

LIPSTICK ON THE GUILLOTINE

Written by

Kenneth Semat

Based on, The Unlucky and The Unfortunate by Kenneth Semat

3511 Stratford Drive
Jeffersonton, VA 22724
703-966-7877
Kennethsemat@gmail.com

I/E. ST. ODILE BOARDING SCHOOL, ALSACE LORRAINE, FRANCE, MAY
1938 - DAY

SUPER: MAY 1938 (AGE 19)

Verdette leaves the nursing school and walks up to an elderly man, Viscount Henri LeGrand (Henri). He kisses her on the cheek. He hands her a large lollipop.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

That is not my father; that is my trophy husband, the Viscount Henri LeGrand. He is a trophy because he walks around stuffed, looking to be hung on a wall.

HENRI

Would you like some ice cream?

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

I had just graduated nursing school. I was trying to earn my way into polite society through charity work. I did not have a privileged upbringing. In that school, I learned two important things: medicine and German. That was about it. It was a German school - fortunate for me.

VERDETTTE

I am nineteen, so it should not be too much of an impact to my figure.

HENRI

Splendid. I know of a shop nearby. A pet dog, perhaps.

VERDETTTE

No thank you. I will be cleaning up enough shit for a while.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

Don't get me wrong, he was not a pervert or a bad man. He was a man who let life pass him by and did not plan his succession.

HENRI

Come. Maybe a new dress then?

VERDETTTE

As long as it does not have a sailor theme, sure. No balloons either.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

He never tried anything with me on our wedding night or any night after for that matter. He was impotent due to his age and lost in other things most of the time.

The two walk down the street holding hands. A few people know the story about them and chuckle.

Verdette feels hurt and stares down.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

Girls like me are to bed someone else to provide the heir. I was told that by a classmate when I was younger in boarding school. I asked her if she had a suitor. She said she did. I asked if I could meet him. She fled the school and my reach.

Verdette smiles as she walks, thinking of that moment.

HENRI

So I guess you will be starting at the hospital in Lyon?

VERDETTTE

That's where nurses work.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

I didn't have to wait for my life to start. Like Henri, mine started too early – but in a very different way.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF LYON, FRANCE – DAY

SUPER: LYON JUNE 1940 (AGE 21)

German soldiers are running amuck, looting the place.

There are armored cars, motorcycles, and tanks.

Verdette is seen walking down the street in her nurse uniform.

The Germans stop and look at her.

German Soldier #1 runs up to her. His comrades run with him.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

I went to war on my way to work. I cared not that we were conquered, I had to get to the midday shift.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1

Mademoiselle, would you like a good time?

VERDETTTE

(In German)

What? Are you going to shoot each other?

The soldiers look at her. Many go sober.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1

I am sorry, fraulein, I did not know you were German.

VERDETTTE

It's all right. Just be careful and make it back to your mothers and farm animals. Be careful of the French - they are cunning.

GERMAN SOLDIER #1

If only they were good fighters.

Verdette nods and does a wavy thing with her right arm.

German Officer #1 walks over. The soldiers scatter. German Officer #1 motions for German Sergeant #1 to stop them.

GERMAN OFFICER #1

Fraulein, were these men bothering you?

VERDETTTE

No, just another Fuhrer joke.

GERMAN OFFICER #1

If you don't mind, what joke about our Fuhrer?

VERDETTTE

It is rather raunchy.

GERMAN OFFICER #1

I understand if you won't repeat it.

Verdette looks around and appears to be sincere.

VERDETTTE

What does Hitler shove up his ass?

German Officer #1 tips his hat and leaves, rather upset.

GERMAN OFFICER #1

French! Very cunning, Mademoiselle.
I will remember you.

Verdette shrugs and keeps walking. She turns down an alley.

She sees Michel waving her over.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

I saw Michel Duval for the first time. Right there and then I knew I was attracted to good-looking men – which is a rarity in Lyon, good looking men that is, I am sorry but true.

Major Michel Duval (Michel). He turns her around and looks at her. She has a letter opener ready, puts it at his throat.

She is amazed at his good looks. He is taken by hers.

MICHEL

Mademoiselle, it is dangerous out here on the streets.

VERDETTTE

So now you are going to protect me?

MICHEL

I am an officer in the French Army. I would die for you and France – in that order.

VERDETTTE

Amazing. A French officer in civilian clothes watching the city get looted.

MICHEL

You're one to speak – walking about dressed as a nurse with a dull letter opener.

VERDETTTE

It is better than running around
out of uniform wondering when you
get to die.

Michel's face changes. Verdette, who was starting to enjoy
the banter, notices it.

He edges to the end of the alley.

He sees Nurse Spy walking about in the street. The Germans
stop and look at her. A few approach.

German Officer #1 – the one arresting German Soldier #1 and
his comrades – sees Nurse Spy.

German Officer #1 was looking for Nurse Spy.

Michel looks shocked. He turns toward Verdette, then back
into the street.

Nurse Spy panics and pulls out a pistol. The Germans shoot
her as she screams "Vive La France!"

Michel turns and sees Verdette looking around.

He has grabbed the wrong nurse.

MICHEL

Would you like to serve France with
me?

VERDETTTE

I would – but so far I say you are
doing a shit job of it.

MICHEL

That nurse out there was who I was
supposed to meet.

VERDETTTE

So you were just using me?

MICHEL

I am now. Do you work in the Lyon
Hospital?

VERDETTTE

I am a nurse, so yes.

MICHEL

I am looking for a man. An odd man
who can read codes.

(MORE)

MICHEL (CONT'D)

He has a unique gift – he is like one in twenty million births.

VERDETTTE

So that is what's wrong with him. He's the only one that can read the doctor's handwriting.

MICHEL

We need to hurry. The Germans may know about him.

Verdette nods.

VERDETTTE

You can have my letter opener.

MICHEL

I won't need it.

Verdette looks about. The two walk on.

CUT TO:

INT. LYON HOSPITAL, FRANCE, MAY 1940 - DAY

Verdette and Michel enter the doctor's locker room.

She hands him a smock and a stethoscope.

VERDETTTE

Here. It is all you need. Most men have to go to school for eight years. You just went to the locker room and stole it...like most gynecologists.

MICHEL

I must say your continual deadpan humor is busting me up. With all that is going on, you are very calm.

VERDETTTE

I have a boring life. It makes everything else interesting – not exciting.

Michel smiles.

MICHEL

I am Major Michel Duval.

Verdette realizes what is happening between them. She turns toward him.

VERDETTTE
I am the Viscountess Verdette
LeGrand.

Michel freezes.

MICHEL
The child bride of Lyon?

Verdette blushes. He lifts her face.

MICHEL (CONT'D)
I read the papers. You know they
were just jealous – a beautiful
young girl working on the family
farm...

VERDETTTE
I know my life story. I do not need
you to give me your opinion on it.

MICHEL
Fair enough. Looking at you... it's
clear what inspired the Mona Lisa

VERDETTTE
Really.

MICHEL
A beautiful woman with her mouth
shut.

Verdette chuckles.

VERDETTTE
I will walk you up to his room. He
is on the top floor with the mental
patients. It's so they can't leap
out unless they think they can fly.

MICHEL
Stairs or elevator?

VERDETTTE
Usually their arms.

MICHEL
I mean, getting up to that floor.

VERDETTTE

The stairs. I must warn you – I wear flats. My ass will not wiggle for you.

MICHEL

I was concerned about being seen but I will keep my eyes out and down.

Verdette busts up laughing. Michel winks.

VERDETTTE

You do know I am married?

MICHEL

Ok, we can pretend.

CUT TO:

INT. MENTAL WARD, LYON HOSPITAL, FRANCE, MAY 1940 – DAY

Michel and Verdette arrive at the mental patient ward.

Germans are already there.

Lyon Nurse #1 is trying to help them, but the Germans don't speak French.

VERDETTTE

They must have taken the elevator.

MICHEL

And we took the stairs. Flats don't hide a working derriere, by the way

Verdette and Michel calmly walk up.

MICHEL (CONT'D)

Can I be of assistance?

LYON NURSE #1

Doctor, these Germans are looking for someone.

MICHEL

(In German)

Good afternoon. Can I help you?

The German Officer #2 smiles and nods.

GERMAN OFFICER #2
 My apologies. My translator was
 arrested for making disparaging
 comments about the Fuhrer.

Verdette and Michel nod.

MICHEL
 Unfortunate.

GERMAN OFFICER #2
 We are looking for a man who we
 know has checked in here. A Phillip
 Packard. He is rather eccentric.

MICHEL
 I see. Let me check the registry.

LYON NURSE #1
 (In French)
 Are you going to cooperate with
 these Boche? Who are you?

MICHEL
 I am Doctor Kohl Hans. I am the new
 gynecologist.

Verdette is impressed.

Lyon Nurse #1 immediately realizes Michel is someone working
 for France. She smiles with pride.

MICHEL (CONT'D)
 Ah, room five. Nurse LeGrand, could
 you assist?

VERDETTTE
 Certainly, Doctor Hans.

The Germans walk away with Verdette.

Lyon Nurse #1 leans across the counter.

LYON NURSE #1 (HUSHED)
 Room Five?! That's the werewolf!
 Packard's under an alias in..
 ([Michel hushes her])

MICHEL

So if you and your friends don't
wear a red hood, you should be
fine.

The Germans, Verdette, and the patient reappear.

The man is secured in a straitjacket and a ball gag.

VERDETTTE

He keeps doing math and riddles. We
can only get him to shut up if we
read him haikus.

GERMAN OFFICER #2

The Japanese poems?

VERDETTTE

Oui.

GERMAN OFFICER #2

No one understands those.

VERDETTTE

He does.

The Germans nod – they have the right man.

They walk away. More Germans appear and help with the man.
They leave.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

There is a full moon Wednesday.

Michel shakes his head.

Verdette points at a room.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

Room two.

They enter and find Packard sitting quietly at a desk,
completing crossword puzzles at insane speed. He has a pile
of finished ones.

MICHEL

Phillip?

PACKARD

Give me a second.

Michel and Verdette lift him up.

CUT TO:

INT. LEGRAND TOWNHOUSE, LYON, FRANCE, MAY 1940 - DAY

Verdette, Michel, Packard, and British Spy #1 are in the kitchen.

Packard is being taken away. He has grown close with Verdette and Michel.

He is a harmless man who cannot relate to people.

Verdette is touched by his sweetness.

Michel is glad to see him go - he has driven him insane.

VERDETTTE

Well, he is a good man.

BRITISH SPY #1

Miss, he's touched, but he can crack codes - that's it. These buggers can drive you bonkers.

Michel is nodding.

BRITISH SPY #1 (CONT'D)

Now Phillip, say goodbye to these nice normal people.

PACKARD

Goodbye Verdette. Michel, I am sorry for asking you about stuff.

MICHEL

It is all right, Phillip. I had a kid brother once.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

This was my second experience with the British.
My first was their cooking - so I knew what to expect.

British Spy #1 and Packard leave.

VERDETTTE

I will make us something to eat.

MICHEL

Do that. I will watch.

Michel closes in on Verdette.

He grabs her.

MICHEL (CONT'D)
You know how this is going to end
between us?

VERDETTTE
I am going to break your heart and
you will throw yourself off a
bridge.

MICHEL
I was thinking more of under a
train. I have seen other men
survive the bridge technique. It
makes you bowlegged.

Verdette smiles.

Michel approaches her and grabs her. Verdette has never been
grabbed like that before. She resists.

VERDETTTE
I have never been with a man.

Michel kisses her.

MICHEL
Maybe I should slow down.

Verdette kisses him back.

They pull at each other and head up to her bedroom.

They undress and fall onto her bed.

They go passionately into the evening.

Later, they lay in bed. The moon shines into their room.

They hear the howl of a wolf.

VERDETTTE
It's Wednesday.

MICHEL
I hope he likes German.

EXT. STREETS OF LYON, FRANCE - JUNE 1940 - DAY

Verdette and Michel walk the streets of Lyon arm in arm like
a couple.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

As the days turned into weeks, we became a couple. I could see us spending eternity together after the death of Henri. Sadly, Henri had fled. Being a patriotic married woman in an affair, I stayed.

They see the Germans leaving.

Michel looks around.

MICHEL

It seems the Boche are keeping their agreement and leaving.

VERDETTTE

I have to say they were not as brutal as I expected.

MICHEL

Brutal in what way?

VERDETTTE

Like staying. That smell they have.

MICHEL

Deodorant. Yes, it isn't very reassuring.

VERDETTTE

No, the other one. That smell of wet sheep.

MICHEL

Maybe that's why they need the deodorant.

