the Kabul hospital, and you will not return to the company. From there straight to the Union!

KAPUSTA

(jokingly)

How could I not say goodbye to you?! I wanted to return home in a parade. Not in a hospital gown, and certainly not in zinc!

RUST

(with a smile)

It's reasonable!

KOSTER

"Who's lucky – that's for twenty-one months and up to two years" – do you remember your words to us on arrival in Afghanistan?!

KAPUSTA

(smiling)

I remember how not to remember.

RUST

(with a smile)

The main thing is that you survived!

KAPUSTA

Thanks to Mongol, he has enchanted! The doctors at the hospital appreciated it – they say: it's unprecedented. The bullet passed half an inch from the heart. And where is he?!

SIDOR

He's coming in now, he's a little behind!

KAPUSTA

(changing the subject)

Well, how are you here without a foreman?!

KOSTER

The company was replenished after the losses in Kunar. A lot of new guys have arrived.

STRELA

(conferring to the incoming Mongol)

And here is the shaman himself!

MONGOL

(to Kapusta)

I wish you good health, Comrade Foreman!

Welcome back to the company.

(pause)

On the occasion of a successful survival and for the purpose of complete healing, may I, Comrade

foreman, make a surzhem?! In other words, let me hold a shamanic rite of asking help from the Ongons, the spirits of our sacred ancestors, in the tent?!

SIDOR

(with a laugh)

Mongol, are you back for the old?!

KAPUSTA

What should I do?!

MONGOL

In the prayer service, I will ask the Ongons to take away the evil from my comrades and your complete healing.

This should be accompanied by merging together 3 drinks - milk, tea, vodka, and sprinkling this mixture on the walls of our tent.

Sidor, Rust, Strela, Koster, Kostyan exchanged glances with a grin.

KAPUSTA

What is required of us?!

MONGOL

I am obliged to offer the ongons a sacrificial gift - sweets, for example condensed milk, sugar. The main thing is to find and, by all means, pour milk, vodka and tea into different dishes.

We will hold a session after the evening verification, when the officers retire to rest.

KAPUSTA

(to friends)

Well, guys, will we find milk and vodka?

SIDOR

(in a masterly way)

There are no problems with tea!
With condensed milk too!
Milk can be obtained in the division. There is a cow feeding the division's command staff with

dairy products.

(pause)

Instead of vodka, will moonshine do?! I saw it at the sappers' yesterday. They just brew.

MONGOL

(pompously)

The main thing is that the alcohol should be colorless, turbidity is acceptable.

SIDOR

(assuring)

Clean as a piece of glass - they are notable craftsmen.

91. INT. TENT - NIGHT.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. SCOUT TENT.

Hot. Soldiers throw wet sheets over their bodies. 5 kerosene lamps are dimly lit in the tent: one lamp on a bedside table covered with a white pillowcase, 5 open cans of condensed milk are lined up in a row there. There are 4 deep aluminum plates in front of them. One plate is empty, 3 others are filled with milk, moonshine, tea. Next to each plate there is a tablespoon intended only for her.

Mongol has inspected everything and is leaving. The fighters are resting, leaning back on the iron backs of the bunks. The hubbub in the tent is interrupted by a loud beating with a mallet in a tambourine, hanging on the chest of Mongol dressed in shamanic attire, and the crackle of a rotating rattle. Mongol rhythmically waddles from one foot to the other and, shaking his head, shouts shamanic incantations.

SIDOR

(from Matusovsky M.)

"And the voice of this horn,
I recognize it as a friend's
voice."

Mongol moves along the aisle of the tent to the end and on the way back passes a tambourine to Sidor and a rattle to Koster, asking them to continue in the same spirit with a circular gesture of the hand forward.

Mongol himself fills the fourth one with rose spoons from 3 plates in turn. The fighters mostly silently watch Mongol plunging into a frenzy, taking the ritual seriously. Some barely contain their laughter. The mixture in the plate

remains at the bottom, Mongol threw the remainder on the ceiling and, falling to his knees with his hands thrown up, long-drawn out the spell "Tooreg!"

Mongol takes out a long wooden smoking pipe, stuffed ahead of time, from a bag lying under his bunk and, having lit it, passes it to his comrades. The intoxicating tart smoke of the pipe passing from hand to hand spread across the tent, enveloping it in a blue haze. Mongol, put a harp to his teeth and, rolling his eyes, starts a fight with the tip of his finger on the thin metal tongue of the instrument, making overworld sounds: hey-ya, oh-ya, ai-ya, ai-ya.

The session is over. The hubbub is heard in the tent.

FLASHBACK OUT

92. INT. TEAHOUSE — DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE

Zalmay brings Otto on a tray a sizzling lamb rib kebab, just removed from the grill, a hot tandoor tortilla, a pot of green tea. Otto continues to rest, leaning the back of his head against the wall, eyes closed. Otto, through a doze, hears the measured creaking of fan blades, the clink of dishes, the clatter of bones, the shuffling of checkers "shesh-besh", the multilingual hubbub of tea house guests, the soulful song "Khuda Bowad Yarat" by the cult Afghan singer Ahmad Zahir from the sound speakers. Otto's nap is interrupted by the loud noise of a low-flying pair of jet planes.

93. EXT. THE SHORE OF A SMALL RIVER — DAY.

TITLE: OMAR KHEYL VILLAGE, KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

Two F-15ES fighter-bombers of the ISAF forces appear in the sky, fly over 2 German tankers hijacked by the Taliban and hundreds of civilians of the village of Omar Kheyl, who are waiting in line to fill the tanks with diesel fuel. They are bombing people and tankers. Bloody human body parts and torn clothes are scattered at the site of the airstrike. The dead and wounded residents of the village are lying. The groans of the wounded are heard. A swarthy, bearded Afghan is crawling with his legs torn off.

94. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Otto's nap is interrupted by the loud noise of a low-flying pair of jet planes. The rumble of heavy bombs falling nearby can be heard, shaking the ground.

Sirens can be heard; dozens of ambulances are rushing along the central street past the Yakub Khan teahouse at high speed.

95. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Yakub Khan looks after the cavalcade of ambulances.

96. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Yakub Khan goes back into the teahouse, adjusts the radio to the news wave, turns up the sound of the radio, listens to the text of the emergency issue. Otto looks at Yakub Khan, Yakub Khan is stunned.

OTTO

(sensing trouble, he asks)
What happened?!

YAKUB KHAN

ISAF aircraft carried out an air strike in the vicinity of the village of Omar Kheyl.

(mournfully)

They reported many civilian casualties.

Otto gets up from the cot and walks over to Yakub Khan.

OTTO

Where is Omar Kheyl?!

YAKUB KHAN

Nearby, from Kunduz, two kilometers to the south, then the same amount to the west.

Otto pays money for food, hurriedly leaves the teahouse.

97. INT. SPINZAR HOTEL. OTTO'S ROOM - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. SPINZAR HOTEL.

Otto is sitting in an armchair in his hotel room, watching the news on TV. German TV channels broadcast: "As a result of NATO air strikes in the Chahar-dara district of Kunduz province, more than 100 Afghan civilians were killed."

Otto switches to an Afghan English-language TV channel, where it is reported: "ISAF aircraft carried out an airstrike on the village of Omar Kheyl in Kunduz province, as a result, 70 Taliban and 30 Afghan civilians were killed - there are women and children."

Otto calls the translator Sultan Mukhadi by phone.

OTTO

Sultan, I need you! We need to go
to the village of Omar Kheyl!

98. EXT. SPINZAR HOTEL - DAY.

A taxi pulls up to the hotel with Sultan Mukhadi sitting in the passenger seat in front, Otto gets into the back seat, the car hurriedly drives off.

99. EXT. A WASTELAND, THE OUTSKIRTS OF AN AFGHAN VILLAGE - DAY.

TITLE: OMAR-KHEYL VILLAGE, KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

Otto and Sultan Muhadi arrive at the site of the airstrike. Otto and Sultan Mukhadi get out of the car. Otto leans over to the window of the driver sitting behind the wheel and, handing over the cash for the trip, makes a request.

OTTO

Here's the money for the round
trip. If we do not leave the
village by 20.00, inform the
administration of the Spinzar Hotel
about it.

The taxi driver agrees.

Otto and Sultan Mukhadi leave. The taxi remains waiting for them.

Otto and Sultan Muhadi go away from the taxi towards the police cordon.

View of the overturned burnt 2 large German tankers, fuel spilled on the ground, fragments of human bodies and clothing fabrics scattered hundreds of meters.

Otto takes several pictures, looks for eyewitnesses to question, but is prevented by Afghan employees from the ISAF assistance force unit. They are pushing Otto and Sultan Muhadi away from the scene of the tragedy.

Otto and Sultan Mukhadi, bypassing the site of the airstrike, go deeper into the village of Omar-Kheil.

Otto and Sultan Muhadi pass by mud-brick dwellings, encounter oncoming Afghans, through Sultan Muhadi's translator Otto invites them to give an interview, but this only causes negativity and malicious remarks. Afghans look at Otto and Sultan Muhadi with hatred and do not want to communicate with them.

At the entrance to one of the dwellings, Otto and Sultan Muhadi find themselves trapped: three Taliban armed with machine guns point the muzzles of their machine guns at them, tie their hands, and capture them.

SULTAN MUKHADI

(To the Taliban men)

Do you know that this European is a professional journalist, a reporter for a German publishing house?! He's not a military man!

SENIOR TALIBAN

(ignoring the question, strictly)

Think about yourself! Pray to the Almighty that your children are not orphaned!

The Taliban take the prisoners in an unknown direction.

100. EXT. WASTELAND, THE OUTSKIRTS OF AN AFGHAN VILLAGE — EVENING.

A wasteland, the scene of a tragedy on the outskirts of the village of Omar-Kheyl, a tired taxi driver looks at his wristwatch. The taxi driver looks around the area, starts the car engine, slowly moves off, drives onto the highway, and departs.

101. INT.OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - DAY.

TITLE: TF-47 HEADQUARTERS, OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE.

Oberst Jung is holding a meeting with a group of officers at a long table. Phones are ringing incessantly in the office; Oberst Jung is depressed.

OBERST JUNG

(with irritation)

The airstrike on Omar-Kheyl caused a wide response. The Bundeswehr High Command, the KSK command, Bundestag deputies, international humanitarian organizations, all want to know: "Who gave the order for the airstrike in Omar-Kheyl?!" "What were the targets of the strike?" "What is the actual number of civilian casualties?!" and so on.

Oberst looks into the eyes of Bruno sitting in the center of the table. Bruno looks away.

OBERST JUNG

(excited)

But this does not cancel the operation "The Joker"! The elimination of the organizers of the attacks on the Bundeswehr columns of Moulavi Shamsutdin and Mullah Abdul Rahman, who are hatching plans to attack the TF-47 garrison in Kunduz, remains a priority for us! Unfortunately, the intelligence data on the whereabouts of the Taliban leaders that flocked to the TF47 Combat Control Center for a month constantly vary. This does not allow us to act for sure. However, yesterday, intelligence sources gave similar information. Based on them, Moulawi Shamsutdin, accompanied by twenty-five Taliban devotees, should arrive at the village of Khalazai at the appointed time. We will start the operation early

in the morning, an hour before the muezzin's call to the pre-dawn Fajr prayer. This will take the Taliban by surprise.

More!

(pauses)

The course of the operation is complicated by the fact that the point of arrival of Shamsutdin with a detachment in the village of Khalazai coincides with the place of detention of civilian hostages, among whom there is also a reporter of the magazine "Der Spiegel" Otto Greenberg, along with an Afghan translator.

(pause)

Our task is to eliminate Shamsutdin and his people, preventing the death of hostages. I entrust its execution to the group of Oberlieutenant Bruno Thevs.

Oberst Jung gets up from his seat, goes to a large map hanging on the wall.

OBERST JUNG

(to officers)

I suggest we approach the map.

The officers leave the table, stand behind the Oberst in a semicircle.

Oberst Jung points a red ray at the map.

OBERST JUNG

The village of Khalazai.

(pointing the red beam)

The method of delivery of special forces by air. After the landing, it is necessary to urgently and accurately establish in which rooms the Taliban are located and where the hostages are being held. This will dictate the choice of fire density.

Work jewelry! The first thing the Taliban will do when you break into the premises is to start shooting hostages.

This will happen even if the Taliban did not plan to do it ahead of time. The key to success is in

the factor of surprise, coherence
of actions.

(to Bruno)

Do you understand, Ober-
lieutenant?!

BRUNO

(statutory)

That's right, Mr. Oberst!

The officers leave the Oberst's office. Zimmer stays in the
office and turns to Oberst Jung.

ZIMMER

Why did you assign the task to an
untrained Thevs, Mr. Oberst?

OBERST JUNG

Thevs and Shamsutdin have their own
scores. In a battle with his squad
in 1986, Thevs's father died. Let
him taste the sweetness of
retribution.

102. EXT. HELIPAD - NIGHT.

TF-47 garrison helipad. Oberst Jung and Ober-lieutenant Thevs
approach the helicopters. Bruno looks at his IWC-PILOT watch.
The hands of the clock show 02.15.

Two crews of NHI NH90 helicopters and two groups of special
forces - 20 fighters each - are waiting for departure for the
operation with slight excitement.

Oberst Jung screams, trying to be heard by Bruno over the
noise of running engines and rotating blades.

OBERST JUNG

Good luck, Ober-lieutenant!

BRUNO

(To Jung)

Thank you, Mr. Oberst!

Bruno jumps into the helicopter that has started to rise,
stands at the edge, the flight technician pushes Bruno
inside, slams the door.

103. EXT. KHALAZAI VILLAGE - EARLY MORNING.

TITLE: KHALAZAI VILLAGE, KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

2 helicopters hover over the roofs of the village, fighters land on the roofs by cables. They open fire on the Taliban running out.

Bruno and his group kick out doors with their feet and gun butts, break into the premises of adobe buildings, open fire on the Taliban.

They receive a fierce rebuff from the Taliban. Hostages are rushing to the sides, huddling in corners, trying to hide from the crossfire.

Bruno breaks into one of the rooms; there are dead and wounded inside.

A wounded Talib lies on the floor, looks at Bruno with a pleading look so that Bruno does not shoot him, Bruno comes closer, looms over Talib and, without hesitation, shoots Talib in the head.

The shooting stops.

BRUNO
(to special forces group)
Specify the losses!

Fighters are checking to see if there are any survivors among the killed Taliban. They turn over corpses with their feet, holding them at gunpoint.

Bruno, with his hands in leather mittens, takes a photo out of his breast pocket, approaches the corpses of the Taliban, turns them over with his foot, bends down, carefully investigates everyone's face, looks for leader Shamsutdin among the dead.

He understands that Shamsutdin is not among the killed Taliban. Annoyed.

BRUNO
(hissing with annoyance)
Gone!

SPECIAL FORCES MAN
Herr Ober-lieutenant!
We have two dead, three wounded.
"Der Spiegel" reporter Otto
Greenberg was wounded.

Bruno gets in touch with Robert Jung on the radio station.

BRUNO

(disappointedly)

Mr. Oberst, it's over!

(pause)

I have two dead, three wounded,
with varying degrees of severity.
The reporter of "Der Spiegel" is
also wounded... damn him!

OBERST JUNG

(serene)

What about Shamsutdin?!

BRUNO

He is not among the dead. But no
one left the perimeter.

(with anger)

I don't understand where we missed
him!

There is silence on the air.

OBERST JUNG

Bad!

(pause)

OK, after returning to base –
debriefing! As for the evacuation
of our dead and wounded, load them
into a helicopter and into Mazar-I-
Sharif. Load the Der Spiegel
reporter onto an armored personnel
carrier and take him to the MSF
Doctors Without Borders (MSF)
civilian hospital in Kunduz–
there's nothing for him to do in
our military hospital!
He already broke our operation.

Oberst Jung comes off the air, a special forces soldier
approaches Bruno.

SPECIAL FORCES MAN

Reporter Greenberg's translator, an
Afghan, was found. According to the
documents, Sultan Mukhadi. In a
shootout, he was shot in the head,
died on the spot.

BRUNO

I suppose Oberst Jung is not
interested in this.

There are five ATF DINGO-2 armored personnel carriers at the site of the operation.

TF47 special forces medics give Otto Greenberg an analgesic injection, the thigh stitched with a bullet is tightened with a tourniquet, bandages.

A helicopter has arrived. Bruno orders two commandos to load the bodies of 2 dead and wounded commandos on board. The board lifts off the ground, Bruno switches to Otto Greenberg.

BRUNO

(with dissatisfaction to
the commandos)

Load the reporter into an armored
personnel carrier! There is an
order to escort him to the MSF
hospital in Kunduz.

Bruno sits in the front next to the driver, Greenberg and two special forces men – in the back.

104. INT. ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIER ATF DINGO-2 – DAY.

Armored personnel carrier is moving, Bruno stares ahead with a glassy gaze, he rides silently, everything is boiling inside him. They drive into Kunduz. Bruno turns sharply back, grabs Otto by the collar and attacks Otto with a loud curse.

BRUNO

(to Otto)

What are you doing here?!
Why didn't you stay at home?!
You've disrupted our operation!
Two fighters were lost because of
you, two more were wounded,
Shamsutdin was missed!

OTTO

(pale from blood loss,
pain shock, analgesic)
You do your job, I do mine!

Bruno turns away silently.

105. EXT. MSF HOSPITAL – DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ.MSF HOSPITAL.

The ATF-DINGO-2 armored personnel carrier with the wounded

Otto Grinberg drives briskly into the courtyard of the Doctors Without Borders MSF hospital. The accompanying commandos help Otto get off, put him on a stretcher, and bring him into the emergency room.

Bruno comes in after them.

106. INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM – DAY.

The reception room has snow-white walls, the staff in ironed clothes, everything is in turmoil.

BRUNO

(astonished)

Well! After the heat of Kunduz,
this is a real paradise!
Here is an island of civilized
Europe in the medieval East!

There's a commotion in the waiting room. Doctors come running, then run away again – nobody cares about the wounded Otto. Bruno is very nervous, looking with his eyes for someone to get rid of Otto sooner. Bruno sees that the paling Otto is getting worse.

BRUNO

(conciliatory)

Where do you live in Germany?

OTTO

(peaceably)

In Munich!

BRUNO

(slightly delighted)

Great! And I'm from the south -from
Freiburg!
And what are you doing in
Afghanistan?!

OTTO

I am collecting material for an
article about the XX anniversary of
the withdrawal of Soviet troops
from Afghanistan.

BRUNO

To the anniversary of the
withdrawal of Soviet troops?!
(shows interest in the
topic)

OK! But the Soviet troops left
 twenty years ago, and how is this
 connected with the events in Omar-
 Kheyl?!
 How did you get there?!

Otto lifts himself slightly on the stretcher.

OTTO
 I'm a journalist!
 (unperturbed)
 My place is where things happen!

Exhausted, he leans back.

OTTO
 Ober-lieutenant, excuse me for
 being tactless, can I ask you about
 one thing?

BRUNO
 I hope it's not to write an article
 for you?! With all my desire to be
 useful to you, we must remember
 that I am a military member of the
 ISAF group, and I have a lot of
 responsibilities: a entrusted unit
 and demanding superiors.

OTTO
 The request is simple – you just
 need to stop by the Spinzar Hotel,
 where I rent a room, and pick up a
 large travel bag from there. It
 contains all my luggage: clothes,
 change of underwear.
 The room is paid by the end of the
 month, there will be no problems
 with access.
 (pause)
 And here's another thing: there's
 an old, battered notebook in the
 top drawer of the bedside table.
 Please put it in the bag.

A pleasant female voice speaking German is heard from behind
 Bruno.

SEETA (V.O.)
 Please put the wounded man on a
 gurney so that the orderly can take
 him to the operating room.

Bruno turns curiously, he is amazed - in front of him is a tall, beautiful oriental girl, her large dark brown eyes, long eyelashes, thick eyebrows against a light-skinned face, a thick black braid twisted into a ring reminded the stunned girl at the Mazar-I-Sharif airfield with her beauty. The girl is wearing a neat green medical suit - trousers and jacket, emphasizing a thin waist, lean loins, beautiful breasts, a badge "Dr. Akhmadzai" is attached to her chest.

Bruno, leaning over slightly, reads the name on the badge.

BRUNO

Frau Akhmadzai, what a surprise!
You speak excellent German.
It's a pity that I'm only finding
out about this now. At the
airfield, to put it mildly, you
were quite terse.

SEETA

(shyly)
This is my second language.

BRUNO

(surprised)
Strange. And I was sure that the
first one.

SEETA

I was born, and until last year I
lived in Germany, Munich.

An Afghan orderly appears, rolled up a gurney, inadvertently pushed Bruno with it. Bruno pulled back slightly.

SEETA

Excuse me, I must go.

Seeta gives a low command to the orderly in Dari.

SEETA

Take the gurney to the operating
room!

Seeta swims alongside with a graceful, dignified gait. Bruno gets excited.

Otto, riding off on a gurney, shouts to Bruno, who is numb, watching Seeta go.

OTTO

Ober-lieutenant! What about my request?!

BRUNO

(mentally)

I must definitely come back here! Perhaps Otto's request is God's providence that allows me to come here again.

Bruno, without taking his eyes off Sita and following her with his eyes, answers.

BRUNO

Good! Warn the hotel administration by phone call, I will try to do it one of these days.

107. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - EVENING.

The commanders of the special forces' groups are leaving Oberst Jung's office. Oberst Jung passes by and sits down at his desk.

Ober lieutenant Zimmer sits in the chair at Oberst Jung's desk. Bruno Thevs looks after the last person leaving and sits down in the chair opposite Zimmer.

Bruno is confused by Zimmer's presence, looks at Oberst Jung and addresses him.

BRUNO

(hesitating)

I have a question, Mr. Oberst!

Bruno looks at Zimmer.

OBERST JUNG

It's all right, Ober Lieutenant, tell me I have no secrets from counterintelligence.

BRUNO

This reporter from "Der Spiegel", Otto Greenberg, you remember him, made a household request, requiring, if you don't object, two hours of my time.

OBERST JUNG

Oh, I was thinking about him just now. This journalist may be very useful to us in the future.

(pause, Oberst thought)

OK! I rely on your responsibility, Ober-lieutenant, you are free!

Bruno comes out of Oberst Jung's office.

ZIMMER

(haughtily)

What a Kipling's soldier! I don't like these Deutsch-Russians. You never know what's in their head.

Oberst Jung grins.

OBERST JUNG

Take a closer look at him.

108. INT. SPORTS GYM - EVENING.

Bruno, dressed in a sports uniform, runs on a treadmill. Reduces the pace, looks at the clock, goes to a quick step, gets off the treadmill. Approaches the projectiles with a barbell, puts additional pancakes on the neck, proceeds to bench presses.

He finishes training, dries himself with a facial towel, drinks from a bottle of water.

Bruno goes to the locker room, takes a hot shower.

109. INT. BRUNO'S ROOM - EVENING.

Bruno enters his room with replenished forces. Helmut ZIMMER, his roommate, is awake.

Bruno greets Zimmer with a nod of his head, lies down on the cot dressed, looks at the ceiling, thinks. He takes a book out of the bedside table and plunges into reading.

HISTORICAL EVENTS FROM THE BOOK "THE GREAT GAME IN AFGHANISTAN"

110. EXT. ALIABAD VILLAGE - DAY.

TITLE: ALIABAD VILLAGE, NORTHERN AFGHANISTAN. THE HEADQUARTERS OF KURBASHI IBRAHIM BEK, 1929.

On the outskirts of the village, near a large yurt a dozen horses are tied on a pole. A RIDER gallops up. Dismounts, passes the horse's bridle to the guard. He hurries to a large yurt.

111. INT. BIG YURT - DAY.

Three dozen Basmachi are sitting in a circle inside the yurt, drinking tea, eating pilaf, boiled mutton with their hands, breaking off flat bread and passing it to each other.

In the back, facing the entrance, sits kurbashi Ibrahim bek, statuesque, broad-shouldered, dark-skinned with a black beard in a white turban and a national robe.

The rider enters the yurt.

RIDER
(loudly greeting)
"AsSalamu Alaikum!"

The rider disarms at the entrance, gives up his saber, goes inside, approaches Ibrahim bek, bends his knee, comes close to his ear, reports:

RIDER
Venerable Kurbashi!
A detachment of the Red Army
invaded Afghanistan this morning.
Their strength is up to 500 sabers.

112. EXT. AFGHANISTAN - DAY.

A large detachment of Uzbek kurbashi Ibrahim bek is moving to defeat Witmar's troops.

Ibrahim bek himself prances importantly ahead of the squad.

113. EXT. AFGHANISTAN - DAY.

Two fighters ride up to Witmar, who personally leads the squad.

THE FIGHTER

A detachment of Basmachi horsemen is two versts away. Five hundred sabers.

Witmar orders an assistant.

WITMAR

Put up 8 artillery pieces in the main direction!

Fighters begin to install guns and machine guns.

WITMAR (V.O.)

Install two machine guns on both sides of the road. Take the nearest section of road under the sights. Let the Basmachi cavalry get as close as possible. Open direct fire from artillery guns on my command. Hit the head of the approaching basmachs column with three guns, three - at the end, two - in the center. Complete the defeat with machine gun fire from the flanks.

Rows of Ibrahim Bek's Basmachi appears from behind the hill. Ibrahim bek calls his warriors to attack.

IBRAHIM BEK

Takbir! Allahu Akbar!

He rushes forward himself. The warriors follow him.

A Witmar detachment prancing 500 meters away puts its rifles in combat position and opens fire on the basmachs. After firing a couple of shots, the fighters turn their horses around and rush away from the advancing Basmachi.

The eyes of the galloping Basmachi sparkle with rage.

The Basmachi almost caught up with the retreating cavalry of Witmar. Suddenly, the Witmerians split into two groups, diverging to the right and to the left. In front of the galloping basmachs are the gun and machine gun positions of the Witmar.

Guns and machine guns open rapid fire, mowing down the ranks of the Basmachi. The Basmachi are fleeing the scene of the battle in panic. The Witmerians are catching up with them.

There is a saber fight going on.

Shooting back, only a handful of Basmachi with Ibrahim bek escape.

114. INT. BRUNO'S ROOM - EVENING.

Bruno finishes reading the chapter, puts the book in the nightstand, muses.

He remembers the beautiful Afghan doctor Ahmadzai. (slow-motion footage from the scene of meeting Seeta in the hospital).

Bruno returns from his thoughts, extinguishes the floor lamp, falls asleep positively.

115. INT. HOTEL SPINZAR- DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. SPINZAR HOTEL.

Bruno walks up to the reception desk, nods, and says something. The administrator nods in response. He turns around, removes the key from the stand and gives it to Bruno. Bruno thanks and walks away.

Bruno climbs the marble spiral staircase to the second floor.

116. INT. HOTEL. OTTO'S ROOM - DAY.

Bruno enters Otto's room, takes a large travel bag out of the closet, puts it on the bed, goes to the bedside table where the notebook is, pulls the handle, takes out an old notebook in a brown leather binding with frayed edges, casually throws it inside the bag.

The edges of two yellow photographs with streaks of dried blood protrude from a notebook that has fallen on top of things.

Bruno opens the notebook, sees on one of the pictures his young mother, nee Rosa Schmidt, on the other, six Soviet soldiers standing in an embrace. His father, Konstantin Thevs, who died in Afghanistan, is standing on the left, smiling.

NOTE: A COPY OF THIS COLLECTIVE PHOTO IS FRAMED AT THEIR HOME IN FREIBURG ON THE SIDEBORD IN THE LIVING ROOM. KONSTANTIN SENT THIS PICTURE IN A LETTER TO DZHAMBUL HOME IN EARLY 1985,

DURING THE FIRST MONTH OF HIS STAY IN AFGHANISTAN.

Bruno turns the photo over.

In the corner on the back of the photo it is written diagonally: "To my beloved wife Rosa and our son, whom we will call Bruno, from Dad. Kunduz. Afghanistan, February 1985."

Bruno is amazed.

117. INT. OTTO'S HOSPITAL WARD - DAY.

Frantic Bruno runs into the hospital Otto's ward. Bruno is holding an old notebook and photographs of his Father.

Otto is lying on a cot with a bandaged leg, peacefully having lunch, eating soup, thinking about something.

Bruno steps up to Otto, knocks him off the bed. There is a crash, the clink of broken dishes.

Otto is lying on the floor, terrified.

Bruno shoves photos under Otto's nose.

BRUNO

From where?!

OTTO

(indignantly)

Do you know, Ober-lieutenant, that it is indecent to rummage in other people's things?!

Seeing that Bruno is adamant, Otto responds.

OTTO

(sincerely)

From the Mujahideen!

BRUNO

(persistently)

Get ready! Let's go... and show the one who gave it to you!

OTTO

(serene)

First, it's not possible right now because I can't walk.
Secondly, I never disclose my sources, this is professional

ethics!

Bruno's high-pitched speech startled medical staff and three Afghan civilians lying on nearby beds. The nurse on-duty and Doctor Seeta Akhmadzai enter the ward.

SEETA
(in a firm voice)
What's going on?!

BRUNO
(realizing the presence of
the problem)
It's all right, Frau, we were
clarifying service issues.

SEETA
(in a firm voice)
This is not a military hospital;
official investigations are not
conducted here!
Please leave the ward!

Seeta pretentiously points with her hand to the exit.

BRUNO
(resigned)
Okay, I'll leave!

Bruno quickly leaves the room, walks down a long corridor. Otto jumps up from his bunk, leaning on crutches in a hurry to catch up with Bruno.

118. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY.

Otto comes out of the room, shouts after Bruno who has reached the end of the corridor.

OTTO
(loudly)
Wait, Ober-lieutenant!

Bruno stops. Otto hobbles towards him on crutches.

Together with Otto they leave the corridor into the hospital garden.

119. EXT. HOSPITAL GARDEN - DAY.

Otto and Bruno are sitting on a bench, having a conversation.

BRUNO

(bitterly)

These are the belongings of my
deceased father.

Bruno's eyes filled with moisture.

OTTO

(astonished)

So, your father was a Soviet
soldier and died in Khost Wa
Firing?!

BRUNO

Yes!

(pause)

After his death, my mother and I
moved to Germany.

OTTO

(with empathy)

There it is!

(pause)

I promise you, as soon as I switch
to the cane, we will certainly go
with you to the village in Khost Wa
Firing to the Mujahideen who gave
me these photos and a notebook.

(pause)

And now, as part of my promise, I
have two reciprocal requests to
you.

First, you need to go to the
brother of the deceased translator
Sultan Mukhadi, Yahya, and give his
family money from me. At the same
time, offer Yahya to work as a
translator on our trip to Khost Wa
Firing.

