

1 (CONTINUED)

REPORTER (O.S.)
... Are you getting this?

CAMERA MAN (O.S.)
Yeah.

The camera PULLS BACK to encompass the reporter: who is again addressing the camera.

REPORTER
Now in the eleventh month of fighting, The United Eastern Nations continue to roll over the Allied forces. Military Command cites this years scorching dry season as a contributing factor in recent defeats. Even with the employment of the expanded draft, the U.N. complement of 15 million troops will undoubtedly fall short.

In the distance a missile explodes, lighting the sky. The reporter turns silhouetted against the explosion - pauses - and turns back.

REPORTER
Unless these additional forces are successful in the upcoming counter-attack, I fear the President may call for FIRMER MEASURES.

A second, closer, missile explodes. The reporter flinches at the sound. He begins to lower the microphone, but then stoically restores it.

REPORTER
Until that time, all we can do is wait and watch, and pray that our fighting men can avert the GROWING STORM.

A third, closer, missile explodes.

WHITE OUT then FADE TO BLACK

2 EXT/INT. CITY STREET IN RUINS - DUSK

Yet another missile flairs, illuminating a boy named **JOHN**. He is nervously waiting outside of a woman's bathroom, in the hall of a large building. He is sixteen, big for his age, and carrying a sack of supplies.

The hall is dark except for the **OUTSIDE** light of burning buildings, visible through an entranceway and windows, at the end of the hall. Dust falls from the ceiling and the building shakes from the explosion outside.

JOHN

Jesus, that's it. (Pounding on the restroom door.) Hurry up come on!

John continues pounding on the door until his sister, **LILY**, appears from within the darkened bathroom. She is six, carrying a flashlight and a stuffed lamb in one arm, while the other fastens her jeans. She and John head down the hall for the "EXIT".

LILY

I couldn't go. It was too dark.

JOHN

We shouldn't have come in here anyway.

LILY

But I can't **GO** outside.

JOHN

Come on, we can't be inside with the missiles dropping everywhere. You're just going to have to wait.

CONTINUED:

2 (CONTINUED)

They enter the street while burning buildings silhouette people running in all directions. Flames of red and orange create a HELL-LIKE image.

LILY

Where are we going?

JOHN

I don't know, but we better keep moving. I think we can get clear by morning. Maybe we'll find some place nice, I'll bet you. (Skeptically to himself) Yeah, I'll bet.

They pass by a building racked in fire and it begins to shake and rumble. As they begin to run, Lily stumbles; falling to the ground she drops her lamb.

JOHN

Lily, come on!

LILY

I can't. (Crying)

John runs back and sweeps her up in his arms.

LILY

LAMBIE!

Stopping long enough to grab the lamb, he runs for safety with Lily and the lamb in his arms. The building collapses on the spot as they disappear into the darkness - ZOOM IN on flames.

CUT TO:

3 EXT./INT. RED ARMY COMMAND TANK - MORNING

Overhead, the sky is partially cloudy but the sun is currently shining.

TANK COMMANDER (O.S.)
Fire! Fire!

EXT. - A tank, marked by Command insignia, fires several canon shells while moving fast over an open meadow. - CUT TO INT. -The crew and the Commander busily check their sensors.

TANK COMMANDER
Talk to me Abe, what's out there?

GUNNER
I've got one blip coming in at... hold it... 4 .. 5... Bogies, Bogies ! 180 degrees reverse field. Get out of here, get out of here ! !

NAVIGATOR
(looking to his comrades)
Oh man, we're in it now. It's REVELATIONS, like the thunder of distant hoof beats.

COMMANDER
Shut that crap up! If you take your eyes off of those controls again, so help me... Abe!

GUNNER
Closing in fast sir. They'll have a lock any second.

COMMANDER
Time to earn our pay boys. Wait for it...Fire, Fire! !

The INT. of the tank explodes.