Michel laughs. She winks at him.

MICHEL (CONT'D)

Let's go to our meeting.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET CAFE, LYON, FRANCE - JUNE 1940 - DAY

Claude Marlohe (Claude) and Richard Marlohe (Richard). Claude is white French (20s) and Richard is French Cambodian (20s).

They both stand as Michel and Verdette approach.

MICHEL

Verdette, this is Richard and this is Claude. The Toulon Twins. They are brothers.

Verdette nods. They all shake hands.

VERDETTTE

From what I know of Toulon, I can see the resemblance.

Both Claude and Richard nod. They see no issue with her comment.

CLAUDE

Big X for the region has sent us to talk to you. We are breaking in two. We will get a Big X for Toulon. This is the start of Operation Lorraine.

MICHEL

I am afraid I have missed a few meetings. Could you fill me in?

Richard leans forward – it is obvious he has a gun pointed at them under the table. Verdette makes a similar motion but with her letter opener.

CLAUDE

I hate to be rude, but have you been compromised?

MICHEL

No. You see these Germans around here? They're everywhere. All I could do was take cover with my number two here...we only have one bed.

VERDETTTE

They call him the werewolf.

Claude and Richard nod.

RICHARD

So that was you eating those Germans?

MICHEL

Mutton – not man.

CLAUDE

I don't know whether to commend you
or have you committed.

VERDETTTE

There is a room available.

CUT TO:

INT. LEGRAND TOWNHOUSE, LYON, FRANCE - MAY 1940 - NIGHT

Claude explains to Verdetette and Michel Operation X. Richard
watches the windows and doors. He still does not trust them.

CLAUDE

According to the armistice, the
Germans will occupy northern
France. We are not to do operations
there. They threaten massive
retaliation toward the populace if
we do.

MICHEL

I see. So we are to build this
place into a safe sanctuary.

CLAUDE

Oui. You are to start a cell here
in Lyon. X....will be in direct
contact with you.

Michel and Claude look at each other hard and nod.

Verdetette can tell they know who is X.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

It is our goal to undermine the
Vichy Government. If we get the
local administrators and the police
into our ranks...

Claude and Michel look at one another when Claude says
police. Michel nods as if to understand.

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

...we can operate with impunity
till we are strong enough to act.

MICHEL

It won't be hard. Lyon is the
bastion of nationalism.

CLAUDE

Oui.

Richard turns around and looks at Verdette.

RICHARD

I remember who you are. The girl from the paper.

CLAUDE

Which one?

RICHARD

The one that married that Viscount General.

Claude is amused.

VERDETTTE

That would be me.

CLAUDE

You are the Viscountess Verdette LeGrand.

VERDETTTE

Oui.

RICHARD

Is your husband, the Viscount, dead?

VERDETTTE

Yes. He died and went to England. He will be there till his soul is purified.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF LYON, FRANCE - AUGUST 1940 - NIGHT

Michel and Verdette make their way across the streets. Lyon does not have a curfew.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

Our cell grew rapidly. Michel proved to be a gifted spymaster. Soon we were being called the Resistance. Our sheer existence became a threat. We found many loyal Frenchmen - and those who had nothing better to do - joining our ranks.

MICHEL

I am amazed they have not put a curfew into effect.

VERDETTTE

How would they enforce it? The police go home at six. They cannot afford the overtime. Everyone else eats at home, the restaurants would close. This is Lyon, not Paris.

The two approach their rendezvous. Chief Inspector Raul Leech (Leech) waits.

The three exchange nods and go into a garage.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

Leech was an average policeman. Nothing spectacular. Lyon made many average people. However, Leech found his calling as an arms smuggler. The grocers of Paris had nothing on Leech when it came to illicit arms.

LEECH

We received another shipment today from Britain. They dropped this batch into a kindergarten. Right through the roof. Little ones were thrilled.

There are two British drop containers – Enfield rifles and pistols of every kind.

MICHEL

What do they expect us to do – rise up?

LEECH

I believe it is to cause chaos.

VERDETTTE

Do they work?

Leech and Michel look at one another. Michel smiles and looks at Leech.

Leech takes a rifle and works the action, it cannot close. He shakes his head.

LEECH

Verdette, why would they send guns that did not work?

VERDETTTE
 Why did they send us troops who did
 not stay?

MICHEL
 Good point.

Michel checks the weapons. He smiles.

MICHEL (CONT'D)
 No proof marks... they sent us
 factory rejects.

Leech closes his eyes and takes a breath.

MICHEL (CONT'D)
 Where is the ammo?

LEECH
 I have been asking that since the
 first drop.

VERDETTTE
 Letter openers work every time.

MICHEL
 Even the dull ones.

Michel looks about and leans into Leech.

MICHEL (CONT'D)
 Schedule a meeting. We need to
 address this with them.

Leech nods.

VERDETTTE
 If they send us butter knives next,
 I'm resigning.

INT. SHACK ON LEGRAND ESTATE, FRANCE - NOVEMBER 1940 - DUSK

Verdette and Michel approach a shack. A British SOE man
 stands guard at the door.

Michel and Verdette enter.

SOE Operator #1 and Major Brush (Brush), SOE, are present.

MICHEL
 Major.

Michel is amazed Brush has a handlebar mustache. Verdette picks up on it immediately and gives Michel a look.

Trust is broken by Brush's callous disregard for appearance. The French don't wear that kind of mustache.

There are other SOE men in the room.

BRUSH

Major.

VERDETTE

Major.

BRUSH

Who are you?

MICHEL

She is some woman I picked up in a locker room. Her name is Louisa Fish.

VERDETTE

How do you do?

BRUSH

How do you do, Louisa?

Verdette nods.

BRUSH (CONT'D)

I must say, we have dropped you enough rifles to arm China. When are you people going to fight?

MICHEL

We are grateful for the rifles, but we are still waiting for the ammunition.

VERDETTE

And hammers to straighten the barrels.

BRUSH

Ammunition will come next year. There has been a cockup, but you must improvise and overcome.

MICHEL

Well, there you have it then. That is the earliest we can start.

BRUSH

Typical of you French. No fight in you.

VERDETTTE

Excuse me, Major – what kind of British soldier are you?

BRUSH

What do you mean?

VERDETTTE

Breaststroke or backstroke?

BRUSH

Pretty bold coming from a woman named Fish.

VERDETTTE

At least I have an excuse.

Brush clears his throat. No comeback. He knows he lost.

BRUSH

Listen, it is the directive of the SOE to set Europe ablaze.

VERDETTTE

Keep sending us these rifles – we will make a bonfire.

The SOE men snicker harder.

Michel intercedes.

MICHEL

We can use a radio operator. If you could arrange it.

BRUSH

Of course....I'm heading back over tomorrow night. I will request one.

A wolf howls outside. Brush and the SOE men are startled.

VERDETTTE

He only eats Germans.

The SOE men stop laughing. Brush just stares at Verdette – uncertain whether to admire her or report her.

CUT TO:

EXT. GERMAN CHECKPOINT, OCCUPIED FRANCE - MAY 1941 - DAY

SUPER: OCCUPIED FRANCE, MAY 1941 (AGE 21)

A cart pulled by two horses approaches a German checkpoint. Jean is the man playing farmer.

Verdette passes it on a bicycle. She is wearing obscenely tight clothes.

The German sentries stop her.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

Things as usual with the British did not get sorted out. We would have to wait another year for ammunition.

The British could not find it in the budget again. Churchill did not think we were a good investment because we were not fighting. We also now had a problem storing defective arms that continued to arrive. We had to move them as well, we kept running out of room.

GERMAN SENTRY #1

Mademoiselle, please stop.

Verdette stops.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

We were also burdened with the large amounts of British airmen who were getting shot down over occupied France. We needed a solution for both.

GERMAN SENTRY #1

Where are you going?

VERDETTTE

(Speaking like an airhead)

I am going to the nudist retreat near some town. I have a map...where is it?

Verdette pulls out a map on a napkin.

German Sentry #1, German Sentry #2, and German Sentry #3 come over to look at the map.

GERMAN SENTRY #1
 (Pointing on her map)
 Yes, we are here. Where is this
 place, the nudist place?

VERDETTTE
 Well, I am not supposed to tell. It
 is an annual tradition.
 All of us girls get together and
 compare our bodies. We have several
 categories, breast, legs, and
 working derrieres.

GERMAN SENTRY #1
 Mademoiselle, where is this place?

GERMAN SENTRY #2
 (To Jean on cart)
 You on the cart, go on!

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 This was my bold plan to
 simultaneously distract the guards
 and clear the drop zones in the
 west of the region.
 All it needed was the British to do
 their part.

Verdette plays with them, running her hand over the map.

CUT TO:

EXT. BARN IN VICHY FRANCE - MAY 1941 - DAY

The cart pulls up to a barn. Michel is there with Leech.

Verdette arrives. Leech turns around. Michel offers his coat.
 Verdette takes it. The two kiss.

VERDETTTE
 I have been tending to the sheep.

MICHEL
 I can tell.

VERDETTTE
 I think I have cleared the western
 drop zones.

Verdette and Michel wink at each other.

Leech and Jean pull back the hay. British airmen are sitting
 on seats with British rifle barrels. They are in a mold.

LEECH

You men get out. Welcome to Vichy.

The airmen climb out.

Leech grabs a barrel. Michel comes over with a rod. He runs it through. Leech and Michel smile.

Michel holds it up and inspects it.

MICHEL

Perfect. Now if the Germans just shoot down a thousand more of them, we can arm half of Luxembourg.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE – GERMAN UNITS MOBILIZE FOR THE NUDIST CONTEST

EXT. VARIOUS GERMAN ARMY OUTPOSTS – FRANCE – DAY

– A TELETYPE machine spits out a message:

NACHRICHT: UNGEWÖHNLICHE ANSAMMLUNG VON FRAUEN – MÖGLICHE NUDISTISCHE VERSAMMLUNG IN REGION SÜDWEST.

– At a rural outpost, a German lieutenant kicks open a door.

LIEUTENANT (SHOUTING IN GERMAN)

All units – full alert. Possible enemy gathering of unclothed women.

– At a checkpoint near Normandy, two soldiers abandon their post. One tucks a bouquet of wildflowers into his belt. The other carries a crate of Riesling.

– In a rail station in Dijon, a group of Wehrmacht troops boards a train in full field gear – but each has a silk handkerchief tucked into their collar. One carries an accordion.

– A motorcycle battalion speeds south – strapped with MG-34s, field packs... and gift baskets.

– At headquarters in Marseille, a GENERAL stares at a map. Several push-pins cluster around a red circle labeled "Possible Nudist Retreat".

GENERAL (IN GERMAN, DEADPAN)

Deploy two divisions. Bring translators and... picnic supplies.

– Paratroopers march past a sign reading:

NACH SÜD – ZUR RETTUNG DER DEUTSCHEN WÜRDE

("To the South – To Preserve German Dignity")

– A supply convoy roars down a country road – □ one truck clearly overloaded with perfume bottles and flowers. □ A trooper waves a lingerie catalog at a passing farmer.

– An SS unit stands at attention. □ The commander frowns, lowers his binoculars.

SS COMMANDER

You're telling me the French are throwing a nudist contest in our sector?

(beat) Load the Panzer. Bring extra cameras.

EXT. FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE – DUSK

German troops establish camp across the fields.

They erect tents, roll out rugs, uncork bottles.

A pair of Luftwaffe officers lay out towels like they're at the beach.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

The British couldn't get us ammo.
So I used what we had: French curves and German loneliness. They moved an entire regiment for a rumor.
I made the map myself.

INT. GERMAN FIELD COMMAND – BRIEFING ROOM – DAY

A large, humid tent somewhere in southern France. Flies buzz. Cigarette smoke hangs in the air.

A GERMAN GENERAL (60s, stiff, heavily decorated, thoroughly exhausted) leans over a folding table.

Spread out in front of him: aerial maps, intel reports, intercepted messages... and one stained Café de Lyon napkin.

On the napkin is a crude hand-drawn heart, shaded with eyeliner pencil. Inside it, a triangle labeled "Zone d'Amour."

The General adjusts his glasses. Squints.

GENERAL
(quietly, in disbelief)
They deployed two battalions... for
this?

A COLONEL peers over his shoulder.

COLONEL
Maybe not enough. It appears to be
authentic, sir.
(pointing at the map)
She shaded it. Like an invitation.

COLONEL (CONT'D)
They say the region smells like
perfume now.
No sign of the Resistance, but
morale is reportedly... "heightened."

The General stares at the heart-shaped napkin.

He slowly lowers himself into a chair.