Second, I strongly ask you to
change from a military uniform to a
civilian one during the trip. Or
better yet, in traditional Afghan
clothes. My personal experience in
the tragedy in Omar Kheyl has shown
that it is not necessary to arouse
anger among the Taliban and poor
Afghans.

120. INT. OTTO'S HOSPITAL WARD - DAY.

Bruno is sitting on a chair next to Otto's bed in the hospital room. Otto takes a sealed envelope from a large travel bag and hands it to Bruno.

OTTO

The envelope contains money for the family of the deceased Sultan Muhadi and the address where you will find his brother Yahya Mukhadi.

121. EXT. HOSPITAL GARDEN - FLASHES OF DAWN.

Otto, leaning on a cane, walks around the hospital garden, waiting for Bruno.

A taxi with Bruno arrives, Otto gets in, the taxi is leaving.

122. EXT. YAHCHAN-KHURD VILLAGE - DAY.

TITLE: YAHCHAN-KHURD VILLAGE, KHOST WA FIRING COUNTY, BAGHLAN PROVINCE.

The taxi stops at the home of the former Mujahid one-armed Ismatullah. The passengers are getting out. An excited Ismatullah appears at Yahya Muhadi's call "Ismatullah".

Otto turns to Ismatullah, who has approached.

OTTO

(positively)

AsSalamu Alaikum Ismatullah!

ISMATULLAH

(suspiciously)

Vaaleikum AsSalam!

OTTO

(pointing with his hand)

This is the son of one of the "Shuravi" who died in the battle that you told me about. His name is Bruno.

Yahya translates Otto's words.

Ismatulla looks guiltily and sadly into Bruno's eyes and putting his right palm to his heart, bows his head.

Ismatullah is shivering with excitement, holding the stump of his left arm with his palm, hidden in the sleeve of a perukhan (Afghan long shirt) tied with a ribbon.

ISMATULLAH

(with empathy)

I am sincerely sorry. A lot of our Mujahideen and Shuravi died in that battle. You see...

(ostentatiously stretches out the stump of his left arm)

..in that war, I got badly hurt.

Ismatullah is shivering with excitement, showing the stump of his left arm hidden in the sleeve of a perukhan (Afghan long shirt) tied with a ribbon.

Yahya Muhadi translates Ismatullah's speech.

Sonorous children's voices are heard. A gang of children aged from seven to eleven years runs up. Three of them – two boys and a younger girl – are nailed to Ismatulla, take him in a tight embrace in the waist area.

BRUNO

(surprised)

Are these yours?!

ISMATULLAH

(proudly)

Al-Hamdu li-Llahi! My younger ones!

Bruno takes out hundreds of euro bills from his pocket, passes one to each of the children. The children take the money and, looking into Ismatullah's eyes, immediately hand it over to him.

BRUNO

(with joy)

Good upbringing!

Ismatullah is touched by the offering and puts his hand to his heart.

ISMATULLAH

Tashakur!

(with gratitude,

embarrassed)
It wasn't necessary at all.

Ismatullah gathers his thoughts, and with a wave of his hand invites Bruno, Otto and Yahya Mukhadi to go into the courtyard of his home.

123. INT. ISMATULLAH'S HOUSE - DAY.

Ismatullah, Bruno, Otto and Yahya Muhadi enter the house.

When they see outsiders, the women and girls who are busy in the yard around the house jump up from their seats and hurriedly leave.

Ismatullah and the guests take off their shoes, sit down on a colorful screen. One of the sons - a young man of eleven years old brings tea. Ismatullah pours it into bowls, begins the story.

ISMATULLAH

It was the middle of June 1986.

DOCUMENTARY VISUAL SERIES WITH AFGHAN MUJAHIDEEN ATTACKING SOVIET TRANSPORT CONVOYS

ISMATULLA (VO)

The Shuravi were pulling columns from Kunduz to Faizabad. Groups of Mujahideen attacked their columns and mined the highway. Our detachment was waiting for the order of Commander Kazi Kabir to descend from the mountains and strengthen these groups with weapons and additional manpower. In the early morning of June 16, 1986, we heard the sound of approaching helicopters and saw the landing troops. The confrontation was stubborn. There were dead and wounded on both sides. But Shuravi had a lot of them. The fight lasted all day. It continued at night. Then I was wounded and miraculously survived.

With his remaining hand, Ismatullah moves a fruit dish on the table closer to the guests.

ISMATULLAH

After two months of treatment in Pakistan, I returned to the squad. This coincided with the time when the Mujahideen were rebuilding the destroyed base. At the place where the Shuravi were storing their dead and wounded, under boulders, I found a notebook that had fallen out of the pocket of one of the Shuravi and two photos enclosed in it - six soldiers standing in an embrace and a Russian girl. The notebook was covered in blood.

(looking at Bruno)

The day your reporter friend came to Yahchan Khurd, promising to write the truth about the Afghan war, I told him about that dramatic battle and handed over these relics.

(pause)

The Russians were brave warriors, not like these cowards from ISAF.

Otto and Bruno exchange glances.

BRUNO

(resolutely)

Can we get to that place?!

ISMATULLA

Why not?! It's not far from here.

(lifting a beige pakol - Afghan headdress from his sweating forehead, with a reservation)

Unless, of course, you are ready to spend the night in the mountains?!

BRUNO

(resolutely)

We are ready!

124. EXT. VILLAGE OF YAHCHAN-KHURD - MORNING.

Ismatullah, Bruno and Yahya Mukhadi load blankets, a bag of provisions, leather bales with water on 2 donkeys and set out on their way. Otto sees them off and stays in the village.

125. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - TWILIGHT.

Ismatulla, Bruno and Yahya Mukhadi move along the bottom of a deep gorge, squeezed by mountain ranges at the mouths of narrow, rapidly flowing river.

126. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DARK.

The expedition stops moving, breaks up a bivouac. Ismatullah is lighting a bonfire. Bruno, Yahya Mukhadi, Ismatullah are warming themselves by the campfire. Ismatullah skillfully removes the kettle from the fire, pours tea into bowls for everyone, passes pieces of flatbread.

Everyone goes to bed.

Bruno is asleep. A venomous Gyrza snake crawls up to Bruno and stands ready to bite. With a sharp sound Ismatullah cuts the snake in half with his machete. Bruno wakes up to the sound, he is shocked.

127. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

The expedition approaches the village of Dekhmiran, which is located at the foot of the mountain with its back pressed against a gentle saddle.

Ismatullah leads Bruno and Yahya Muhadi to a saddle lying between two mountains.

Ismatullah stops, looks around, gets visibly excited. He turns to face one of the peaks. Covers his eyes with his palm from the blinding edge of the sun from behind the edge of the mountain and begins the narration.

FLASHBACK IN

128. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

TITLE: KHOST WA FIRING, BAGHLAN PROVINCE. THE MOUNTAIN STAGE OF OPERATION MANEUVER, JUNE 1986.

To the mountain plateau (saddle) a pair of Soviet MI-8MT helicopters flies up and hovers between the mountains.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

Early in the morning, Soviet helicopters arrived and began landing troops here.

Rebels who came out of hiding are hitting helicopters from grenade launchers from the slopes of the mountains.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

The site was under the control of our firing points. We immediately opened targeted fire and burned two of their helicopters in a short time.

Two MI-8MT helicopters are engulfed in flames, burning. The fire of the rebels is intensified by small arms fire.

Koster, Mongol, Sidor, Strela, Rust, Kostyan jump out of 2 burning helicopters with heavy weapons, they immediately join the battle. There is a stubborn fire confrontation.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

Our snipers hit several of their commanders, who were giving orders in battle, fighters, and disabled all radio station.

Rebel snipers hit the officer giving orders, fighters, and aim at portable radio stations.

FLASHBACK OUT

129. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

TITLE: OUR TIME.

Bruno is standing a meter and a half away from Ismatullah, attentively listening to his narrative from Yahya Mukhadi's translation.

Evidence of the battle has been preserved on the ground - rusted fragments of the blades and fuselage of burned Soviet helicopters, devastated rusty machine gun belts, scattered shell casings.

Bruno, breathing in air and closing his eyes, is mentally transported back to June 1986, feels like an eyewitness to the confrontation.

FLASHBACK IN

130. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

TITLE: YEAR 1986.

There is a stubborn battle, the crackle of bursts, the roar of exploding shells. The number of dead and wounded in "Shuravi" is growing.

Koster, Mongol, Rust, Strela and Sidor are active in battle. Kostyan selflessly hits with a machine gun, covers his comrades.

The "Shuravi" and the rebels are struck by fire.

Scouts are dragging wounded and dead comrades out of the zone of continuous fire into the natural folds of the terrain, behind boulders.

FLASHBACK OUT

131. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

TITLE: OUR TIME.

Bruno looks up. He closes his eyes. In his ears are the screams of fighters, the roar of grenade explosions, the crackle of machine gun fire.

FLASHBACK IN

132. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - NIGHT.

Scouts Rust, Sidor, Strela, Mongol, Koster, Kostyan (Bruno's father) stretch out in a long chain, wrap around the mountain from the adjacent saddle, set a distance, everyone sees the outlines of comrades ascending on both sides. They begin a silent hidden ascent.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

Night fell. The "Shuravi" decided to make a daring raid.

Kostyan follows in the center, Rust to his right, Strela to his left, and Mongol is even to the left.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

Then I just took up guard duty - I was a sentry. Suddenly in the

darkness I heard a crumble of small stones.

Kostyan, rising from the side of the saddle, is discovered by the rebel sentry, Ismatulla, who is carrying guard duty.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

After a moment a sturdy "shuravi" appears in front of me. As powerful as you are. I immediately fired an automatic burst at him, hitting him on the spot.

Amazed by the "Shuravi" who came close, the rebel sentry Ismatullah bellows: "Allahu Akbar" - and immediately focuses a burst from a machine gun on Kostyan.

FLASHBACK OUT

133. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - NIGHT.

TITLE: OUR TIME.

Bruno is shocked by Ismatullah's story.

Ismatullah takes a few steps forward and, turning, stamps his foot on the edge of the height.

ISMATULLA

Here!

(pointing downwards)

It was here!

Bruno has a rapid throbbing in his temples.

FLASHBACK IN

134. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - NIGHT.

TITLE: YEAR 1986.

Kostyan falls, rolls down the slope, rests against a boulder.

There is a hubbub of Dari at the top.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

Our whole squad woke up and took up arms, starting to shoot at the lowland where the "Shuravi" were.

The rebels open small-arms fire at the scouts from several barrels.

Strela is close to Kostyan. He crawls up to him and drags behind a boulder. Kostyan is no longer breathing.

Strela, without stopping, continues his rapid ascent, but is cut off by a short burst.

Rust, who is nearby, sees this, crawls up to Strela, hurriedly pulls him out of the affected area. Strela groans loudly. Rust quickly cuts a blood-soaked section of the mountain suit with a sharp bayonet knife, exposing the wound.

Strela is suffocating, trying to take a deeper breath to be able to say something.

STRELA

(barely)

Rust! I have a bad feeling about this. Do my request with the guys!

(pause, gaining strength)

After the demobilization, visit my mother in Leningrad!

RUST

(strictly)

Stop, Strela! We will come to Leningrad for your wedding. Mongol will build his tailagan in the Gulf of Finland.

Strela turns pale after a moment, raises his chin high and, wheezing, sharply relaxing his body, stops breathing. Strela's blue eyes remain open.

Rust palpates the ray pulse of Strela, it is not there.

Rust takes Strela's machine gun and, filled with rage, thirst for retribution, opens non-stop fire from it, rushes to the top.

Mongol rises from the side of Rust. As soon as Mongol runs into the dome of the mountain, he comes face to face with the sentry who killed Kostyan. The rebel is momentarily ahead of Mongol, pulling the trigger of his AKM first. A short burst throws Mongol back to the slope.

Mongol falls backwards, upside down. 5 shamanic tholes are moving up his neck from his chest. Mongol goes into agony, dies.

A group of scouts continues to advance.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

"Shuravi" were advancing from different sides, and we were no longer able to stop them. They ran to the top; I was able to defeat someone else. But while we were shooting at those who were rising from the saddle, we suddenly saw several "Shuravi" behind us, who came to our rear from where we were not expecting them.

Sidor, Koster and other scouts run out to the top from the back, no one is waiting for them there; they furiously, with loud obscenities, throw hand grenades at the rebels, finish them off with small arms fire.

The rebels at the top of the mountain are brutally destroyed, only some retire in the dark.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

The "Shuravi" started throwing grenades at us and hitting us with machine gun fire. The explosion of one of the grenades cut off my arm. It was hanging by tendons.

The rebel sentry, Ismatullah, retreats from the place of fire contact, his arm dangling on a tendon.

ISMATULLA (V.O.)

But, despite being seriously wounded with outside help with a handful of Mujahideen, I was lucky enough to escape.

(pause)

In the morning, helicopters arrived and then planes - they began bombing all the heights, and our Mujahideen left the area.

135. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

Mi-8MT helicopters hover over the top of the mountain.

The survivors - Sidor, Rust, Koster, and other scouts load the bodies of their fallen comrades in raincoat tents on board of helicopters: Kostyan, Strela, Mongol, and the wounded. They climb themselves.

The MI-8MT helicopter lifts off the ground and gains altitude.

136. INT. HELICOPTER - DAY.

In the helicopter, Sidor, Rust, and Koster look with bitterness at the dead lying on the raincoat tents - Strela, Kostyan, and Mongol.

FLASHBACK OUT

137. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

TITLE: OUR TIME.

Ismatullah finishes the narrative, looks down.

Bruno stands silently, taking deep breaths of the mountain air.

Bruno silently begins to collect the earth from the place where his father died in a cellophane bag, puts it in a backpack.

138. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

Ismatullah, Bruno and Yahya follow a narrow mountain path.

Ismatullah moves on foot, holding the donkey's bridle and leading Bruno and Yahya, who follow on donkeys.

The noise of falling stones - one, another, turned into a rockfall.

Ismatullah's donkey twitches, pulling Ismatullah towards the abyss.

Bruno and Yahya abruptly dismount and lean their backs against the slope.

The rockfall intensifies, the one-armed Ismatullah cannot hold his twitching donkey, they both shift to a steep cliff, the donkey pulls Ismatullah with him and falls into the abyss.

Ismatullah, who released the bridle from his hands, falls over the edge himself, remains hanging over the cliff, clinging with a death grip to the trunk of a chasmophyte

sticking out of a rock crack. The crunch of a tree being uprooted from a rock is heard.

Bruno rushes to help Ismatullah, clings to the back of his head with both hands, pulls him up, tries to prevent falling into the abyss. Ismatullah drags Bruno into the abyss with his weight.

Yahya, who arrived in time, clung to Bruno's belt, holding him from falling. All three are close to death.

Yahya shouts at Bruno in German:

YAHYA

Let him go, there's no way to save him!

Bruno suddenly imagines a picture of the distant past, as mujahid Ismatullah discharges a burst of machine gun fire at his father in the night, fatally wounding him.

FLASHBACK IN

139. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - NIGHT.

TITLE: YEAR 1986.

Kostyan jumps out from behind a boulder with a machine gun at the ready.

Ismatullah shouts "Allahu Akbar" as loudly as he can out of fear and fires an automatic burst at Kostyan; a long echo sounded in the night.

Kostyan's eyes remain glassy, his pupils dilate, his strength immediately leaves him, the soldier cannot resist and fall on the spot, and collapsing rolls down the slope, resting against a boulder at the end.

FLASHBACK OUT

140. EXT. THE MOUNTAIN REGION - DAY.

Bruno looks into the eyes of a confused Ismatullah, sees the horror of death. A moment later, Bruno pushes off from the rocky embankment with one hand and makes a dash with the other hand, pulling Ismatulla onto the path. Bruno, Ismatullah and Yahya lie exhausted on the path, coughing, inhaling air.

141. EXT. YAHCHAN-KHURD VILLAGE - EVENING.

Ismatullah, Bruno, Yahya Mukhadi in Yahchan Hard, say goodbye.

Ismatullah goes out to escort the guests out of the gate, passes Otto a package of goodies-fruits with persimmons, dried apricots. Otto accepts them.

Ismatulla, with a penitent look, extends his hand to Bruno to shake. Bruno holds out his hand in return. There is a handshake.

ISMATULLA

Forgive us, don't hold
a grudge. The years that have
passed since "Shuravi"'s departure
have opened our eyes to many
things. An epiphany, even if it
comes decades later, makes sense.

Bruno accepts Ismatullah's words without emotion. It is clear that Bruno's mind is in another place.

Bruno, Otto and Yahya get into a taxi waiting. Bruno is in the front seat next to the driver. Behind him is Otto, to the left of Otto is Yahya. The car is on its way.

Ismatullah remains standing by the road, waving after the departing taxi.

142. INT. TAXI - EVENING.

Bruno is sitting in the front seat, puts his hands into a weightless leather bag lying at the bottom in front of his feet and secretly screws a silencer into a GLOCK G46 pistol.

The taxi turns the corner.

Bruno suddenly turns to Yahya.

BRUNO

Stop the taxi!

Yahya translates the order to the taxi driver, who stops abruptly.

BRUNO

I'll be right back.

Bruno picks up his bag, abruptly gets out of the taxi and, leaving at a brisk pace, disappears around the corner.

Otto and Yahya are perplexed, they are at a loss.

143. EXT. YAHCHAN-KHURD VILLAGE - EVENING.

Bruno quickly steps towards Ismatullah, who is coming out of the gate with a donkey loaded with two flasks at the ready; the distance between Bruno and Ismatullah is rapidly closing.

Bruno takes the safety off the pistol in his bag.

Bruno is already approaching Ismatulla.

At this moment, a group of four of his younger children runs out from behind the gate to Ismatullah, they hug Ismatullah in their belt, drag him into the courtyard of the house.

Bruno is stunned. Ismatullah has figured out Bruno's insidious plan and, keeping his composure, holds out his hand to Bruno.

Bruno holds out his own in return. There is a handshake.

144. INT. HOSPITAL - MIDNIGHT.

Limping Otto and Bruno, helping to carry Ismatullah's gifts, sneaking on tiptoe so as not to cause unnecessary noise, are walking along the hospital corridor to the ward.

At the staff lounge, they suddenly come face to face with Dr. Akhmadzai, who is on duty at night. Bruno froze for a moment, immediately came to his senses.

BRUNO

(softly)

Frau Ahmadzai, how glad I am to see you! Since our previous meeting, I have been reproaching myself for not asking your name. I want to fix this error.

(smiled)

Seeta accepts Bruno's words without emotion.

SEETA

My name is Seeta!

BRUNO

A beautiful name - Seeta!
Are your parents from Kunduz?

SEETA

Yes, from Imam Sahib, a county north of Kunduz.

BRUNO

Are you a Tajik yourself?

SEETA

I am a Pashtun of the Gilzai tribe. Our roots are from the southeast - Paktia.

The ancestors moved to Kunduz during the time of Emir Amanullah Khan in 1925. Then there was a state policy of Pashtunization of the northern territories. The peoples of the north - Tajiks, Uzbeks, Hazaras - moved to the south, southeast - to Kandahar, Ghazni, Jalalabad, the places of traditional residence of the Pashtun tribes, and the Gilzai, Karlani Pashtuns - to the northeast to Katagan.

BRUNO

And how did you end up in Germany?

SEETA

In 1980, after the entry of Soviet troops, my parents and my young older brothers emigrated to Germany, Munich, where I was born years later.

Bruno is happy about the conversation that has started. The hubbub in the corridor interferes with communication. Bruno, wanting to question Seeta, barely grabs her by the elbow, dragging her aside. Seeta pulls out her hand, looks accusing.

SEETA

It's not customary in Afghanistan!
This is not Germany!

BRUNO

(apologetically)
Excuse me, Seeta!

SEETA

(omitting the incident,
continues)

After school, I graduated from the Medical Faculty of the University of Munich. In 2008, after passing an interview, I got a job at the international humanitarian mission MSF "Doctors without Borders". That's all I'm ready to tell you about myself right now.

(smiles)

And now I must go.

Seeta goes to one of the wards.

HISTORICAL EVENTS FROM THE BOOK "THE GREAT GAME IN AFGHANISTAN".

FLASHBACK IN

145. EXT. AFGHANISTAN, CARAVANSERAI — DAY.

The city square of the "Kunduz Circle" is crowded, horses are tied to poles at the entrance.

TITLE: Kunduz. Caravanserai, 1929.

There is a gathering of elders, clergy, officials. Local elders sit on long benches in the first row. Next to the elders are large Uzbek, Turkmen kurbashi - Ibrahim bek, Ishan-Khalifa Kyzyl-ayak, Mahmud-bek, Utan-bek, and others.

There are armed people behind kurbashi - numerous guards, all in a turban, in dressing gowns, with sabers and rifles.

Vis-a-vis dignitaries are a crowd of people - all men, no women.

From the mouth of the HERALD, elderly, gray-bearded Afghan in an expensive robe and a black turban, an appeal sounds.

HERALD

People of Afghanistan! The Kafirs
have set dirty feet on our holy
land, captured Balkh, Kelif,
Deydadi, Mazar-I-Sharif, and
Tashkurgan, and are now heading for
Kabul. All for holy jihad! To burn
kafirs in hell!

146. INT. A LARGE ROOM. ORIENTAL INTERIOR WITH CARPETS — DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. THE HEADQUARTERS OF NAIBUL-HUKUM, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF KATAGAN-BADAKHSHAN PROVINCE.

A nobleman, the governor-General of the Katagan-Badakhshan province of NAIBUL-HUKUM, is sitting on a large cot, drinking tea, taking raisins from a menagerie on the table, thinking about something.

ADJUTANT

Your Highness, kurbashi Ibrahim Bek
has arrived.

NAIBUL-KHUKUM

(he climbs off the cot)

Let him in!

Ibrahim Bek proudly enters the hall, handing over a saber and a revolver with a holster to the adjutant at the entrance.

IBRAHIM BEK

AsSalamu Alaikum!
(politely nodded his head)

NAIBUL-KHUKUM

Alaikum Salam, dear Ibrahim Bek!
(ingratiatingly)
Yesterday your squad was defeated
by the Red Army.
I am so sorry.

IBRAHIM BEK

(nodded his head,
accepting sympathy)
I lost most of my people.
(with excitement,
courteously)
I do not quite understand, dear
Naibul-Khukum, how it happened that
a detachment of the Red Army
crossed the state border of the
Emirate without meeting a worthy
rebuff from the Afghan government
forces?! Why are my soldiers
carrying out the mission to protect
Afghan sovereignty?!

NAIBUL-KHUKUM

Dear Ibrahim Bek!
I have to remind you: when the Red

Army smashed your detachments and drove them from their homes, you found salvation here, beyond the Amu Darya.

We have accepted your families, given you shelter, endowed you with land. Afghanistan is now your land! It's time to repay the kindness! Stand up for protection!

IBRAHIM BEK

(reducing the fervor)

With all my desire, my army is not able to resist the Red Army! The forces and logistics are incomparable.

Naibul-Khukum calmly listens to Ibrahim bek, hands him a dispatch with the royal coat of arms.

NAIBUL-KHUKUM

(in a calm tone)

This is a letter from Kabul.

(slowly)

His Holiness the Emir demands that you, dear Ibrahim Bek and other leaders of the Basmachia in northern Afghanistan, immediately send your detachments against the Kafirs!

Otherwise, you and other kurbashi should lay down all the weapons available to your detachments and, obeying the will of the Holy Emir, leave Afghanistan with your families!

IBRAHIM BEK

(with dignity)

Our weapons are not directed against Afghanistan! It's ours, we got it in battle! And while we're alive, we won't give it to anyone!

Frustrated by the pressure of Naibul-Hukum, Ibrahim bek stops the conversation, picks up his abandoned weapon at the entrance.

Naibul-hukum's face expresses dissatisfaction with Ibrahim bek's answer, he shook his head in disbelief.

147. EXT.NAIBUL-HUKUM HOUSE-DAY.

Ibrahim bek walks briskly out of Naibul-Hukum's house. The discontent on his face increases. He approaches the horse, takes the bridle from the groom's hands, famously jumps on the horse and retreats.

FLASHBACK OUT

148. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - DAY.

Oberst Jung, Bruno, and a group of officers are present in the office. Everyone is sitting at a large table; at the head of the table is Oberst Jung.

OBERST JUNG

Intelligence channels reported that on the night of October 18-19, a meeting of the Taliban leadership will be held in the Gundai village of Chahar-dara district of Kunduz province under the chairmanship of Abdul Rahman. The goal is to establish cooperation between the Taliban during the attack on the TF-47 garrison.

(to Bruno)

Your group, Ober- Lieutenant, will have an urgent flight by NHI NH90 helicopters to the area of operation near the village of Gundai. Hanging over the building where the Taliban leaders are scheduled to meet, destroy them with the fire of onboard machine guns.

149. EXT. GUNDAI VILLAGE - NIGHT.

TITLE: GUNDAI VILLAGE, KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

A special operation is underway. Active pockets of Taliban resistance are suppressed on the ground from NHI NH90 helicopters hovering in the air. The group of Thevs begins to disembark from helicopters and surrounds the building where the Taliban are entrenched, continuing the fight on the ground.

There is an active confrontation between the special forces

and the Taliban.

Taliban leader Mullah Abdul Rahman and several other Taliban commanders come out with their hands up, surrendering. The group of Ober -Lieutenant Thevs escorts the Taliban into a helicopter.

The helicopters are taking off.

150. EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY.

Otto limps around the hospital garden along the benches, talking on a mobile phone with the EDITOR of "DER SPIEGEL" from Hamburg.

EDITOR (V.O.)

(male voice)

Otto, we strongly recommend that you return to Germany for treatment!

OTTO

(adamantly)

Thank you for your concern. The wound is already healing, I am able to work fully. We will be in touch, goodbye!

EDITOR (V.O.)

Goodbye!

Otto ended the conversation.

There is a loud sound, two attack helicopters with the image of the national flag of Afghanistan fly low over the ground. Seconds later came the rumble of heavy explosions.

151. INT. HOSPITAL - DAY.

Otto, with a quick limping step, leaning on a cane, follows to the middle of the hospital corridor, where the desk of the nurse on duty is located.

The phones rang, there is a commotion. The medical staff on duty runs along the hospital corridor to the exit, loads into ambulances, with loud sirens turned on, hurriedly leaves for a call.

Otto goes to the working TV in the hospital corridor, starts watching the news. In local TV news with English titles, the

ANNOUNCER reports.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

At 11.00 a.m., the Afghan military aviation, supported by ISAF forces, carried out an airstrike on the village of Daftani in Dasht-e-Archi County, northeast of the city of Kunduz. At the time of the airstrike, celebrations were held at the Daftani Madrasah following the results of the competition of Koran reciters - Hafiz children from 6 to 13 years old. At the time diplomas and gifts were being awarded.

152. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Yakub Khan, standing at the entrance to the teahouse, makes excuses to Otto.

YAKUB KHAN

(to Otto)

Don't get me wrong, in many ways I condemn the policies and actions of the Taliban, and I don't agree with the Honorable Shamsutdin in everything. That's why I stay away from them. I would also recommend you to take into account that during the release of hostages in the village of Khalazai, among whom were you, Mr. Otto, Shamsutdin's people were killed. And he himself, it is important to note, miraculously survived. Therefore, they are unlikely to be happy to see you alive.

OTTO

(to Yakub Khan)

And you explain that I am a journalist!
My job is collecting authentic material. I only ask you to allow me to the local population of the village of Daftani, to the victims who lost their children.

YAKUB KHAN
 (pessimistically)
 OK, I'll try.

Otto walks with Yahya Mukhadi deep into the teahouse, takes the usual cot, and makes an order. Out of the corner of his eye, he watches Yakub Khan remaining at the entrance. Yakub Khan is calling on the phone to arrange a meeting with someone. Otto watches the visitors who come into the teahouse, at the same time, together with Yahya, slowly eats lamb kebab, flatbread, and drinks tea.

A gray-bearded man HALFUTDIN of about fifty in a blue perukhan and a light turban enters Yakub Khan's teahouse. Yakub Khan leads the man to the cot where Otto and Yahya are sitting, points with his palm at the man.

YAKUB KHAN
 This is the one you need.

Otto and Yahya politely get off the couch, invite the guest to sit down together. Yakub Khan calls Zalmai, orders tea for the guest, returns to the entrance himself. The guest silently takes off his shoes, climbs onto the cot, sits down in a corner.

Otto turns to the guest. Yahya synchronously translates Otto's speech without hesitation.

OTTO
 I am Otto Greenberg, a reporter for the German magazine Der Spiegel.
 (nodding at Yahya Muhadi)
 This is my translator Yahya Muhadi. His brother, Sultan Mukhadi, one of the hostages who died during the liberation in the village of Khalazai.

The guest-parliamentarian nods his head, putting his palm to his heart, expressing his condolences to Yahya.

Halfutdin, looking at Otto, asks dryly.

HALFUTDIN
 (looking at Otto, coldly)
 I am Halfutdin. What do you want?!

OTTO
 I ask to be admitted to the village of Daftani so that I can interview

residents, and if possible, the families of the victims.

HALFUTDIN

(with a pause)

Good!

(looks piercingly)

We will guide you to Daftani and are ready to ensure your safety. In return, we must receive truthful coverage of this outrage, without distortion. Exactly as it is.

OTTO

I promise you to shoot a report on photo and video cameras and send it to the editorial office along with the written material. This will complicate the falsification attempt.

HALFUTDIN

Tomorrow at dawn at 5.00 on the southern outskirts of Daftani.

OTTO

Agree!

Otto is pleased, climbs off the couch with Yahya, warmly thanks Yakub Khan for the meeting. At the exit of the teahouse, Otto claps in a handshake, leaving Yakub Khan a few hundred euros. Zalmai accompanies Otto and Yahya Mukhadi, calls a taxi.

153. EXT. HOSPITAL — DAY.

Otto takes a taxi to the entrance to the courtyard of the MSF hospital. The courtyard is filled with ambulances and more than a hundred Afghans. Male hubbub is heard, female sobs. The MSF hospital is filled with children wounded in the village of Daftani.

154. EXT. DAFTANI VILLAGE — FLASHES OF DAWN.

TITLE: DAFTANI VILLAGE, KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

Against the background of the departing taxi, Otto and Yahya approach the waiting Halfutdin. Halfutdin greets them dryly, looks sharply into Otto's eyes. Muhadi translates everything.

HALFUTDIN

Do you confirm the fulfillment of
our requirements?!

OTTO

(firmly)

I confirm!

