

THE BARON

Original Story and Screenplay

by

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No figure in Soviet folklore is more condemned than that of Baron Roman Nikolai Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg.

The Soviets so feared "The Baron" that by the start of the reign of Stalin, they sent an army of hundreds of thousands to destroy him.

So it is, few real military and political figures in the 20th Century are more enigmatic than Baron Roman Nikolai Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg.

Borne into an ancient and wealthy Austrian-Estonian aristocratic family. Awarded for his heroic efforts at the age of 18 in the Russo-Japanese War 1904-05, the Baron rejected his heritage, joining the ranks of the famous Cossacks and served on the front lines with the 34th Regiment in WWI -- receiving more awards for his bravery and leadership.

After the Bolshevik-led October Revolution of 1917, he became a key commander of the White Russian resistance to the communists and their Red Army.

By 1920, the Baron was commissioned to form the Asiatic Cavalry Division of more than 6,000 -- arguably the most diverse military division ever seen. Thousands of Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Jewish and Hindu soldiers from more than 30 diverse tribes and cultures.

Today, thanks to the legacy of Soviet authors and articles, the Baron is remembered as an insane psychopath, a modern-version of Vlad the Impaler (Dracula) and a wicked soul, to be eternally condemned as the "Bloody Baron".

Yet what of the real story?

TITLE CARD: "Rally your sons to our cause, To defend our homes against the Bloody Baron. Never was (there) a more cruel and dangerous tyrant, Than mad Baron Ungern-Sternberg" (Old Soviet Red Army Song)

EXT. SOLITARY TRAIN, TRANS-SIBERIAN, EAST SIBERIA - DAY

A solitary steam train ARCS ACROSS a valley.

Against the backdrop of snow capped mountains towering above sweeping fields of grasslands.

As we move closer, we can see the train in more detail--

- a mix of wooden freight and passenger carriages of different shapes and classes;
- interspersed with machine gun nests manned by soldiers arranged on flat bed trays, protected by sand bags and steel plates.

Two oversized Imperial Russian flags flutter on either side of the locomotive.

We MOVE AROUND and see an Imperial Russian Crest pinned to the front of the main boiler.

POV: Moving closer we begin to see the horizon as the driver of the locomotive sees it...

...In the distance is the mirage of an approaching city.

INT. 2ND CLASS CABIN, TRANS-SIBERIAN, EAST SIBERIA - DAY

Inside the 2nd Class carriage, an assortment of men, women of different ages and ethnicity -- variously resolving the monotony of the travel--

- some speaking and playing cards,
- some reading and knitting,
- others sleeping.

One occupant is a young handsome Imperial Russian officer in the colors and uniform of the Amur Cossacks (THE BARON) (30's).

He is sitting alone, ignoring the other passengers -- staring out at the passing landscape.

He briefly closes his eyes...

POV. VIOLENT BATTLE

This is NOT a peaceful memory, but the view of a desperate, muddy FIGHT TO THE DEATH between Russian and Japanese soldiers.

The Baron SHOVES a Japanese soldier off him into the mud of a trench...But before he can fire, another lurches at him SCREAMING -- with his rifle and bayonet .

He SWINGS around, so that the MOMENTUM of the attacker causes him to fall on top of the other Japanese soldier.

The Baron FIRES and FIRES again, before he turns to see other soldiers around him fighting for their lives...

EXT. VIOLENT BATTLE

In the distance below, battleships are mimicking the soldiers in firing on one another at close range.

As flames and explosions RIP around the men fighting in the trenches on the hill.

INT. 2ND CLASS CABIN, TRANS-SIBERIAN, EAST SIBERIA - DAY

The Baron opens his eyes as the train starts to slow down.

The outskirts of the city pass by the window:

- peasants with horses and carts moving along a dirt road next to the rail line;
- small factories and buildings;
- half a dozen Cossacks on their horses with their rifles, eyeballing the slowing train as it trundles past.

EXT. BLAGOVESHCHENSK, AMUR REGION, EAST SIBERIA - DAY

The train come to a stop at a quaint station, guarded by more Cossacks and next to a stationary train pointing in the opposite direction.

It is festooned with Buddhist flags and symbols.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Blagoveshchensk Station, Amur Region, East Siberia 1912"

EXT. RUSSIAN TRAIN, BLAGOVESHCHENSK STATION - DAY

As soon as the train stops, a flurry of activity erupts.

Porters rush towards the doors and soldiers step forward into position on the platform, cordoning off the front of the train from the people traveling at the back.

The young Baron in his Cossack uniform steps out of his carriage and onto the platform, carrying his rifle and sack.

He starts walking in the direction of the back of the train where he sees porters have started to off load horses.

EXT. OPPOSITE PLATFORM, BLAGOVESHCHENSK STATION - DAY

The Baron turns and looks at the station platform opposite:

-- An elderly impeccably dressed man with distinct Mongolian features (NAMNANSUREN) is standing, watching the activity.

-- a large burly looking Cossack Officer (SEMYONOV) with two other Cossack soldiers (REZUKHIN and VESELOVSKII) are watching on next to him.

Rezukhin spots the Baron briefly looking at them.

Rezukhin points out Baron Ungern-Sternberg to Semyonov and Veselovskii.

At that moment, The Baron sees his horse being unloaded by a porter.