GENERAL
I have commanded tank divisions
through Poland.
I studied under Guderian.
(pause)
Now I'm chasing a... French nudist
festival drawn on linen.

He holds up the napkin.

GENERAL (CONT'D)
God help us. We're going to lose
this war.

INT. FARMHOUSE, VICHY FRANCE - MAY 1941 - NIGHT

Verdette serves food to downed RAF airmen. They cannot get
their eyes off her.

Michel eats nearby at a table, shaking his head.

VERDETTTE

Eat. I am going to start charging
you all rent.

Verdette points at one RAF man at the table.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

You. This is the third time you
have been here.
I am starting to believe you need
to change careers – or you are a
stalker.

RAF Man bows his head.

Verdette takes her hands and pretends they are airplanes.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

If they go right, you go left.
If they go up, you go down. If they
are somehow tricked, if it would
ever happen, to get in front of you
– you shoot them down.

RAF MAN

I am a bomber pilot.

VERDETTTE

You are to drop bombs, not your
plane!

The RAF men try to avoid making eye contact with her.

Michel smiles. She joins him.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

We need to do something big.
We recruited a lot of people. They
expected to fight for France.

MICHEL

My love, this business is dangerous
enough.
We have gotten away with a lot.

VERDETTTE

Besides adultery, smuggling, and
running a bed and breakfast, what
have we done?

MICHEL

We have shown the world we have not
given up.

VERDETTTE

The Germans check our papers.
The Germans round up our people for
forced labor. I believe no one is
fooled. We gave up.

MICHEL

Verdette, I have been in this
business a while.

There is always someone who is more brilliant and ruthless.
You need to avoid that person's attention.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST OUTSIDE LYON - NIGHT

Dark woods, pierced by swaying GERMAN FLASHLIGHTS. The sound
of clanking wine bottles, crunching boots, and the occasional
sniff of expensive cologne.

Up in a tree, hanging awkwardly by his parachute lines, is
MAJOR BRUSH - disheveled, upside-down, and utterly miserable.

Below him, a dozen WEHRMACHT SOLDIERS stare upward - slack-
jawed, hopeful - holding bouquets, wine bottles, and just a
hint of desperation.

A corporal slices the chute. Brush drops like a sack of
turnips. A thud, a grunt.

The soldiers descend on him - not as enemies, but like
disappointed bachelors at a canceled bridal expo.

EXT. FOREST PATH - MOMENTS LATER

Brush is dragged through thick underbrush by two Germans.
He's filthy, swearing, still tangled in his cords.

Up ahead, a YOUNG GERMAN PRIVATE stands alone - arms full:

A bouquet in one hand

A large teddy bear in the other

His helmet is tilted just slightly - romantic, not tactical.

He sees Brush.

The column halts.

Flashlights catch the bear. Time freezes.

A long, puzzled silence.

GERMAN SOLDIER #4

(staring)

Where did you get... that?

The Private shifts uneasily, clutching the bear tighter.

PRIVATE

It was... for the girls.

You know... the little ones.

Beat.

GERMAN SOLDIER #4

(flat)

That is so...

Nobody knows how to finish the sentence.

Two Germans slowly step forward, lift the bear from his arms like it's radioactive. Another clamps cuffs on him without a word.

Brush watches - baffled, bitter, hanging his head.

INT. GERMAN MILITARY TRUCK - NIGHT

Brush and the Private with the teddy bear sit side by side, both in handcuffs.

The bear sits between them.

Brush stares at the Private. The Private stares at the bear.

Outside, the forest recedes behind them.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

The Resistance gained nothing.

INT. GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS, PARIS, FRANCE - MAY 1941 - DAY

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Michel's words were prophetic.
That man would be Braun, the
Fuhrer's enforcer. Brush and our
radio operator were supposed to be
dropped in the west.

(MORE)

VERDETTE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 They were caught in the east -
 where the Germans were looking for
 a teenage girl nudist competition.
 The RAF never failed to deliver -
 just sometimes to the wrong
 customer.

Brush sits stripped. Half his mustache shaved off.

Obersturmbannführer Braun (Braun) and his loyal deputy
 Hauptsturmführer Dolt (Dolt) enter.

The Mute sits next to the electrocution device.

BRAUN
 I hear you are ready to talk?

Brush nods.

BRAUN (CONT'D)
 Good. I need to hear those two
 names again, and you will get to
 keep the other side of your
 mustache.
 Oh, and the mute here will not
 electrocute your testicles again.

Brush nods.

BRAUN (CONT'D)
 Was that nod for me to electrocute
 your testicles or you have two
 names for me?

Brush snuffles and sits up.

BRUSH
 Michel Duval and Louisa Fish.

Braun sees Duval's file spread out in the pile. He pulls it
 up. He shows Brush his picture. Brush nods when he sees it.

There is a Louisa Fish file as well. She is obese and has a
 mole. Braun shows him the picture. Brush looks sick and
 shakes his head.

BRAUN
 Ah, a lover, perhaps? A woman who
 you are now ashamed you betrayed?

BRUSH
 Fuck no!

BRAUN
I like your spirit.

Braun nods to the mute. Brush tries to insist – but the mute zaps him.

Brush leaps in excruciating pain.

INT. GESTAPO HALLWAY – CONTINUOUS

Harsh lighting. Stone floors. Distant screams echo faintly, muffled behind thick steel doors.

A YOUNG GERMAN PRIVATE – now wearing a dull grey armband labeled "GESTAPO TRAINEE" – sweeps the hallway with intense focus.

Every few feet, he glances over at a large, slightly grimy TEDDY BEAR, seated neatly on a wooden chair beside a filing cabinet. The bear now wears a tiny black SS kepi, tilted jauntily.

A senior GESTAPO CLERK strides past, sneers at the bear, then mutters:

CLERK
Don't let the bear outrank you.

The trainee stiffens, resumes sweeping.

Down the hall, DOLT emerges from an interrogation room – shirt unbuttoned, sweaty, eyes wild.

He stops. Stares at the bear.

DOLT
(to himself)
It's always the quiet ones.

He walks off without another word.

The trainee gently pats the bear's head, then keeps sweeping.

FADE IN:

INT. LEGRAND TOWNHOUSE, LYON, FRANCE, JULY 1941 – DAY

Michel and Verdette lay in bed. Michel looks at her, kisses her head, and slips out of bed to get dressed.

Verdette wakes up.

VERDETTTE

Where are you going? I thought this was our day off.

MICHEL

I am going out for a walk.

Verdette nods. She understands. Michel gets ready to leave but stops.

MICHEL (CONT'D)

Why don't you come with me? It is beautiful outside.

Verdette smiles and gets up.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREETS OF LYON, FRANCE, JULY 1941 - DAY

The two take in the sights, walking leisurely. They see her old hospital.

MICHEL

Do you miss the work?

VERDETTTE

Not really. The doctors' writing was always very poor. We loved Phillip - he could always tell us what the doctor meant. After he left...

MICHEL

He is doing well from what I have been told.

VERDETTTE

What do they have him doing? The British budget?

Michel nods.

They see people out and about.

MICHEL

If I were to ever get killed doing this, I want you to know two things.

Verdette looks at him.

VERDETTTE

I truly loved you and don't avenge me?

MICHEL

So I have told you before?

VERDETTTE

I do believe you and Phillip were brothers.

He smiles.

MICHEL

Well, it's true.
Also - you were just a part of this. There is a lot more going on than you realize.

VERDETTTE

I see.

MICHEL

I wanted to protect you.

The two embrace.

Braun, Dolt, and the Mute pass them in a staff car as they kiss. Neither notice them.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOUISA FISH RESIDENCE - LYON, FRANCE - JULY 1941 - DAY

BRAUN, DOLT, and LEECH stand outside a peeling townhouse. A pair of bored LOCAL POLICEMEN hang back.

FISH opens the door a crack. She's in a ragged shawl, holding her identification. A dozen cats hiss and swirl around her legs.

BRAUN looks down at her papers... then subtly sniffs the air.

DOLT winces, blinking rapidly. He keeps his distance.

BRAUN holds up a picture of BRUSH, his mustache half-shaved.

BRAUN

Madame, I must be frank. Do you know this man?

FISH
 (with dry disdain)
 With half a mustache? Be serious.

BRAUN
 He's been... remarkably chivalrous
 on your behalf.

FISH slams the door.

A long beat.

BRAUN turns to DOLT.

BRAUN (CONT'D)
 That went exactly how I expected.

DOLT
 Agreed.

BRAUN
 Normally I'd kick in the door and
 beat her senseless.
 (beat)
 But there aren't enough medals in
 the Führer's drawer to make me walk
 into that house.

DOLT
 It smells like a cat farm.

LEECH steps up, awkward but informative.

LEECH
 She never leaves. Gets alimony.
 Husband was heir to a furrier's
 fortune.

BRAUN
 Do we know where he is?

LEECH
 He thought he was a werewolf. We
 had him committed.

BRAUN exhales, impressed.

BRAUN
 We lit that poor Brush up for two
 weeks... and he was telling the
 truth.
 (beat)
 He set a record. Remarkable man.

DOLT

Still, I think Brush would agree:
getting his balls shocked was
better than going in that house.

BRAUN

Let's tell him that.
(beat)
Before his execution. I don't want
him to leave on bad terms.

EXT. STREETS OF LYON, FRANCE, JULY 1941 - DUSK

Verdette and Michel wait at a park bench.

They are enjoying the day pass. Michel kisses her forehead.

MICHEL

My love, I must go into that
townhouse over there.
That is where our British radio
operator is. They just arrived a
day or so ago.

VERDETTTE

I have a bad feeling about this.

She notices the streets are deserted.

Michel looks at her with astonishment.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

I do as well, I would be amazed if
the radio worked.

Michel smiles. He kisses her and heads over.

Verdette watches. She notices again - no one on the street.
She decides to walk toward a park across from the townhouse.

CUT TO:

INT. RADIO OPERATOR'S TOWNHOUSE - LYON, FRANCE - JULY 1941 -
DUSK

Michel enters cautiously. The space is quiet, too quiet -
faint radio static in the background.

At the table, a man in British civvies fiddles with a radio.
A British Enfield rifle leans against the wall.

The man looks up. It's DOLT – pretending to be the operator.
He smiles.

Michel hesitates.

DOLT
Evening. You're late.

Michel pulls a torn playing card from his coat.

Dolt pulls out the matching half.

They fit perfectly.

MICHEL
Splendid.

DOLT
Good to meet you, old boy.

MICHEL
(sharp)
Your French sounds like British
slang with a German accent.

DOLT
(bland smile)
Bit of both, I suppose.

Click.

A door creaks behind Michel. He turns – too late.

BRAUN steps out of the shadows, flanked by LEECH and FOUR
GERMAN SOLDIERS.

BRAUN
Major Michel Duval – I am
Obersturmbannführer Braun.
(beat)
I've been looking forward to this.

Michel lifts his hands. A soldier relieves him of his pistol.

MICHEL
The radio operator?

BRAUN
She leapt right into that nudist
trap up north – same as Brush.
Whole division waiting.
(shrugs)
Tragically, she had her clothes on.

MICHEL
(snarling)
Fucking RAF.

BRAUN
Yes. We say RAF stands for "Wrong
As Fuck."

MICHEL
(in German)
It works in both languages.

They stare at each other.

CUT TO:

EXT. RADIO OPERATOR TOWNHOUSE - LYON, FRANCE - JULY 1941 -
DUSK

Verdette watches from across the street as GESTAPO CARS swarm
the townhouse - brakes screech, boots slam, engines hum.

She lights a cigarette with trembling fingers - calm on the
outside, firestorm within.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
You feel it in your spine first.
When it's all gone.

She turns to walk. Doesn't run. Just... walks.

To run would confirm it all.

She glances - MICHEL is led out in cuffs. Bloodied, defiant.
Their eyes meet for one last second.

It's enough.

Then DOLT lifts the Enfield rifle - the British prop - aims
at Michel's back.

BOOM.

The rifle ****explodes**** in his hands. DOLT screams - two
fingers gone, face split by shrapnel.

Total chaos.

BRAUN and the GERMANS draw pistols - shouting, firing wild.

MICHEL bolts.

VERDETTTE watches - frozen, cigarette falling from her lips.

MICHEL dashes into the street.

SCREECH-THUD!

A Gestapo car slams into him. The crack of impact echoes. His body flips, lands hard, still.

Verdette's knees buckle - but she walks.

Deliberate. Controlled. Until she vanishes into a nearby alley.

Only then does she break.

She crumples into shadow.

CUT TO:

INT. LEGRAND TOWNHOUSE, LYON, FRANCE, JULY 1941 - DUSK

Verdette sits sobbing uncontrollably. She hopes for a miracle.