Halfutdin leads Otto and Yahya through the narrow streets of Daftani. They approach the building of the village mosque. Its facade is riddled with a thousand fragments of bombs; from the edge you can see the sagging frame of the tent erected for the festivities, the roof torn off by the explosion, heaps of pairs of children's shoes left behind.

Otto takes the camera out of the bag, sets the current time, starts shooting. The place of celebrations, where the children were, is abundantly covered with blood. Scattered around are scraps of clothing fabrics, small fragments of human bodies. Otto leads the camera smoothly, misses nothing.

A large group of men gathered at the Daftani Mosque, passionately discussing yesterday's tragedy. Halfutdin brings Otto and Yahya, covers his face with a piece of turban against the background of the crowd, leaves only his eyes, points his thumb at himself, orders Otto to take himself off first in the report.

HALFUTDIN

(heartfelt)

Corrupt government officials said that the Afghan Air Force carried out a targeted air strike on the village of Daftani in Kunduz province, destroying a Taliban training center and thirty of its militants. Among those killed, Taliban leader Mullah Biryani, who allegedly arrived from the Quetta Shura, and nine field commanders. It was also said that none of the civilians were injured in the airstrike. Now you will see for yourself that there was no training center in Daftani, but there was a mass murder of children.

Halfutdin finishes, steps aside, makes way for an interview with a resident of Daftani, a lanky dehqan MOHAMMAD ISHAN in a brown perukhan, beige pakol.

MOHAMMAD ISHAN

When helicopters appeared in the sky, the children got scared and started shouting: "They will drop bombs on us! They will drop bombs on us!", and the adults calmed them down. "No, that's not going to happen! Don't be afraid!"

However, it happened!

(emotionally, wiping his tears with the sleeves of perukhan)

More than 200 children attended the ceremony. They were 11-12 years old, a little older, even younger. I was lucky, I was standing a little further away, and I miraculously survived. It's better, instead of children, all the adults who were on the holiday died!

A bony dehkan HADJI GHULAM holds a gray donkey with fascines by the bridle - with a tremor in his voice, sorrow in his eyes.

HADJI GHULAM

They do not spare us or our children! O Allah, why do we have this grief?!

Halfutdin leads Otto and Yahya through the narrow streets of Daftani past the dwellings, women's wailing, sobbing, crying can be heard from the courtyards. Parents and relatives say goodbye to the dead children before taking the bodies to the cemetery.

They enter the courtyards, Halfutdin raises his hand, makes it clear to the residents of Daftani that kafirs (infidels, not Muslims) Otto and Yahya are under his protection. Otto is serene, continues to shoot everything that appears on camera.

A BLACKSMITH NAMED ABDUL KHALID

(sitting by his son's body)

My son was only thirteen years old!
(wipes tears from his eyes with cracked fingers)

He learned the Koran by heart and was invited to the awards. On this day, he dressed festively, was especially happy.

They leave the Blacksmith's yard and enter the neighboring yard.

Women are sobbing over the bodies of two children. The men are standing on the sidelines.

AN AFGHAN WOMAN DRESSED IN A BURGUNDY BURQA moans, stroking the bodies wrapped in a shroud.

AFGHAN WOMAN DRESSED IN A BURGUNDY
BURQA

(moaning, sobbing)

My two sons have memorized the Quran. Finally, the long-awaited day of their awarding with diplomas, participation in the ceremony of tying the turban came. The sons wanted it so much. The day before they brought home two flower wreaths, they asked me to put them on them on my return from the celebrations. I went out to meet them on the street, holding in my hands the wreaths they had prepared, I was waiting, but they were still not there. Suddenly two helicopters flew low in the sky, and I heard four loud explosions, followed by screams. A little while later, their father returned, carrying the bodies of our two sons on his shoulders. When he entered the house, he told me: "Our sons learned the book of the Almighty by heart and immediately went to meet him."

HALFUTDIN

(covering his face with a piece of turban – on camera)

Among those killed in the airstrike in Daftani, 101 children were killed, more than 100 were injured. 37 children will be buried today in Daftani. The bodies of children from other villages have already been taken by their parents for burial in other places. I draw everyone's attention!

(raised his index finger)

There were no Taliban fighters

among the dead and wounded in the airstrike in Daftani, but only civilians.

The sun is setting. Otto and Yahya come out of Daftani; they are depressed.

EVENTS FROM THE BOOK "THE GREAT GAME IN AFGHANISTAN".

FLASHBACK IN

155. EXT. AFGHANISTAN, ALIABAD - DAY.

TITLE: ALIABAD. KUNDUZ PROVINCE, 1930.

In the village, a group of military Afghan government troops and tribal formations with sabers and rifles break into the homes of local Uzbeks, Tajiks, Turkmens, and Hazaras. They rob, pillage, harshly push back the owners with weapons, take away their cattle, take away food, set fire to homes. They bring out the men. Women are crying, clinging to them.

156. EXT. AFGHANISTAN, KHANABAD - DAY.

TITLE: KHANABAD. KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

The city square is filled with people. There is a long pedestal in the center. On the pedestal is a row of a dozen pillars with gallows. A decapitation block is equipped on the side of the gallows.

The government is carrying out a public execution of 35 captured soldiers of kurbashi Ibrahim bek, their hands are tied behind their backs, they are brought in turn, executed. A cruel sight. With each execution - hanging, beheading, a hubbub grows in the crowd.

FLASHBACK OUT

157. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - DAY.

In the office of Oberst Jung, Oberst himself and Ober lieutenant Zimmer.

Oberst is sitting at the table; Zimmer is submitting documents for signature.

The phone rings, Oberst Jung picks up the phone. Brigadier General Markus Neumann is on the return line.

OBERST JUNG
 (ahead with a greeting)
 Hello, Mr. Brigadier General.

Markus Neumann is talking on the speakerphone in his office. During the conversation, he sharpens a pencil with a blade on the latest issue of Der Spiegel. In front of him, a glass is filled with sharpened pencils.

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)
 Hello, Oberst!
 Tell me, which of the German
 journalists are hanging around
 there now?
 (pause)
 Otto Kruger from "Der Spiegel", is
 there?!

OBERST JUNG
 (anticipating the problem)
 Otto Greenberg!

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)
 Greenberg! Did we rescue him from
 captivity?!

OBERST JUNG
 That's right, Mr. Brigadier
 General, him!

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)
 His article in "Der Spiegel" about
 the airstrike in Daftani made a lot
 of noise. In the Bundestag, ISAF,
 Pentagon, Bundeswehr – everyone is
 very nervous. He was wounded,
 wasn't he, as I recall?

OBERST JUNG
 That's right, Mr. Brigadier
 General, he was!

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)
 And what is he still doing there?!

OBERST JUNG
 He is being treated at the MSF
 hospital, Mr. Brigadier General.

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)
 (raising his tone)
 So send him to hell to Germany!

OBERST JUNG

I can't, Mr. Brigadier General. MSF Hospital is an international civilian institution. I'm not Greenberg's boss. He has his own management in Hamburg. In general, I suggest we think about whether we should quarrel with Der Spiegel? Journalists are scandalous people, it's better not to fight with them. They will begin to walk on our heels, sniffing out fried things, destroying the network of agents built up over the years.

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)

(already calmly)

Oh well. Then block his access to the places of incidents, contacts with the local population when collecting malicious information.

OBERST JUNG

It's impossible, Mr. Brigadier General. Unfortunately, they have their own sources of information, and they are free to move.

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)

(with annoyance)

Unfortunately! But we release them from captivity, and often by sacrificing our people!

OBERST JUNG

I'll think about it, I'll try to do something, Mr. Brigadier General.

MARKUS NEUMANN (V.O.)

All right, Oberst! Keep me posted.

Oberst Jung hung up, immediately calls the assistant.

OBERST JUNG

Urgently call Ober-lieutenant Thevs to me.

There is a knock-on Jung's office.

BRUNO

Mr. Oberst! Ober-lieutenant Thevs

has arrived by your order!

Oberst Jung comes out from behind a large table, offers to sit down on a paired leather chair by the coffee table with a gesture of his hand. Both sit down.

OBERST JUNG

Ober-lieutenant, as far as I know,
you are in contact with reporter
Otto Greenberg.

BRUNO

That's right, Mr. Oberst, I support
it!

OBERST JUNG

(with a squint)
And where is Greenberg now?

BRUNO

Still recovering at MSF hospital.

OBERST JUNG

(almost friendly)
This Greenberg, with his material
about the airstrike in Daftani,
raised a big stir in society. The
big bosses called from Calv; they
are extremely indignant at the
publication of his article in Der
Spiegel.

(pretentiously)

I consider it necessary for you,
Ober-lieutenant, to go to the
hospital to Greenberg right now
and, as he risked his own and the
lives of his subordinates - in the
name of his salvation, insist on an
immediate departure to Germany.

BRUNO

Yes, Mr. Oberst!

158. INT. HOSPITAL. OTTO'S WARD - DAY.

Hospital ward, a conversation between Bruno and Otto.

BRUNO

(complacently)
Otto! We managed to become friends
with you. I sincerely don't want to

spoil the relationship with you,
but they expect a result from me.

Seeta enters the ward; she looks tired and depressed.

BRUNO
(happily, jumps up from
his seat)
Seeta!

OTTO
(brightening up)
Frau Akhmadzai! How convenient!
Do you have a private room where
the three of us could retire for a
while?

Bruno is discouraged. Seeta thinks a little, remembers something, goes to get the keys of the senior nurse's room.

Otto nods at the bedside table.

OTTO
Bruno, please take my video camera
from the nightstand.

159. INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR— DAY.

Bruno and Otto leave the ward, walk through the throng of the hospital corridor filled with many beds with wounded children from the village of Daftani, their relatives.

They pass on, they see a young Afghan woman with a blue burqa thrown back, standing at the door to the operating room. A European doctor comes out to the Afghan woman, removes the mask, informs her through the transfer of an Afghan nurse that her son has died. The silence is broken by the wail of the unhappy mother, which turns into a heart-rending sob.

Dumbfounded, Otto and Bruno approach the head nurse's room. Seeta is already in place, opens the room, turns on the light.

160. INT. HOSPITAL SENIOR NURSE'S ROOM — DAY.

Otto, Bruno and Seeta enter the head nurse's room. Seeta is going to leave.

OTTO

Seeta, please stay for a while,
please.

Otto pulls up a chair and offers Seeta a seat. Seeta prefers not to sit down; looks at the clock.

SEETA

Okay, but not for long!

Otto takes the video camera from Bruno's hands, puts it on the table, and turns it on. On a small screen with the shooting date continuously flashing in the lower corner, the village of Daftani appears, the facade of a local mosque damaged by an explosion, the lopsided construction of a festive tent with a torn roof, a blood-soaked playground with many pairs of children's shoes left in place after the tragedy, small fragments of human bodies.

Interviews of residents at the mosque, parents sitting by the bodies of their dead children begin. Otto doesn't comment on anything. Bruno doesn't take his eyes off the screen. Seeta stands with her back against the wall, silently wiping her tears.

OTTO

(loudly)

Bruno! The ISAF coalition prefers
to hide this inhuman crime,
everything is clear with them!
And what do you personally think
about the cynical airstrike?!
Do you also think that such crimes
are permissible in the XXI
century?! What is the difference
between ISAF and the fascists of
the Third Reich, who wiped out
thousands of cities and villages in
your Homeland of the USSR,
exterminated 30 million people,
branded the German people with
curses and eternal guilt before
humanity?!

Bruno is silent, shocked, dejected, depressed.

FLASHBACK IN

161. EXT. VILLAGE - DAY.

BRUNO'S MEMORIES

(Slow motion) Bruno breaks into one of the rooms; there are dead and wounded. A wounded Talib is lying on the floor, looking at Bruno with a pleading look that Bruno would not shoot at him. Bruno stands up, looming over Talib, aims his machine gun at Talib's head. It's getting dark.

FLASHBACK OUT

162. INT. HOSPITAL SENIOR NURSE'S ROOM - DAY.

Otto, Bruno and Seeta are in the room. Seeta stands with her back against the wall. Bruno and Otto are sitting at the table. Bruno turns to Otto.

BRUNO

Otto, how long are you planning to stay in Kunduz? I see a real threat to your life; you should seriously think about personal safety. Scandalous journalistic activity displeases both the ISAF and the Afghan government. Eliminating you by the hands of ISAF specialists or bribed Taliban is an easily doable task.

OTTO

(sincerely)

I have to finish collecting material about the presence of Soviet troops here. I think it will take a month.

BRUNO

(with pessimism)

It is hard to believe in your willingness to leave Afghanistan.

163. EXT. THE GARDEN OF THE HOSPITAL - IT'S GETTING DARK.

Bruno and Seeta are sitting on a shady bench in the depths of the hospital garden, tenderly looking at each other, silent.

SEETA

(breaks the silence)

Bruno, were you born in the Soviet Union?

BRUNO

(with surprise)

Yes.

(pause)

I was born in Kazakhstan, in Dzhambul. My ancestors came from Germany to Russia in 1762.

SEETA

(with sympathy)

Is it true that your father died in Afghanistan?

(pause)

Mr. Greenberg informed me about this.

BRUNO

Really!

SEETA

And where did this happen?

BRUNO

Here nearby, in the mountains of Khost Wa Firing.

SEETA

(with empathy)

I'm sorry, Bruno!

(changing the subject,
smiling)

I imagine the astonished faces of my relatives who found out about the courtship of "Shuravi"'s son.

BRUNO

(with a smile)

Will it make things worse after I'm an ISAF serviceman?

SEETA

You know, the attitude of Afghans to Shuravi is different, ambiguous. Yes, the war in the 1980s greatly spoiled it. But there were a lot of good things. My parents tell me

that the Soviet Union, before the war in Afghanistan in the 1980s, built factories, factories, factories, a large hydroelectric power plant "Naglu", founded a Polytechnic institute in Kabul, laid a tunnel on Salang.

Bruno takes Seeta's palms in his overworked hands with protruding veins, looks intently into her eyes.

BRUNO

(with a smile)

So, I still have facilitating circumstances?!

(pause)

Seeta feels awkward, lowers her gaze, takes her hands away, pays attention to the time of Bruno's watch.

SEETA

(anxiously)

Oh, it's time for me to run!

Bruno escorts Seeta to the door of the hospital, she disappears into the crowd of the corridor.

164. INT. OFFICE SPACE - EVENING.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. TF-47 HEADQUARTERS.

Bruno passes by the window of the TF-47 duty headquarters, goes to the office of Oberst Jung, the DUTY OFFICER calls out to him.

DUTY OFFICER

Ober-lieutenant, Oberst Jung is not in place. In the morning, his son Alfred, a cadet at the Munich Military Medical Academy, came to see him.

Bruno is delighted with the postponement of the report on sending Otto to Germany.

BRUNO

(with joy)

At least one good piece of news!

165. INT. BRUNO'S ROOM - EVENING.

Bruno enters his room, sits down at the table, takes out the book "The Great Game in Afghanistan" from the nightstand, starts reading.

HISTORICAL EVENTS FROM THE BOOK "THE GREAT GAME IN AFGHANISTAN".

FLASHBACK IN

166. EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF ALIABAD - EVENING.

TITLE: THE OUTSKIRTS OF ALIABAD. THE HQ OF KURBASHI IBRAHIM BEK, 1930.

There are many bonfires in the night. Basmachi are sitting around the campfires in the dark, slightly illuminated by the flashes of fire.

A large hearth is burning, a crowd of armed Basmachi is sitting around, looking at the fire, drinking tea from bowls. In the center, the leaders of the Uzbek and Turkmen Basmatism, kurbashi Ibrahim Bek and ISHAN KHALIFA Kyzyl-ayak, are sitting and talking.

A cauldron with pilaf is installed on the hearth next to them. The cook opens the lid, puts the pilaf in the bowl and serves the kurbashi. He closes the lid and moves away.

Ibrahim bek addresses Ishan Khalifa.

IBRAHIM BEK

(bitterly)

The assistance of Central Asian emigration and local tribesmen has been extremely reduced.

The people are exhausted, people are tired of the war.

Government troops break into houses, empty food supplies, rob, steal cattle, leave people without means of livelihood, burn homes. My detachments are drained of blood, they continue to suffer irreparable losses.

Most of the friendly detachments have been disarmed, some have transferred to the service of the emir.

Those who refuse to lay down their

arms are exterminated and executed. In just a month, I lost 1300 warriors killed. The emir demands to witness to him the fullness of the royal authority, to dissolve my army of one and a half thousand, leaving only 200 soldiers.

ISHAN KHALIFA

(with empathy)

It is already obvious that it is no longer possible to stay in Afghanistan! We have to leave! You just must choose - to Iran or beyond the Amu Darya.

(pause)

If your proposal to join forces oppose the Soviets is still in force, I confirm my readiness.

IBRAHIM BEK

The best direction for us is the Soviet territory. Wherever we go, we are required to hand over our weapons everywhere.

In the worst case, there, in our native places, we will hand over weapons to the Soviet government... Let the Bolsheviks kill us rather than the Afghans!

167. EXT. RUSSIA. PARK-GARDEN - DAY.

TITLE: MOSCOW REGION, ZUBALOVO-4, GOVERNMENT COTTAGE OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE CPSU STALIN I.V.

Cloudy, drizzling rain.

General Secretary Stalin I.V. in a military cap, military tunic, boots, covered with a plaid sits on a bench and enthusiastically feeds a flock of pigeons. He takes millet from a paper bag and throws it to the birds.

At the edge of the bench, shielding Stalin I.V. from the rain with a black umbrella, stands a young slender captain of the NKVD.

In front of Stalin I.V. stands an NKVD GENERAL in uniform, cap, round glasses with a black "brush" mustache, reading a report to Stalin I.V.

NKVD GENERAL

In the north of Afghanistan, the government forces of Emir Nadir Shah defeated the detachments of kurbashi Ibrahim bek. Ousted by the Red Army beyond the Amu Darya, Ibrahim bek deployed dozens of rear bases in Afghanistan. He gathered and armed a group of 20,000 Basmachi from emigrants and the local population. For ten years, Ibrahim bek, who was not controlled by Kabul, regularly carried out armed attacks on the Soviet territory of the republics of Central Asia, exterminated representatives of the legitimate authorities, terrorized the local population, destroyed food supplies, stole cattle, burned houses.

STALIN I.V.

(without emotion)

Finally, the Afghan leadership realized that we have the same interests in eliminating the Basmachia. Sorry for the time spent.

(pause)

Give Emir Nadir Shah my fervent greetings and best wishes!

NKVD GENERAL

It will be done, Comrade Stalin!

TITLE: DURING THE ARMED ATTACK ON THE USSR IN JUNE 1931, IBRAHIM BEK AND MEMBERS OF HIS SQUAD WOULD BE CAPTURED BY RED ARMY SOLDIERS AND SHOT BY A MILITARY TRIBUNAL.

Stalin continues to feed the pigeons.

FLASHBACK OUT

168. EXT. TF-47 GARRISON - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. TF-47 GARRISON.

The Talibans from the nearest village are constantly monitoring the TF-47 garrison with binoculars.

On the territory of the unit, Alfred Jung and 2 special forces soldiers guarding him get into an ATF-DINGO-2 armored personnel carrier. Oberst Jung accompanies his son.

The armored personnel carrier leaves through the checkpoint. It is followed at some distance by a white ISUZU pickup truck.

169. EXT. AFGHANISTAN HIGHWAY - DAY.

An armored personnel carrier with a junior Jung and accompanying commandos drives into the "Kunduz circle", stops.

The younger Jung goes out to buy souvenirs. A group of Taliban raided the accompanying commandos and Jung from two sides. The Taliban shoot the commandos, push the youngest Jung into an inconspicuous car.

The car is hiding in an unknown direction.

170. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. TF-47 HEADQUARTERS.

Oberst Georg Jung in despair, did not sleep at night waiting for at least some news about his son. There's a knock on the Oberst's office.

Bruno comes into the office.

BRUNO

May I come in, Mr. Oberst?

OBERST JUNG

(with longing)

Come in, Ober-lieutenant.

Oberst Jung points Bruno to an upholstered chair. Bruno sits down. Oberst sits down on the opposite side on the double chair.

BRUNO

Mr. Oberst, do you remember the scandalous article about the airstrike on Daftani in "Der Spiegel", which caused an international outcry?

OBERST JUNG

I remember how not to remember.

BRUNO

(excitedly)

So, I think it was impossible for reporter Otto Greenberg to collect that material without the help of the Taliban.

I am more than sure that he has contacts with the Taliban.

OBERST JUNG

(cheering up)

Think right, Ober-lieutenant!
This card in the deck may be useful to us.

BRUNO

(inspired)

May I go to the MSF hospital and persuade Greenberg to use these contacts to find your son?

OBERST JUNG

Of course, Ober-lieutenant!
I will be sincerely grateful to you!

Bruno, excited, leaves Oberst Jung's office and runs into Zimmer at the door. Zimmer casts a cursory unkind glance at Bruno as he leaves.

Zimmer stays in the office, goes over to Oberst Jung's desk, hands over a folder. Oberst Jung opens a folder containing photos of Bruno and Sita lovingly holding hands on a bench in the MSF Hospital Park.

ZIMMER

I never believed this Deutsch-Rusish. Who do you think this lovely lady is? None other than the niece of Taliban leader Mullah Shamsutdin.

(pause)

Obviously, Thevs is directly involved in the abduction of your son, Mr. Oberst.

Oberst Jung turns purple. He puts the folder in his desk drawer.

OBERST JUNG
 (with severity)
 Keep this information private! You
 understand me, Zimmer!

Oberst Jung is looking out the window, thinking.

171. EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY.

Bruno enters the hospital dining room; Otto is sitting at a meal.

Bruno sits down at the table with Otto.

BRUNO
 Yesterday in Kunduz the Taliban
 shot two of our special forces and
 captured Oberst Jung's son, Alfred.

OTTO
 (placidly)
 I heard - an unpleasant story.

BRUNO
 Otto, after the airstrike on
 Daftani, did you go to the place
 and did a voluminous report?!

OTTO
 (with pathos)
 I'm a journalist, this is my job!
 (pause)
 And what?!

BRUNO
 Reporting was impossible without
 the assistance of the Taliban,
 right?!

Bruno moves closer to Otto, begins to speak more quietly.

BRUNO
 Who, if not the Taliban, took you
 to the village, provided security,
 allowed you to film everything?

OTTO
 Well, let's say.

BRUNO
 I ask you, Otto: raise your

contacts, find out about the location of the younger Jung and the conditions of his release.

OTTO

(without pause)

I won't do it!

(with negative)

Oberst Jung is responsible for the deaths of more than a hundred Afghan civilians, I'm not even talking about ordinary Taliban.

Bruno, upset by Otto's refusal, leans back in his chair, half-turned, looks out the window in despair.

BRUNO

(excitedly)

By the way, the operation to free you in Halazai was conducted under the command of Jung. Two of our fighters died in it.

OTTO

(with a pause,
reluctantly)

OK, I'll try. I warn you right away, this is unlikely!

BRUNO

(delighted)

Thank you, Otto! I was sure that you would not remain indifferent. While you're getting ready, I'll run over to Seeta and wait for you at the exit in 15 minutes.

In euphoria, Bruno leaves the dining room.

172. INT. HOSPITAL - DAY.

Bruno walks up to the female doctors' lounge and, without knocking, pushes the unlocked door forward.

In the room, Seeta changes into medical uniforms from everyday clothes - she takes off her skirt, blouse, and bra.

At the moment of Bruno's entrance, Seeta turns out to be naked, having managed to turn her back. Shouting "You can't!", Seeta covers her chest with her hands.

Bruno plays with his feelings and, omitting Seeta's words, rushes to her. Seeta stops Bruno with an outstretched hand, shuts off the screen.

SEETA

Quiet! Quiet, young man! Keep yourself in control.

(smiles)

BRUNO

(aggressively)

Seeta, let me breathe by you! I can't live without you anymore!

SEETA

(from behind the screen)

I believe it willingly.

(smiling)

But the immutable condition is still the observance of our ancestral traditions, which do not allow intimacy before entering the marriage bond.

(pause)

Are you ready for this, Bruno?

Seeta listens behind the screen, looks away, smiles.

Endlessly happy, Bruno emotionally throws up his hands.

Seeta, in a medical uniform, comes out from behind the screen.

Bruno beams with happiness, takes Seeta by the waist, lifts her high up. Seeta looks down at Bruno.

SEETA

A letter came from relatives in Munich. My father allowed me to date the German Bruno.

(smiles)

BRUNO

How happy I am Sita; how happy I am!

Bruno remembers something with annoyance, looks at his watch.

BRUNO

I have to run now. But when I get back, you'll tell me all the details, okay?!

Bruno is leaving.

173. INT. HOSPITAL - DAY.

Otto is dressed in civilian clothes, standing at the exit of the MSF Emergency Room, calling the interpreter Yahya Muhadi.

OTTO

Yahya, go urgently to Yakub Khan's teahouse! Meet me at the entrance.

174. INT. TAXI - DAY.

Otto and Bruno are sitting in the back of a taxi, driving through Kunduz.

BRUNO

(with joy)

Otto! I have great news!

OTTO

(serene)

What great news there can be right now!

BRUNO

(happily)

On the personal front, Seeta's parents are ready to give her to me as a wife.

This is unthinkable, Otto!

OTTO

(with humor)

Really unthinkable!

This is a rare piece of luck for a German officer from the ISAF!

BRUNO

(without taking offense,
with a positive attitude)

I will invite Seeta to celebrate the wedding in two cities - Freiburg and Munich.

(pause)

Otto, give me a vow that you will definitely be present!

Also promise to come with me to Russia and find his friends together at the addresses in his

father's notebook.

OTTO
 (smiles)
 I promise!

HISTORICAL EVENTS FROM THE BOOK "THE GREAT GAME IN AFGHANISTAN".

FLASHBACK IN

175. INT. THE HOUSE OF A WEALTHY AFGHAN – EVENING.

TITLE: KUNDUZ, SOUTHERN OUTSKIRTS, SEPTEMBER 1941

The house of a wealthy Afghan. RASMUS and WITZEL are talking in the room, both dressed in military uniforms of Abwehr intelligence officers.

An Afghan photographer appears in the room with a tripod and a thick velvet cape. Witzel adjusts his uniform, and on his finger is a ring with a black rectangular stone.

WITZEL
 (to the photographer)
 My dear, just hurry up, we don't have time.

The photographer fusses, puts the camera in front of Rasmus and Witzel. The officers sit shoulder to shoulder in front of the camera.

The photographer hides under his cape, Rasmus and Witzel focus on the camera lens, and there is a flash.

The photographer reappears from under the cape, hastily removes the camera and leaves the room.

(the photo of Rasmus and Witzel and the ring with Witzel's black stone appear for the first time in scene 15.)

The handsome Kurbashi MAHMOUD BEK enters the room.

WITZEL
 (grandiloquently)
 Dear Mahmoud Bek. We appreciate your long-term persistent struggle with the Soviet government, and the presence of your own large detachment and authority among the kurbashi of the Uzbek and Turkmen

Basmachia.

However, your extensive network of agents in the republics of Central Asia and northern Afghanistan is more important to us. Three months have already passed since the approval of you at the head of the "Union" organization in September 1941.

If you remember, at our previous meeting we outlined to you a list of the main tasks of the 1st stage of the Union's activity?

There were four of them.

Expansion of the agent network in the southern regions of the republics of Central Asia – the Turkmen, Tajik and Uzbek SSR.

The establishment of the exact number of Basmachi in northern Afghanistan on a national basis, the places of their concentration on both sides of the Amu Darya, the names of influential Kurbashi.

Creation of a stronghold of German sabotage groups near Kunduz for transfer to the USSR.

Preparation of sabotage groups from among the Basmachi.

It is also not superfluous to recall that you have received a tranche of 40 thousand Afghani for these purposes.

(smiles)

And that in addition to us, you successfully provide intelligence services of our respected axis allies – Italy, Japan and have made a solid fortune on this.

Mahmud bek calmly listened to the patrons and starts from afar in oriental.

MAHMOUD BEK

The German attack on the USSR in the emigrant environment in the north of Afghanistan and in the capital Kabul was met with deep enthusiasm.

The Mujahideen, all as one, are ready to stand up for the Amu Darya

against the Red Army at the call of their hearts to step into their native firmament and return our shrines - Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva, Ferghana!

Regarding the expansion of the agent network and the funds I received for this: the base of our agents in 3 Central Asian republics has increased significantly.

In addition to the local dehkans, it included figures of the executive, state power of the Soviets, military personnel from the national formations of the Central Asian military district of the Red Army of various levels. Regarding my contacts with the Axis intelligence services: as far as I know, this August, the German Ambassador in Kabul, Hans Pilger, not without your participation, dear Gentlemen Witzel-Rasmus, organized a meeting of the Japanese attorney Katsubi with the Bukhara Emir Seyid Alim Khan! Outwardly observing the commitment to King Zahir Shah, his policy of neutrality, Emir Seyid Alim Khan at this meeting evaded the proposed cooperation.

However, intelligence agents from Japan, Italy, and Turkey soon established cooperation with his inner circle, agreed on monetary and military assistance.

Their personalities are well known. I think it is useful to recall that at the stage of the "Union" organization, I was approved by the commander-in-chief of the Basmach formations in Afghanistan.

There is also an agreement that assistance to the Basmachs will be carried out entirely through me. But the precedent with the Emir of Bukhara suggests the opposite.

My plans are transparent and known to everyone - the seizure of the territories of the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva, the return of the deposed rulers to

their thrones!

Now about the report of funds for the creation of a strong point in Kunduz for the sabotage forces of the Third Reich: Instead of one, I created two.

The second one is in Baglan. Hamra Gul-bek, a former officer of the Afghan army under my control, has been temporarily appointed as their head until your approval.

Now about the true number of Basma formations in the north of Afghanistan. Based on the data collected from Kurbashi on ten Afghan cities and their districts, she compiled 22.300 Basmachi, only 15 thousand of them are properly armed.

Rasmus' question interrupts Mahmud-bek.

RASMUS

Turkmen kurbashi Ishan Khalifa Kyzyl-ayak, in a letter to Afghan Prime Minister Mohammad Hashim Khan in August of this year, cited a different figure, it differs significantly from yours. Kyzyl-mayak writes about the readiness to put a 40-thousandth group of Turkmens alone under arms.

The same amount, according to him, will flow in case we supply additional weapons and funds.

Kyzyl-ayak, according to our data, has an army not exceeding 11 thousand Basmachi. Wanting to get more help, is he deliberately overestimating the figure by 4 times?

MAHMOUD BEK

(lamenting)

This is one of the pernicious consequences of my unity of command destroyed by you!