CUT TO:

4 EXT. DESERT/MEADOW - BATTLE FIELD: MORNING

A lone soldier of the Red Army defends the outer ruins of a bunker, the structure towers over him like a shrine. He is wearing a religious medallion with his dog tags and firing heavily to accompany his curses of defiance.

The small enemy compliment is ragged and unarmed, save for a few rounds and bayonets. The soldier nearly cuts them down until his weapon jams, leaving one alive. The soldier clears his weapon and shoots the enemy, point-blank, as a bayonet is thrust into his stomach. Dropping his weapon, the soldier stumbles back against the building and tries to keep his stomach intact.

Suddenly a burning tank, with Command insignia, crashes into soldier and shrine, becoming beached upon it. - CU - the mangled arm of the soldier and the medallion protrude from under the tank. A patch of fire falls, landing in blood and spreads to encompass the soldier and medallion.

DISSOLVE TO:

4b EXT. DESERTED BATTLEFIELD - DUSK

An army **Chaplain** staggers across the same, now desolate battlefield. The sun dips behind a cloud and the sky is filled with smoke and crossed trails of missiles and jets.

As he searches for survivors, the Chaplain comes upon the burned-out tank and stops to look about. Images of death and destruction surround him. Behind him, the tank seems to erupt. Unable to take cover, the Chaplain is thrown by the explosion and the shrine crumbles down.

CONTINUED:

4b (CONTINUED)

Dazed, he slowly sits up and looks toward the wreckage before him.
Something is moving within it.

4c **POV. OF CHAPLAIN**

A figure, HERCULEAN in stature RISES within the inferno. He is nearly eight feet tall and garbed in ancient body armor. A helmet covers half of face; a heavy red beard obscures the rest. At his side hangs sheathed a huge sword. His features are hidden in darkness; save for a slash of RED in his tunic, a medallion hangs from his neck. Stepping from the fire, he sees the Chaplain.

CHAPLAIN

(Frantically moving backward) Oh, Christ. Get away from me!

4d **MED. SHOT - CHAPLAIN AND WARRIOR**

Getting to his feet, the Chaplain runs terrified, but the warrior is instantly upon him. With a single hand, the warrior clutches the Chaplain by the face and raises him into the air. Above the sun again comes from behind the clouds.

The Chaplain's face burns under the still searing flesh of the warrior. The Chaplain struggles, hitting and kicking the warrior, seemingly to no effect. The warrior draws his sword then lifts it to strike.

The warrior's eyes follow the path of the sword. The sword stops short of the Chaplain as a sudden glint of light arrests the warrior's attention.

4e MED. SHOT - CHAPLAIN AND WARRIOR

Sunlight is reflecting off of the crosses the Chaplain wears on his lapels. A bridled rage fills the warrior. Reluctantly, the warrior lowers his sword and forcefully hurls the Chaplain aside. Burned and near shock, the Chaplain holds himself and attempts to speak.

CHAPLAIN
(Trembling) What... are you?

The warrior stands in silence gazing down at the Chaplain.

CHAPLAIN
What do you want?!

The warrior remains silent as he sheaths his sword. The Chaplain begins to sob and the warrior turns toward distant cannon fire. Overhead the sun again dips behind the growing storm clouds and the warrior is gone.

DISSOLVE TO:

5 EXT. FORTIFIED HILLSIDE TRENCH - AFTERNOON

An army **sergeant and three troops**, of an unspecified **BLUE** army, adjust their equipment for an upcoming battle. A storm front is moving in from ahead of them. The shifting clouds create a patchwork of lighting, the soldiers scramble about unaware of the patterns.

SERGEANT
Get that gear secured Jenkins. There's a storm on the way.

SOLDIER 1
Got it Serg.

CONTINUED:

BITTER GARDEN

**An Original Screenplay - Outtake
For an Animated Short Film**

By

Douglas R. Martin

March 1991 - 10/2000 Rewrite