A knock at her door - it's the one Michel would give.

She rushes to the door - it's Leech.

She pounds him with her fists.

Leech, in tears, shoves his way inside.

She eventually calms down.

LEECH

You need to get out of Lyon.
They backtracked everything to the
hospital...thank God you took a
goofy picture.

Verdette looks up in horror.

She looks around and nods.

LEECH (CONT'D)

Go to Paris.

We have people there.

Verdette nods.

LEECH (CONT'D)

But be careful.
Many in Paris claim to be members
of the resistance – and the British
pay them because of it.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

I have relived that day many times
in my mind.
Three things became clear to me:
One – Michel, by running away from
me, saved me. Two – my first love
was true love. Three – Leech was
the X of Lyon. He risked himself to
save me.

TIME CUT:

EXT. GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - LYON, FRANCE - DECEMBER 1942 -
DAWN

SUPER: DECEMBER 1942

Grey light creeps over frost-covered stone.

CHIEF INSPECTOR LEECH stands at a weathered post, arms bound.
A PRIEST murmurs last rites beside him.

He refuses the blindfold. Refuses the cigarette.

DOLT – his face scarred, fingers missing – steps forward,
flanked by a FIRING SQUAD.

DOLT

That's very brave, Chief Inspector.

LEECH

I just wanted to see that stupid
scar one more time.

(beat)

It's even worse in the morning.

Dolt flinches – not from the insult, but the clarity.

LEECH (CONT'D)

And we both know who you *really*
are, don't we?

A long silence. Dolt looks away.

The priest steps back.

RIFLES RAISE.

A moment of wind. Then:

CRACK. CRACK. CRACK.

Leech slumps – never flinching.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

He never talked.
 He never gave me away.
 The hustlers in Paris wormed their
 way into MI6 –
 Sold us out just to undermine the
 SOE.
 Michel's network – over a hundred
 men and women – slaughtered.
 True patriots, now remembered only
 on two crumpled sheets of the
 Resistance roster.
 I hate the British to this day for
 it.
 I was the cell's only survivor.

INT. TRAIN TO PARIS – EARLY MORNING – 1943

Verdette stares out the window, motionless. Her hands are clenched in her lap.

Across the aisle, a YOUNG MOTHER soothes her LITTLE GIRL, no more than six.

The girl tugs at her mother's sleeve. Whispers. The mother looks at Verdette – sees her glassy eyes, her grief.

She reaches into her bag. Offers a handkerchief.

VERDETTE

Merci.

Verdette takes it – gently. She wipes her eyes.

She turns to the window. Her reflection barely looks back.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

It's amazing how the smallest act
 of kindness can stop the
 suffering... if only for a moment.
 But nothing would ever stop my pain
 over Michel. Until then, I hadn't
 known what it meant to live. Only
 how to exist.

She goes to return the handkerchief. The woman shakes her head – no.

The little girl leans forward.

LITTLE GIRL
Please cheer up.

Verdette's lips twitch. She nods.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
Life is like that, though.
You must hold on to those you love
– because it may be the last time
you can.

She looks out the window.

The French countryside rushes by – sunlit fields, grazing horses, smoke far off in the distance.

EXT. PARIS STATION - MIDDAY

Verdette steps off the train. Paris is occupied. Wehrmacht patrols. Barricades. Flags.

Posters slapped over every wall.

INSERT: POSTER
A Wehrmacht bulletin:
NUDIST RETREATS AND CONTESTS ARE
ILLEGAL.
REPORT ANY SUCH GATHERINGS TO
HEADQUARTERS.

REWARD FOR INFORMATION.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
At least I had them spinning their
wheels.

She passes a line of women waiting outside a bakery. Their faces are tired – but there's laughter. Hope.

Verdette smiles at them, just briefly.

A GERMAN TRUCK pulls up hard. Soldiers leap out.

Chaos. Barked orders.

The soldiers begin seizing the women one by one.

A GERMAN SOLDIER shouts, aggressive.

GERMAN SOLDIER
 Wer ist verheiratet? Wer ist
 verheiratet?!
 (Who is married?)
 The women freeze. One starts to
 cry.

Verdette slides away – disappearing before the next round of
 horror can touch her.

INT. GERMAN IMPORTED DOMESTIC HELP PROCESSING CENTER, BERLIN,
 GERMANY, AUGUST 1941 – DAY

Verdette and several French women stand stripped down to
 their slips.

The people looking them over are mostly senior Nazi
 officials' housewives.

One man stands out – in an electric blue uniform:

Sturmbannführer Klaus von Pfau (Klaus).

Verdette is ignored.

It is obvious they find her beauty intimidating.

Verdette shows Klaus her hands.

He nods and looks about with a raised nostril.

The other women, less attractive, are taken by the
 housewives.

KLAUS
 I am Sturmbannführer Klaus von
 Pfau.
 I am the head of Party Affairs here
 in Berlin.

VERDETTE
 How do you do?

KLAUS
 I need a maid. You seem to fit the
 bill.

VERDETTE
 Do I get one of those uniforms?
 I would prefer magenta.

Klaus busts up laughing and looks about.

He is slightly effeminate.

Verdette is delighted to see it.

KLAUS

I might just do that... for me.

VERDETTTE

I have more ideas.

KLAUS

Well, we'll have plenty of time to share them.

Verdette smiles. Klaus seems overjoyed.

VERDETTTE

(Offers her hand)

Lieselotte Schweinbein.

KLAUS

That is a German name – and you speak our language.

Please tell me you are not from Alsace Lorraine.

Those people are off-limits.

VERDETTTE

Just across the line in Lyon.

I have nothing else to do at the moment.

KLAUS

(Kissing her hand)

A pleasure.

CUT TO:

INT. BERLIN APARTMENT – EVENING – 1943

Low jazz on the gramophone. Velvet drapes, expensive liquor, a smoky chandelier glow.

KLAUS (30s, tall, immaculate) adjusts Verdette's pearl necklace with gentle affection.

KLAUS

You're perfection, Liebling. Like something from a Paris window.

He leans in for a kiss – but glances past her at the mirror, eyeing a photo of SS men in flamboyant Hugo Boss uniforms – lavender piping, teal armbands, a twisted parody of style.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Klaus was a poof – but a gentle one.

Another loveless arrangement.

He joined the party for the uniforms.

He longed to design fashion, not dictate policy.

MONTAGE – VARIOUS NAZI FUNCTIONS

- At a grand ballroom, Klaus poses with Verdette for a propaganda photo, but he's looking at a lieutenant with a baby-blue swastika sash.

- A dinner party: men in pastel SA uniforms drink martinis and whisper, while their women – the beards – sit stiffly in silence.

- Verdette trades glances with:

- A deranged ****CZECH WOMAN**** laughing too loud.

- A ****TERRIFIED POLISH GIRL**** trembling as her date laughs with a man stroking his lapel.

- A stoic ****RUSSIAN WOMAN**** who says nothing... until she does.

RUSSIAN WOMAN

(deep, masculine voice)

I killed a bear once. With a shoe.

All fall silent. Verdette nearly chokes on her wine.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Klaus was kind. Accommodating. I can't complain.

INT. DRESSING ROOM – DAY

Verdette stands before a mirror. A butler holds up a grotesquely ruffled, ultra-feminine gown.

Cut to: a trashy, rhinestone-laden wedding dress – something a circus bride might wear.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 He longed to be in the fashion
 industry.

INT. MASSIVE PARTY - REICH CHANCELLERY - NIGHT

Champagne flows. A swing band plays. The beards gather near the back, awkwardly sipping, watching as their "husbands" flirt, touch, even slow dance - pretending it's all for show.

Only the Russian woman has a real partner - a hulking female bodyguard in a tuxedo.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 I have lived a life of the upper
 class in a way...and in others
 not.
 (beat)
 At least I had Michel for a time.

EXT. TIERGARTEN PARK - BERLIN - LATE AFTERNOON

Golden light filters through skeletal trees. KLAUS and VERDETTTE stroll arm in arm, the picture of Aryan domesticity.

But Klaus's eyes are elsewhere.

Across the path, another pair approaches: A chubby man in an impeccably tailored vanilla SS uniform - pale leather gloves, boots like black mirrors - walks with quiet grace. His arm is looped around a young officer, whom he guides with practiced affection.

Klaus slows, breath catching, eyes misting.

The chubby man turns, just slightly. A nod. A faint smirk. Then he walks on.

Klaus grips Verdette's arm - too tightly now.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 Klaus longed for his lover.
 A Gauleiter. A favorite of Hitler
 himself. (beat) Oh well.

Verdette looks up at him, deadpan.

VERDETTTE
 I don't think vanilla suits him.

Klaus, still staring, sighs.

KLAUS

It does when he wears it.

VERDETTTE

Then who am I to argue.

He pulls her a little closer – not out of love, but resignation.

CUT TO:

INT. BERLIN SALON – NIGHT – “GAY BINGO”

Crystal chandeliers glitter above velvet walls. Candelabras flicker. A smoky parlor reimagined as something between a game show and a cabaret.

VERDETTTE, dazzling in a sequined gown and a tilted tiara, stands at a velvet podium, pointer in hand. A golden card board gleams beside her.

Behind her: a Nazi flag, awkwardly half-obscured by a Greco-Roman nude tapestry – the tension between power and performance absurd, almost comic.

Above it all, a neon sign buzzes faintly: “BINGO NACHT – Sponsored by the Ministry of Culture.”

The crowd: high-ranking men in pastel-trimmed uniforms, lounging like bored socialites – sipping aperitifs, flicking fans, giggling behind gloves.

VERDETTTE

B-Sechs-und-Siebzig! B-Seventy-six!

(beat)

Or as General Vogt calls it... his waist size.

Polite laughter. A flick of a feathered fan.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

Still... they had Bingo Night.
And I found it amusing. (beat) God forgive me – but look at them.

She spins the golden bingo cage. The balls clatter like distant artillery.

VERDETTTE

N-Acht-und-Neunzig! N-Ninety-eight!

An SS colonel gasps theatrically, hand to chest. Another twirls a pink fan, mock-fainting.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 Don't ask what the prize was.
 I never did.

CAMERA PUSHES IN – slow, dreamlike:

- One man strokes another's mustache, almost reverently. - A second nuzzles a crystal swan, murmuring to it. - A third blows glitter across the table – it hangs in the haze like golden spores.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 Just look at them.

CUT TO:

A close-up of Verdette – tiara tilted, smirking, detached – as the next ball drops.

INT. KLAUS'S HOME, BERLIN, GERMANY, APRIL 1942 – DAY

Verdette and Klaus prepare for Hitler's Birthday Party.

Klaus brings out a dress he had made for Verdette.

Verdette looks at the dress and nods her head back and forth.

VERDETTTE
 I am not wearing that.

KLAUS
 Why? I had it made for you.

VERDETTTE
 I think you had it made for you.

KLAUS
 Well, I modeled it.

VERDETTTE
 I am sorry that I am a French woman
 who can cook – and not sew.

KLAUS
 I never held it against you.

VERDETTTE
 And you will never hold that dress
 against me either.

KLAUS

It is a tad rough.

VERDETTE

Klaus, there is a war on.
We are not getting cotton anymore.
The British have it all.
Wool has to be worn in other ways.
The cut looks great, but it will
leave marks.

KLAUS

I have an idea. I saw a movie once.

CUT TO:

INT. SS DINING HALL, BERLIN, GERMANY, APRIL 1942 - DAY

Klaus stands watching workers remove a curtain from a bomb-damaged wall.

There are small tears in it, but it is mostly intact.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

I cannot complain about him.
In fact, I came to adore him.
He was a gentle spirit who wanted
to bathe the world in fashion and
dance them to death at parties.
I came to respect his perspective –
but not his fashion taste.

KLAUS

We will make it a solid wall.
A window that big will get someone
killed.
Workers pack the curtain up.

He smiles eagerly at it.

CUT TO:

INT. KLAUS'S HOME, BERLIN, GERMANY, APRIL 1942

Verdette looks at her new dress – it is very revealing.

VERDETTE

We are still pulling the mail-order
bride romance thing to give you
cover?

KLAUS

I will be the envy of the party.

Verdette looks at him.

VERDETTTE

Klaus, I am not one you should put
out there in a paper, trust me.
I don't bring people good luck.

KLAUS

How can you say that?
I have been invited to so many
events since you came into my life.
You have been great.

VERDETTTE

These people are ruthless.

KLAUS

Let them be jealous.

VERDETTTE

Do you know about the Nazi Party?
Do you ever go to their meetings?
They mean it – let me tell you.