The total number of Turkmen formations based on the left bank of the Amu Darya doubled from the beginning of 1939 to the autumn of 1941.

It should be taken into account that the Turkmen emigration is the most numerous, that's why it has large detachments.

On the issue of training sabotage groups from among the Basmachi, we have identified a list of the most combat-ready detachments, from where it will be possible to conduct a selection in a short time.

Their numbers and skills depend solely on your means!

In conclusion, I would like to note: the supreme power in Kabul is following the events on the fronts of the Second World War, waiting for the capture of Moscow and Leningrad by the Wehrmacht and the beginning of the fall of the USSR. If, or when, this happens, Kabul will not miss the historic opportunity to establish power over the territories of the Bukhara Emirate and the Khanate of Khiva with the bayonets of the invading Basmachi.

Therefore, King Zahir Shah is forced to tolerate our many thousands of troops in his northern territories, without taking steps to establish control over them. Unlike the Kabul authorities, the Basmachi have no other choice but not to count on the Reich. Only with him can we return to our homes! We are strangers here in Afghanistan! Kabul uses us all: you as a money bag, us as cannon fodder!

Mahmud-bek has completed his report.

Rasmus pulls out a small leather suitcase from under the table. Mahmud-bek comes over, puts the suitcase on the table, and opens it.

There are bundles of Afghan banknotes in the suitcase.

Mahmud-bek grins with satisfaction and closes the briefcase.

176. EXT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

The taxi stops on the other side of the road - opposite the teahouse. Yakub Khan, standing at the entrance to the teahouse, sees Otto and his friend getting out of the taxi, waving his hand in greeting. Otto and Bruno skip the flow of honking cars, cross the road.

Yahya Mukhadi is waiting at the entrance to the teahouse.

OTTO
(to Yakub Khan)
AsSalamu Alaikum!

Yakub Khan nods back with a smile, puts his palm to his heart.

177. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Yakub Khan accompanies Otto, Bruno, Yahya Mukhadi to Otto's usual cot, invites Zalmai to take the order.

OTTO
(addressing Yakub Khan,
who is standing next to
him)
Yakub Khan! You probably know that
a Bundeswehr armored personnel
carrier was attacked in Kunduz the
other day?

(pause)
Two soldiers were killed, Commander
Jung's son from TF-47, a young man
of 20 years old, was also
abducted?!

Yahya Mukhadi translates Otto's words, Yakub Khan nods sympathetically.

OTTO
I have a request for you: contact
Shamsutdin's people, they probably
know who did it.
We will transmit their terms to TF-
47
(Otto nods at Bruno, a
stranger to Yakub Khan)
I believe the parties will be able
to agree.

YAKUB KHAN

(cheerless)

I can't promise anything, dear.

(pause)

I suggest we meet tomorrow, at the same time. Maybe I can clarify something.

The conversation is interrupted by the efficient Zalmai, who is bringing the ordered dishes to the guests – a large plate of pilaf, mutton kebab, hot tortillas. The guests postpone the discussion and, under the sincere "Dast az talab nadara" of the Afghan singer Ahmad Zahir, which sound from the speakers, proceed to the meal.

Two guests are enthusiastically playing backgammon.

178. EXT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE – DAY.

Bruno hails a taxi parked on the opposite side of the road.

BRUNO

(to Otto Greenberg, Yahya Mukhadi)

You can go, and I'll visit the store. I need to buy a gift.

Bruno hurriedly heads to the jewelry store located 30 steps from the Yakub Khan teahouse with large panoramic windows and bright showcases.

179. INT. JEWELRY STORE – DAY.

At the entrance Bruno is met by the owner – an elderly Sikh Hindu in a black dastar (an Indian turban tied in a characteristic manner), a snow-white kurta (an Indian long wide shirt below the knees), churidars (narrow long trousers) made of expensive fabric.

BRUNO

(positive)

AsSalamu Alaikum!

THE HINDU

(with a smile)

Guten morgen!

Bruno goes inside the store, looks around and goes to the window with a lot of jewelry – with emeralds, rubies, sapphires, lapis lazuli. The Hindu walks along the inside of

the showcases and becomes a vis-a-vis.

THE HINDU

(helpfully in German)

Do you want to choose something for yourself?

BRUNO

Not to me! To the bride!

THE HINDU

(with pathos)

Wonderful! We have everything to win the heart of a beautiful young lady! Is she German?!

(Pause)

How old is she?!

BRUNO

She is an Afghan woman of 25 years old!

THE HINDU

(astonished)

An Afghan woman?!

BRUNO

(hesitated)

It doesn't matter! I need a gift. The ring!

The Hindu looks at the products, pulls on a tray under a glass case, pompously.

THE HINDU

Gold - white, yellow, pink?! You can choose from the best precious stones in Afghanistan- Pamir rubies, Panjshir emeralds, no worse than Colombian ones, I will note to you!

(looks intently at the confused Bruno)

How much money do you expect?

Bruno is puzzled.

THE HINDU

(he calls out to the assistant)

Raj! Bring us some coffee!

(without letting Bruno

come to his senses)
 Here, the Afghan-Badakhshan lapis
 lazuli from Jarm!

The Hindu takes out a silver set of elegant earrings and
 rings with blue lapis lazuli ovals on a stand.

THE HINDU

Excellent quality of the stone. For
 your information, Afghan lapis
 lazuli is the best in the world.
 During excavations, it was found
 even in the tombs of the pharaohs!

Bruno is interested.

BRUNO

(with confidence)

I'll buy it, maybe something else,
 if you give in to the price.

THE HINDU

(with cunning)

If you buy this and anything else,
 there will certainly be a discount.

BRUNO

(delighted, runs a glance)

OK! Show me this yellow ring with a
 green stone.

The Hindu points his finger at the product under the glass.

THE HINDU

Oh! This is a great choice for the
 future spouse - the mother of your
 children!

Mister, a gold ring with an
 emerald! Panjshir emeralds are
 famous on world stock exchanges,
 they are not inferior in quality to
 Zambian and Brazilian ones.

BRUNO

(having studied the price
 tags on the string tie -
 strictly)

What will be the discount?!

THE HINDU

(expertly tapping his
 fingers on the calculator

- with importance)
25% is the maximum!

BRUNO
(categorically)
Not serious - 35%!

THE HINDU
(compromise)
30%!

BRUNO
(conciliatory)
Persuaded!

The Indian lit up with a smile and, taking a VIZA credit card from Bruno, rolls it in the terminal. Then, he puts the jewelry in a small advertising bag with an inscription in Arabic and passes it to Bruno. Bruno immediately takes them out again and puts them in his uniform backpack. The Hindu smiles. Bruno nods gratefully to the Indian and is about to leave.

THE HINDU
(after)
Young man!
(benevolently)
At the first opportunity - take
your passion and leave Afghanistan!
There will be nothing good for you
here!

BRUNO
(turning, intrigued)
Why is this all of a sudden?!

Bruno returns, stands up vis-a-vis to the Hindu.

THE HINDU
(putting his hand to his
heart)
My name is Iqbal Singh!

BRUNO
(with a smile)
You don't have to know my name!
Call, for example, Konstantin!

THE HINDU
(with cordiality)
Mr. Konstantin! My ancestors came
from Punjab to Afghanistan more

than two centuries ago. I was born and grew up in Kunduz, where most of them lived in my memory - Pashtuns, Uzbeks, followed by Tajiks, Turkmens, ethnic Arabs and, to a negligible extent, we are Punjabi Sikhs! I graduated from a school in Kunduz, then from a university in Kabul. Afghans and Hindus have always coexisted peacefully in Kunduz, as well as in Fayzabad, Jalalabad, Kabul, Gardez, Kandahar. In the Afghan society there was an absolute tolerance for religious traditions, the same-Hazaras-Shiites, Pamiris-Ismailis, Hindus-Sikhs. It should be noted that the Sikhs living in Afghanistan have been engaged in high-budget trade since ancient times and were not poor people. Their possessions included large shops and bazaars. The Sikh children studied at the universities of Kabul, Islamabad, Delhi, London and were highly educated! However, with the coming to power in Afghanistan of the radical Taliban movement and in the future, an evil intolerance began to manifest itself towards the Hindus and their traditions. Out of the 150 thousand Sikh community of Afghanistan in the 1970s, there are currently not even 4 thousand! Afghan children are forbidden to play together with our children, to study in the same school, in other educational institutions. Our children, the Afghan ones, are insulted, called names and humiliated, as well as adults. Sikhs respect their freedom, as well as the freedom of other people! On the day when my unforgettable wife Amrit Singh died, "May she have a better place in paradise", my grown-up children and representatives of the Sikh community and I saw her off on her last journey in compliance with our religious tradition.

FLASHBACK IN

180. EXT. EASTERN QUARTER - DAY.

There is a funeral procession of Hindu Sikhs. Sikhs are dressed in their national clothes, carrying the body of the deceased.

THE HINDU (V.O.)

On the way to the place of cremation of tribesmen that existed from time immemorial, we were met by a raging crowd. With obscene shouts, in front of the respectable citizens.

There is a crowd of Afghans shouting insults.

They pelt the procession with stones, rotten vegetables, and demand to get back to their India immediately.

FLASHBACK OUT

181. INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY.

Raj pours Bruno's hot coffee from the cup.

THE HINDU

(emotionally)

We had no choice but to endure this humiliation, tame our pride and sacrifice our dignity. The horror is that none of the elders who saw this outrage tamed and condemned them!

Bruno remembers.

FLASHBACK IN

182. EXT. AN ABANDONED WORKSHOP IN AN INDUSTRIAL AREA - DAY.

Bruno, a 13-year-old boy, is tightly surrounded by older boys beating him. He is punched and kicked from different sides, and name-calling "russish" sounds in his address.

Bruno's face is covered in blood, he fights back furiously, but the forces are not equal.

Bruno takes a large boulder and hits one of the offenders in the face with it.

The offender falls unconscious. The crowd makes way in fright.

FLASHBACK OUT

183. INT. JEWELRY STORE - DAY.

Bruno ends the conversation with the Indian.

BRUNO
(nodding sympathetically)
Thank you, Mr. Singh, I'll take
your instructions into account!

He leaves the jewelry store.

184. EXT.KUNDUZ CIRCLE-DAY.

Bruno goes out into the street, squeezes through the moving traffic and smartly jumps into a taxi standing on the opposite side of the road.

185. EXT.MSF HOSPITAL-EVENING.

The taxi flows briskly into the courtyard of the MSF hospital and drops Bruno off. He immediately draws attention to a variety stage mounted in the depths of the hospital garden, a farm with lighting devices, sound equipment and artists tuning musical equipment.

186. INT.MSF HOSPITAL-EVENING.

Bruno goes to the staff room and opens the door. He goes inside.

Seeta is sitting alone at the table studying the "medical histories". She turns to the door at the noise.

Bruno fixes a loving gaze on Seeta, leans back and locks the door.

Seeta also looks lovingly at Bruno, waiting for his further actions.

Bruno approaches, without looking away, gently takes Seeta's hand and leads her out from behind the table. Turning his back and closing his eyes with the palm of his hand, Bruno slowly takes out boxes of jewelry from his backpack and puts them on the table in an open form. Bruno removes his palm, and Seeta beholds a silver set with lapis lazuli and a gold

ring with an emerald.

BRUNO

Please try this on!

Seeta is stunned, shyly inserts the rods of earrings into the ear punctures, puts both rings on her ring fingers. Seeta changes her profile twice with a teasing smile, shows earrings in her ears. Seeta raises her fingers up, shows the outside of her palms, shows rings.

SEETA

Well?!

BRUNO

These are my pre-wedding gifts.
With a green stone-an engagement ring.

SEETA

(joking)

Is there any money left for the wedding?!

Bruno is inflamed with passion, leans forward to kiss Seeta. Seeta pulls back slightly, covers Bruno's lips with her palm.

SEETA

It's still early!

(pause)

My father agreed after long persuasions - mom and mine, to marry you.

But!

(smiling)

With the indispensable preservation of chastity before entering into the marriage bond.

Maiden honesty is the main wealth of an unmarried girl!

We'll have to be patient!

BRUNO

(shaking his head to the sides, sobering up)

Where to go!

(smiles)

Be patient, so be patient!

SEETA

In the evening, a charity concert of the beloved Afghan singer,

musician Shafiq Murid will be held at the hospital. I invite you to the concert program. Only it will be necessary to sit down among male doctors.

(sympathetically with a smile)

Otherwise, it will cause the indignation of my local relatives and local inhabitants. Afghan traditions are strict and unchangeable!

BRUNO

What can I do?!

(smiling)

To men, so to men!

187. EXT.HOSPITAL GARDEN - EVENING.

The hospital garden is filled with people, aiding for the concert. It will start soon. On the chairs in front of the stage sit the MSF doctoral staff, divided by gender. Bruno is sitting in the center of the first row. Seeta is in the fourth from the edge. Her beautiful blue dress is in harmony with the stones of jewelry. The patients of the hospital are in the back rows, there are no women among them.

The illustrious Shafiq Murid, a short man in a black pakol and a flowered perukhan, comes out to the musicians who are playing on the stage. The audience meets the artist with applause. Murid begins to perform folk songs in a heartfelt way. To the beat of the tabla (an Afghan musical percussion instrument), the ensemble played rhythmic music, inviting active spectators to dance in front of the stage.

European medical staff MSF employees, who know about Seeta's Pashtun origin, push her to the stage, forcing her to dance.

Seeta is forced to enter the rhythm, dance incendiary and inspires the audience and artists who clap to the beat. Delighted with her grace, Bruno claps are the loudest.

HISTORICAL EVENTS FROM THE BOOK "THE GREAT GAME IN AFGHANISTAN".

FLASHBACK IN

188. INT. THE HOUSE OF A WEALTHY AFGHAN — EVENING.

TITLE: KUNDUZ, SOUTHERN OUTSKIRTS, SEPTEMBER 1941.

The house of a wealthy Afghan. In an orchard on a large cot covered with vines in a trellis illuminated by kerosene lamps, there is a conversation between employees of the German diplomatic mission in Kabul (residents of the Abwehr) Karl Rasmus and Dietrich Witzel.

The owner of the house brings chess and tea.

Rasmus takes the chessboard in his hands, opens it, and begins to arrange the pieces.

RASMUS

(to Witzel)

Dietrich, but Mahmoud Bek is right!
I do not believe their king Zahir
Shah and the camarilla of the
Barakzai dynasty - the eternal
creature of the British.

Meanwhile, the owner of the house pours tea into two bowls, and leaves.

RASMUS

I agree with Reich Minister
Ribbentrop, who considers it
necessary to replace Zahir Shah
with the exiled Emir Amanullah
Khan.

Witzel takes out a smoking pipe — a hexagonal "bulldog" Bruyeregarantie, fills it with BREMARIA tobacco from the Bremen company BRINKMANN and ignites it.

RASMUS

For joining the axis countries, the
Afghans demand from Germany a
guarantee of the transfer of the
territories of the republics of
Central Asia and access to the
Indian Ocean, the port of Karachi.
In addition, a large number of
military aircraft, artillery guns,
and tanks.

Isn't that too much?!

Unbridled greed!

(with pathos)

Do you know, Ober lieutenant, that

by April 1941, the Chief of the General Staff of the Wehrmacht, Franz Halder, by order of the Fuhrer, had developed a plan for Operation Amanullah?! According to him, 4,000 paratroopers should seize Kabul and overthrow King Zahir Shah. Having accomplished this, the Wehrmacht troops will rush to the borders of British India and, with the support of the rebellious Pashtun tribes, with the forces of 17 divisions: 6 mountain infantry, 4 infantry, 4 motorized, 3 other mobile units, will capture it. The base we have created in Afghanistan will become a springboard for the offensive. The adaptation of personnel to the operation in a region with a hot climate takes place in Greece, a special unit of the Wehrmacht "F". The above-mentioned divisions will be joined by a "Turkic division" from among Soviet Muslim prisoners of war, natives of Central Asia. In Poland, a secret base for training saboteurs "SS-20 Forest Camp" or "Main Camp Turkestan" has been created near the city of Wroclaw. Ideological support in them is provided by military mullahs. Sabotage groups of the "Turkestan Legion", formed from Basmachi from the strongholds we created in Baghlan, Kunduz, will invade the borders of Soviet Central Asia. Weapons will be delivered to northern Afghanistan by Luftwaffe planes.

FLASHBACK OUT

189. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Otto, Bruno and Yahya Mukhadi enter the teahouse. At the entrance they are greeted by a friendly Yakub Khan. The guests go into the hall, climb onto the usual cot. Halfutdin, the Taliban emissary, approaches Yakub Khan at the entrance.

Yakub Khan leads Halfutdin to the cot where Otto, Bruno and Yahya are sitting.

HALFUTDIN
 (to Otto about Bruno
 without politesse)
 Who is this?!

Yakub Khan looks at Otto questioningly.

OTTO
 (through the translation
 of Muhadi)
 This is an officer of the
 Bundeswehr, authorized by Oberst
 Jung.

HALFUTDIN
 (looking unkindly at
 Bruno)
 Let him wait until we talk.

Muhadi translates Halfutdin's insistence.

OTTO
 (heeding the demand)
 Bruno, wait for tea while Yahya and
 I talk to Halfutdin.

Four people—Halfutdin, Otto, Yahya Mukhadi, followed by Yakub Khan, go to the service room of the teahouse. Bruno remains sitting on the cot and curiously contemplates the street turmoil. Zalmay appears and skillfully brings a teapot of green tea.

Bruno pours it twice from the bowl back into the teapot and, having filled it in half, takes a sip.

A typical swarthy Afghan (Abdullo KODIROV) in a white turban and beige perukhan comes down from the cot opposite, comes close to Bruno, stands sideways. Kodirov addresses Bruno in good Russian, without taking his eyes off the door to the office room, where a conversation with Halfutdin is taking place.

KODIROV
 I advise you to avoid personal
 participation in the exchange of
 Jung's son for the Taliban leaders.
 And another thing: the Taliban
 knows about your close relationship
 with Shamsutdin's niece Seeta

Akhmadzai. This is extremely dangerous!

BRUNO
 (surprised with
 displeasure)
 Who are you?!

The stranger skips the question, hurriedly goes to Zalmai, who replaced his father at the entrance, puts a bill in his hand on the move, disappears into a dense stream of passers-by.

190. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

The room: Halfutdin, Otto Greenberg, Yahya Mukhadi, Yakub Khan are talking at the table.

HALFUTDIN
 Commander Jung's son is staying with Shamsutdin.
 The raid on an armored personnel carrier, the abduction of Jung's son was the response to the deaths of children in Daftani.
 The younger Jung is treated normally - they give him water and food.

OTTO
 What are Shamsutdin's plans for him?!

HALFUTDIN
 Anything is possible, Shamsutdin is magnanimous! We will not exclude the exchange option.

OTTO
 (with concern)
 Who does Shamsutdin want in return?!

HALFUTDIN
 Shamsutdin is ready to exchange Commander Jung's son for Mullah Abdul Rahman, who was captured in the Khundai village and five Taliban leaders from Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar and Badakhshan, arrested by TF-47!

The list of names is written here!
 (hands Otto a folded piece
 of paper, continuing)
 The date and place where the
 exchange will take place are also
 indicated there.

Otto opens the crumpled sheet, sees the text in a clumsy font
 in German. At the bottom, under the list of names of the
 Taliban, the date, time, and place of exchange are written.

HALFUTDIN

The security of the exchange will
 be guaranteed by your life and that
 of someone close to Oberst Jung.
 You and someone else from Commander
 Jung will be taken hostage during
 the exchange. This is dictated by
 the fact that the exchange request
 came from you.
 In conclusion, I am told to convey
 - it is not necessary to take any
 steps to find the younger Jung!
 The young man's life is in the
 hands of Almighty and Shamsutdin!

The conversation is over; Yakub Khan escorts Halfutdin to the
 exit.

191. INT. YAKUB KHAN'S TEAHOUSE - DAY.

Otto and Yahya Mukhadi join Bruno. Yahya pours tea for Otto,
 Bruno and himself.

OTTO

(to Bruno)

These are the conditions of the
 Taliban!

BRUNO

(categorically)

I think it's wrong to involve you
 in this case! It will be me and the
 TF-47 officer!

OTTO

Have you forgotten?! The conditions
 are set by the Taliban!

192. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE - EVENING.

Bruno knocks, enters the office of Oberst Jung, passes a paper from Halfutdin.

BRUNO

The conditions of the Taliban are as follows: Otto Greenberg and I should be held hostage by the Taliban during the exchange at the request of the Taliban.

Oberst Jung turns to the window, looks into the distance, thinks, is silent.

193. EXT. KUNDUZ - DAY.

Kunduz, a loud sound of incoming planes is heard in the city, powerful explosions of dropped bombs are heard seconds later. Fiery explosions, smoke over the city.

194. INT. HEADQUARTERS "NORTH" ISAF - DAY.

TITLE: MAZAR-I-SHARIF. GROUP HEADQUARTERS "NORTH" ISAF.

Bruno is sitting in the conference room next to the German military commanders of different levels. The commander of the group, Brigadier General of the Bundeswehr HANS STRUCK, is conducting an instruction.

HANS STRUCK

In Kunduz, both in the city and in the province, the situation has deteriorated sharply. ISAF has decided to conduct raids by US forces to eliminate the Taliban underground.

Struk's adjutant enters the office and transmits a telephone message.

HANS STRUCK

(reads aloud)

Gentlemen officers, a moment of attention! 10 minutes ago, the US air force carried out an airstrike at the MSF hospital in Kunduz.

The horror is reflected on Bruno's face. The pen breaks in

Bruno's hand.

VOICE (V.O.)

The US air force carried out an airstrike on the MSF hospital in Kunduz.

195. EXT. HEADQUARTERS "NORTH" ISAF — DAY.

Bruno quickly jumps out of the headquarters building, calls Seeta on her mobile phone, and the answering machine answers.

196. EXT. HOSPITAL — DAY.

TITLE: KUNDUZ. MSF HOSPITAL.

There is a fire and smoke at the place where the impact was carried. Two buildings are half destroyed; the other windows are broken.

NOTE: AT THE TIME OF THE AIRSTRIKE 89 DOCTORS AND OVER A HUNDRED PATIENTS WERE IN THE HOSPITAL. THE 1ST STRIKE IGNITED THE MAIN BUILDING OF THE MSF HOSPITAL, THE 2ND HIT THE BUILDING WHERE THE HOSPITAL WARDS WERE LOCATED. A LARGE NUMBER OF PATIENTS WERE BURNED ALIVE. ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL ESTIMATES, FORTY-TWO PEOPLE DIED UNDER THE BOMBS OF THE US AIR FORCE, THIRTY-SEVEN MORE WERE INJURED. ACCORDING TO HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS, OVER 100 PEOPLE DIED.

197. EXT. HEADQUARTERS "NORTH" ISAF — DAY.

Bruno calls MSF headquarters in Geneva.

BRUNO

Good evening!

MSF OFFICE SECRETARY (V.O.)

(in a pleasant female voice)

The office of the international medical organization "Doctors Without Borders".
How can I help you?!

BRUNO

(alarmed)

Hello! I can't get through to my fiancée — your employee working at the MSF hospital in Kunduz. Her

name is Seeta Akhmadzai. I'd like to make sure she's okay.

MSF OFFICE SECRETARY (V.O.)

I'm sorry, we have an emergency right now. The situation with the victims is still being clarified. Please stay on the line.

An MSF employee puts the call on hold, a melody started playing on Bruno's phone.

Bruno is nervous, he taps the wall with his palm in time to the melody.

The MSF office secretary returns to Bruno's call.

MSF OFFICE SECRETARY (V.O.)

Thanks for waiting! A lot of calls, I'm sorry. Please repeat your fiancée's last name.

BRUNO

(clearly)

Akhmadzai! Seeta Akhmadzai!

MSF OFFICE SECRETARY (V.O.)

Please stay on the line.

The secretary of the MSF office puts the call on hold, a melody starts playing on Bruno's phone.

The Secretary returns to the conversation in a faded voice.

MSF OFFICE SECRETARY (V.O.)

I'm sorry, but I have bad news for you: Dr. Seeta Akhmadzai is listed as dead.

AN ECHO IN BRUNO'S EARS

«...Sita Akhmadzai is listed among the dead...»

MSF OFFICE SECRETARY (V.O.)

Please leave your contact phone number, we will certainly call you.

Bruno already skips these words, he is crushed, hangs up the phone.

198. THE TRANSITION - EXT.THE RUINS OF THE HOSPITAL / EXT.
HEADQUARTERS "NORTH" ISAF - DAY.

Otto stands on the ruins of the hospital in torn, burnt clothes, scratches bleeding.

Bruno has his forehead against the wall and is tapping the wall with his palm. Bruno's phone rings. Bruno answers. Otto is calling.

OTTO
(mournfully)
Bruno, do you already know?!

BRUNO
(with longing)
How did this happen?!

OTTO
I was in a dressing room. When the air raid began, we were urgently evacuated to a hospital bunker. I couldn't contact anyone from there. At the time of the impact, Seeta was in the main building at the meeting. The bomb exploded right under their window. The explosion knocked out all the windows. The fragments of the bomb hit everyone who was there. No one survived!
(pause)
I express my condolences to you!

199. EXT. MAZAR-I-SHARIF AIRFIELD - DAY.

TITLE: MAZAR-I-SHARIF AIRFIELD.

The Akhmadzai family descends the ramp - Seeta's parents, older brothers.

Everyone is depressed, the mother in a dark gray mourning shawl is broken. The father is wearing a black suit and a gray shirt.

200. EXT. CEMETERY - DAWN.

TITLE: IMAM SAHIB, KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

A large house near the mausoleum "Baba Hatim Ziyarat",

adjacent to the cemetery. Bruno and Otto drive up to the open gate of a large house.

In the center of the courtyard is a body wrapped in a shroud. The camera pulls away to Wide Shot.

There is a large cluster of women around the body, sitting on benches on both sides.

Seeta's father, her brothers and male relatives stand aside.

Cars continuously drive up to the house, dropping off armed men.

The men line up, enter the courtyard, hand over their weapons at the gate to the man standing at the entrance. They approach the cohort of sitting men and express their condolences.

Halfutdin has arrived, passes by Bruno and Otto standing at the gate.

Abdullo, who arrived with him in the same car, follows Halfutdin. Abdullo does not recognize Bruno, goes into the courtyard.

Bruno and Otto are standing at the gate of the house, not daring to go inside the courtyard, attracting the stern looks of men, curses of women who are moaning. The situation is heating up.

A group of elders and Seeta's father Ayub Ahmadzai, who is accompanying them, leave the courtyard outside the gate of the house. He is heartbroken, listens to the condolences of the elders and nods his head.

He sees the Europeans, recognizes Seeta's fiancé, Bruno, and approaches them.

AYUB

(delicately in German)

It would be better if you left now!

Bruno and Otto, nodding understandingly, retire.

201. INT. BRUNO'S ROOM — EVENING.

Bruno is lying on the bed in his room, remembering Seeta.

THERE IS A VISUAL SERIES — Bruno gives Seeta pre-wedding jewelry, Seeta dances at a concert at the MSF hospital.

202. EXT. ALIABAD. KUNDUZ PROVINCE — DAWN.

TITLE: ALIABAD. KUNDUZ PROVINCE.

A wasteland, on the outskirts of a village, a taxi pulls off the highway onto a country road. Bruno and Otto get out of the taxi.

Three-armed Taliban approach Bruno and Otto. The Taliban tie Otto and Bruno's hands behind their backs, blindfold them, and take them behind the nearest adobe buildings. A column of 5 units of German armored vehicles appears on the horizon: four ATF DINGO-2 armored cars with special forces, an armored MUNGO truck in the middle.

The column decorously pulls off the highway, gets up. A group of special forces dismount from the lead armored car. They are followed by Oberst Jung, Ober-lieutenant Zimmer, and two TF-47 officers. They are immediately surrounded by guarding special forces. The fog is clearing. Oberst Jung is tense, looking at his watch.

2 motorcycles with 3 Afghans with radio stations leave the highway on a vacant lot. The TF-47 officer points the Afghans to the truck where the Taliban prisoners are. TF-47 officer with a hand gesture orders the special forces to lower the awning on the MUNGO body.

In the back of the MUNGO is Mullah Abdul Rahman, 5 Taliban leaders, TF-47 guards. Motorcyclists are convinced of the presence of Taliban prisoners.

Motorcyclists exchange phrases with Taliban prisoners, report to someone by radio that everything is in order, leave.

Halfutdin puts his hand reverently to his chest and greets the Taliban prisoners standing near MUNGO.

They all leave together and disappear behind the building.

Alfred Jung immediately appears from behind the building in traditional Afghan clothes - in brown perukhan, beige pakol. Alfred sees his father, beams with a smile, walks towards him with a quick step. Behind Alfred, Bruno and Otto step sedately behind.

Oberst Jung and Alfred with TF47 officers retire to the armored personnel carriers. Oberst Jung turns to Zimmer on the move, nods silently, thus releasing the order to act.

EC-665 Tiger HAP attack helicopters appear in the sky; they begin to hit buildings behind which the Taliban barely disappeared. From the buildings, a group of Taliban, including Abdullo, return fire on helicopters. At the same time, directed fire is coming at Bruno and Otto.

Bruno and Otto duck and start running, leaving the affected area. A long machine-gun burst from the Taliban hits Otto in the back, his legs give way, he falls. Bruno run up, Otto is still alive.

OTTO
(with the last of his
strength)
It was impossible to believe Jung!

Otto goes into agony, death throes, dies.

BRUNO
(loudly, frantically)
Why?!

Helicopters are flying over Bruno's head.

Bruno remains sitting next to the deceased Otto.

Abdullo is lying on the building where the Taliban were, aiming a machine gun in front of him.

Ober-lieutenant Zimmer abruptly steps up from Bruno's back. He raises his machine gun and, pointing the barrel at the back of Bruno's head, prepares to shoot.

Abdullah shoots Zimmer in the head.

There is a soaring and screeching eagle in the sky above the scene.

The special forces load the bodies of Otto and Zimmer into the back of the Mango, Bruno sits forward in the cockpit.

203. EXT. GARRISON TF-47 - DAY.

TF-47 garrison checkpoint. There are civilian vehicles at the entrance and a group of Afghans - two men and three women in burqas.

Bruno looks excited. Bruno hurries past the Afghans, notices among them the son of Yakub Khan, Zalmay. Zalmay looks extremely upset. Zalmay looks after Bruno with an expression of entreaty.

Bruno passes by the barracks. There are two gurneys with human bodies in black bags at the entrance. Bruno opens the zipper of the first package, and the face of the dead Yahya Muhadi appears in front of him. Bruno opens the zipper of the

second package; there is the one-eyed face of the dead Yakub Khan. Bruno's face is filled with rage.

204. INT. OBERST JUNG'S OFFICE – DAY.

Bruno resolutely enters the TF-47 headquarters, passes the duty officer, without knocking, bursts into the office of Oberst Jung.

Approaches Oberst Jung sitting at the table.
Bruno bends down, leans close to Otto's face.

BRUNO

(in a raised tone)

Why did you call the aviation?!

OBERST JUNG

(firmly)

Calm down, Ober-lieutenant!
It wasn't my decision! We are at war, and there are commanders above me!

BRUNO

(with pressure)

Did you want to kill us?! Otto Greenberg saved your son's life! Why did he pay for it with his own?!

(pause)

The cynicism and inhumanity of ISAF has no limits!
You, Mr. Oberst, are personally responsible for the victims of civilians in Omar-heil. The command of the US grouping and the army of the corrupt Afghan government – the MSF hospital and the children of the village of Daftani!

OBERST JUNG

You, Ober-lieutenant, have completely lost your temper with your Pashtun girl, have turned into a blancmange, and you desecrating the memory of your father!

Bruno is furious, immediately punches Oberst Jung sharply in the jaw. Oberst Jung falls off his feet.
Bruno slams the door loudly, leaving Oberst Jung's office.

205. EXT. SHEREMETYEVO-2 AIRPORT - DAY.

TITLE: MOSCOW, SHEREMETYEVO-2 AIRPORT.

A large civilian airliner lands on the runway.

206. INT. SHEREMETYEVO-2 AIRPORT - DAY.

Bruno goes out to the arrival hall of Sheremetyevo-2 airport. Takes out his father's old notebook, dials phone numbers. Rust answers him.

BRUNO

Hello! My name is Bruno Thevs.
I need Rustam Tukaev.

RUST (V.O.)

I'm listening to you.

BRUNO

Rustam, I am the son of your friend
Konstantin Thevs, who died in
Afghanistan. I'm in Moscow now, and
I'll be glad to see you.

RUST (V.O.)

(with amazement)

Guten Abend!

BRUNO

Guten Abend!

RUST (V.O.)

By what fates?!

BRUNO

I want to see my father's friends.

RUST (V.O.)

(approvingly)

Laudable! We'll meet at the Black
Cat Inn. Head straight there. It's
on Taganka, the taxi drivers know.
There will be more people coming to
us.

207. INT. TAXI - DAY.

Bruno rides in a taxi in the back seat. He curiously examines the beautiful streets of Moscow. The car drives up

to the Black Cat inn.

208. EXT. THE BLACK CAT INN – EVENING.

Bruno gets out of the taxi and enters the inn.

209. INT. THE BLACK CAT INN – EVENING.

At the entrance, stylized as the 1940s, Bruno is met by Rust and a long-bearded, uniformed typical cloakroom attendant. Rust - in a strict suit with the order bars of 2 orders of the "Red Star", medals "For Bravery". Rust warmly hugs Bruno tightly and invites him to pass.

The inn has a welcoming atmosphere, and music is playing. Rust brings Bruno to the set table. Cold appetizers and drinks have already been served.

RUST

(enthusiastically)

Well, let me see you – you look like your father! Like two drops of water! Is Mom okay?

BRUNO

Everything is fine!

(pause)

After the death of my father, she did not want to arrange a personal life.

Rust nods his head understandingly.

RUST

(softly)

Bruno, how are you doing with time? Would you like to accompany me on a trip to the Arkhangelsk region? Sidor, our friend, is being released from prison. He will be glad to see Kostyan's son.

BRUNO

I have plenty of time. I will also be glad to see my father's comrade.

RUST

(smiling)

That's settled. We're going together.

Two lean men with a military bearing enter the tavern. Seeing Rust, they go to him.

RUST

(loudly, through the song
"Bessarabian woman",
pointing at the two
guests)

Bruno! This is our company
commander in Afghanistan, SEREDA
Grigory Semyonovich, and the
translator of our regiment from the
Dari language, Abdullo Kodirov.

Rust invites everyone to the table. Bruno looks at Abdullo, wondered where he met this swarthy Asian.

A girl with an armful of bouquets of white, scarlet roses swims briskly between the tables of the inn. Rust calls her and buys a bouquet, asks the waitress to put it in a vase with water.

Abdullo addresses Bruno with cordiality.

KODIROV

(looking into Bruno's
eyes)

Your father saved my life!
In June 1985, we were ambushed in
Panjshir.

FLASHBACK IN

210. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY.

TITLE: THE UPPER REACHES OF THE PANJSHIR GORGE, PIRYAH
DISTRICT SOUTHEAST OF PISHGOR.

Senior Lieutenant Abdullo Kodirov and Kostyan (Kostya Thevs) are cut off by rebel fire and are in the same shelter. Single shots hitting them escalate into queues and heavy fire.

Abdullo and Kostyan are running to the nearest shelter 100 meters away.

The rebel fire reaches a high density.

Kostyan is the first to run behind the adobe shelter. He is waiting for Abdullo. Abdullo is still missing.

Kostyan looks out from behind the shelter and sees how the wounded Abdullo, lying on the ground, raises his hand behind the clouds of settling dust.

Kostyan looks around, takes more air into his lungs and, breaking into short dashes, falling and turning over, crawls to the wounded Abdullo.

Kostyan loads Abdullo on himself, starts moving quickly with him.

The rebels are hitting at Abdullo and Kostyan, who are crawling into cover in the open area, from two sides, not allowing them to raise their heads.

Kostyan and Abdullo crawl behind a dilapidated adobe wall.

There is a short pause in the battle. Kostyan cuts Abdullo's camouflage with a bayonet knife, injects promedol, bandages the wound.

FLASHBACK OUT

211. INT. THE BLACK CAT INN – EVENING.

Abdullo looks piercingly into Bruno's eyes.

A waiter approaches the guest table, takes a decanter with red berry juice from the middle, begins to pour into the glasses of the guests.

Bruno is thinking about something.

KODIROV

I was wounded, stayed in the firing zone, and Kostya Thevs came back for me, dragged a decent distance to the shelter under bullets. Provided first aid, defended.

BRUNO (V.O.)

Where did I hear that voice?!

BRUNO

I know about that case!

(pause)

When my father died, his friend Koster wrote about it.

Mom still keeps all the letters.

SEREDA

(proudly)

Thevs was a good soldier!
We all left a part of ourselves,
our souls in Afghanistan. War is
the only thing we have:
good and bad!

RUST

(thoughtfully)

That's right! Grigory Semenovich
and Abdullo continue to serve the
Motherland.

(with pathos)

And Colonel Kodirov

(looks at Abdullo with a
smile)

is constantly on the Afghan
direction. As they were
intelligence, so they stayed in it!

Rust's words dawned on Bruno.

FLASHBACK IN

212. EXT. TEAHOUSE — DAY.

CAMERA, A HAZE EFFECT USED WHEN BROADCASTING MEMORIES OF THE PAST.

Bruno is sitting on a cot in Yakub Khan's teahouse, curiously contemplating the street commotion.

Zalmi appears, deftly brings a pot of green tea. Bruno pours tea from the kettle into a bowl and takes a sip.

A typical swarthy Afghan ABDULLO (Kodirov) in a white turban and beige perukhan comes down from the cot opposite, comes close to Bruno, stands sideways. Abdullo addresses Bruno in good Russian, without taking his eyes off the door to the office, where Otto and Yahya Muhadi are having a conversation with Halfutdin about the Taliban exchange of Alfred, the son of Oberst Jung.

ABDULLO

I advise you to avoid personal
involvement in the exchange of
Jung's son for the Taliban leaders.
And one more thing: the Taliban is
aware of your close relationship

with Shamsutdin's niece, MSF doctor
Sita Ahmadzai. It's deadly
dangerous!

BRUNO
(surprised with
displeasure)
Who are you?!

Abdullo omits Bruno's question, hurriedly moves to the exit
of the teahouse, thrusts a bill into Zalmai's hand on the
move and disappears into a dense stream of passers-by.

FLASHBACK OUT

213. INT. THE BLACK CAT INN - EVENING.

Bruno is amazed with joy.

BRUNO
I remembered!
You are a swarthy Afghan in a white
turban, beige perukhan, who came up
in the teahouse of one-eyed Yakub
Khan and advised in Russian to
avoid personal participation in the
exchange of Alfred Jung for Mullah
Abdul Rahman and 5 Taliban leaders,
and to stop courting Shamsutdin's
niece, because it is dangerous.

ABDULLO
Well, from intelligence, let's say,
not just us.
(looks at Bruno with a
smile)
As far as we know, the Thevs family
is already a dynasty! So does TF-47
manage to successfully solve
problems in Afghanistan?!

BRUNO
(embarrassed)
It happens in different ways.
(pause)
I no longer serve in this unit.

The tango "Blue eyes" is nearing completion. A young, tall,
beautiful girl, MASHA enters the hall, begins to look for
someone. She attracts the eyes of all those present. Slim
figure, long blond hair, big blue eyes make an impression.

Rust sees the girl, gets up from the table, takes flowers from a vase, goes to meet her. Rust brings the girl to the guest table, sits her vis-a-vis Bruno. Rust holds the girl by the shoulders, introduces her to the guests.

RUST

Let's get acquainted! This is Masha Kostrova, the daughter of our dear Koster, she is a student of the journalism faculty of Moscow State University.

(smiling)

In the near future, with a high probability, the head of ITAR TASS.

Masha blushes.

RUST

(looking at Bruno and the guests)

Masha, and this strong young man is the son of the equally dear for us Kostya Thevs-Bruno.

Bruno stands up and nods his head politely. Sereda, beaming with a smile, leans back in her chair.

SEREDA

(with joy)

The breed is felt. Gallant as a father.

RUST

(proudly)

Bruno lives in Germany, served in Afghanistan for two years, by the way, in the same zone as we once did.

(smiles)

SEREDA

(glancing at Abdullo)

Did I understand correctly?!

Abdullo nodded his head smilingly.

BRUNO

(with a smile)

You can't say anything, Russian intelligence is working well!

SEREDA

(interested)

And what prompted you to serve in the army and even more so to go to Afghanistan?

(pause)

There has already been a tragedy with Afghanistan in your family.

BRUNO

When I began to grow up, not wanting to disturb my mother with difficult memories, I secretly took out, reread my father's and his friends' letters. At a certain point, I firmly decided that I want to become a military intelligence officer, like my father.

Upon reaching military age, I enlisted in the Army, the airborne brigade in Zweibrücken. At the final stage of my service, I entered officer courses, after graduating, I was selected for a special intelligence unit of KSK. After serving for some time in Germany, I turned to the command with a request to send me to serve in Afghanistan in TF-47 - the unit that Abdullo mentioned. That's all. But that's all in the past.

(with a slight smile,
sadness)

SEREDA

What are your plans?

BRUNO

(embarrassed)

I haven't decided yet.

KODIROV

(jokingly)

Or maybe... to us?!

SEREDA

Leave the guy alone!

(smiles)

Sereda changes his smile to severity, gets up with a glass. After him, everyone stands up in silence.

SEREDA

The third toast!
 (with a glass,
 grandiloquently)

Dear combat friends and children of
 our fallen comrades! The feeling of
 guilt that we are alive, and your
 fathers are not with us, will
 always oppress us. We firmly
 believed in what we were doing,
 that the sacrifices are not in
 vain!

Draining glasses, sitting down. Pause.

RUST

(interrupting the silence)
 Well! I have at random, two tickets
 to the Bolshoi for "Giselle"!
 (looks at Masha)
 Masha, will you support Bruno in
 his intention to take you to the
 theater? It's time to get out, my
 driver will take you to the place.

Masha is confused, Bruno stands up resolutely, looks at
 Masha, certifying the offer. Bruno and Masha leave the table.
 Sereda, Abdullo, Rust stays seated, follow the young with
 their eyes.

214. EXT. BOLSHOI THEATER — EVENING.

TITLE: MOSCOW. THE BOLSHOI THEATER.

Bruno and Masha enter the Bolshoi Theatre.

215. INT. HALL OF THE BOLSHOI THEATER — EVENING.

The last minutes of the play "Giselle", the performance is
 over, the artists come out to bow, standing ovation from the
 audience.

Bruno and Masha get up from their seats and go to the exit.

216. EXT. MOSCOW, RED SQUARE — DAWN.

Moscow, Red Square, deserted. Bruno and Masha pass by Lenin's
 Mausoleum.

BRUNO
 (with a smile)
 Again, I am not destined to visit
 the Mausoleum.

MASHA
 (smiles)
 You'll have time yet.

Bruno and Masha leave against the background of Vasilievsky
 Descent.

217. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

TITLE: MOSCOW. BELORUSSKY RAILWAY STATION, MOSCOW -
 ARKHANGELSK TRAIN.

Rust and Bruno enter and sit down in the compartment. The
 train is moving, picking up speed.

The conductor serves tea. Rust and Bruno are sitting opposite
 each other at the table, Bruno is staring intently at Rust.

BRUNO
 What happened to the three of you
 after the death of Strela, Mongol
 and Father?

RUST
 The bodies of the guys were sent to
 the Union. We had very little time
 left before the demobilization.
 In mid-August 1986, a major
 military operation was conducted in
 western Afghanistan. Our regiment
 was transferred by transport
 aircraft to participate.

FLASHBACK IN

218. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - FLASHES OF DAWN.

TITLE: SHARSHARI. HERAT PROVINCE, AFGHAN-IRANIAN BORDER,
 OPERATION TRAP, AUGUST 1986

There is a fierce battle - Sidor, Koster, Rust close to each
 other in the trenches. From the positions of the rebels, the
 voice of the muezzin is heard reciting the azan from a
 powerful loudspeaker, the beginning of the morning prayer of

Fajr is announced loudly. The prayer has ended, a dense fire resumes from opposite heights.

Assault aircraft arrives to support the scouts. Pairs of Su-25 aircraft, alternating, fly over the positions of the scouts in the direction of the fortified area "Kokari-Sharshari", inflict massive bomb-storm strikes on the rebel strongholds, crush them. Every Su-25 attack is a delight for the scouts.

The rebels meet the Su-25 with the fire of ZGU-23-2 anti-aircraft guns, the shots of MANPADS missile systems, spiritualizing themselves with the lingering sounds of prayers from a powerful loudspeaker. At the climax of the battle – across the entire width of the front, the rebels jump out of hiding, presenting themselves at full height, release rocket-propelled grenades, a long machine-gun burst, flaunt fearlessness. Sidor effectively shoots an enemy machine gunner who jumped out of hiding, ready to shoot, with a shot from his sniper rifle.

SIDOR

(with pathos)

They are fighting brightly!

But you can't take us like that!

There is an attack of Su-25 and Mi-24 combat helicopters. The scouts stop shooting, watch the fierce duel of planes with the rebels.

RUST

They enter the strike, work as expected, along the border strip. That's right, why would they provoke a political conflict with Iran?!

SIDOR

(in suspense)

Look how they defend themselves! That's it, they'll hook it in the tail! On the new approach of the Su-25, they will definitely get them!

RUST

Let's hope they don't get it! You see, their rockets do not have time to fly, they remain behind the tail. The stormtrooper is flying fast, high!

Pairs of Su-25s begin the third approach to the airstrike. — The Su-25 are shaking the rebel defenses. The rebels are firing a rocket from a MANPADS. A rebel missile pierces the Su-25, ignites it. From the positions of the scouts, exclamations with Russian obscenities are heard.

SEREDA

(with annoyance)

Japanese transistor! Got it, the devils!

The pilot of the Su-25 turned the flaming plane away from Iran deep into Afghanistan, ejected himself. Sidor, Rust, Koster and others see the opened canopy of the parachute. The parachute smoothly descends into a hollow descending from the saddle between 2 opposite peaks occupied by scouts and rebels. Captain Sereda is called by the commander of the regiment, Lieutenant Colonel A.I. Ostroumov.

SEREDA

01, answered!

So we see, landed in our area!

Yes sir, urgently send a group to the rescue!

(calling, platoon commanders, lieutenants)

Shilo, Tyshkevich! Urgently complete the group.

Select two fighters and one machine gunner from each platoon.

Under your command, Fyodor!

(to Tyshkevich)

The group should immediately descend into the ravine and escort the landed pilot to the position. Do it in a hurry before the rebels get ahead! Be sure to take the radio station! Do not lower the machine gunners into the hem, leave them on the slope, let them cover.

A group of scouts: Koster, Sidor, Rust, Good, three more under the command of Lieutenant Tyshkevich are rapidly descending into the lowlands. They reached the lowlands, they see a parachute spread out at the foot of the slope, they hear gun shots. The Su-25 pilot is firing a pistol at the rebels approaching from the opposite side. The scouts engage the rebels in battle, destroying 3 of them, the rest are put to flight. Together with the PILOT-captain, the scouts return to altitude.

TYSHKEVICH
 (proudly to Sereda)
 Recaptured, Comrade Captain!

PILOT
 (introducing himself to
 Sereda)
 Captain Smirnov!

Sereda and Smirnov greeted each other in return.

PILOT
 (with cordiality to
 Sereda, the scouts)
 Thank you, Captain!
 And to you guys, thank you!

SEREDA
 (inspired by Tyshkevich's
 group)
 Well done! I will present everyone
 to the government awards!

The fire subsided for a while, soon it resumes with renewed vigor. Twilight, the shooting has stopped. Night falls.

219. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE – NIGHT.

The scouts tired of the battle are resting or cleaning their weapons, someone is on guard duty. In the darkness, the order of the officers to the sergeants is heard: to clarify ammunition and water supplies. Sidor, Rust and Koster are sitting side by side. Rust and Koster are cleaning weapons in the dark. Sidor looks into the distance at the Iranian territory, where the lights of the city of Taybad shine, unlike Afghanistan, where it is dark. Sidor softly started singing an old song, thinking about something.

RUST
 (continuing to clean his
 AKS-74 – with a smile of a
 spy)
 Sidor, what are you doing?! Did you
 drag out a mournful one, are you
 making us sad?!
 Tell us better, could you imagine
 in civilian life that you could
 look at Iran so easily from the
 outside?!

SIDOR

(with seriousness)

I didn't think so! And to tell the truth - I didn't really want to!

(with pathos)

And to gird your loins and survey the world, having a backpack over your shoulder, stuffed not with ammunition with dry rations, as it is now, but with overseas currency, it would be great!

KOSTER

(intrigued, looking at Rust)

And where would you go if it was filled with it?!

SIDOR

(without pause)

To South Africa or Colombia!

Koster and Rust exchanged glances.

KOSTER

Well, well!

(Pause)

Why such an exotic choice?!

SIDOR

(dignified)

There is no secret! Diamonds are mined in South Africa, emeralds in Colombia!

Hearing the answer, Rust and Bonfire could not restrain themselves and burst out laughing loudly in unison.

SEREDA

(who was nearby - menacingly)

Guys, what happened there?!

KOSTER

(taming laughter)

It's all right, Comrade Captain!

220. EXT. MOUNTAIN RANGE - DAY.

The heat is +50 ° C, the air is melting, flowing, blurring in outline. Scouts in the mountains are advancing to the rebel

positions, ascend to one of the heights. From the dome of the opposite height, intense shooting opens up on the scouts. The scouts quickly ascend to the top, collide on the trail with the Afghan military "green", hiding behind huge boulders, flatly refusing to go forward and attack the rebels.

There are only rolls of overcoats on the backs of the "greens", large aluminum kettles hang on the belts, ammunition for each of the 1st magazine, there is no ammunition reserve. Rust is angry at the cowardice of the "greens", directs his AKS-74 at them and, having removed the safety, strictly demands in Afghan:

RUST

Buru! GO!

The "Greens" have a death grip on the boulders, the trunks of hazmophytes sticking out of the rock cracks, do not want to move from their place. The advanced patrol, friends – Rust, Sidor Strela look evil, push the "greens" away from the path with the butts of their weapons, walk around at a brisk pace, head forward. The main group of scouts is following the friends. Scouts run into the height being shelled.

The rebels meet their scouts with heavy fire, the scouts respond to them. Scouts try to hide from the fire, lie in relief folds, behind boulders.

SEREDA

(loudly)

Everyone take cover!

The advance of the reconnaissance company has choked. The dome of the mountain is a solid minefield, completely shot through by steady small arms, mortar, grenade launcher fire of the rebels from the opposite dominant height. There are machine-gun points equipped there, they do not allow the scouts to raise their heads. Rust is the first to run to the top, followed by others. Rust occupies a pit that covers it from the fire of the rebels.

Every scout running to the top is faced with frontal fire, rushing in search of shelter from defeat. On the site, in the vicinity of Rust's position, a scout is blown up on an antipersonnel mine.

RUST

Cover up!

Rust takes a sapper probe and crawls to the wounded man under enemy fire. The wounded man's shin is torn off, his groin is

torn, he screams loudly:

"Mom!"

Rust drags him to his shelter, there he quickly loosens the wound tourniquet from the butt of the machine gun, tightens the stump of the severed leg of the wounded man, injects him with a dose of promedol.

The ferocity of the confrontation is growing. Continuous, with short intervals, whistling of mines, their bursts, steady small-arms fire of the rebels are intensifying. An explosion is heard near Rust, a scout is torn off by a shin, an explosive wave tears his face, knocking out an eye. Non-stop rifle fire continues on the scouts.

Rust repeats the rescue actions, pulls the raincoat tent with the wounded back, takes it out of the zone of continuous fire. A characteristic click sounds under Rust's feet, "Mine!" – he understands. In the mind – horror. A moment after the click, a loud gap is heard. Rust flies up and falls on the mountain firmament. He is very shaky, there is a lingering ringing in his ears, a thick veil covered his eyes. Rust falls on his side, sees white bones sticking out of the torn, bloody soft tissues of his 2 shins, light liquid dripping from them. Nearby scouts freeze.

RUST

(to Sidor and Koster, who
are rushing to him)

Stop, don't come near!
Everything is mined here!

Rust shakes his head with scorched powder smoke, with an incredible effort, crawls to his AKS-74 submachine gun thrown by the blast wave. Abruptly pulls the belt, taking off the safety, directs the AKS-74 to himself. Sidor instantly unravels Rust's plan, makes a jerk, pulls out the AKS-74 with force.

RUST

(to Sidor)

Return the submachine gun! I'm not
a tenant anymore anyway! While they
drag me to the helicopter, others
will be blown up!

The creeping Koster, silently injects Rust with a double dose of promedol and, with a knife, splits a crimson rubber tourniquet unwound from the butt of the AKS-74, tightens it on the stumps of the shins, writing the current time on it. Rust is losing consciousness. The fire of the rebels does not

stop, does not allow the soldiers to raise their heads.

IT IS NECESSARY TO LEAVE A HEIGHT URGENTLY!

SEREDA

(loudly)

Company forward!

The scouts are rushing forward, leaving several to evacuate the wounded. The offensive is hindered by machine-gun fire from the nearest rebel point.

Sidor, abruptly descends from the mountain, singing under his breath in excitement.

SIDOR

Oh, she didn't see me standing in
the church, leaning against the
wall, sobbing inconsolably.

Oh, leaning against the wall,
sobbing inconsolably.

The sounds of the waltz were
rushing, the whole hall was having
fun.

Sidor bypasses the firing point from the rear, approaches it at a distance from where you can throw a grenade. Sidor lies on his side, pulls out the pin of the RGD-5 grenade and, slightly rising, throws it with force.

Sidor is pierced by a bullet of an enemy rebel submachine gunner, the bullet entered under the left collarbone and, flying out through the shoulder blade, paralyzed – Sidor is pierced by a bullet of an enemy rebel submachine gunner, the bullet entered under the left collarbone and, flying out through the shoulder blade, paralyzed the left arm. The fire on the scouts does not stop. Sidor clenched his teeth in pain and, pulling out the second grenade, sang with difficulty.

SIDOR

Oh, she didn't like the end of my
life... And to spite me, she went
down the aisle with a hateful one.

Sidor pulled out the pin with his teeth, gathered his last strength, repeated the throw. The machine gun fell silent.

221. INT. HOSPITAL – DAY.

TITLE: KABUL. ARMY HOSPITAL, SEPTEMBER 1986

The wide corridor of the hospital is a busy artery that connects the hospital departments with the operating room, dressing room, dining room. There is a queue of wounded people standing on crutches with Ilizarov devices in the corridor at the dressing room. They and other wounded are waiting for medical treatment of wounds.

Screams and loud swearing of the wounded man are heard from the dressing room. Sidor in a blue robe with a sling on his collarbone, together with an orderly, roll a gurney with a recumbent Rust to the door of the dressing room. Rust is lying on his stomach, his head on a pillow, the stumps of 2 severed shins are covered with a sheet.

The door of the dressing room opened, a nurse and an orderly rolled out a gurney with a wounded man, his whole back without skin - riddled with many fragments. From the dressing room with snow-white tiles on the walls, the firm male voice of the military doctor is heard: "Next!" Sidor and the orderly are quickly pushed into the dressing gurney with the wounded Rust.

222. INT. DRESSING ROOM - DAY.

There are three operating tables in the dressing room, with circles of powerful lighting lamps on top.

On the operating table, a wounded Rust lies belly down with 2 severed shins. Military doctor Alexander TEPLOV processes the seams of the stump, open areas of torn soft tissues of the back of the thighs.

TEPLOV

Now, brother, you'll have to be patient. How you got it!

Teplov abundantly pours furatsilin solution on the gauze bandages soaked in dried blood on the seams of the stumps and torn soft tissues, immediately begins to tear them off. Rust drowns out the throat he makes and, stuffing his mouth with a corner of the pillow, turns it into a hollow moan, his forehead is in cold sweat. The dressing is finished.

A stretcher with Rust is rolled out by an orderly and a nurse into the corridor.

223. INT. KABUL HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY.

Rust, lying on a gurney, looks towards a group of wounded people waiting in line to change gauze balls on the spokes of

Ilizarov's devices.

RUST

(to the waiting Sidor)

Let's stay in the hallway for a while. I'm tired of the ward already! Let's talk to the people.

Sidor puts a gurney along the wall near the door to the dressing room. Rust strikes up a conversation with his comrades. A bald-haired, slim ORDERLY and a stocky FIGHTER accompanied by him with his arms amputated above the elbows and a binocular bandage for both eyes approach the dressing room. The fighter's face, with numerous cuts, is heavily smeared with Brilliant Green.

FIGHTER

(to the orderly, entering the dressing room)

Hey, bro! When will the blindfold be removed?!

The answer to the fighter remains outside the door. The orderly leaves the wounded man in the dressing room, he goes out to wait.

SIDOR

(Grimly to the orderly)

What happened?!

ORDERLY

(to Sidor)

This is a sapper from Charikar, arrived at night. He was assigned to scouts combing the village in the Surubi area and conducted mine clearance of the trail. So - the mine exploded in his hands.

SIDOR

(with annoyance)

Bad luck!

(pause)

And what about the eyes?!

ORDERLY

(serene)

He has no eyes - everything is sewn up! He doesn't know yet, but no one dares to tell him.

224. INT. HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT.

TITLE: KABUL. ARMY HOSPITAL. WARD OF THE SURGICAL DEPARTMENT

A ward with 6-meter-high ceilings. On both sides of the long aisle - one and two-tier iron bunks. The first tier with amputees and wounded patients with Ilizarov devices, a construction of steel discs and spokes that tighten the two ends of broken bone tissue. Sidor and Rust are lying on adjacent bunks, not sleeping, thinking. The wounded man's groan is heard in the ward. Rust raises his head from the pillow, sees a chain of glowing cigarette lights in the darkness of the midnight hospital ward.

225. EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY.

TITLE: KABUL. AIRFIELD.

The IL-76 MD-Scalpel is coming off the runway. There are many wounded on board.

RUST (V.O.)

For many soldiers who have not left their hospital beds for a long time, the minutes when they rose, exhausted, but strong-willed, will remain dear memories. Step by step, overcoming pain and infirmity, leaning on crutches or the fragile shoulders of nurses, they learned to walk again, bringing their return home closer.

Weeks or months later, the ever-memorable Kabul hospital, its sacred brotherhood, remained behind us, where, oblivious to what had happened, we were only on the verge of the point of no return. The last battle had not yet thundered, the fatal click of a mine did not sound, an ominous bullet did not fly out of the "BUR" rifle.

Not through the front corridor, but with a "cargo-300" aboard the IL-76 MD-scalpel at the appointed time, lying on a stretcher, covered with soldiers' overcoats, we will rise into the Afghan sky for the last time and, heading for our native lightning, we will fly to meet our

fate.

Beaten, but not defeated, having passed through the corridors of Afghan hospitals, we face other trials ahead - a country that has debunked ideals, an environment alien to our values, where, re-defeated, we will be deceived, rejected and forgotten.

Rust is pale, lying on a stretcher, covered with a greatcoat. Sidor with a sling on his shoulder, sitting opposite.

FLASHBACK OUT

226. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAWN.

In the sleeping car Rust and Bruno are sitting vis-a-vis.

BRUNO

(to Rust)

And how did your, Sidor and Koster destinies turn out after Afghanistan?

RUST

(thinking)

There were some twists and turns.

FLASHBACK IN

227. EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY.

TITLE: TASHKENT. 340th DISTRICT MILITARY HOSPITAL OF TURKVO.

The birthday of the Lenin Komsomol is October 29, 1986. Rust and Sidor are sitting on a bench in a large hospital garden in an alley of slender rows of century-old plane trees. The treated military men in blue hospital robes are walking slowly past in pairs. At a rapid pace, they are overtaken by officers in uniform hurrying on duty: majors, lieutenant colonels, colonels with the emblems of the military medical service on their buttonholes.

There's a fuss in the hospital. Red flags are hung on the facades of buildings, Komsomol songs sound from street loudspeakers: "Comrade Song", "Song about anxious youth", "I will not part with the Komsomol", "Love, Komsomol and spring" and others. On the territory of the hospital, one after another, personal service black Volga GAZ-24 with major functionaries and buses with representative delegations from

the Tashkent regional committees of the CPSU and Komsomol.

Members of the delegations get together in groups with Uzbek folk artists and together pass a festive procession through the hospital wards, hand over valuable gifts and souvenirs to the wounded soldiers-internationalists. Employees of the Tashgorobshepit drive up to the entrances of hospital departments on board ZIL-130 in white caps with huge cauldrons of pilaf, boxes of ripe grapes, dressing gowns, and handily unload treats. Rust and Sidor have just passed a medical examination and were declared unfit for military service.