Klaus flutters his eyes, making a shoving motion.

KLAUS

Now, you have to be respectful to
the Fuhrer.
No jokes.
Don't ask him what he shoves up his
ass.
That went around a year ago.
(Beat)
They invaded Russia to have a place
to send those people.
(Beat)
This is the biggest gala yet.

Verdette nods and crosses her heart.

INT. REICH CHANCELLERY, BERLIN, GERMANY, APRIL 1942 – NIGHT

People are lined up in the reception line to greet Hitler.

Verdette and Klaus draw a lot of attention. Her dress is Nazi
Party Red – and very revealing. Klaus wears his magenta
uniform.

Verdette puts on a brave face. Klaus is beaming like a debutante at a ball.

They finally reach Hitler, who takes Verdette's hand and kisses it. Verdette forces a smile.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
Me without my letter opener.
I am the shame of France.

HITLER
Ah, Klaus, where have you been
hiding this flower of Alsace?

KLAUS
It was true love at first sight.
I happened to be walking past the
French Volunteers...

HITLER
Yes, yes, I have heard of them.

They are keeping Belarus safe.

KLAUS
French Volunteers for domestic
service.

HITLER
(Winks)
That's what we call it.

KLAUS
Well, actually yes, Mein Fuhrer.

HITLER
Well, you have to tell me more
about it.
We have to get rolling. We are
promoting Braun tonight.

Verdette's eyes go wide. She sees Braun further down the line
– with an SD Sergeant who is holding a Teddy Bear.

They continue down the line. Verdette tries hard to keep
smiling as she greets people.

Slowly, she is funneled closer to Braun.

Dolt arrives – his face scarred – and distracts Braun.
Verdette is relieved as she moves past.

SD SERGEANT
 I am the Brigadeführer's driver.
 I am getting decorated tonight.

VERDETTTE
 (In broken German)
 Christmas or Easter?

The SD Sergeant chuckles. Verdette smiles and moves on.

Klaus looks at her.

KLAUS
 What is it with you and Braun?
 I detected tension.

VERDETTTE
 Want the truth?

KLAUS
 We agreed – no secrets.

VERDETTTE
 I really wished you had kept yours.

CUT TO:

INT. REICH CHANCELLERY – BERLIN – APRIL 1942 – LATER

A cold, marbled corridor. A storm of silence.

VERDETTTE and KLAUS stand close – too close – as if embracing.
 But it's theater. Verdette shields him from view; Klaus is shaking.

KLAUS
 You tell me this here? In the Reich
 Chancellery?

VERDETTTE
 You asked, Klaus.

He looks around – walls, portraits, chandeliers – paranoid.

KLAUS
 They're not stupid.

VERDETTTE
 No. But they are slow.
 (beat)
 I mean... you all have Bingo Night,
 for God's sake.

KLAUS
 It's just Bingo..
 (his voice cracks)
 Harmless.

VERDETTTE
 You said that twice. Not helping.

KLAUS
 (sputtering)
 I should've been promoted. Look at
 me. For God's sake!

She takes his arm, steadying him.

VERDETTTE
 Okay. If we're going to keep
 pretending we're in love, we leave
 now.
 No goodbyes. No second guesses.

KLAUS
 And then?

VERDETTTE
 We vacation in Switzerland.
 (beat)
 And we don't come back.

Klaus takes a breath. Nods. The decision settles in.

KLAUS
 I think... I can swing that.

They slip down the hallway like ghosts. Outside, a black cab
 idles. The door opens. They get in.

CUT TO:

INT. REICH CHANCELLERY - LATER

Back at the ceremonial hall, the crowd returns to formality.

A NAZI TAPESTRY looms behind a dais. BRUAN, in full uniform,
 stands beside HITLER.

HITLER

You have earned this promotion and the title of Special
 Investigator of the Reich.

Do us proud.

BRAUN
Yes, mein Führer.

Polite applause. Cameras flash.

But Braun's face tightens – something's gnawing at him.

INT. CHANCELLERY HALL – MOMENTS LATER

After the handshakes and photographs, BRAUN leans toward DOLT, who loiters at the edge – sullen, sharp-eyed, always watching.

BRAUN
I wish I could control my brain and memory better.
We've been so fixated on the Berlin Slasher... (beat) But something just came back to me. Not sure what exactly. But it's important.

DOLT
Oh?

BRAUN
The brunette. The one in the red dress.

DOLT
Ah. Party Red.
(smirking)
I noticed. I'll pull her in. And Klaus – we can arrest him for being a poof.
Wearing magenta to a formal function – disgraceful. (beat)
Maybe teal. But not magenta.

BRAUN
(chuckling dryly)
I admire your zeal, Dolt.
But no. She's someone else.
(beat) Verdette LeGrand. Lyon. A year ago.

DOLT
The one who made that face in her hospital ID?

BRAUN
Yes. That one.

DOLT

What makes you think it's her?

BRAUN

(leaning in, voice low)

Because I sense her. That beauty –
that wit.

Anyone who sticks out her tongue in
a government photo two years before
it becomes strategically
significant... (beat) And still
looks flawless?

Dolt pauses. For once, he doesn't smirk.

DOLT

I'll see if I can find her.

INT. KLAUS'S HOME - BERLIN - APRIL 1942

Rain streaks the windows. The apartment is dim and hushed,
the walls heavy with farewell.

KLAUS, eyes red, hurriedly packs a small suitcase. His
uniforms lie discarded on the bed – beautiful, useless
relics.

VERDETTE enters, dressed in simple travel clothes, holding a
single bag.

KLAUS The only reason I joined the Party was for the uniform.

VERDETTE

Sometimes you have to let things
pass.
It's a fine cut, Klaus – no offense
– but it's meant for a brute of a
man.

KLAUS

(softly)
So true.

He opens a drawer, pulls out papers and a small stack of
Reichsmarks, wrapped tightly in twine.

KLAUS (CONT'D)

I had these made. Two months ago.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Even in the end, Klaus thought
ahead. Just not for himself.

KLAUS

They've been onto me for a while.
That Dolt man from the Gestapo – he
keeps appearing. Cornering me. He
looks at me with that hideous face.
(beat)
I can feel him arresting me.

VERDETTTE

I see...so an unerotic arrest?

Klaus nods tearfully.

KLAUS

We need to leave.
They didn't promote Braun because–

[POUNING ON THE DOOR.]

Both freeze.

KLAUS

Go. I'll handle this.

VERDETTTE

We can run. Together.

KLAUS

I'll only slow you down.
I know everyone – and they know me.
Let me be strong, just once.

Verdette hesitates. They lock eyes.

VERDETTTE

Klaus...

KLAUS

Go.

She blows him a kiss – a silent thank you – and slips out the
back into the darkness.

Klaus watches her disappear through the kitchen curtain. A
faint smile forms. Resigned. Almost proud.

KLAUS (CONT'D)

(sotto, as if in trance)
She's gone.

He turns back toward the door. The knocking gets louder.

EXT. BERLIN STREET - EARLY MORNING - 1943

Sirens echo. Smoke drifts. Verdetta moves fast, blending with foot traffic in a worn coat.

A Gestapo car jerks to a stop across the street.

Two officers drag KLAUS from a narrow stairwell. He's disheveled, but composed.

Verdetta stops. Her eyes find him. His eyes find her.

A long, silent beat. Then - a small nod. A farewell. His lips twitch. Almost a smile.

VERDETTA (V.O.)

Again, I watched the Gestapo seize
someone I cared about.

I was beginning to feel cursed.

She turns. Walks.

Stops again. Looks back.

The black car pulls away with Klaus inside.

She tears up a bit.

TIME CUT:

INT. GESTAPO INTERROGATION ROOM - BERLIN - NIGHT

Cold tile. A single lamp swings above.

KLAUS stands before DOLT and BRAUN, trying to appear calm. He fidgets - uncertain, a little intimidated.

BRAUN (FLAT)

The curtain.

The one you borrowed. Where is it?

Klaus scans the room - almost relieved.

KLAUS

I made it into a dress.

Dolt tilts his head - eyes narrow, intrigued. A flicker of arousal.

KLAUS (SAUCILY) (CONT'D)

For my mistress.

Braun lifts a photo – Verdetto's hospital ID from Lyon. She's sticking out her tongue. Rebellious. Defiant.

Klaus chuckles with genuine affection. Nods like he's proud.

DOLT (LEANING FORWARD)
She is the Berlin Slasher.

Klaus stiffens.

DOLT (CONT'D)
She disfigures pretty men like
you...
with an old butcher knife from
Provence. Kept in a felt case.
Embroidered: "I shall not be
alone."

Braun shifts, uncertain – surprised by that detail.

BRAUN
...Did you just make that up?

Dolt doesn't answer. Braun shrugs like it's plausible enough.

KLAUS
That sounds rather gay, don't you
think?

Braun snorts. Dolt's hand cracks across Klaus's face.

A beat of silence. Klaus recovers – eyes smoldering.

EXT. BERLIN STREETS – EARLY MORNING – 1943

Sirens. Smoke. Boots on pavement.

Verdetto moves fast – ducking Gestapo patrols, eyes scanning every alley.

She passes a WANTED POSTER:

INSERT: POSTER
Her tongue-out ID photo.

Next to it: a crisp artist's rendition – sleek, smug, cigarette dangling.

In bold black letters:

FRENCH WOMAN – ARMED AND DANGEROUS

She pulls out a cigarette. Sees the poster again.
Frowns. Crumples the smoke. Drops it in a puddle.

EXT. SIDE STREET - CONTINUOUS

A red brick convent looms - iron gate cracked open. Laundry flaps in the yard.

Verdette ducks inside.

INT. CONVENT LAUNDRY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Steam. Linens. A rack of folded habits.

Verdette slips in, checks the hall.

Grabs one. Dresses fast. Straightens the veil.

She stops at a mirror, pauses... then lights a cigarette.

EXT. BERLIN STREET - MOMENTS LATER

She steps back into the street - nun's habit on, cigarette lit, defiant and undercover.

She takes a long drag.

Nods to a passing priest. Who tenses up then goes back to walking.

Disappears down the street.

EXT. GESTAPO PRISON COURTYARD - BERLIN - APRIL 1945 - DAY

SUPER: BERLIN, APRIL 1945

Grey light. Rubble clings to crumbling walls. KLAUS is marched into a cracked stone courtyard. A makeshift gallows creaks in the wind.

He stands tall - pale, disheveled, but defiant.

From the steps, GESTAPO CHIEF REINHARD MÜLLER watches in silence. An SS ADJUTANT ticks names from a clipboard. DOLT leans against a post, smirking - fingers twitching with anticipation.

KLAUS
I have one regret.
Verdette...

DOLT
(twitching)
Repeat what you just said?

MÜLLER shoots him a glare. Dolt steps back.

Klaus meets both men's eyes. Calm now. Clear.

KLAUS
Never mind.

A flicker crosses his face. Not fear – something softer. A final clarity.

He'd loved her. Not for what she gave. Not how she looked. Just... for being.

DOLT steps forward, fits the noose, draws the hood.

MÜLLER nods.

The trap drops.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
He was just different. He wanted to belong. To anyone who would have him.
(beat)
Don't be hard on him. He was a man who was too gentle for the time he lived in and he paid the price.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. BERLIN TRAIN STATION - DAWN - APRIL 1942

Steam curls across the tracks like ghostly silk. The station is crowded, restless – soldiers, widows, children, couriers. VERDETTTE, in a plain wool coat, clutches a satchel and glances nervously over her shoulder.

She approaches a train car, flashes her forged Party ID and travel papers to the CONDUCTOR – a man in a tired uniform with indifferent eyes.

He barely looks at the papers. Then notices the rank insignia.

CONDUCTOR
Senior Party service? Very good,
madam.

This train goes to Budapest.

VERDETTE
Perfect.

She boards. Doesn't look back.

INT. TRAIN CABIN - EN ROUTE - LATER

A small private cabin. Verdette sits alone - arms wrapped around herself. Outside, fields blur past, flat and gray.

VERDETTE (V.O.)
I had now lost two men.
And France.
(beat)
I was only twenty-two... but I felt
forty. An easy forty - not a hard
one. Still... it was piling on.

She closes her eyes. The train rocks her into sleep.

INT. TRAIN CABIN - HOURS LATER - MORNING

A jolt. A whistle. Verdette wakes. Light streams through the window.

Outside: BUDAPEST.

Chaos. Refugees. Vendors. Troops. Black marketeers. Screaming children. Cigarette smoke and shouting in five languages.

She watches the world swirl.

VERDETTE (V.O.)
I had arrived... in Budapest.