SIDOR

(dejectedly to Rust)

Congratulations!
That's the end of our military service! We will receive the 317 rubles due to us for serious injuries, and I will go to the airport for tickets.

RUST

(disapprovingly)

No! That won't do!
Come on, brother, let's fulfill our duty to the tradition established in the company!
Everything should be done as if we were returning home normally, not from the hospital.
In short, first go to the airport and buy tickets for the next few days. Then we will settle in the Uzbekistan hotel, and in the evening we will put on a ceremonial uniform with awards and go to celebrate at the Zaravshan restaurant.
The hospital has already allocated me a wheelchair, so I'm on new wheels now!

228. EXT. HOSPITAL - TWILIGHT.

Sidor rolls the wheelchair with Rust past the "Emergency room" outside the hospital to the nearby restaurant "Zaravshan".

229. EXT. RESTAURANT - EVENING.

TITLE: TASHKENT. ZARAVSHAN RESTAURANT

Rust and Sidor arrived at the restaurant, there are no empty seats. People are crowding at the entrance; they can't get into the institution. Rust, full of determination, beckons the administrator with a wave of his hand, from behind the glass door, he bends down, Rust puts a blue five-ruble bill into the breast pocket of the administrator's uniform suit.

RUST

(declared proudly)

Get us a table, my dear!

230. INT. ZARAVSHAN RESTAURANT - EVENING.

The administrator starts fussing, sends 2 waiters to bring a round table. Waiters briskly set the table in front of the raised stage. The administrator invites Sidor and Rust to go into the hall and sit at the table. The VIA (vocal and instrumental ensemble) performs on stage in front of the guests in bright woven national robes, the popular song of the YALLA group "Uchkuduk - three wells" sounds.

The song is sung, VIA announces a short break, leaves the stage. A young helpful waiter approaches Sidor and Rust, takes the order.

SIDOR

A bottle of Soviet champagne.

The hubbub of the hall is interrupted by the LEAD SINGER OF VIA, who has returned from a break and started speaking into the microphone - with black wavy hair, a lush mustache.

LEAD SINGER OF VIA

Dear friends!

Today we have visiting
internationalist soldiers, scouts
of the military contingent in
Afghanistan - Rustam and Sergey!
On behalf of their company
commander, combat friend and all
the guests of this evening, we
congratulate the guys on the
completion of military service in
Afghanistan and wish them success
in peaceful life!
The famous song of the war years

"Smuglyanka" will sound for them.

The announcement caused excitement and applause in the audience.

Rust and Sidor began to look around for familiar faces. Captain Sereda and Koster came out of the VIA room onto the stage and descended in full dress uniform. The audience amicably sings along to the VIA.

Sidor and Rust rejoiced at the unexpected meeting with Sereda and the Koster, all hugging, slapping each other on the shoulders.

KOSTER

(gratifying)

That's the meeting!

SIDOR

(excusing himself)

It's all Rust!

We will not, he says, violate company traditions!

As long as all our company demobs have come back like this, and we will go like this!

SEREDA

(approvingly)

Tukaev thought correctly!

SIDOR

(with curiosity)

How did you know we were here today?!

KOSTER

(proudly)

Let's start with the fact that we, like you, are faithful to our company traditions! That's why they planned to go to Zaravshan in the evening. In addition, when registering at the hotel, we were informed that two Afghans an hour ago were already interested in how to get to this restaurant. According to the description, we admitted: what the hell is not joking about?! What if it's you?!

RUST

Yes! Loyalty to tradition gave us
away!

The guests of the restaurant, through the waiters, begin to bring bottles of alcohol, flowers to the scouts, and greet them with standing ovations. The friends stand up together, nod gratefully to the guests in response.

231. EXT. HOSPITAL - MORNING.

A team of doctors and nurses, with them Captain Sereda, came out to see off Rust, Sidor, Koster. Friends in full dress uniform with orders and medals, carrying identical, gray-colored briefcases with modest soldier's belongings. The orderly took a collective picture, Rust, Sidor, Koster hug Sereda and, load into a taxi, drive off.

232. INT. AIRPORT TASHKENT - MORNING.

TITLE: TASHKENT. YUZHNY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

There is a lot of commotion in the departure hall of the airport. Koster rolls Rust's wheelchair to the panoramic window.

KOSTER

Rust, wait for us here,
Sidor and I will quickly find out
if there is a flight delay and buy
something to eat.

Koster and Sidor put three demob briefcases close to the wheels of Rust's wheelchair, begin to move away. At the airport, there are many demobee returning from Afghanistan in full-dress uniforms with the same type of briefcases. Rust is greeted with piety by the demobeers, many come up to shake hands.

Rust feels the stares of the untrustworthy 2 gangster-looking guys standing on the sidelines. The bandits are nervous, shifting their gazes from the briefcases left next to Rust's stroller to Rust's bent trousers with a stump, waiting for Koster and Sidor to move away. Koster and Sidor have disappeared into the crowd, the bandits are rushing to the briefcases.

Rust is ahead of their aspirations, whistled loudly. The bandits do not have time to grab the handles of the

briefcases, to pull away from the place - Rust rushed first, clung with a death grip. The bandits, unable to free themselves from the legless Rust, drag him along the granite floor to the exit, fight back with their fists, elbows. Rust holds firm. The whistling and the noise of the scuffle reached Koster and Sidor, who rushed to Rust's aid and, running up to the bandits, began to beat them hard.

The collision doesn't last long. The police officers on duty at the airport appeared - a stocky foreman and a red-haired sergeant, who dragged the enraged friends aside. The bandits are taken out of the airport hall, put into a yellow-blue police UAZ-469, taken away somewhere. Sidor, Rust, Koster spend them with his eyes.

Boarding for the Tashkent - Moscow flight has been announced.

233. INT. AIRLINER SALON - DAY.

The cabin of the Tu-154 airliner. Sidor, Rust, and Koster are sitting next to each other. The pilot announces the upcoming flight.

FLASHBACK OUT

234. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

TITLE: TRAIN "MOSCOW - ARKHANGELSK"

Rust and Bruno are sitting vis-a-vis to each other at the conversation.

BRUNO

And what happened to Sidor that he sat down for so long?

RUST

In November 1986, we were demobilized. Back in Afghanistan, we made a vow - if we return alive, we will certainly go to Leningrad to visit the mother of the deceased Arrow, Lyudmila Vasilyevna. She came to Strela in Surkhandarya to the training company for the oath and treated all six of us - Kostyan, Mongol, Strela, Rust, Koster and Sidor with pilaf from teahouse. She should have remembered us.

So, during the student holidays, we went to Leningrad.

The trip was complicated by the fact that the notebook containing Strela's home phone number and address was lost by me along with the camouflage cut by the doctors before the surgical operation at the Shindand garrison hospital. The only thing that remained in my memory after the severe concussion I suffered was that Strela lived on Polyustrovsky Avenue. The number of his house, according to fragmentary memories, was either 20, and apartment 25, or vice versa, or maybe neither.

Rust is silent, lost in memories.

Bruno looks at Rust, waiting for the narrative to continue.

FLASHBACK IN

235. EXT. LENINGRAD. MOSCOW RAILWAY STATION – DAY.

TITLE: LENINGRAD. MOSCOW RAILWAY STATION, JULY 1987

EIGHT MONTHS AFTER THE RETURN OF SIDOR, RUST, KOSTER FROM AFGHANISTAN

Sidor, Rust, and Koster come out of the train onto the platform, dressed in fashionable jeans and jackets MONTANA and US TOP, ROMIKA and Adidas sneakers, bought in Afghan dukan, with bright sports bags at the ready.

On the square in front of the station, a queue of two dozen taxis with glowing green lights lined up in a row. Friends attracted the attention of a puny, snub-nosed, in shabby leather jacket and an awkward orange cap of a TAXI DRIVER.

TAXI DRIVER

(with a squint, passing by friends, spitting aside)

Where to go?!

RUST

(irritated by the moveton)

Polyustrovsky Avenue!

The name of the avenue was the only thing Rust remembered

firmly.

TAXI DRIVER

What house?!

KOSTER

(resourcefully)

Let's go to Polyustrovsky for now,
and then we'll see.

Let's start with house 20!

The taxi driver looks apprehensively, points to his white Volga GAZ-24 with checkers. Rust sits in front, Sidor and Koster in the back seat. Driving along the wide avenues and streets of Leningrad, the taxi drove into a deserted, abandoned industrial zone with old, from tsarist times, brown-brick houses with residents awaiting relocation. Friends were simultaneously wary.

SIDOR

(with pressure)

Where are you taking us?!

TAXI DRIVER

(visibly agitated)

So we'll take a shortcut, the path
will be shorter.

The taxi driver drove a little and stops the car at an iron telephone booth and complains that he forgot to turn off something at home, went out to make an urgent call. Picking up the phone, and starting to talk to someone in a phone booth, the taxi driver turned away. The taxi driver turned around, looked intently at the friends waiting in the car and, as if conducting a reconnaissance, reported them to someone.

Four strong fellows jumped out of the entrance and, running around the taxi, abruptly opened the front and rear doors and put Finnish knives to the throat of each of the friends.

ONE OF THE RAIDERS

(sonorously)

Money and valuables, spread it
quickly! Otherwise, we'll cut you
into belts!

There was no pause. Sidor, Koster, Rust instantly mobilized, firmly grabbing the raiders by the hands, and, pulling them into the taxi cabin, began to brutally beat and strangle them. The fourth robber, a short man who poked his head into the passenger compartment through the driver's door, tries in

vain to strike at Koster and Sidor, who were beating his accomplices with fists and heads, and then unclench Rust's hands, who imprisoned the third accomplice in pincers and forced him to wheeze from suffocation.

The taxi driver watches with horror from a phone booth. The fight inside the car was transferred to the sidewalk. Sidor is already finishing off the nearest raider, whose face looks like the pulp of an overripe watermelon.

Three accomplices are treated by Koster and Rust. They, having resigned themselves to the defeat and abandoning their comrade, limping, holding their sides, wiping blood from their faces, hurriedly leave. The raiders are leaving the scene of the attack, a WOMAN'S SCREAM is heard from the windows of the house hung with drying laundry.

WOMAN'S SCREAM (V.O.)

Bandits! Look at what they're doing
in the middle of the day, huh?!
We'll call the police now!

KOSTER

(spitting bloody saliva on
the sidewalk)
Bacchanalia!

SIDOR

(with annoyance)
If the late Strela had seen his
native Leningrad receiving military
confidants, he would certainly have
been upset!

The taxi driver returned to the car, he is in turmoil, can't hide his excitement, confirming his involvement in the raid.

SIDOR

(with passion)
What, a thieves ' mug, brought us
to a hijacking?! Are you their
tipster?!

TAXI DRIVER

(babbling)
They forced me, they said they
would deprive me of my life.

SIDOR

Now you're going to drive us around
the city for free until we find the
address we're looking for or our

badly shell-shocked friend suddenly
remembers it!

The taxi driver chose the first one. Friends drove to Polyustrovsky avenue, house 20, apartment 25, then to house 25, apartment 20, and then also to other addresses with similar numbers 0, 2, 5, but they did not find the Streltsov apartments. Checking the next address, friends went to the entrance of the house. Behind the friends, the screeching of tires was heard as a taxi pulled away from the place.

SIDOR

(with annoyance)

Threw off the shackles, you
bastard!

KOSTER

What a misfortune!

RUST

It is necessary to look for the
district military enlistment
office, to which Polyustrovsky
avenue is attached!

SIDOR

(excitedly)

The right idea!

236. EXT. LENINGRAD DISTRICT MILITARY COMMISSARIAT — TWILIGHT.

TITLE: LENINGRAD DISTRICT MILITARY COMMISSARIAT

Friday evening, the working day is already over. Sidor, Koster, Rust knock on the door, no one answers the knock. Friends go around the building from the back and, having found the service entrance, knock again.

ROUGH MALE VOICE OUTSIDE THE DOOR

(V.O.)

What do you need?!

RUST

(leaning his head against
the door)

Hello! We are Afghan veterans. We
came from Moscow to visit the
mother of our comrade who died in
Afghanistan.

(pause)

His name was Herman Vladimirovich
Streltsov. Could you give us the

Streltsov's home address?

ROUGH MALE VOICE OUTSIDE THE DOOR
(V.O.)

I won't say anything! The
commissariat does not give such
information!
Come up on Monday at 8.00 to the
attendant.

KOSTER
(irritated)

You probably didn't understand?!
We came from Moscow and can't wait
until Monday. We have no one in
this city!

There is silence outside the door.

Desperate to get the address of the Streltsov, the friends sat down on the steps of the service entrance and pondered. The darkness of the courtyard of the military enlistment office was illuminated by the bright headlights of yellow-blue police UAZ-469 with flashing lights and sirens turned on from 2 sides. The two patrol service squads that flew off them, without finding out anything, used rubber batons, not even letting the friends insert a word.

Friends can't stop the barrage of blows with words. In order to moderate zealous policemen, friends resort to forceful restraint. However, the forces are unequal. Rust, lying on the asphalt, covering the stumps of his lower leg from blows with batons, screams.

RUST

Will someone explain to us what our
fault is?!

A STOUT POLICE SERGEANT
Now we will take you to the police
department and there we will
continue to explain what your fault
is!

(snapping handcuffs behind
the backs of friends lying
face down)

And our employees will also record
beatings in the emergency room, and
a criminal case will be opened
against you under Article 191 part
1 – for disobedience and resistance
to police officers using violence

and threats when their performance
of the duties of the service.

Friends are pushed into the UAZ-469, into the detention compartment. The door slammed shut behind them with a deafening clang. A STOUT POLICE SERGEANT, clinging to the window bars with a sweaty round face with a Mephistophelic smile.

A STOUT POLICE SERGEANT
(bilious)
And taking into account a stable
group, each of you will get five
years!

Sidor, cheerfully with a smeared face and a split lip, shaking off the dust from a denim jacket, the buttons of which are uprooted, in response, pressed his face close to the gray nose of the sergeant and sings softly.

SIDOR
"The piano is open, you came up,
and you said: Your love has sunk
deep into the heart.
(pause)
Dear weirdo!

KOSTER
(with annoyance)
Nothing to say, a warm welcome!
First the bandits, then the
commissariat officer on duty, and
at the end, the native police
participated. What will happen
next, I can't even guess.

RUST
(serenely; massaging the
blue stumps of the shins
protruding from the
prostheses)
And we didn't come to them!

KOSTER
That's right!

SIDOR
(to Rust - with empathy,
watching as he puts the
stumps back into the
prostheses)
How are you?!

RUST
(statutory)
Normally! It was worse in Herat!

237. EXT. LENINGRAD. THE POLICE DEPARTMENT OF ONE OF THE DISTRICTS OF THE CITY - TWILIGHT.

TITLE: LENINGRAD. THE POLICE DEPARTMENT OF ONE OF THE DISTRICTS OF THE CITY.

A police UAZ-469 drives into the courtyard of the police department, and Sidor, Rust, and Koster are taken out of the prisoner compartment in handcuffs.

238. INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - EVENING.

Sidor, Rust and Koster, handcuffed behind their backs, are escorted past the window of the "Duty Officer" to the "Aquarium" pre-trial detention cell. In the cell there is already a group of ardent fans of Dinamo Tbilisi who arrived for the match of the 18th round of the 50th anniversary Championship of the USSR with Zenit Leningrad. The fans are taken out for questioning one by one, and the Afghan friends are completely forgotten, as if they don't exist at all. Without bothering the attendant with questions, Sidor, Rust, and Koster lay down on wooden benches and peacefully fell asleep.

239. INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY.

The door to the cell is opened by a short, intelligent-looking, friendly, fair-haired CAPTAIN who is on duty.

CAPTAIN
(to the screaming Tbilisi fans)
Quiet! Quiet! Step aside! The remaining natives of the tea region will be the last to be interrogated!

The captain squeezes deep into the filled cell to the friends lying on the benches.

CAPTAIN
And you, comrades, for what outstanding feat have you been awarded to us?!

RUST

There was no feat!

CAPTAIN

(doubtfully)

There wasn't, you say?

Well, come with me, tell me
everything in detail.

And your friends will wait in the
cell.

Rust follows the attendant into a room where there is a large remote control, flashing lights, a bunch of phones, chattering tirelessly.

CAPTAIN

Have a seat!

In the register of persons
taken to the police department and
the Register of materials on an
administrative offense, it is
written: "Yesterday, at about
19.30, a group of violators of
public order beat on the door of
the District Military Commissariat,
demanding to let them inside.
The rowdies not only did not react
to the demand of the commissariat
officer on duty to leave, but they
used obscene language and
threatened physical assault."

What can you explain about this?
Only in essence!

RUST

Yes, there was no such thing!
We behaved decently. We explained
truthfully, as it is, that we came
from Moscow to visit the mother of
a friend who died in Afghanistan.
Since we have not preserved the
number of the house and apartment
where he lived, but only the name
of the avenue, we decided to seek
help from the district military
commissariat. And circumstances
allowed us to get to it only in the
evening. Yesterday, as you know,
was Friday – the end of the working
week and a short working day. The
military enlistment office was

already closed by our arrival. We had no choice but to contact the RVC duty officer to help with the address. And he turned out to be callous, unwilling to humanely enter into our situation, and even cynically sent until Monday. In addition, he called two police squads, who detained us harshly, with the use of force.

CAPTAIN

You put it well! Show me your passport first and tell me the full name of the mother of the deceased friend.

RUST

(held out the document)

Here is my passport!
And the mother of the deceased friend's name is Lyudmila Streltsova, she lives on Polyustrovsky Avenue.

The captain flipped through the passport, made sure of the Moscow temporary student registration and returned it.

CAPTAIN

I'm going to query the database now.

(picking up the phone,
saying)

Base! Look at me, Lyudmila Vasilyevna Streltsova, Polyustrovsky avenue.

The captain is answered, he gets excited, presses the phone to his shoulder with his chin, looks at Rust. Hastily tore a blank sheet of paper in half, repeating after the voice on the line, quickly wrote the address: "house 5, apartment 20" – and the home phone number.

CAPTAIN

(to Rust)

Here you go! We'll call her on the phone now.

RUST

(categorically)

No need! It's better not to make her nervous ahead of time. We'll drive up and decide everything on

the spot.

CAPTAIN

As you know.

The Captain and Rust return to the camera. The captain releases Sidor and Kostra and goes to escort all three to the exit of the police department.

240. EXT. LENINGRAD POLICE DEPARTMENT – EVENING.

At the front door on the street, the captain lights up. At this moment, the UAZ-469 driver who brought friends to the police department last day meets at the door.

CAPTAIN

(in his own way to the
driver)

Grisha! Drop the Afghans on
Polyustrovsky 5!

Sidor, Rust and Koster exchange glances and smile.

RUST

Uh, no, thanks! We'd better get
there ourselves.

The song "The Stars are waiting for us today" by the Mirage group is heard on the street. Inspired by their newfound freedom, the friends stop a taxi and having bought a cake and flowers on the way, arrive at 5 Polyustrovsky.

241. INT. ENTRANCE/APARTMENT OF STRELTSOVA – DAY.

Apartment of Lyudmila Vasilyevna Streltsova. Rust, Sidor, Koster have come to the door, they are ringing. Footsteps were heard, a tall gray-haired woman opens the door.

RUST (V.O.)

Mom's eyes, like Strela's, are the
same blue- blue!

RUST

Hello Lyudmila Vasilyevna! We are
Herin's army friends!
Do you remember us?

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA

My God, of course I remember you!
Come on in, guys!

Friends noticed Lyudmila Vasilyevna's sadness, which filled her eyes with tears, and were confused. Koster handed over flowers and a cake. Friends wash their hands from the road, go to the hall. Passing by a small room, their gaze caught on a large portrait hanging on the wall with a smiling Strela. Friends freeze for a moment.

RUST
(quietly)
We pass on!

Friends come into the hall, sit in upholstered chairs, on the sofa. Behind the glass of the sideboard, there is a framed collective school photo with Strela standing in the first row.

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA
(bringing a vase of
flowers)
Guys, help me push the table apart.

Friends stand up together, quickly pull out the table, connect two tabletops together, cover them with a tablecloth.

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA
Dumplings with potatoes and cottage
cheese will be ready soon, Hera
adored them.
(mournful silence)
As I felt, I stuck them on with a
reserve and put them in the
freezer. Herin's classmates visit
me all the time and go to the
cemetery to see him.
Sometimes I'll go there, and the
flowers on the grave are fresh –
they remember. Thank them!

Friends, looking down, are silent.

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA
(after leaving for a
while, she brought hot
dumplings to the kitchen)
Everyone at the table!
(mournfully, wiping away a
tear)
So we gathered.

RUST

We remember well how you came to
Herman for the oath in
Surkhandarya. How you treated the
six of us to pilaf and samsa. Their
taste is still in our mouths.

Lyudmila Vasilyevna smiled sadly.

RUST

Herman, probably wrote to you about
us, and yet I will remind you of
our names: I am Rustam Tukaev, to
my right is Sergey Sidorenko, to my
left is Ivan Kostrov.
There were six of us, three - your
son Herman, Konstantin Tevs and
Darkhan Badmaev died. We have no
words of comfort for you,
(getting up)
they have not yet been invented for
a mother who has lost her only son.
But the three of us will try to at
least partially replace Herman for
you!

Sidor and Koster follow and silently remember their dead
friends.

SIDOR

(taking off the guitar
hanging on the wall and
tuning it up, he sang)
We don't need loud toasts, we don't
need glasses ringing,
We are not happy with this vodka
that is in our mugs now. The dusty
battalions will remain in our
memory
And our dead guys who will always
live among us.
The first toast is for those who
have gone into eternity,
May the earth be down to them.
We will remember them all alive, We
will remember them with a quiet
word.
The second toast is for luck and
courage,
For our guys, strong in spirit,
So that they remain young in soul

And do not abandon their friends.
 On the harsh land of Afghanistan,
 under a strange, unfriendly sky,
 our strong friendship was born,
 That helped out more than once in
 battle! We will raise the third
 toast for her and share salt and
 bread, may that friendship be
 eternal, here forever bound us!

242. INT. TAXI - DAY.

Taxi on the move to the Northern Cemetery of Leningrad. In the cabin - Lyudmila Vasilyevna in front, Sidor, Rust, Koster in the back seat. On the road, on Leningrad avenues, streets, Zenit fans meet sporadically.

243. EXT. THE NORTHERN CEMETERY OF LENINGRAD - DAY.

TITLE: LENINGRAD. NORTHERN CEMETERY

Sidor, Rust, Koster follow Lyudmila Vasilyevna, they come to the site where the internationalist soldiers who died in Afghanistan are buried. A long row of fresh graves immediately appears to the eyes of friends. From the photo on the monument of one of them, a young lieutenant-pilot in a ceremonial uniform looks out. An epitaph is carved under his name: "You are my joy, my love, my sorrow."

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA
 (passing behind Sidor,
 Koster and Rust, frozen at
 the grave with the
 inscription)

This guy was brought recently, a
 monument was placed on the grave
 the same month, unable to withstand
 the time until the earth settles.

Fresh burials of Afghan soldiers obscured the Strela's grave, which remained in the depths. Friends reach the grave of Strela, they saw a photo and a name engraved in light maroon granite: "Streltsov German Vladimirovich. An internationalist warrior." There are several bouquets of fresh roses and carnations on the grave.

RUST
 (quietly)
 Well done classmates!

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA

(quietly)

Hello, son!

So your friends have come to you.

Lyudmila Vasilyevna stands looking at the photo of her son, and, pouring water from a bottle on a piece of cloth, begins to wipe the monument from dust. Silently watching from behind Lyudmila Vasilyevna, friends are painfully impressed. A benevolent Strela smiles at his friends from the photo.

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA

(on the move, leaving the cemetery)

The Great Patriotic War caught me as a six-month-old child in Pskov. Besides me, there were other elders in the family: a sister born in 1938 and a brother born in 1939. The Germans sent us, three small children and my mother, to a concentration camp near Königsberg, and the Red Army units freed us from the dungeons. After the war, after graduating from high school, I entered the Pskov Polytechnic Institute, where I met my future husband Vladimir Streltsov. Soon we got married, and our son Herman was born. We lived happily until Vladimir died in a car accident in 1971. So I was left a widow with a four-year-old son in my arms. All my life I have worked at one of the major defense enterprises and did not seek to arrange a personal life, devoting myself entirely to Hera. Herman graduated from school with good grades, but decided to enter the institute after the army. At the age of 18, in October 1984, obviously, like all of you, with the first group of conscripts, Gera was sent to the Turkestan military District in Surkhandarya. You know what happened next.

244. INT. STRELTSOVA'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Lyudmila Vasilyevna's apartment. Rust, Sidor and Koster go into the hall, look into a small room where a large portrait of Strela hangs. Entering the room, they see traces of abundant neighbors flooding from the upper floor. There are large dried smudges on the ceiling, corners, joints of the walls, peeling wallpaper.

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA
(passing from the hall to
the kitchen, without
anger)

Yes, this is our new neighbor,
Yakov Itkin. Flooded me from above
at the end of winter.

He is a prominent man - the
director of two shops "Berezka" on
the Morskaya embankment, where all
Leningrad speculators will settle
down.

Itkin bought two adjacent
apartments and combined them into
one. Neighbors say that it is a
gift to a young mistress - the
future opera diva of the Mariinsky
Theater.

When he was doing a global repair,
at the same time he decided to
change all the pipes and heating
batteries. And his repairmen
overlooked something. Over the past
six months, I have already gone to
the housing office several times
and personally appealed to him to
eliminate the consequences of
flooding - all to no avail.

RUST
(resolutely)
And we will certainly get to know
him tomorrow, and we will
definitely settle this issue.

AT THE SAME TIME. FOOTBALL MATCH

There is a TV in the hall of Lyudmila Vasilyevna's apartment.
Koster is watching the broadcast.

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE/LENINGRAD. STADIUM NAMED AFTER
S.M.KIROV. ZENIT - DYNAMO-TBILISI MATCH.

The match of the USSR Football Championship between Zenit Leningrad and Dinamo Tbilisi has begun. Koster (a fierce fan of Spartak Moscow, a long-time rival of Zenit) is sitting at the TV, watching the broadcast. It's cloudy at the stadium. The beginning of the match - the home team is constantly crowding the guests. In the 8th minute, Zenit's leading forward Vladimir Klementyev strikes a sharp blow into the upper corner, scoring a spectacular goal against Dinamo Tbilisi. The score becomes 1:0.

After the Zenit players scored a goal, shouts and whistles of jubilant fans can be heard from the windows and balconies of nearby houses. The noise died down, the game continued.

Lyudmila Vasilyevna is in the kitchen, spinning minced meat for cutlets. Rust and Sidor are sitting in the Strela's room and continue the evening of memories. Rust and Sidor's communication is interrupted by screams coming from the upper floor.

SIDOR

Did you hear that?!

RUST

I heard it!

Voices from above are drowned out by the amplified sound of a TV broadcasting a football match.

RUST

Sidor! Come on, call Koster, Let's go explore what's going on there.

Without saying anything, Sidor, Rust, and Koster hurriedly put on their shoes and are leaving the hallway.

LYUDMILA VASILYEVNA

(after)

Guys, where are you going?!

RUST

(closing the door behind him)

Lyudmila Vasilyevna, we won't be long!

245. INT. ITKIN'S APARTMENT - EVENING.

The friends hurriedly go up to the floor above and, turning the handle of the unlocked door, enter. The apartment is in

semi-darkness, it smells of cigar smoke. The light comes from ancient sconces dimly shining in the corridor and a high floor lamp with yellow openwork fabric in the near corner of the hall. What is happening inside the hall is not visible from the hallway. Rust notices that there is a strip of light under the toilet door.

Rust draws the attention of Koster to this and, motioning to him to stay to cover, moves forward himself. Sidor follows. Walking slowly along the figured walnut parquet, along the walls papered with Finnish Sandudd wallpaper, past rooms with antique furniture in the style of Boulle of the Louis XIV era, the friends approach the hall where the TV is working loudly.

In the hall, a short-haired, tall, broad-shouldered ROBBER in Lee Cooper jeans and a Marimekko windbreaker loomed over the owner of the apartment, Yakov Ilyich ITKIN, an obese man of 35 years old, with abundant body hair, with three-day stubble, who was sitting in an antique chair. The robber is holding an iron connected to the network in his hands. Itkin is wearing colorful family underpants, a white T-shirt. Itkin's hands and feet are tied, gagged.

A little further away, in the back of the hall, a young lady Kira Weissman is sitting on a matching chair, similarly bound, of wondrous beauty, graceful forms. Curls of her wavy brown hair are spread out on the top lace of a short, marengo-colored silk shirt, slender hips are bare. On the sofa, with his hands behind his head and his legs crossed, without being distracted by the sides, a sturdy man is sitting, absently watching the progress of a football match.

THE VOICE OF RUST (V.O.)

Well, there are three of them! How can we stun them?!

The toilet door opens, a third accomplice appears. Koster does not let him come to his senses and pushes him back with a precise direct blow to the chin.

AT THE SAME TIME. FOOTBALL MATCH DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE. LENINGRAD. STADIUM NAMED AFTER S.M. KIROV. ZENIT - DYNAMO-TBILISI MATCH. THE SIXTEENTH MINUTE OF THE MATCH IS UNDERWAY, AND TORRENTIAL RAIN HAS BEGUN TO FALL AT THE STADIUM.

DURING THE GAME, DUE TO A VIOLATION OF THE RULES BY A ZENIT FOOTBALL PLAYER, THE REFEREE EDUARD DIDUR APPOINTS A PENALTY ON THE GOAL OF THE HOME TEAM. TBILISI COACH KAKHI ASATIANI TRUSTS OTAR KORGALIDZE TO BREAK THROUGH IT. A STRONG BLOW. OTAR KORGALIDZE LIFTED THE BALL OVER THE WALL AND SENT IT TO THE TOP CORNER FAR FROM THE GOALKEEPER.

The sturdy man, annoyed by the missed goal, jumps up from the sofa, swears, prompting friends to take decisive action. Sidor rushes into the room, abruptly pulls the TV cable out of the power grid, and Rust pulls out a red certificate of a "disabled war veteran" from the breast pocket of his denim jacket and tightly, so as not to see the inscriptions, puts it unfolded to the face of the stunned raider.

RUST

OBHSS! Department of Combating the
Theft of Socialist Property!
Until the approach of the task
force and the staff of the
prosecutor's office, everyone stay
in their places!