EXT. BUDAPEST TRAIN STATION - PLATFORM - MORNING

Verdette steps off the train into the crowded, volatile chaos of wartime Budapest.

Street vendors shout. Soldiers march. Black market exchanges buzz.

Displaced souls drift, some desperate, some numb.

She lights a cigarette with trembling hands – then pauses.

Across the crowd, she spots a man in a tweed coat, moving with purposeful unease.

His handlebar mustache curls like a warning sign. A leather satchel bounces at his side.

He scans the crowd like a fox in enemy territory.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Luckily – or so I thought at the time – I found a British agent.

He moves off quickly. Verdetta tails him, keeping her distance.

EXT. BUDAPEST SIDE STREETS – SERIES OF SHOTS – DAY

– The mustached man turns abruptly down a side alley.

Verdetta follows – cool, calculated.

– He glances back – quickens his pace – ducks into a side door.

– Verdetta slows, waits, then continues. The door swings slightly open again.

– He emerges from a different street entirely, doubling back toward the train station.

– Verdetta now stands still, scanning calmly as people blur past her in the square.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

He tried to lose me...and did a shit job of it.

EXT. BUDAPEST TRAIN STATION – MOMENTS LATER

The mustached man arrives back at the exact spot where he started – flustered, sweat beading on his brow.

He freezes.

Standing across from him, exactly where he left her, is Verdetta.

Arms crossed. One brow raised. Smirking, just slightly.

A long, awkward silence.

VERDETTTE

Lost?

EXT. BUDAPEST TRAIN STATION - CONTINUOUS

The mustached man stiffens as Verdetto steps toward him.

He clears his throat and adopts a bizarre, unplaceable accent
- part Welsh, part Martian.

MUSTACHED MAN

Ah, bonjour, mademoiselle. I am..
tourist, yes? From.. West Albion.
I come to see famous paprika
markets. Very spicy! Very red!

He gestures vaguely to his coat, then the station ceiling,
then back at her, smiling too wide.

Verdetto stares at him for a long beat. Then, coolly:

VERDETTTE

(in flawless English)

I'm an escapee from Germany.
I'm in the Resistance.
You can stop pretending now.

The man pauses - then grins sheepishly.

MUSTACHED MAN

God, thank you. My accent work's
bloody awful under pressure.

VERDETTTE

You wouldn't need it you shaved
that broom off.

MUSTACHED MAN

Never.

INT. BUDAPEST SAFEHOUSE - LATER

A shabby apartment packed wall to wall with downed RAF
airmen, escaped POWs, and a haze of sweat, smoke, and quiet
panic.

Maps and coded notes scatter the tables. A single light bulb
buzzes.

Verdetto steps in behind the British agent. Her eyes scan the
room.

And then – a little girl looks up from a corner cot.

ANNA KRAVITZ, seven, sharp-eyed, thin as a twig, already knows too much.

She clutches a threadbare doll, speaks in deliberate French:

ANNA
Vous êtes française?

VERDETTE
Oui, chérie. Et toi?

Anna nods solemnly. Verdette crouches, lifts her gently. Anna clings to her without a word.

VERDETTE (V.O.)
This is where I met Anna Kravitz.
Just seven, going on thirty.

VERDETTE (V.O.)
She was separated from her parents
in Budapest.
Her parents narrowly escaped the SS
roundup. Anna went back to lock her
hiding room door – as a good girl
would – and got caught... but got
away.

For the first time in days, Verdette smiles.

INT. SAFEHOUSE – MOMENTS LATER

A LOCAL RESISTANCE WOMAN bursts in – breathless, armed, urgent.

RESISTANCE WOMAN
There's a roundup starting. Gestapo
trucks on Andrassy.
They're blocking the bridges. All
roads east.

VERDETTE
Why here?

The woman hesitates. Then:

RESISTANCE WOMAN
This is the Jewish quarter.

The room goes still.

Verdette looks around – airmen, prisoners, Anna in her arms.

She understands.

INT. TRAIN TO AUSCHWITZ - POLAND - DAY

SUPER: POLAND - MAY 1942

Verdette clutches ANNA in a crammed cattle car, shoulder-to-shoulder with terrified Hungarian Jews and Roma women.

She looks down at her forearm: a freshly inked selektion number. Still raw. Still stinging.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

I hate IBM. The Nazis used their inventory system to track inmates at Auschwitz. I carry their catalog on my skin.

She hugs Anna tighter, shielding her from the despair around them.

VERDETTTE

We'll be all right. I'll get us out.

The train lurches. Screeches to a halt.

SOBS ripple through the car. Whispers of dread.

Verdette pushes her way to the bolted door. Above it, a small vent.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

Anna. Can you climb up? Look out?

Anna, trembling, nods.

Verdette lifts her. Others help. The girl peeks through the vent.

ANNA

Soldiers... in brown uniforms.

Verdette stiffens - processes. She turns and translates in German:

VERDETTTE

Hungarian uniforms.

Gasps. A plump woman cries out.

PLUMP WOMAN
 (in German)
 My people! They're Hungarians!

A younger girl shoves forward.

HUNGARIAN GIRL
 I can speak!

They boost her up. She grabs the vent's grate and shouts in Hungarian:

HUNGARIAN GIRL (CONT'D)
 We're Hungarian women! They're
 sending us to the camps!

A guttural Nazi bark from outside:

SS GUARD (O.S.)
 Get your head back in, you filthy
 Jew!

A beat. Then – a new voice. Urgent. Familiar.

HUNGARIAN SOLDIER (O.S.)
 (in Hungarian)
 Liza? Is that you?

The girl freezes. Breath caught.

HUNGARIAN GIRL
 ERIC?! YES!

Verdette squeezes her eyes shut – muttering a prayer. Anna clutches her tighter.

Gunfire erupts – close. Then closer. Chaos.

The lock SLAMS open.

A HUNGARIAN SOLDIER bursts in.

HUNGARIAN SOLDIER
 LIZA!!!

She leaps from the vent, throws her arms around him. Tears. Relief. Shock.

She turns, points to Verdette.

LIZA
 (in German)
 He's my brother!

VERDETTTE
Tell them to kill the Boche.

More GUNFIRE outside. Screams.

LIZA
They don't need to be told...he is
disowned but I forgive him.

Verdette nods, scoops Anna into her arms.

VERDETTTE
Welcome back to the family.

EXT. TRAIN TO AUSCHWITZ, SOMEWHERE IN POLAND, MAY 1942 - DAY

Verdette, holding Anna, leaps down from the train.

She pulls a shawl over her head - she doesn't trust the
Hungarian bandits.

VERDETTTE
Figure the odds.

ANNA
What?

VERDETTTE
My luck must be back.

Around them - a killing frenzy.

SS guards and train workers are being killed mercilessly.

She puts her hand over Anna's eyes.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)
Don't look.

Anna grimaces.

I/E. BARN, POLAND, MAY 1942 - DAY

Verdette carries a tired Anna through the rain.

She spots a barn and dashes for it.

Inside, the Polish Resistance and Hungarian bandits meet.

They point guns at her.

WOLECH, the Polish Resistance leader, and JOSEPH, the Hungarian mutiny leader, step forward.

They see Anna and Verdette's selektion number.

WOLECH
They are from the train.

Everyone lowers their weapons.

WOLECH (CONT'D)
Do you speak Polish?

Verdette shakes her head.

WOLECH (CONT'D)
German?

VERDETTE
Ja!

Everyone points their guns again.

JOSEPH
I speak German for fuck's sake!

VERDETTE
We are good Catholics. Anna, let's pray.

Anna follows Verdette's sign of the cross.

JOSEPH
No Jews, thank God.

VERDETTE (V.O.)
Even in the midst of what would be called the Holocaust, two targeted groups – the Poles and the Jews – could not get along. Both fought each other as much as they fought the Germans.

Anna bites her lip.

VERDETTE
We are off the train. I just came to get out of the rain.

Wolech points to the loft.

WOLECH
Please go up there while we talk.

Verdette nods and starts to climb.

Anna spots a water bucket and drinks – the men smile.

Verdette sees German weapons – a dead SS man stripped of his clothes.

WOLECH (CONT'D)

Oh, we had a straggler from the train.
Take what you need. Leave the weapon...

Suddenly – the side doors are kicked open.

The Hungarians and Poles are caught off guard.

Verdette throws herself to the loft floor and crawls to see Anna.

The massive barn doors open.

Major JEAN-CLAUDE DEDIARE, Captain NEVILLE LEBLANC, and Feldwebel HENRI LECHET enter, flanked by French Volunteer Legion (VLF) troops in German uniforms.

Dediare wears a crushable visor cap – the others wear helmets.

WOLECH (CONT'D)

Major Dediare.

DEDIARE

I told you to stay out of this sector, Wolech.
You're just a group of armed refugees.
I don't mind you making do – but that supply train...

JOSEPH

Those were Hungarian bandits.

Dediare gives him a hard look.

DEDIARE

Whoever.
Somebody stopped a supply train in my sector.
Wolech – I warned you.

Leblanc gives an order in French to Lechet – search the men.

Anna hears French – her eyes light up.

Verdette notices, too late.

Anna leaps from behind a locker.

ANNA
(In French)
Have you come to rescue me?

The VLF soldiers freeze – then lower their weapons.

Some weep in shame.

Dediare looks stricken.

They all see her Auschwitz tattoo.

WOLECH
From the supply train.

DEDIARE
Dear God.

Anna runs to Dediare.

Leblanc turns away to hide his tears.

Lechet openly weeps.

ANNA
I knew you would come.

DEDIARE
(Voice cracking)
Of course we would.

Leblanc gestures for her to lower her voice – he can't speak.

Lechet scans to ensure no Germans interfere.

ANNA
Will you take me home now?

DEDIARE
Well, it depends. What part of
France...?

ANNA
I'm from Caen.

Hands shoot up among the VLF.

DEDIARE
 She's from Caen!
 You are...?

ANNA
 I'm Anna Kravitz.

DEDIARE
 Well, here she is.

The VLF nod.

Dediare picks her up.

Anna taps his VLF tri-color patch.

ANNA
 I knew you were French.

DEDIARE
 Oui. We are.

ANNA
 We have the most brave and handsome
 men.

Leblanc walks away, sobbing silently.

Lechet nods, smiling through tears.

DEDIARE
 We also have the most brave and
 beautiful girls and women.

ANNA
 Would you like to meet...

WOLECH
 (Interrupting)
 We will take care of her. She's
 Catholic. She'll find a home with
 us.
 Just leave us in peace, Dediare.

Dediare looks at him – a tear runs down his cheek.

He lowers Anna and gently takes her hand.

DEDIARE
 She is a daughter of France.
 If I hear harm has befallen her –
 If she's harmed, I'll bury the man
 who touched her and his father, too.

WOLECH

The Germans have taught you well.

(Beat)

Remember your words when you stare
at the daughters of Poland.

Leblanc nods.

Lechet and the VLF nod solemnly.

Dediare rips off his canteen and lays it at Anna's feet.

The VLF soldiers do the same – piling rations and candy.

Verdette, hiding above, watches.

She clutches her chest – the "God of War" she's been waiting
for.

WOLECH (CONT'D)

I have twenty Hungarians. They'll
be hunted.

I don't have the room.

DEDIARE

I can take twelve.

They'll have to learn French or
German real quick.

JOSEPH

Oui and Ja!

Dediare grins faintly.

Lechet approaches Anna.

LECHET

Nice to meet you, Anna.

Lechet rounds up the twelve mutineers.

Leblanc kneels before Anna.

LEBLANC

Pray every night. It works... most
of the time.

Anna crosses herself – badly.

Leblanc shows her the right way.

She kisses him on both cheeks.

She does the same to Lechet – then to Dediare.

ANNA

(With a wink)

I'm a daughter of Samuel Kravitz –
but I'm from France, so I get it.

Dediare smiles.

The VLF pile into their vehicles and drive off.

Verdette watches them leave, clutching her heart.

Anna waves.

The VLF wave back.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

That is Jean-Claude Dediare – my
future husband.

He doesn't know it yet – but he
will know it every day after we
meet again.

XT. ROAD IN POLAND, MAY 1942 – DUSK

Verdette, Anna, and Wolech walk with the Poles and Hungarian
mutineers.

WOLECH

That was Dediare. He and the French
control part of this sector. He is
the best the Germans got.

VERDETTE

That good?

WOLECH

(Sighs)

He is. Dediare has honor. He turns
a blind eye to the groups in these
woods. However, if you want a
fight, the French are game for it.

VERDETTE

Armed refugees?