The oppressors are discouraged. Without letting them come to their senses, Sidor grabs by the neck a matte-green bottle with a three-dimensional pressing of the letter "N" and the golden inscription "CAMUS NAPOLEON", standing on a marble countertop next to a vase filled with fruit and a box of cigars Partagas, and, swinging, hits the head of the robber, splitting into small fragments. — The raider falls to the floor at Itkin's feet. Amber-colored elite drink spills on the floor.

SIDOR

(sings)

"The piano is closed, and my
favorite spring tango, forgotten by
you, does not sound."

Shocked by what he saw, the sturdy man timidly tries to get up from the sofa but seeing the gesture of the palm of the outstretched hand and the evil eye of Sidor, who orders him not to move, meekly submits. Rust steps over the robber, who is howling softly and holding his head, sprawled in the middle of broken glass and spilled cognac, and, bending down, pulls the gag out of Itkin's mouth.

RUST

(To Itkin)

Where's the phone?!

ITKIN

(nodding towards Kira
Weissman)

There!

RUST

(in Sidor's ear)

Lock the door and hold the defense with Koster! So that no one slips out! You'll open it when the police arrive!

Rust finds a portable telephone receiver and, sagaciously without untying the owner of the apartment, presses two buttons in front of his eyes - 02. On the reverse side of the communication, they answered: "The police." Rust puts the phone to his stubbly cheek and orders: "Speak up!". Delighted that the second group is not the attackers, Itkin grasses without a break.

ITKIN

Please come urgently! My last name is Itkin, my name is Yakov Ilyich. I've been attacked!

THE POLICEMAN ON DUTY (V.O.)

(strictly)

Your address?

ITKIN

Polyustrovsky, building 5, apartment 24.

THE POLICEMAN ON DUTY (V.O.)

(strictly)

The response team is already leaving, wait!

A sturdy man sitting on the sofa, hearing a conversation with the police, after thinking about it, jumps up, rushes to the exit, but in the corridor the iron fist of Koster stops him. A sturdy man falls. The police arrive soon, the policemen untie Itkin, Kira Weisman, and the rest of the defendants, including Rust, Sidor, Koster, are handcuffed until the circumstances are clarified, and are led to the exit.

246. INT. ENTRANCE OF THE HOUSE - EVENING.

Entrance of Polyustrovsky Avenue, 5. Lyudmila Vasilyevna heard a noise in the entrance, police cars in the yard, alarmed, went out onto the landing. Six young men are coming down the stairs, accompanied by armed policemen, with handcuffs snapped behind their backs. They are followed by limping Itkin and Kira Weissman.

RUST
 (seeing Streltsova)
 Lyudmila Vasilyevna, don't worry!
 Go to bed. We will definitely be
 back by morning!

SENIOR LIEUTENANT
 (short, ugly with a skinny
 face, pushing Sidor, Rust
 and Koster)
 Come on, come on, don't slow down!

247. EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - EVENING.

Captain joyfully welcomes Rust, Sidor and Koster,

CAPTAIN
 Oh, old acquaintances! What, the
 military enlistment office was
 stormed again?!

SIDOR
 At least they didn't beat me this
 time!

248. EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - EARLY MORNING.

It's getting light.

Sidor, Rust and Koster are released in the morning - together with Yakov Itkin and Kira Weissman. The official black Volga GAZ-24 drives up to the entrance of the police department and, having released the driver, Itkin himself get behind the wheel. Kira Weissman sits in front, and Sidor, Rust, and Koster sit in the back.

249. INT. ENTRANCE OF THE HOUSE - DAWN.

Entrance of Polyustrovsky Avenue, 5. The company consisting of Sidor, Rust and Koster, also Itkin and Kira Weissman enter the entrance. On the flight of stairs at Lyudmila Vasilyevna's apartment, Itkin turns to Rust.

ITKIN
 I invite you and your friends to my
 place for lunch tomorrow at 13.00!

RUST
 (looking at Sidor and
 Koster)
 Why not?! The guys also agree.

250. INT. ITKIN'S APARTMENT - DAY.

Apartment of Yakov Itkin in the house of Polyustrovsky avenue, 5. Hall. Yakov Itkin and Kira Weissman are sitting at the dining table, guests - Lyudmila Vasilyevna, Sidor, Rust, Koster. Delicious dishes and delicacies are on the table: beluga, ket caviar, hot smoked sterlet, salmon, balyk. Main dishes - pike perch "Orly" with tartar sauce, lamb chops on a bone. Alcohol - SMIRNOFF vodka, CAMUS NAPOLEON French cognac. At the table, the waiter of the Astoria restaurant serves dishes, pours drinks into glasses.

RUST
 (without touching the
 food, to Itkin)
 What did they want from you, Yakov
 Ilyich?

ITKIN
 You see, I am the director of two
 shops "Berezka" on the Morskaya
 embankment, houses 9 and
 15. Our stores sell audio, video
 and household appliances, as well
 as other scarce goods. Their
 payment is made only in foreign
 currency or checks of
 Vneshposyltorg. Checks, a type of
 money, they are used by the state
 to pay for the work of citizens
 working or serving abroad.

RUST
 (with importance)
 We know what checks are!
 In Afghanistan, we were given
 checks, albeit a little.

ITKIN
 (astonished)
 So you are Afghans?! Well, okay.
 Let me answer your question first.
 Recent Resolutions of the Central
 Committee of the CPSU and the
 Council of Ministers of the USSR in
 connection with perestroika and
 glasnost declared a struggle with

privileges – "for equality and social justice." The Government of the USSR decided on January 1, 1988 to liquidate the Vneshposyltorg trading system and close all Berezka stores. The already high demand for our products has increased. We are talking about imported video, audio and household appliances, and clothes, of course. Huge queues began to form at our stores. Holders of large amounts of checks are ready to overpay a lot more, just to have time to get them out of stock sooner. Since 1988, trade in the stores "Berezka" will be carried out only by bank transfer. So, considering that the stores I run are located in the so-called "Bermuda Triangle", a place where a variety of elements revolve: from speculators and currency prostitutes to bandit elements, yesterday's incident is proof of that. Criminals seek to establish control over the queue. They use preferential certificates of veterans and invalids of the Afghan war. After all, the Afghans, as you yourself said, received checks, even if they gave less to soldiers and more to officers, but everyone by law equally has the right to buy goods with them in all Vneshposyltorg stores anywhere in the USSR. The difference between the certificate of a war veteran and a disabled person is that we are obliged to serve disabled people out of turn.

(Itkin smiles)

Do you understand how this simplifies the task for those who have closed on themselves the flows of holders of large sums in checks and currency?

RUST

(without showing interest in this topic)

The scheme is clear, Yakov Ilyich!
(pause)

We have a household question for you: you flooded the apartment of the esteemed Lyudmila Vasilyevna. For six months, she has been unsuccessfully trying to get a restorative repair from you. We have a compromise proposal in the form of an urgent recommendation: provide us with decent wallpaper, glue, brushes, and other handy tools, and we ourselves will make repairs in the coming days and remove this problem. And then, you know, things are not waiting in Moscow. It will not be difficult to establish the area of the flooded bedroom at the bottom. It is identical to yours. So please!

ITKIN

(excitedly)

Of course, of course!
Already tonight you will have everything.

(apologetically)

I'm sorry, I'm very embarrassed that this happened! Maybe I can still give you workers?

RUST

(with a smile, looking at Sidor and Koster)

We would not like to shift this honorable mission to outsiders and we will be happy to fulfill it ourselves. So only materials!

The waiter serves tea and desserts.

ITKIN

(putting his hand on Kira Weissman's shoulder, proudly)

My soul! Sing to us, please, my beloved.

The diva readily got up from the table and, taking an acoustic guitar from a special stand, began to play and mezzo-soprano to perform the romance "White acacia clusters fragrant".

Everyone listens, enjoying the performance and appearance of the singer. The romance is fulfilled, everyone claps together.

SIDOR

It's amazing, you can't say anything. Can I play one of ours?

ITKIN

(intrigued, handing over the guitar)

Of course!

Rust and Koster exchange glances.

SIDOR

(ran his fingers over the strings)

I will sing you a song by the Afghan bard Igor Morozov, "I once knew two brothers."

During the performance, Lyudmila Vasilyevna wipes a tear, focuses on herself the compassionate glances of Koster and Rust.

Sidor finishes singing, there is a gloomy silence.

RUST

(standing up)

Well, it's time for us to go!

Friends, Lyudmila Vasilyevna got up together, left the table.

ITKIN

(to guests)

I'll see you off!

The guests came to the threshold, Rust lets everyone go ahead and, closing the door behind everyone, says to Itkin.

RUST

Yakov Ilyich! Lyudmila Vasilyevna is the mother of our friend who died in Afghanistan. She's like a mother to us. I would like you to take note of this.

ITKIN

I've already figured it out!

RUST squeezes Itkin's hand.

RUST
 (looking shrill)
 Things are waiting for us in
 Moscow. Please don't delay us.

251. EXT. LENINGRAD. BERYOZKA STORE — DAY.

TITLE: LENINGRAD. VASILIEVSKY ISLAND. 1988

There is a huge queue at the entrance of the BEREZKA store with panoramic glass windows. There are a couple of young ladies in sable fur coats, with bright makeup, precious jewelry and a tiny chihuahua in their arms. Two men in bright blue Alaska jackets get out of a blue Mercedes executive class and take their place in the queue. On the sidelines, three criminal elements in black leather jackets are watching the queue. The guys squint at the lucky ones who take out boxes with video and audio equipment "SONY", "TECHNICS", "PANASONIC".

At the glass door to the "BEREZKA", swearing is heard for the priority passage — "you were not in front of me" — an elderly lady emotionally insists to a young man restraining emotions.

Access to the store is carried out by two policemen — a stout foreman and a slim senior sergeant.

SIDOR HAS BUSINESS RELATIONS WITH YAKOV ILYICH ITKIN. ITKIN, THROUGH EXTENSIVE CONNECTIONS, ATTRACTS LARGE BORROWED FUNDS TO THE ITKIN-SIDOR JOINT BUSINESS.

THE RUBLES ATTRACTED BY ITKIN INTO CIRCULATION ARE EXCHANGED FOR FOREIGN TRADE CHECKS AND FOREIGN CURRENCY FROM SHADOWY MONEYBAGS, LARGE BATCHES OF IMPORTED HOUSEHOLD, VIDEO, AUDIO EQUIPMENT, BRANDED CLOTHING ARE BOUGHT UP FOR CHECKS. THE GOODS ARE SOLD IN BULK TO RESELLERS FROM OTHER LARGE CITIES, ALSO TO SIBERIA AND THE CAUCASUS.

Sidor approaches the entrance of the "BERYOZKA" with a confident gait, he is wearing a long black leather raincoat and a burgundy turtleneck. Sidor is holding a leather briefcase.

Sidor seeps through the queue, greets the policemen, who helpfully open the door for Sidor. Sidor, ready to go inside, releases 3 customers carrying wide-diagonal PANASONIC TVs from the store and is ready to go through the open door.

Sidor hears the screech of brakes behind him. Sidor turns around.

Three strong fellows with brass knuckles abruptly pours out of the swinging back doors of the ambulance without license plates, they are joined by the guys in leather jackets waiting in line; all six of them with strong punches of hands and feet knock down buyers of PANASONIC televisions, throw televisions into the ambulance, jump in themselves and slamming the doors, they rush away.

252. INT. SHOP "BERYOZKA» - DAY.

Sidor is in a long corridor, enters the office with the sign "DIRECTOR" without knocking. Itkin is sitting contentedly at the table in a large leather armchair. Itkin is wearing a light brown cashmere jacket, a beige shirt with gold cufflinks, and a solid yellow tie, smoking a long thick cigar.

Sidor throws his raincoat over his hip and sits on the edge of the table, puts a briefcase on it, turns it around and defiantly opens it in front of Itkin. The briefcase contains a pile of "Disabled person's certificates" and "Veteran's Certificates" stacked in open rows with green and red covers.

SIDOR

A raid was carried out at the entrance to the store, TV buyers were robbed.

Itkin looks at the contents of the briefcase, turns his chair to the side, moves forward to open a large iron safe standing on the side, begins to put all the certificates on the top shelf of the safe.

ITKIN

What can I say, Chicago! The police have already been called, let them sort it out.

Itkin continues to put the IDs in the safe. There's a knock on Itkin's office. Itkin reacts to the knock: "Come in!". Sidor turns in a half-turn with interest, looks at the door.

A strict-looking graceful Collector enters the office, accompanied by two hefty guards. The guards remain in the office, locking the door behind them.

The Collector is holding a bag. He passes the bag to Itkin, then passes the Invoice. Security guards with impenetrable faces stand behind the Collector with their backs to the front door. Itkin pretentiously takes out a thick gold Parker

from the inside pocket of his jacket, draws a pen, signs the Invoice, (smiling affably) passes it to the Collector.

The collector nods, silently turns around and leaves the office with the guards. Itkin pulls the bag closer to the safe, opens it, begins to lay out plastic packages with rubles from the bag and puts them on the middle shelves of the safe. Itkin takes the last two cellophane packages out of the bag and hands them to Sidor: "This is the share of the guys. Everything is as it should be!" Sidor nods contentedly, puts the money in his briefcase, closes it.

FLASHBACK OUT

253. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

Rust and Bruno are lying with their heads on pillows at the head of the window wall, looking up, talking. There is a knock on the compartment door. The conductor brings tea and sugar. Bruno and Rust get up and sit down at the table.

FLASHBACK IN

254. INT. RUST'S APARTMENT - EVENING.

TITLE: MOSCOW. KUTUZOVSKY PROSPEKT, 1, SEPTEMBER 21, 1993

Sidor and Koster ride in the elevator, go up to the top floor, ring the apartment doorbell. The door is not locked, Sidor and Koster go into the hallway, shouting: Rust!

In response, Rust's voice is heard from the far room.

RUST

Guys, come on in!

Three minutes, I'll join you!

Sidor and Koster leave bags of groceries in the kitchen, go deep into the apartment, from where the deep measured breathing of a person engaged in physical exercises can be heard. Sidor and Koster look into the room - they see Rust in dark boxer shorts, with his shins missing in a straight line, on a horizontal bar spaced between the floor and ceiling, nonstop, alternating, performing force exits and upheavals. Every muscle on his trained body is clearly defined, his chiseled figure, short haircut - everything is in the army habitus.

SIDOR

(joking)

I see our friend does not suffer
from abulia and asthenia.

Rust completes the exercises, nimbly descends from the horizontal bar and, after taking a few steps on his knees, nimbly jumps onto a low chair. Rust is not embarrassed by the looks of friends, deftly puts on prosthetics on the stumps of the shins.

RUST

Guys, you go into the hall, sit
down at the table! I'm going to
have a quick rinse.

Rust turns on the TV, goes to the shower. Koster and Sidor go into the hall, sit down at the table set for the festive occasion.

The table is decorated with a crystal vase with fruits, a pile of lush tandoor cakes sprinkled with sesame seeds, a menagerie with raisins, nuts and teapots with bowls. Rust appears, he is wearing a new white shirt, strict black trousers. Rust ties his apron behind his back, starts fussing in the kitchen. Rust quickly fills three painted plates with a ladle bubbling in a saucepan with shurpa, puts a pair of fleshy lamb ribs in each and, sprinkled with fragrant dill, serves it to the table in the hall.

KOSTER

(to Sidor)

Rust knows a lot about oriental
cuisine, cooks with inspiration.

The pilaf is finally ready. Rust removes a large plate that has completely covered a battered cast-iron cauldron and lets off steam. With dexterous movements, he fills the Rishtan lyagan with crumbly amber rice-devzira and yellow carrots-mshak, sprinkled with cumin. In the center, separated from the bones and finely chopped, he puts a pile of pieces of juicy flesh of a young Karachay lamb, crowns the edge with sliced ripe persimmon and purple grains of a ripe pomegranate.

KOSTER

Yes, Khan's food!
I often remember our Afghan
slackness and that huge ram in the
Panjshir gorge that was skinned by
translator Abdullo Kodirov and our

late Kostyan – how, being terribly hungry because of the spiritual raid, we could not eat it.

The friends smile and reminisce.

RUST

(solemnly)

Well, we'll start with our friend Kostyan!

(throwing a strict black jacket hanging on the back of a chair with an order strip of moire ribbons of 2 Orders of the Red Star and Medals for Bravery over his shoulders)

Let this be the third toast!

Rust reduces the sound of the TV, and all three solemnly stand up. Sidor fills a glass from a bottle of Smirnoff vodka brought by him and covering it with a slice of flatbread, puts it on the edge of the table. Rust and Koster, who for various reasons did not consume alcohol, pour non-alcoholic drinks.

RUST

(after a short pause, heartfelt)

Eternal memory of the fallen in battle! Among them are our friends – Strela, Kostyan, Mongol.

There is a painful silence at the table.

RUST

(handing the guitar to Sidor)

Sing "Helicopters are circling over the mountains."

Sidor ran his thumb over the strings and, having tuned the instrument, begins to sing.

The big grandfather clock strikes 20.00. On the TV screen broadcasting from the 2nd all-Russian channel VGTRK (RUSSIA-1), a bright blue screensaver appears with the announcement: "Address of the President of the Russian Federation B.N. Yeltsin to the citizens of Russia." The head of state appears, greets the citizens.

RUST

You should definitely listen to it.
 (by making the sound
 louder, looking at the
 screen)

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE/YELTSIN (V.O.)

Dear Russians! I signed the Decree
 "On gradual constitutional reform".
 There is a political situation in
 the Russian Federation that
 threatens the state and public
 security of the country...

The friends exchange puzzled glances.

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE/YELTSIN (V.O.)

The Congress of People's Deputies
 and the Supreme Council are making
 systematic and increasingly active
 efforts to usurp not only the
 executive, but also the judicial
 function...
 Recent days have finally destroyed
 hopes for the restoration of any
 constructive cooperation... the
 power in the Russian Supreme
 Council was seized by a group of
 people who turned it into the
 headquarters of the irreconcilable
 opposition...

Sidor listened to the President's speech in indignation. He
 averted and returned his gaze to the screen, from Rust, who
 was listening enthusiastically and Koster, who did not betray
 the emotions.

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE/YELTSIN (V.O.)

Striving to eliminate the political
 obstacle that prevents the people
 from deciding their own fate;
 taking into account the
 unsatisfactory parliamentary
 standards of the quality of the
 work of the Supreme Council and the
 Congress of People's Deputies of
 the Russian Federation; taking into
 account that the security of Russia
 and its peoples is a higher value
 than formal adherence to
 contradictory norms created by the

legislative branch of government...
 - Preservation of the unity and
 integrity of the Russian
 Federation;
 - Withdrawal of the country from
 the economic and political
 crisis...

After these words, Sidor moves to a chair, closer to the TV,
 and begin to listen carefully to the speech.

The Head of State makes a short pause and continues:

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE/YELTSIN (V.O.)

- I decree: To interrupt the
 exercise of legislative,
 administrative and control
 functions by the Congress of
 People's Deputies of the Russian
 Federation and the Supreme Council
 of the Russian Federation... This
 Decree comes into force from the
 moment of signing - President of
 the Russian Federation B.N.
 Yeltsin.

SIDOR

(exclaiming and jumping up
 briskly from his chair)
 Wow, how he brought it out!
 "... Taking into account that the
 security of Russia and its peoples
 is a higher value than formal
 adherence to contradictory norms
 created by the legislative branch
 of government... striving to
 eliminate the political obstacle
 that prevents the people from
 deciding their own fate." But what
 about the constitution?!
 I can competently state that by
 this Decree its guarantor violated
 two points No. 6 and 11
 - Article 121 of the Constitution
 of the Russian Federation, and
 paragraph No. 8 of the same article
 outlawed himself.

KOSTER

(with a sneer)
 Sidor! You're not supposed to be a
 communist.
 I understand if Rust, who received

his party card at the age of 19 in Afghanistan, was outraged. Unlike renegade politicians from different sides, he did not burn his party card in 1991 and did not throw it away!

Well, and you, Sidor! when did you manage to be filled with the ideology of Marxism-Leninism? We know you different!

SIDOR

The crafty talker dug a grave for a mighty state during his six-year reign, and a seditious proselyte hammered the last nail into his household. The Belovezhskaya Agreement of December 1991 – this is an unprecedented gesheft of the Republican secretaries of the Communist Party, striving to snatch their slice from the torn empire with the blessing of victoriously rejoicing Americans. It is regrettable that no auto-dafe will not return to us the lost great country. I wonder why it is that in the near past, the first secretary of the Sverdlovsk regional party Committee, the secretary of the CPSU Central Committee and the first secretary of the Moscow City Committee of the CPSU suddenly and furiously hated everything communist?! What is it about the native party, which gave power, provided all the benefits, and its loyal associates, with whom he fought side by side for the highest ideals and built a bright future for up to 60 years, deprived him?!

Rust turns off the TV, and the friends return to the table impressed. Sidor suddenly remembers that he needs to call a student friend at Lomonosov Moscow State University, Igor MALYAROV, the leader of the Russian Union of Communist Youth of the RKSM. He picks up a portable phone and goes into the kitchen.

SIDOR

Igor, hello! Your 1st Congress of

the RKSM, scheduled for September 27-28, has already been postponed indefinitely due to Yeltsin's televised address?! Did you listen to his speech?! And what will be your answer to Chamberlain?!

SIDOR

(to Rust and Koster -
after a conversation with
Malyarov)

Our university students from the Faculty of Philology, the Faculty of History, and other faculties from the assets of the RKSM are gathering at the House of Soviets for a rally in support of the Supreme Council and the Council of People's Deputies.

As I predicted: Decree No. 1400 was declared unconstitutional!

The Supreme Council has already adopted a resolution on the immediate termination of the powers of the President and the convening of an emergency session of the Supreme Council with the agenda "on the coup d'etat".

(excitedly jumping up from
his seat and resting his
palms on the back of the
chair)

And the created Extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies will nominate General A.V. Ruskoy to the post of President among its first decisions and approve it at once!

KOSTER

What an augur!

SIDOR

The Supreme Council appealed to all citizens of Russia to stop the coup d'etat and create a defense headquarters of the House of Soviets. More than a thousand people have already gathered for a spontaneous rally at the walls of the House of Soviets and the construction of barriers has begun.

The police are pulling a tight ring
around the demonstrators. We can
see for ourselves.

(he nodded at the balcony)

Friends get up from the table and follow Rust out onto the
balcony. What Sidor said is confirmed.

DOCUMENTARY NEWSREEL/MOSCOW OCTOBER
1993 (V.O.)

Citizens with posters and flags are
flocking to the House of Soviets,
where a spontaneous rally is taking
place, and Interior Ministry units
are pulled up from different sides.

255. INT.BALCONY AND APARTMENT-EVENING.

The phone rang from the apartment. Rust goes inside and picks
up the phone. The chairman of the Russian Union of Veterans
of Afghanistan RSVA Alexander KOTENEV is calling.

KOTENEV (V.O.)

Rustam, hello!

RUST

Hello, San Sanych!

KOTENEV (V.O.)

Are you following the news?

RUST

(statutory)

That's right, I'm watching!

KOTENEV (V.O.)

In this difficult time, we must
support the President!

(Kotenev interpreted
firmly)

I wrote the text of the RSVA
statement with strong political
support for Boris Nikolaevich and a
sharp condemnation of the
destructive actions of the Supreme
Council and People's Deputies.
I have already sent it by circular
to the Presidential Administration,
the Government, the Ministry of
Defense, the Supreme Council and
the Council of People's Deputies!

RUST
 (delicately)
 I understand, San Sanych!

KOTENEV (V.O.)
 The degree is heating up, surely
 our participation will be required.
 You stay in Moscow and stay in
 touch!

RUST
 I will be in Moscow, there are no
 plans to leave!
 (pause)
 San Sanych! I have a question.

KOTENEV (V.O.)
 Ask.

RUST
 Are you sure that in the
 constitutional crisis that has
 arisen, the Afghans should take
 sides and be on the cutting edge?
 As far as I know, there are also
 many Afghans on the side of the
 Supreme Council and the Council of
 People's Deputies.

KOTENEV (V.O.)
 I know! But today everyone has to
 choose who he is with!
 Boris Nikolaevich has done a lot
 for the Afghans, signed a decree on
 social and medical rehabilitation.
 Betrayal is shameful and
 unacceptable!

RUST
 I understand you!

KOTENEV (V.O.)
 Thank you for understanding! See
 you soon!

Rust went out onto the balcony. After briefly looking at the
 commotion at the White House, he soon returned to the table
 with his friends.

KOSTER
 Yes, a serious commotion is

brewing. We have already been put on enhanced mode.

SIDOR

(with annoyance)

Rust! Of course, the RSVA will side with Yeltsin? After all, your chairman Kotenev is close to the supreme power. Although it is appropriate to note that, according to the Constitution of Russia, it is the Congress of People's Deputies!

RUST

(excited)

And it's good that he's close! The veteran organization needs the support of the authorities! Without her participation, it is impossible to provide urgent assistance to thousands of those crippled by the war and those who lost their loved ones in it.

SIDOR

But this is called hidden bribery, isn't it?!

RUST

(emotionally)

Whatever you call it. Disabled people who need prosthetics and primitive vehicles to move around, widows left without a man's shoulder, those who need to raise young children and learn, are not interested in our political beliefs! they sacrificed the most precious thing - the health and lives of their loved ones! They need real help!

SIDOR

(with regret)

Could we, soldiers - internationalists, fighting shoulder to shoulder in Panjshir, Kunar, Herat, Fayzabad, assume that after five years will have different political beliefs, which will put us at opposite sides of

the fence?!

On that count, the President,
appointed the second head of state
Afghan hero and General?! Did you
want to keep a groom or bibabo by
your side?!

RUST

(boiling up)

Listen, Sidor! I do not belittle
the military merits of our star
Afghans! There was one life, here
is another! However, I can't wait
to find out: what kind of Satori
suddenly visited our megalomaniacs
and homegrown apologists for
overseas democracy from among
yesterday's communist party
nomenclature who sat in the Supreme
Council and the Council of People's
Deputies, among whom, I note, there
are Afghans?! Were they not two
years ago, in August 1991, huddled
together in a furious crowd, with
frenzied ostracism, they carried
out the Supreme Commander-in-Chief,
the President of the Soviet Union?!
Didn't they realize then that they
were ruining a great power?! what
purpose did they pursue?! What were
you counting on?! And I'll tell
you: they were thinking about sweet
places!

I personally think this way: if the
national leader elected by the
people took you into his team ...
appointed you the second person of
the state, so be a decent person,
moderate your alter ego and follow
his instructions! And if you don't
agree with his policy, then leave!
And to say to the whole universe: I
am honest, and my boss is a
scoundrel, and that's why I
collected a suitcase of
compromising material on him... you
know, for me, it's not comme il
faut! No matter how heroic this man
was!

KOSTER

(loudly)

We must stop this useless discord! Your emotions are already going through the roof! Everyone has their own beliefs, and we don't trade them! I suggest you remember what we are here for. We have come to congratulate our friend on the birth of the second heir! And our best wish will be to raise a core personality for our father, a worthy son and defender of our fatherland!

(Koster summed up pathetically)

The friends sat in silence for a while and broke up with a chill in their relationship.

DOCUMENTARY NEWSREEL OCTOBER 1993

(V.O.)

The growing crisis of power plunged Moscow into a state of anxious expectation.

Sidor's prophecies turned out to be true.

Held late in the evening

On September 21, 1993, an emergency session of the Constitutional Court recognized Decree No. 1400 and the President's televised address on state channels as inconsistent with a number of articles of the current Constitution of Russia and as grounds for impeachment.

What was announced by the Chairman of the Constitutional Court at the 7th emergency session of the Supreme Council of the Russian Federation, which opened at midnight from September 21 to 22.

By its decision, the powers of President Boris Yeltsin were terminated and transferred to Vice President A.V. Rutskoy, who canceled Decree No. 1400 as unconstitutional.

256. INT.APARTMENT OF SIDOR-MORNING.

TITLE: KRYLATSKOE. WEST OF MOSCOW. SIDOR'S APARTMENT,
SEPTEMBER 22

Bedroom, Sidor is lying in bed. The phone rings. The awakened Sidor finally picks up the phone.

MALYAROV (V.O.)

Sergey, hi! I bring to your
attention: the RKSM is currently
meeting at the House of Soviets.

SIDOR

(in a sleepy voice)

Accepted!

(even in the evening,
Sidor firmly decided not
to stay away from the
fateful events)

I'll be there soon!

Before leaving, Sidor calls Rust. Without finding Rust, Sidor dialed the number of Koster. His phone also does not answer, and Sidor leaves a voice message on the answering machine:

SIDOR

"Koster! Tell Rust my regrets due
to the emotional intensity of the
discussion. But I have my own
political views! I decided to stand
up for the House of Soviets".

257. EXT.HOUSE OF SOVIETS-DAY.

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE/MOSCOW. THE HOUSE OF SOVIETS. SEPTEMBER
22, 1993.

VOICE-OVER

The number of protesters at the
House of Soviets increased
dramatically in the morning.

Sidor arrives at the gathering place of the RKSM activists. The demonstrators are shouting political slogans, waving red and black-yellow-white flags. Members of the RKSM pitched a tent in which the defense headquarters was formed. The non-stop rally at the walls of the House of Soviets is accompanied by a live broadcast of the meeting of the Xth Congress, and the number of citizens who came to express

solidarity to the Supreme Council and People's Deputies is increasing. By order of the leadership of the defense headquarters, the entry into the volunteer regiment began. Sidor, as a past hot spot, was among the first enlisted in a volunteer regiment and became the commander of a detachment of one hundred people.

MOSCOW. THE FIRST DAYS OF OCTOBER 1993 DOCUMENTARY NEWSREEL

VOICE-OVER

Armed clashes periodically break out between demonstrators and Interior Ministry units in different parts of Moscow. The headquarters of the defense of the House of Soviets, expecting the assault to begin soon, ordered to distribute to the volunteer regiment about 100 units of AKSU-74 Kalashnikov assault rifles from the arsenal of the former Department of Security. On the territory adjacent to the House of Soviets, along the perimeter and inside the building — on the floors, staircases and passages, posts have been set up and a round-the-clock guard service has been organized. All approaches to the building are blocked by concrete slabs and barricades. Smolenskaya and Oktyabrskaya Squares became new places of confrontation between supporters of the Supreme Council and divisions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. A crowded rally at the Lenin monument in the center of Kaluga Square turned into a mass march, which, like an avalanche, moves along the garden ring through the Crimean Bridge and Zubovskaya Square to the New Arbat. Armored vehicles of the Ministry of Internal Affairs pulled together to the House of Soviets. The stream of demonstrators sweeps away obstacles, equipment and Interior Ministry units on its way.