WOLECH

We are not supported by the
Americans, British, or the Home
Army. We've never done anything
big.

VERDETTE

Like?

WOLECH

Blow up a bridge or kill somebody big. We do steal things and pick over the dead.

VERDETTE

I see.

WOLECH

If we did something to get noticed, they would drop us arms, medicine, food – and most of all, training. None of us are soldiers. We are just Polish Catholics – a group that would get put on a train ride like Jews.

VERDETTE

Aren't you afraid of retaliation?

WOLECH

They're going to kill us no matter what. Same with the Russians.

VERDETTE

Let me see what I can do.

WOLECH

(Nods)
Ok.

Verdette sees Anna eating a British chocolate ration.

VERDETTE

Are you ready for some fun?

ANNA

I am, I am...

VERDETTE

What do we French girls do when we see a handsome man?

ANNA

I don't know, I'm only in Aleph.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Aleph is Jewish First Grade.

VERDETTE

We skip.

ANNA

I got ya!

Verdette and Anna skip ahead. The Poles and Hungarians chuckle.

EXT. BYCHAWA, POLAND, JUNE 1942 - DAY

Verdette, Wolech, and Anna walk the streets of Bychawa.

Anna has learned a few Polish words but is told to stay quiet.

They watch as the GOVERNOR arrives at his home - no guards.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)

When your life depends on it, you learn Polish fast. It was the fastest I ever learned anything.

WOLECH

He's the biggest fish we've got. Popular. Feels no need to be protected.

VERDETTTE

In France, we call that mutton.

WOLECH

Okay.

WOLECH (CONT'D)

As you can see - overweight, diabetic. Unhealthy - just as you requested.

VERDETTTE

I need a nurse's uniform, insulin, chloroform - and a birthday cake.

WOLECH

I'm not sure it's his birthday.

VERDETTTE

Someone that big won't care.

Anna smiles at them.

WOLECH

I think she thinks we make a good couple.

VERDETTTE

She's seven. She still believes in Père Noël.

Anna grins at the mention.

I/E. GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, BYCHAWA - DUSK

Verdette and Wolech drive up in a German ambulance. A real nurse lies chloroformed in the back.

SCENE: Governor's House - Arrival

VERDETTTE

Next time, I pick the target. This uniform does nothing for me.

WOLECH

The French...
(shrug)

They park where the ambulance normally does. The guards don't notice.

In the kitchen - the cake is destroyed. Verdette glares at Wolech, who shrugs.

They enter the dining room. GOVERNOR RIEBENTHAL sits, eating cake.

RIEBENTHAL Ah! I forgot about the injection... well, we've got a minute. Cake? Where's Gretchen?

VERDETTTE

She's out, Herr Governor.

RIEBENTHAL

Good for her. Poor girl's been so stressed.
Want some cake?
The town thinks it's my birthday.
Aren't they sweet?

Verdette spots a photo of Riebenthal with Klaus. She freezes. He's in a cream-colored uniform. It is Klaus's lover. She tears up a bit thinking of Klaus.

Wolech chloroforms him. Verdette shrugs and injects the insulin.

Riebenthal dies.

INT. GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, LATER

BRAUN arrives with DOLT. They hold a warrant.

They find Riebenthal's body at the table.

Braun sees the rolled sleeve, the cake, the scent of chloroform.

BRAUN
This was murder.

He sees Klaus's picture on the mantel.

BRAUN (CONT'D)
The key to the case – and someone
has killed the main suspect.

DOLT
The Slasher has this far of a
reach... pure genius.

BRAUN
Yes. Evil knows no limits – believe
me.

Braun eyes everything in the room, increasingly upset.

INT. POLISH RESISTANCE CAMP, POLAND, JUNE 1942 – NIGHT

Verdette tucks Anna into bed. She climbs into her own makeshift bed.

ANNA
Where were you today?

VERDETTTE
I was in town.

ANNA
When are we going home – or will we
ever?

Verdette opens her blanket.

VERDETTTE
Come.

Anna climbs in.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)
What do we do when we are sad?

Anna giggles.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

We stare at our eyelids until we
feel better.

ANNA

You saw I didn't say Hanukkah the
other day?...it is sort of
Christmas.

Verdette smiles and kisses her head.

VERDETTTE

Good Catholic girl.

ANNA

I think they don't care. They
haven't tried giving me pork.

VERDETTTE

You've been eating pork for a week.

ANNA

Oh. Dirty goy!

EXT. POLISH RESISTANCE CAMP, POLAND - NIGHT

Wolech listens to the BBC. They all hope their name will be
read.

BBC ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

To our friends in Bychawa - fat
chance.

Wolech cheers. The camp erupts.

INT. GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, BYCHAWA - SAME TIME

Braun and Dolt listen to the same radio broadcast.

BRAUN

Bychawa. That confirms my
suspicion.

DOLT

Which one? You have so many...
(cheeky)
I do like to hear them.

BRAUN

That this was assassination.

DOLT
Oh. Not the Slasher one?

BRAUN
The Slasher is a sick genius who
will screw up.
These are amateurs – resistance
wannabes.

Dolt looks genuinely wounded.

DOLT
Don't you think the Slasher is
maybe... poetic?

BRAUN
We have a chance to make a name
here.
I could become a Reichsführer.

Dolt tears up a little.

DOLT
It was refreshing to chase a serial
killer.
A pure mind. No ideology – just
brilliance.

BRAUN
Tell me about it. Who else
mutilates faces just to leave a
message?

Dolt shrugs. Braun watches a passing figure – their DRIVER,
holding a teddy bear.

BRAUN (CONT'D)
Stay. Leave the children alone.

The driver silently turns and walks away.

BRAUN (CONT'D)
(to Dolt)
We really need to be less
accepting.

EXT. POLISH RESISTANCE CAMP – NIGHT

A low fire. Rain taps canvas. A circle of Polish partisans
and Hungarian mutineers murmur, huddled and disillusioned.

PARTISAN #1
Maybe the Brits got lost.

PARTISAN #2
Or shot. Or drunk.

WOLECH
(smirking)
Or maybe they're just cowards.

Beat.

VERDETTTE
We're the ones doing nothing.

ANNA
(softly)
They're not coming... are they?

JAN (O.S.)
I didn't get lost.

Gasps. Everyone jumps – guns drawn. Anna darts behind Verdetta.

JAN DABROWSKI steps into the firelight – soaked, gaunt, calm.

JAN (CONT'D)
I've been sitting here for two hours.

Stunned silence.

JAN (CONT'D)
Lesson one: always be on guard.

VERDETTTE
Okay... we're ready for lesson two.

JAN
We take it slow.
You can't handle a big number two.

He kneels beside the fire.

JAN (CONT'D)
I crawled here for most of the evening.
The Germans can too.

Wolech and Verdetta exchange a glance.

WOLECH
I guess help has arrived.

EXT. POLISH RESISTANCE CAMP - DAY

The camp is now bustling – four times the size. Jan surveys them like a drill sergeant fed up with a school play.

JAN

I look at you... and I understand why the Germans send you fat men with diabetes.

A few smiles die in throats.

JAN (CONT'D)

I'm Warrant Officer Jan Dabrowski of the Home Army, attached to the SOE. I haven't come to make you freedom fighters.

VERDETTE

Ok.

JAN

Freedom fighters? That sounds like a dance group with no women.

Dead silence. Then he smirks.

JAN (CONT'D)

We do have women.

The camp breaks into relieved laughter.

VERDETTE

(Shrugs)
Must be a Polish thing.

JAN

You'll be butchers. And between butchers and victory – only victims...poor helpless victims.

Cheers erupt.

Jan eyes Anna – intently. Verdette subtly shields her.

JAN (CONT'D)

Everyone will be a butcher. Everyone.

Anna points at herself.

JAN (CONT'D)
Everyone!

EXT. BYCHAWA, POLAND - SAME TIME

Braun and Dolt stand over a mutilated corpse in the woods.
Braun lights a cigarette, eyes locked on the mess.

DOLT
A patrol found him.

BRAUN
Looks like Berlin.

DOLT
And Lyon.

BRAUN
Could it be this Verdette woman?

DOLT
Her ID photo says she's got issues.

BRAUN
That face... the one with the
tongue...
The photos in her manor were-
(smiling) -exquisite.

DOLT
Don't get fixated.

BRAUN
It's a mind game.
An attractive woman, clearly
brilliant - disfiguring beautiful
men.
Possible, but unlikely.

That figure, that face... an angel.

DOLT
I wouldn't say she's beautiful per
se.

BRAUN
Are you joking? If the Greek Gods
cursed her and made her Medusa, she
would be one hot snake bitch!

DOLT
Okay. I get your point.

BRAUN
I'll call in some friends.
We're sweeping everything.

EXT. POLISH RESISTANCE CAMP - POLAND - AUGUST 1942 - DAY

The camp is transformed - lean, camouflaged, and armed with British kit.

JAN
Verdette. Come kill me.

Verdette raises her Sten.

JAN (CONT'D)
Bare hands, please.
(beat)
But points for paying attention.

She charges. Jan tosses her off like laundry. Wolech charges next - nearly bests him. A woman kicks Jan in the groin - he grunts, still flips her. A man with an axe charges - Jan disarms him, then beats him with the handle. Then Anna rushes Jan, clawing for his eyes. He gently puts her down. Only Anna keeps fighting.

JAN (CONT'D)
Lesson two: just shoot them.

VERDETTTE
I tried that...

JAN
Don't jump ahead, smarty-pants.

Anna keeps kicking. Jan adjusts her foot mid-strike.

JAN (CONT'D)
Here. Like this.

ANNA
Thank you.

EXT. BYCHAWA, POLAND - SEPTEMBER 1942 - DAY

SS DEATH SQUAD TEN, COLOGNE RESERVE disembarks - disheveled, sweaty, unimpressive.

BRAUN
Berlin says the slasher killings
stopped elsewhere.
It's just us now.

DOLT
Small blessings.

BRAUN
I'm worried about these troops.
Warsaw got the real ones, they are
not very terrifying if you get my
drift.

They watch the sorry bunch fumble off the train.

SS RESERVE MAN #1
I didn't think I'd actually have to
fight.

SS RESERVE MAN #2
I just wanted the uniform.

DOLT
Silence! The Brigadeführer will
deliver his usual pep talk.

BRAUN
We need a new name.
"SS Death Squad Ten, Cologne
Reserve" won't fit on a poster.

EXT. POLISH RESISTANCE CAMP - SAME TIME

A BYCHAWA agent reports to Jan. Jan nods and rallies the
group. Everyone is bruised but proud. Even Anna sports a
black eye.

JAN
Anna - what do you see?

ANNA
Butchers!

Cheers.

JAN
And what do butchers do to Germans?

ANNA
We make them good Germans!

JAN
And German horses?

ANNA
Field borscht. Kosher or not!

JAN
And German cars?

ANNA
We take them. They're great!

Cheers erupt.

WOLECH
The hour of battle is at hand.
Everything uninited into Poland –
dies.

ALL
Long live Poland!

WOLECH
We are butchers. They are victims.

ALL
BUTCHERS!

WOLECH
Now – a loud Polish BUWHAHAHA!

ALL
BUWHAHAHAHA!

Verdette nods, grinning through bruises.

VERDETTTE
We are going to shoot them, right?

WOLECH
Today – yes.

EXT. SS RESERVE AMBUSH SITE – DAY

Braun and Dolt observe from a staff car. Reservists swat mosquitos and sweat. Anna crouches in foliage. A mosquito lands on her nose. They stare at each other. The mosquito flies off. Anna crawls back to Jan and Wolech.

ANNA
(whispering)
The victims have entered the
butcher shop... buwahaha.

She salutes. Jan returns it. A female Butcher lights a flaming arrow – looses it. In the distance, Braun, Dolt, and their DRIVER who has a Teddy Bear watch it arc over.

BRAUN

We either knocked them into the
Middle Ages – or we're about to get
Teutoburg'd.

Gunfire. Screams. Two reservists flee – male Butchers hack
them down with axes, singing and laughing. Verdette reloads a
Bren for Wolech.

VERDETTTE

He said we can shoot them.

The Butchers laugh.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

Just don't eat them.

Wolech fires into pinned troops. An SS flamethrower team
approaches – Verdette mows them down. One explodes. Anna pops
up.

ANNA

LET THEM BURN!

Verdette grabs her mid-sprint.

VERDETTTE

Stay here. Let the adults fight,
please.

She takes Anna back to her hole and makes her stay.

Anna sulks and kicks. Verdette sighs.

VERDETTTE (CONT'D)

Children.

Jan finishes the last resistance. Some SS surrender, hands
up.

JAN

Let them.
This is where the real fun begins.

ALL

BUWHAAAAHAHA!

EXT. BATTLEFIELD – MOMENTS LATER

Braun and Dolt are surrounded. Braun reaches for a weapon –
Dolt stops him. Verdette, Jan, and Wolech approach.

BRAUN

Well, well. Verdetta LeGrand. We finally meet.

JAN

You know him?

VERDETTTE

Oui. He's hunted me since Lyon.

BRAUN

So you admit you're the Slasher?

VERDETTTE

Who the hell is that?

BRAUN

(relieved, confused)
Wait... Dolt?

DOLT

I knew after my disfigurement we could never be together... no other man would—

BRAUN

You? YOU?!

DOLT

I kept trying to imply...

BRAUN

I'm not gay.

JAN

Sure you are.

DOLT

Shut up, you Polish... monster!

JAN

That hurts — especially from an ugly poof.

VERDETTTE

Jan. Don't comment on a man's appearance. It's rude.

JAN

I'm Polish. We don't give a fuck.

DOLT

Kiss me, Braun! Kiss me!

BRAUN

One of you shoot me – before he
does.

Verdette obliges. Braun drops. She turns the gun on Dolt.
Doesn't fire. Dolt closes his eyes and weeps. Opens them –
Verdette's face inches away.

VERDETTTE

He wanted me. Buwahaha.
Now live with it.

Dolt sobs.

WOLECH

If this battle is remembered, it'll
be... open to interpretation.
A whole lot of I don't want to
know.

The Butchers nod. Anna peeks out. Verdette turns to Dolt.

VERDETTTE

We're letting you live.
Because you already died.

Dolt bawls. Nearby, surviving SS Reservists grovel.

SS MAN #1

We're just in the Reserve! Weekend
warriors!

JAN

You missed the weekend – and the
training.
Like... all of it.

Laughter. Anna laughs too – points, grabs her nose. The SS
men cry with Dolt.

JAN (CONT'D)

Private Anna – all the candy is
yours...take one of the men, he
will help you.

Anna eyes the scorched flamethrower corpses... and nods.

ANNA

Ok.

EXT. BYCHAWA, POLAND - DUSK

Dolt and the surviving reservists trudge into town in underwear. The locals stare. Some gendarmes raise weapons.

DOLT

Don't. There's a pack of psychos in those woods.
Let them have it.

GENDARME

What should we do?

DOLT

Give them the forest.
Just... let me mourn Braun. I was so close.

EXT. POLISH RESISTANCE CAMP - NIGHT

Anna sleeps on Jan's lap. Bloody candy wrappers everywhere.

JAN

I've got two boys, two girls.
Boys beat you. Girls take care of you.

VERDETTE

I did that.
Then Dad married me off.

JAN

The French girl in the paper?

VERDETTE

Anyway... where's your family?

JAN

Somewhere in Poland.
I hope.

A RADIO OPERATOR hands Jan a note.

He reads it. Looks at Verdette.

EXT. RESISTANCE LANDING STRIP - DUSK

A C-47 touches down on a rough dirt strip. Supplies are shoved out. Verdette and Anna wait.

Anna spots Jan - and bolts.

JAN

Private Anna Kravitz of the Bychawa
Butchers – your duty is done. Live
a happy life.

She salutes, misty-eyed.

ANNA

I love you, sir!

JAN

No running into firefights.
Candy comes after the kill. It's a
Polish tradition.

ANNA

What's it called?

JAN

War.

She giggles. Jan winks.

WOLECH

We couldn't have done it without
you.

VERDETTE

You would've.
You just needed someone to bully
you into it.

She kisses Wolech on both cheeks. Blows Jan a kiss.

The plane takes off, roaring overhead.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

I think of those Poles when life
goes well.
They didn't see the end of the war.
But the Bychawa Butchers were the
last to fall.

EXT. RESISTANCE LANDING STRIP – SEPTEMBER 1944 – NIGHT

The same forest – now ablaze. JAN fights with feral resolve,
surrounded by NKVD. Wolech falls. Jan empties his Bren. He
charges, bare-handed. Takes down an NKVD officer – then is
riddled with bullets.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 Stalin and Churchill agreed:
 Russia would control Poland. The
 NKVD eliminated the resistance.

Cut to a warm, quiet room. Verdetto watches children play.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 I found Jan's family.
 They live with me now. His wife
 works for me - refuses charity.
 His children want for nothing.

INT. FREE FRENCH HQ - ALGIERS - DAY

SUPER: ALGIERS, JUNE 1944

Maps. Radios. Cigarette smoke.

MAJOR VERDETTTE LEGRAND, in full Free French uniform, salutes a weary COMMANDER - late 50s, Corsican, sharp-eyed despite exhaustion.

COMMANDER
 The landings in southern France -
 they're close. We need someone
 ahead of the wire. The cells are
 splintered. The SS cleared the
 region too thoroughly. I need
 unity. Aggression. Clarity.

Verdetto nods - firm, eyes flinty.

VERDETTTE
 When do I leave?

A MAN enters behind her. She half-turns - stiffens.

We don't see his face. Not yet.

She locks eyes with the newcomer. Says nothing.

All stand. It is de Gaulle, he takes off his kepi and looks at Verdetto with sadness.

EXT. MILITARY CEMETERY - ALGIERS - DUSK

A bugle echoes over rows of white crosses.

French officers stand in solemn formation.

VERDETTE, still in uniform. She stares at the coffin – her husband's.

GENERAL DE GAULLE stands nearby. Tall. Silent. Somber.

He steps forward. Speaks softly, with weight.

DE GAULLE
You can grieve, Major LeGrand.

Tears threaten, but Verdette doesn't break.

VERDETTE
I'm done with that.
I want to go home. And finish this.

De Gaulle studies her – a flicker of emotion behind the granite.

DE GAULLE
(softly)
Like a LeGrand.

She salutes. De Gaulle returns it.

The camera lingers on her face – composed, broken beneath, unrelenting.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. LEGRAND ESTATE – SOUTHERN FRANCE – LATE AFTERNOON

The sun cuts through the mist as VERDETTE, CLAUDE, and RICHARD climb out of a dusty military vehicle.

They wear Free French uniforms, armbands visible, M1 carbines slung.

They stop at the edge of the overgrown drive – staring at the LeGrand mansion in the distance.

Still standing. Silent.

CLAUDE
Impressive.

VERDETTE
(quietly)
Yes. And now earned.

Claude looks at her, then at Richard – who nods. They advance, cautious.

The front gate creaks open. Ivy coils through the ironwork.

At the main door, they stop.

Two seals stare back:

A cracked Nazi eagle – Braun's seal.

A frayed tricolor ribbon – marked F.F.I. in smudged ink.

RICHARD

So Braun sealed it. And our people
sealed it.

CLAUDE

Verdette, you live a charmed life.

VERDETTTE

(running her fingers along
the French ribbon)
I'm starting to see that.

INT. LEGRAND ESTATE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

They step inside.

Dust motes swirl in amber light. The air is thick – not
dangerous. Just... untouched.

No signs of looting. No signs of life. Everything frozen in
time.

CLAUDE

Mon Dieu...

RICHARD

They didn't burn it.

Verdette moves past shrouded furniture.

She stops at a table where a tea set sits under a glass
cloche. She brushes the dust away.

VERDETTTE

Let's open the windows.

INT. LEGRAND ESTATE - HENRI'S DEN - MOMENTS LATER

Verdette opens the door to her late husband's study.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 In all our years of marriage,
 living here...
 I never entered this room.

She steps in. Takes it in.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 He stayed here into the late
 morning hours sometimes.
 I thought he was reading. But as
 you can see... only reference
 books.

She smiles gently – eyes drifting to boxes labeled with
 military unit names.

She opens one. Then another.

Inside: rows of hand-painted toy soldiers – each figure
 different.

She lifts a box. Sits. Opens a leather-bound journal.

HENRI (V.O.)
 They gave me 10,000. I lost them.
 20,000. I lost them. 100,000 – and
 they called me a hero. I am no
 hero. I am a living mistake.

She breaks. Quiet sobs.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 Henri made one for every man he
 lost in the war.
 A hundred thousand. For penance.
 Men suffer too. We often forget.
 He died absolved.
 Bless him.

VERDETTTE
 (Tearfully)
 OH HENRI!

INT. SANTÉ PRISON – PARIS – DAWN

A gray wash of early light bleeds through the window.

DOLT stands at the guillotine – dressed in Verdette's red
 gown, lipstick thick on his trembling lips. Execution day.

CLAUDE, RICHARD, VERDETTTE, and the WARDEN look on in stunned
 disbelief.

WARDEN

I warned you.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Leech brought him to justice from
the grave.
With my testimony, he was sentenced
to death.

DOLT

May I have a last word?

They all shrug.

DOLT (CONT'D)

Viscountess Verdette LeGrand –
brilliant. Beautiful.
All the men wanted you. I could've
been better than you. I could've
had Braun. You didn't even leave me
Klaus...

VERDETTE

Pull the cord.

WARDEN

We must wait till sunrise. It is
the law.

VERDETTE

Pull the cord, for the love of–

A rooster crows outside.

DOLT

WAIT–

THWACK.

His head rolls cleanly. Lipstick smears the head brace of the
guillotine.

RICHARD

That was unexpected.

CLAUDE

(nods)
Very.

VERDETTE

(sighs)
Story of my life.

INT. PALAIS DE L'ÉLYSÉE - DAY

ANNA enters the grand hall, eyes wide.

VERDETTE smiles, arms crossed.

ANNA

It is a very nice lavatory.

VERDETTE

You'd hope so.
(show me your)
Hands.

Anna huffs, shows her palms.

VERDETTE (V.O.)

Michel taught me love.
Klaus taught me style – and why you
do not panic. Jan taught me
survival means becoming a butcher.
Dolt taught me a man should never
wear lipstick to his execution. It
freaks everyone out.

ASSISTANT

The President will see you now.

INT. DE GAULLE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

GENERAL DE GAULLE rises as VERDETTE and ANNA enter. He stands tall but warm, his reserve softened for them.

DE GAULLE

Verdette – you look beautiful.

He kneels slightly to shake Anna's hand, firm but gentle.

DE GAULLE (CONT'D)

I have something for you both.

He hands Verdette a small medal – etched "135."

DE GAULLE (CONT'D)

Tack it yourself... I will not.

Verdette smiles at him, De Gaulle blushes.

He turns and strikes her name from a weathered list.

VERDETTE (V.O.)
 He never forgot who the real
 Resistance was.
 We never forgot he was the
 Resistance. That's why we loved
 him.

De Gaulle turns to Anna now.

DE GAULLE
 Private Anna Kravitz – of the
 Polish Home Army.

He pins a red-and-white ribbon to her chest.

DE GAULLE (CONT'D)
 "Let them burn"?
 Dear Lord.

VERDETTE
 The heat of the moment.

De Gaulle raises an eyebrow, dry.

ANNA
 BUWHAAAAHA!... our battle cry.

A pause. De Gaulle exhales through his nose – the closest he
 comes to a laugh.

DE GAULLE
 (original)
 Indeed.

He looks down at Anna, softens.

DE GAULLE (CONT'D)
 We've located your parents.
 Interned in Cyprus. Safe.

VERDETTE gasps. Anna throws her arms around him – then
 embraces Verdette.

DE GAULLE (CONT'D)
 You and your family are welcome to
 stay in France –
 or move to Palestine. You are
 French. Never forget that.

Anna nods, overcome.

De Gaulle turns back to Verdette.

DE GAULLE (CONT'D)
 Verdette...
 Will you serve France?

VERDETTTE
 France does not need to ask – only
 command.

He hands her a sealed envelope.

DE GAULLE
 Take a few days.
 It's not an easy task.
 (then, quieter)

DE GAULLE (CONT'D)
 I've also sent a letter –
 to the prison. Regarding that
 Dediare man... for you.

Verdette straightens – something flickers in her.

Anna elbows her.

Verdette nods.

EXT. PALAIS DE L'ÉLYSÉE – MOMENTS LATER

VERDETTTE and ANNA step out into the Parisian light. A
 tattered French flag flutters above – its edges scorched but
 intact.

They pause at the top of the steps.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 Now you know my story.
 If it saddened you – you were
 warned. Truth has no rose tint.
 Only its own color.

ANNA
 Do we get to see the handsome man
 again?

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
 The Germans gave me a number.
 France gave me another. I am no
 victim. I am victorious.

Verdette winks. Anna grins.

They descend the steps – skipping like they did in the fields
 of Bychawa.

VERDETTTE (V.O.)
Vive la France.

FADE OUT.

THE END