258. EXT. THE TENT NEAR THE HOUSE OF SOVIETS- DAY.

The protesters approach the cordon at the House of Soviets. Those walking behind press on those in the front rows. The cordon of the Interior Ministry units is not able to stop the pressing human mass pushing it into the depths of Konyushkovskaya Street between the House of Soviets and the City Hall building. You can hear the crackle of machine gun bursts and tear gas grenades exploding. There is a panic.

In the tent of the Defense Headquarters, situated near the House of Soviets, there is a crowd of people, hubbub. Sidor enters the tent with an AKS-74 assault rifle on the edge. He looks for and approaches the general, the head of the Defense Staff of the House of Soviets.

The GENERAL is looking intently at Sidor.

THE GENERAL

Listen to the combat mission. We
need to capture the City Hall! Pick
up the people and get to work.

Sidor selects the most experienced young and middle-aged fighters who have passed the hot spots for the assault squad.

259. EXT. CITY HALL - DAY.

Sidor is conducting a reconnaissance; he divides his squad into three subgroups and sets each a personal task.

The City Hall is being stormed, the 1st and 2nd mobile groups - each of ten people - from their starting positions make a sudden raid on three armored personnel carriers BTR-80 and two ZIL-131 standing in front of the City Hall. With non-stop shooting over the heads of the Interior Ministry servicemen sitting on top of armor and inside the cars, Sidor's mobile groups squeeze into the central entrance of the City Hall; they are dissipating inside the building.

Sidor himself with the 3rd group enters next and, having risen almost to the very top of the building, blocks the approaches to the windows of high-rise floors so that they are not used for firing points when the defenders of the House of Soviets are defeated.

After establishing control over the city Hall, Sidor leaves some of his people there. He and the group return to the House of Soviets. He carried out the order, avoided casualties on both sides. Sidor reports to the General, the Chief of the Defense Staff.

General, the chief of the defense staff orders Sidor to advance with a detachment to the Mir Hotel and capture it.

260. EXT. MOSCOW. HOUSE OF SOVIETS - DAY.

TITLE: MOSCOW, OCTOBER 3, 1993

Koster, along with his Alpha unit, arrives by bus to the House of Soviets.

40 trucks and buses with servicemen of the Ministry of Internal Affairs follow the Garden Ring to the House of Soviets. Helicopter gunships are barraging in the sky. Officers of "Alpha", penetrate into the building from the allocated entrances, Koster is among them.

261. INT.RSVA OFFICE-DAY.

TITLE: MOSCOW. TSARITSYNO. OFFICE OF THE RUSSIAN UNION OF AFGHANISTAN VETERANS 3 October 1993

LaZ-695 buses are waiting for Afghans to load on the street. Rust and the heads of regional organizations of the RSVA are in the central office of the RSVA - in a solid brownstone mansion of the GlavUpDK building complex (the Main Department for the Maintenance of the Diplomatic Corps under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation) in Tsaritsyno, from there they follow the development of events, waiting for the command to move to the House of Soviets.

At 21.00, a group of heads of veteran organizations enters the office of Alexander Kotenev, chairman of the RSVA.

KOTENEV

All members of the RSVA move to the building of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation on Znamenka Street, 14/1, near the Novy Arbat metro station!

262. DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE

MOSCOW, evening of October 3. Armored vehicles of the Taman, Kantemirov and Tula divisions enter Novy Arbat. The last foreign journalists are leaving the House of Soviets. From Leninsky Prospekt and the Garden Ring, 30 armored personnel carriers and 40 trucks with personnel of the former special division of the KGB of the USSR are being pulled together to

the House of Soviets.

263. EXT.THE COURTYARD OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE BUILDING - NIGHT.

TITLE: THE COURTYARD OF THE BUILDING OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON NOVY ARBAT

Rust drove up to the building of the Ministry of Defense, among other veterans of Afghanistan, on the LaZ-695 bus. The courtyard is filled with young people of military habit in civilian clothes. The chairman of the RSVA, Alexander Kotenev, comes out of the front door.

KOTENEV

Fellow Afghans! Listen to my command: fall in two rows!

The veterans quickly form up.

KOTENEV

Straighten up, attention!

At this moment, Russian Defense Minister Pavel GRACHEV comes out of the building. He is calm and confident. Seeing the Afghans in front of him and recognizing some of them, he visibly cheered up.

GRACHEV

At ease!

KOTENEV

At ease!

GRACHEV

(with a parting speech)

Fellow Afghans, fighting friends! The country is going through hard times now. The Supreme Council and the Congress of People's Deputies openly ignore the power of the President! Guided by personal small-scale interests, they block sound legislative initiatives and overdue economic reforms. The Supreme Council and deputies are calling on Russian society to disobey and openly confront the supreme power, plunging it into a civil war. I am convinced that at this crucial

moment, who the country and our president can really rely on is you! Thank you for responding to the call and coming without deceiving the President's hopes. Your task is to prevent the deaths of civilians – removing them from the House of Soviets and withdrawing them from the places of fire contact. On behalf of the Supreme Commander-in-Chief Boris Nikolaevich Yeltsin, I thank you for your personal courage and civic stand!

Grachev finished. His deputy, Colonel-General Georgy KONDRATIEV, immediately approaches him.

KONDRATIEV

Comrade Minister, armored vehicles of the Taman Division approached the building of the Ministry of Defense on Novy Arbat.

KOTENEV

(loudly, having received instructions from Grachev and Kondratiev)

Afghans get loaded on the APC and proceed to the House of Soviets!

The Afghans are hurriedly heading towards the armored personnel carriers waiting on Novy Arbat.

KOTENEV

(called out to Rust, coming close)

Don't expose yourself there! Take care of people!

RUST

(with a smile)

Of course, San Sanych!

Rust hurries to catch up with his comrades.

264. EXT.HOUSE OF SOVIETS-IT'S GETTING LIGHT.

TITLE: MOSCOW, HOUSE OF SOVIETS.

Krasnopresnenskaya embankment near the House of Soviets. APCs

(armored personnel carriers) with Afghans rush along the facade of the House of Soviets to the junction of Krasnopresnenskaya Embankment and Glubokoe Lane, are shelled and thrown molotov cocktails. Jumping down from the armor engulfed in flames, Rust and his comrades hide behind the wide trunks of century-old maples at the intersection of Deep Lane and Krasnopresnenskaya Embankment - on the left flank of the facade of the House of Soviets.

Along Rochdelskaya Street from the end of the Deep Lane, past the barricades, four BTR-80 of Dzerzhinsky division are rushing at high speed. They are under fire from the defenders of the House of Soviets and open returned fire from turret machine guns. Briskly turning onto a Deep Lane, the Dzerzhinsky armored personnel carriers headed down the slope to the intersection with Krasnopresnenskaya Embankment - to the place where the armored personnel carriers of the Taman Division stand. When they see people hiding behind trees, they take them for supporters of the House of Soviets and open heavy fire on them. Shooting is coming from everywhere. Snipers of incomprehensible subordination, lying in the attic and roofs of the houses closest to the House of Soviets, open fire on everyone. The bullet that enters Rust's chest from above flow out of his thigh. Rust's knees buckles and he falls. His comrade, RAVIL Nigmatzyanov from the Moscow City Union of Afghanistan Veterans, drags Rust behind a tree and begins to examine him.

RUST

(with difficulty)

What's wrong with me?!

RAVIL

(seeing the bleeding exit
wound on the thigh)

I see you've been shot in the leg!

RUST

No! in the belly area!

Ravil unbuttons his leather jacket, lifts the sweater and the shirt and sees the entrance hole in his stomach. The Afghans quickly drag Rust to the nearest military Ural-4320 and load him into the back. In an effort to get Rust to the operating table as soon as possible, Ravil jumps into the cab to the driver-SOLDIER and shouts: "Drive!"

RAVIL

(when the Ural-4320 has
already gained momentum)

What's your name?!

SOLDIER

Malkhaz!

RAVIL

Malkhaz, let's fly at full speed!

They are leaving the police cordons behind them and turn from Novy Arbat to the inner side of the garden ring in the direction of the Ambulance Research Institute. Sklifosovsky.

265. INT. THE CABIN OF THE URAL TRUCK - DAWN.

In the distance, "Skliiff" and the military cars with people in uniform standing next to its front door can be seen.

RAVIL

No, guys! We don't have time to explain the strangeness in the conflict and the circumstances of the injury!

(to Malhaz)

Turn left! Let's go to Mira Avenue and drive in from the back. I'll show you the way.

Malkhaz, with a sharp movement of the steering wheel, drives the Ural-4320 onto Mira Avenue and, turning 300 meters to the right into Groholsky Lane, drives by detours into the backyard of the hospital.

266. EXT. SKLIFASOVSKY YARD - DAWN.

There, at that time, from several ambulances, doctors are transferring many wounded people to the medical gurneys. Ravil and Malkhaz jump out of the cab and, climbing into the back, begin to pull out the bleeding Rust. Seeing this, people in white coats smoking at the entrance to the emergency department immediately roll up a gurney and, loading Rust on it, urgently take him to the operating room. Ravil got into the Ural-4320 cab and hurried back to the House of Soviets.

267. INT. THE CABIN OF THE URAL TRUCK - DAY.

Ravil is driving with Malkhaz through the police cordon at the intersection of Novy Arbat and Konyushkovskaya Street. The well-equipped commandos huddled in a circle in the space between parked buses, Koster is among them.

RAVIL
 (to Malhaz)
 Drop me off here!

Thanking him for his help with a strong handshake and a hundred-dollar bill, he jumps off the running board of the car, clicking the closed door on the move.

268. EXT. NOVY ARBAT - DAY.

The sound of a door slamming makes Koster turn around.

KOSTER
 (astonished)
 Oh, Ravil! What are you doing here?!

RAVIL
 (sadly)
 Yes, they say, they can't do without fighters from the RSVA!

KOSTER
 (sensing something amiss)
 And why are you so gloomy?
 Rust is also here?!

RAVIL
 (gloomily)
 And Rust is in trouble, he's in a Skliff!

KOSTER
 What happened?

RAVIL
 They shot him! Two hours ago, in a Deep alley.

KOSTER
 And what is his condition now?

RAVIL
 Critical!

Koster is thrown into heat.

KOSTER
 In Skliff, you say?! I suggest we visit him by all means in the next

few days. Shall we go together?!

RAVIL

Absolutely!

Suddenly, the command of the senior Alpha is heard to load on the BMD-2 of the Tula paratroopers, and Koster, soon saying goodbye to Ravil, departs for the task.

269. INT.OPERATING ROOM-DAY.

TITLE: N.V. SKLIFOSOVSKY RESEARCH INSTITUTE.

Operating room. Rust is lying on the surgical table.

A heavily built SURGEON, an assistant, and two nurses hovered over Rust.

SURGEON

A damaged lung, most of the small intestine, spleen, and one kidney were removed.

(with longing)

In general, it's not a fun story.

The surgeon reaches out to the assisting nurse, who puts a "Kocher clamp" in the surgeon's hand. The surgeon bends over Rust again.

270. EXT.HOUSE OF SOVIETS-DAY.

DOCUMENTARY CHRONICLE

THE EVENTS AT THE HOUSE OF SOVIETS HAVE MOVED INTO A DRAMATIC PHASE.10 TANKS OF THE KANTEMIROV DIVISION LINED UP ON THE NOVOARBATSKY BRIDGE. HAVING COVERED THEMSELVES WITH SHIELDS, THE INTERIOR MINISTRY UNITS BEGAN CORDONING OFF THE HOUSE OF SOVIETS.LOYAL TO PRESIDENT YELTSIN UNITS OF THE TAMAN, KANTEMIROVSKAYA, DZERZHINSKY DIVISIONS OF THE INTERNAL TROOPS, THE PARATROOPER REGIMENT OF THE TULA AIRBORNE DIVISION AND EMPLOYEES OF THE SMOLENSK OMON CAME OUT TO THE BUILDING AND THE ADJACENT TERRITORY.

Koster walks around the building of the House of Soviets with two comrades from the rear and penetrates through the broken windows inside.

271. INT. HOUSE OF SOVIETS - DAY.

Koster with two comrades goes up to the third floor, where he encountered a group of armed men, including Sidor.

KOSTER
(loudly)
Hi!

Sidor turns around and, saying something to his comrades, approaches.

SIDOR
(without emotion)
Hello, Koster!
(pause)
And you were attracted too?

KOSTER
As you can see!
(pause)
Sidor, your situation is stalemate!
The tanks took their starting
position. They will hit with direct
fire from all barrels.
I suggest you, before it's too
late, come with me outside the
cordon. I'll introduce you as my
agent.

SIDOR
Thank you, Koster! But I'm not
going! The guys from Pridnestrovie
and I have recognized each other
and have already become brothers.
Well, how will I explain my
departure to them?! I'm hobbled!
You go ahead, and there, as God
puts it.

KOSTER
Don't be reckless, hopeless! When
it smells fried, your duce will run
to give up a race!
Mark my words: they don't have the
guts to shoot themselves! And you,
ordinary supporters, will be killed
like partridges. There will be no
demand from the dead, and prisoners
and wounded are unlikely to be
spared!

Sidor is adamant. Koster understands the futility of persuasion and leaves with a heavy heart.

272. EXT. HOUSE OF SOVIETS - DAY.

T-80 tanks began to aim at the building. A fire breaks out on the upper floors. The guns of the BMP-2 and BMD-2 armored vehicles and the BTR-80 armored personnel carriers, which were knocking with bursts of anti-aircraft installations, joined the gun volleys. From different sides, army mobile groups moved in short dashes to the House of Soviets, which entered into close fire contact with its defenders. Casualties on both sides have numbered in the hundreds and continue to grow.

Supporters of the Supreme Council, holding the City Hall, are making every effort to break through to help the House of Soviets, but all to no avail. They are stopped by fire, preventing them from approaching the House of Soviets.

The fire has temporarily stopped. From the back of the building, the defenders begin to carry out the wounded and the dead.

273. INT. HOUSE OF SOVIETS-DAY.

Taking advantage of the moment, Koster re-enters the building of the House of Soviets. Koster soars up the stairs, climbing from floor to floor, and running through the long corridors past the offices, looks at the bodies frozen in different poses, burned and lifeless, but among them does not find Sidor.

And now, having ascended to the next floor, an almost desperate Koster sees a silhouette of a man through the haze of a smoky corridor. He is sitting with his back against the wall, his head down. On his outstretched, riddled with shrapnel, bloody thighs lies AKS-74. Hearing the approaching footsteps, the wounded Sidor tries to focus his eyes and aims his weapon at the coming person, but he does not have the strength to do this.

KOSTER

(to Sidor)

Stop! I'm with you!

Koster sits down on Sidor's side, snaps the fuse of his machine gun and puts it aside.

KOSTER

Well, have my prophecies come true?!

Sidor doesn't hear him. Koster is carried away by a stream of memories:

A VIDEO

sequence - Kunduz Airfield. Six friends have just arrived in Afghanistan. Strela, Kostyan, and Mongol are still alive.

KOSTER

(coming to his senses)

We have to leave! They can shoot - either their own or someone else's!

Koster shoulders the bleeding Sidor and hurriedly begins to descend the stairs.

274. EXT. HOUSE OF SOVIETS - DAY.

Koster leaves the building, an ambulance briskly rolls up to him, and the medics who quickly pick up Sidor put him on a stretcher.

KOSTER

(approaching their senior and showing the certificate of the Alpha officer)

Take this wounded man to the hospital as soon as possible!

Koster returns to the buses of his unit.

275. EXT. HOUSE OF SOVIETS-DAY.

The territory adjacent to the House of Soviets. Koster and his comrades are sitting on the BMD-2 armor, they are returning from a mission, following Druzhinnikovskaya Street in the direction of the House of Soviets. Shooting is heard, Koster sees a woman hiding behind a telephone booth with a small child. Koster asks his comrades to cover him with fire, he himself takes a woman and a child out of the shelled zone, evacuates them to a safe place.

BMD-2 resumes running. Koster with his comrades drives a short distance and sees a wounded soldier lying on the edge

of the roadway. Koster jumps off the armor on the move and, grabbing his arm, begins to drag him to the armor. At this moment, a sniper shoots at Koster from the roof of one of the nearest skyscrapers. The wound is fatal.

VOICE OVER

At 17.00 on October 4, 1993, the defenders of the House of Soviets surrendered their weapons and, throwing their hands behind their heads, left the building. As predicted by Koster, their leaders, who appealed to foreign ambassadors to provide them with guarantees of personal security, thought only of themselves.

FLASHBACK OUT

276. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

Rust and Bruno continue the conversation.

RUST

In the spring of 1994, after many months of healing, Sidor resumed joint activities with Yakov Itkin, starting to build a diamond business. Thanks to the flair and commercial streak of Itkin and Sidor, they opened the country's first Russian-American-Belgian-Dutch joint ventures and started importing precious stones - diamonds, rubies, emeralds, sapphires. Sidor was not indifferent to them even in the Army. And here is a global scale, gigantic sums. We must pay tribute, he received professional knowledge in gemology in a short time, became a qualified specialist in cutting and cabochon.

Sidor was absent from Russia for a long time, being on business trips to Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Madagascar, New York, London, Antwerp, Amsterdam and other places. Big money did not spoil Sidor, but over time he began to be surrounded by people with a very

specific worldview. The last time for him was the case when he shipped a solid batch of diamonds from a mine near Cullinan in South Africa to his partners in Antwerp. They were engaged in cutting them. In return, according to the proven model, Sidor - Itkin's company was supposed to receive an agreed number of cut diamonds worth \$ 100 million from them. In a short period of time, three misadventures occurred.

FLASHBACK IN

277. INT. OFFICE SPACE - DAY.

TITLE: ANTWERP, BELGIUM. "DIAMOND QUARTER" May 1997

Friday evening and the holy Sabbath are close. The owner of a large cutting company, a Soviet emigrant of the early 1970s, Shmuel Brandwein, wanting to keep up with the lighting of Saturday candles by his wife, collects the precious stones in the work of the masters and releases them early. Then he puts the stones in the safe room. Before going home, Brandwein goes around all the workshops, sets the office alarm and closes the thick armored door with a code.

278. EXT. PELIKAANSTRAAT STREET - DAY.

TITLE: ANTWERP, BELGIUM. PELIKAANSTRAAT STREET.

Brandwein is walking fast on a crowded street.

THE VOICE OF RUST (V.O.)

It is known for sure that the raw materials were received in Antwerp.

Behind him, trying not to lose sight, is a tall man of about thirty in a beige raincoat, with long brown hair.

THE VOICE OF RUST (V.O.)

However, the owner of the cutting company Shmuel Brandwein, who was transporting diamonds from the Itkin-Sidor company to Russia, was shot dead on his return from work in front of an astonished audience on the square of the four diamond

exchanges in the very center of
Antwerp the day before.

Upon reaching the Brandwine, the man pulls out a pistol and, calling out by name, shoots at point-blank range. After making a test shot in the head, the man disappears.

FLASHBACK OUT

279. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

Rust is sitting across from Bruno; they are having a conversation.

RUST

Sidor and Itkin's business partner, Nahum Nudel, attracted multimillion dollar funds from large foreign investors into the trade turnover of their joint Russian-American enterprise.

FLASHBACK IN

280. INT. SHEREMETYEVO-2 INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT-DAY.

TITLE: SHEREMETYEVO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT.

The departure hall is not crowded. Former Soviet American citizen Nahum Nudel is waiting for the announcement of the check-in for the flight.

"Moscow-New York". Four men in dark coats, with stern faces, approach him. They showed him their official identification cards and, taking him by the arms, led him to the GAZ-3102 black Volga waiting outside.

With a bang of the doors and a brisk dash from the spot, they leave the airport.

RUST (V.O.)

For a long time, Nahum Nudel's whereabouts were unknown. Relatives even put Nudel on the wanted list. But three months later, Nahum Nudel's relatives were called to the police.

281. EXT.THE BANK OF THE YAUZA RIVER - NIGHT.

TITLE: MOSCOW, THE EMBANKMENT OF THE YAUZA RIVER.

Powerful searchlights are aimed at a section of the Yauza River.

RUST (V.O.)

The day before, the swollen, half-decomposed body of a large man was extracted from the bottom of the Yauza river.

The technical service of the city, in the presence of the employees of the police (MUR), takes the swollen, half-decomposed body of a man out of the water with a crane.

RUST (V.O.)

In it, relatives recognized Nahum Nudel.

The death of the Nudel was not the last. On the days of the disappearance of Nudel in Moscow, a double murder was committed in an apartment in the Last Lane.

282. INT.ITKIN'S APARTMENT MOSCOW - EVENING.

TITLE: MOSCOW. LAST LANE, APARTMENT OF YAKOV ITKIN

Unknown people called the apartment on the top floor of the Stalin house, owned by businessman Yakov Ilyich Itkin. There are three of them. Itkin's wife, Kira Weissman, opened the door. She led the guests into the hall to her husband, who was sitting in an armchair watching TV. She retired to the kitchen. The visitors sat around and started a conversation. At some point, one of them got up, walked around Itkin from behind and fired a pistol with a silencer into the back of his head. After that, the criminals enter the kitchen and shoot at Itkin's wife Kira.

FLASHBACK OUT

283. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

Rust and Bruno are sitting at a table. Rust expertly pours tea from a teapot into a glass. Then he pours it back into the kettle. He looks at Bruno.

RUST

Sidor, unfortunately, a few hours before the murder, visited Itkin's house, they discussed the death of Brandwein in Antwerp and the abduction of Nudel from Sheremetyevo-2, the fate of the missing stones and tried to link these events into a logical chain. They were looking for an explanation for everything. But for Sidor, these were not all misfortunes.

FLASHBACK IN

284. INT. IN THE ENTRANCE OF THE HOUSE-LATE EVENING.

TITLE: MOSCOW. BRYUSOV LANE.

Sidor and Nina go up to their floor. Sidor starts to open the door to the apartment.

From the upper floor, you can hear a man's footsteps descending the stairs and approaching a married couple - a killer.

Nina arbitrarily obscures Sidor, turns to the noise, sees a pistol with a silencer in the killer's outstretched hand. Nina and the killer's eyes converge, Nina gets a good look at the killer's face.

The killer shoots Nina.

Sidor turns abruptly, picks Nina, who is falling backwards, and slowly lowers her to the floor.

The killer coolly points the gun at Sidor's forehead, Sidor is inactive, the killer pulls the trigger. The gun misfires.

Sidor, without hesitation, rushes to the killer, clings to his neck; unclenches his fingers, the killer is already dead.

Sidor returns to Nina; Nina is no longer breathing.

FLASHBACK OUT

285. INT. SLEEPING CAR - DAY.

Rust and Bruno are sitting at a table opposite each other, having a conversation.

RUST

Sidor was detained for a month. During this time, operatives actively searched for evidence to prove his involvement in the murders in Moscow - Yakov Itkin and Kira Weissman, in Antwerp - Shmuel Brandwein and the abduction of Naum Nudel from Sheremetyevo-2 airport, but they did not find him. After the seizure during a search of the company's office of valuable minerals worth several million dollars, undeclared during the passage of the Russian customs, Sidor was convicted under the article for illegal trafficking of precious stones on a particularly large scale, assigning him an extremely long sentence.

The MOSCOW-ARKHANGELSK train continued its movement, approaching its destination. Booths of country cottages and private house buildings have already appeared outside the windows. Suddenly there was a knock on the door of the van.

THE CONDUCTOR

Will you order tea or coffee? We arrive in Arkhangelsk in half an hour.

Rust looked at Bruno. Both refused.

RUST

(to Bruno)

How was your trip to the Bolshoi Theater with Masha? I've already begun to worry about your long absence. I didn't call you. You're an adult now. I thought you wouldn't get lost in Moscow.

BRUNO

(inspired)

Wonderful!

After the performance, we walked around Moscow all night. My childhood dream of visiting Red Square has finally come true. It's a pity that I couldn't get to Lenin.

(smiles)

We went to a restaurant in GUM. During the meal, we sincerely told each other about each other.

(pause)

As soon as I saw Masha in the Black Cat, I lost my head.

(pause, embarrassed)

Perhaps you will find me too naive?

RUST

(astonished)

On the contrary, I am extremely happy about this circumstance! Sidor will also be glad to your acquaintance.

The train is slowly stopping. Through the window there is a view of the train station. Outside the window, a 40-year-old man MUNIR waves hello to Rust and Bruno.

286. EXT. RAILWAY STATION PLATFORM - DAY.

TITLE: ARKHANGELSK.

Rust gets out of the train first, followed by Bruno. Munir takes the bag from Rust and leads them along.

In the parking lot of the railway station, Rust and Bruno get into a black oversized jeep, driven by Munir. The jeep starts moving.

287. EXT. THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE KOTLAS CITY - DAY.

TITLE: KOTLAS. ARKHANGELSK REGION. MAXIMUM SECURITY COLONY

A jeep with passengers Rust and Bruno pulls into a parking lot in front of a barbed wire fenced area. Soldiers with dogs armed with machine guns are standing at the checkpoint. A bald-haired man with a trunk comes out from behind the gate in a tracksuit and a leather jacket. This is Sidor. Rust and Bruno jumped out of the car, go to Sidor for a meeting.

RUST
 (from a distance -
 sonorously)
 From bell to bell!

SIDOR
 (positively, slightly
 embarrassed by the
 presence of an unfamiliar
 young man)
 I've been to the war, apparently,
 and it was written to go to prison!

RUST
 (with a smile)
 Fatalist!
 (looking at Bruno)
 Does it remind you of anyone?!

Sidor looks closely.

BRUNO
 (with a smile)
 I am the son of Konstantin Thevs!
 SIDOR
 (to Rust, delighted)
 But he looks like Kostyan, Rust?!

RUST
 (with a smile)
 A son, after all, how not to be
 like his father?!
 (pause)
 I introduced Bruno to Masha
 Kostrova!

SIDOR
 (with regret)
 It is a pity that their fathers did
 not live to see this day.

A short silence.

RUST
 (to Sidor and Bruno)
 Well, are we going?!

Rust, Sidor and Bruno get into the car and drive back to
 Arkhangelsk.

288. EXT.KOTLAS-ARKHANGELSK HIGHWAY-DAY.

TITLE:

KOTLAS-ARKHANGELSK HIGHWAY

They drive in silence in the car. A radio wave sounds softly. When their jeep passes at high speed, the wedding cortege is beeping loudly. From the open windows of four white representative foreign cars, young people are waving their hands. Sharing their blissful spiritual uplift, friends wave back to them in unison.

289. EXT.RAILWAY CROSSING-DAY.

TITLE: RAILWAY CROSSING ON THE HIGHWAY KOTLAS- ARKHANGELSK

A jeep with Rust, Sidor, Bruno and Munir is approaching a railway crossing on the outskirts of a small settlement. The barrier is lowered. The wedding cortege was stands first, close to the barrier. There are two decorative golden rings of different sizes on the roof of the limousine standing last. Inside the limo, the newlyweds were sitting on the back leather seat: a naughty young man in a black tuxedo with a bow tie and a pretty girl in a magnificent wedding dress with a veil. Behind them stands a KAMAZ TRUCK, filled to the top with bags of sand concrete. After the KAMAZ jeep of Rust. Taking advantage of the forced stop, festively dressed young people loudly pour out of the motorcade cars. The guys open bottles of champagne, deafeningly shoot the corks up, spraying the squealing girls with glasses with foam. While doing this, young people dance to the song "WE WISH YOU HAPPINESS".

290. INT. RUST'S JEEP - DAY.

Friends Sidor and Rust exchanged glances and silently smiled. Bruno suddenly felt melancholy in his soul, remembering the deceased bride, Seeta Akhmadzai.

RUST

(not noticing Bruno's
sadness)

Well! Maybe such a significant
event will take place on our street
too? Really, Bruno?!

Bruno hid the twist and smiled slightly in response.

291. EXT.RAILWAY CROSSING - DAY.

There are still no trains.

The drivers of the wedding motorcade, tired of waiting, are calling passengers to get into their cars with horns. The passengers are getting seated.

The cars of the motorcade, one after another, begin to move, go around the barrier, and move over the railway track.

A brisk attendant in an orange uniform runs out of the booth, shouts, waving a baton.

A passenger train appears in the distance, rushing at high speed.

The second car of the motorcade in the tail of the first overcomes the railway crossing.

All four of Rust's jeep jump out of the car, anxiously watching what is happening.

MUNIR

They're crazy, they're going to get
killed!

The rapidly approaching train begins to emit shrill horns.

Following the second car of the motorcade, a third one goes through the railway tracks.

Behind her, a limousine with the newlyweds is moving around the barrier.

As soon as the limo pulls into the wooden deck for the rail track, it stalls and becomes motionless.

The screech of metal on a braking train is heard.

SIDOR

Well, Rust, I guess I'm not
destined to be free!

Sidor jumps out of the jeep, rushes to the unmuted KAMAZ truck in front, the driver of which is smoking by the car, grabs the driver's door, makes a dash to jump into the cabin.

Bruno is ahead of him, slightly pushing Sidor away, and jumping into the cabin. Bruno abruptly steps on the gas and rams the car with the newlyweds off the railway track at speed.

Sidor, clutching his head in horror, remains watching what is happening.

The train sliding on the brakes hits the KAMAZ on the side of the body, turning it over. The train stops on the other side of the railway crossing. The limousine with rings with a flattened trunk and the KAMAZ truck that collapsed with cargo and a crumpled cabin are visible on the other side of the railway track.

Sidor and Munir run to the scene of the accident.

Rust watches as Sidor and Munir extract the wounded Bruno, who was cut by broken glass, from the KAMAZ.

A limping Bruno is loaded into the SUV.

292. INT.TRAUMA CENTER-DAY.

The emergency room is crowded. In the office behind the screen, the doctor examines Bruno's wounds - there are no serious injuries.

Limping, with a bandaged head, Bruno goes out to Rust and Sidor, who are waiting in the hospital corridor.

Bruno is met by a police officer who submits the "Incident Report" for signature.

293. EXT.TRAUMA CENTER-DAY.

Bruno, Rust and Sidor come out of the emergency room.

BRUNO

(smiling)

I'll have to empty my holdings for damages.

RUST

(smiling)

Don't worry, we'll figure it out!

Rust, Sidor and Bruno get into Munir's black jeep and continue their way.

294. EXT. MOSCOW COURTYARD - EVENING.

Bruno limps into the archway of the old cozy city courtyard. His face is cut, with red stripes of scratches, and his head

is bandaged.

Bruno has a large bouquet of scarlet roses in his hands.

Masha looks at Bruno sympathetically from the balcony of a two-story house. Bruno does not see Masha, enters the entrance.

THE END