The horse shifts on the plank and the porter slaps the horse hard.

THE BARON
(shouting)
Hey! Don't do that!

The horse rears and the portal falls over, losing control.

The Baron rushes forward and grabs the reins -- reaching out to the horse...

THE BARON (cont'd)
(to horse)
BALIUS! Settle!

The Baron strokes the horse and slowly settles down.

The Baron steadies his horse down a ramp at the end of the Platform.

The Baron hears loud laughter and looks back over at the end of the other platform.

The watching Cossack soldiers are laughing heartily.

SEMYONOV
(Shouting)
You are too late!

THE BARON
(Shouting)
What did you say?

EXT. EDGE OF STATION, BLAGOVESHCHENSK STATION - DAY

He moves with his horse across the tracks to the edge of the platform opposite where Semyonov and the Cossack soldiers are standing.

The elderly Mongolian man (Namnansuren) is also watching him.

At that moment, The Baron is transfixed as a stunningly beautiful young woman in traditional Mongolian dress (ERDENE) approaches Namnansuren.

Behind her, she is accompanied by a thin and tall officious looking man (DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR) and two other guards.

For a brief moment, she locks eyes with the Baron and gives him the briefest smile.

SEMYONOV
(To Baron)
I said you're Late. The Parade was last month.

Chuckles and laughter from the Cossacks.

The Baron ignores them as he remains frozen and transfixed at the sight of Erdene who has now moved next to Namnansuren.

THE BARON
(Staring at Erdene)
I am Baron Roman Nikolai Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg.

NAMNANSUREN
(To the Baron)
And I am Namnansuren Khan.
(MORE)

NAMNANSUREN (cont'd)

(pause)

Ruler of Sain Noyon and Prime
Minister of Outer Mongolia.

The Baron breaks his stare of Erdene and turns and bows to Namnansuren as three more Mongolian guards accompanying another official looking Mongolian man in a suit (MIJIDDORJIYN HANDDORJ), march over to Namnansuren.

A seeming eternity of awkwardness passes.

No-one speaks and the Baron continues his bow of respect.

He lifts his head to see Erdene is still staring at him smiling.

Namnansuren and the others have moved off.

Erdene looks at the Baron a moment longer before Damdini Sukhbaatar taps her on the shoulder.

She ignores Damdini Sukhbaatar for a second longer, before she bows to the Baron and turns away.

The Baron who bows deeply in return, before rising. She is already gone.

Erdene are now way down the platform. Yet the angry figure of Damdini Sukhbaatar has not moved.

He locks eyes with the Baron -- A snarling, contemptuous stare, before swiveling on his heels to catch up after the rest of the Mongolian party.

Semyonov steps up to the Baron.

SEMYONOV

(To the Baron)

You certainly made a lasting
impression by staring at his
daughter.

More laughter from the two other Cossacks as Semyonov steps down from the platform to the Baron.

Semyonov extends his hand to the Baron.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

Grigory Mikhaylovich Semyonov.

The Baron shakes his hand as he remains transfixed looking down the platform.

THE BARON

She is the most beautiful creature
I have ever seen.

(beat)

What is her name?

Semyonov chuckles and slaps the back of the Baron still holding the reigns of his horse.

SEMYONOV

And that is the closest you will
ever get to see her my friend. Her
name is Erdene and her train leaves
within the hour to Irkutsk where we
will leave them.

Semyonov looks down at his watch and smiles at the Baron.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

I still have time. Come, let me
introduce you to the Colonel.

Semyonov signals to Veselovskii to come down off the platform to where Semyonov and the Baron are standing.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

Stepan Borisovich will take good
care of your horse for you.

THE BARON

(to Veselovskii)

His name is Balius.

Veselovskii nods and the Baron hands him the reigns.

EXT. COSSACK HEADQUARTERS, BLAGOVESHCHENSK - DAY

Semyonov and the Baron salute the guards out the front of the Cossack headquarters before stepping inside.

INT. COLONEL'S OFFICE

Inside the office, a Colonel (YAHIV KUKHARENKO) is busily signing page after page of a pile of papers.

A knock at the door interrupts him.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO

Enter.

Semyonov and the Baron march into the office and salute the Colonel.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)
 (To Semyonov)
 Captain, why aren't you on a train
 with the Mongolians?

Semyonov looks at the Baron and back to the Colonel.

SEMYONOV
 Colonel. My new Lieutenant has
 arrived, so I -

COLONEL KUKHARENKO
 (To Semyonov)
 Damn it Semyonov. I am baby sitting
 the Prime Minister of Outer
 Mongolia and his delegation and the
 Chinese and their delegation and
 until they both leave safely
 without killing one another, I have
 General Suvorov the Commander In
 Chief for the District on my neck.
 And now you go and do this to me -

THE BARON
 (To Colonel Kukharenko)
 Lieutenant Ungern-Sternberg
 reporting.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO
 (To the Baron)
 Yes, I know who you are Baron. I
 know all about your exploits during
 the war with the Japanese and
 Americans. But that doesn't change
 the fact that Semyonov disobeyed a
 direct -

THE BARON
 (To Colonel Kukharenko)
 Begging your pardon Colonel but it
 was my idea. You see I request to
 accompany the Captain on his
 assignment sir.

Semyonov looks at the Baron and back to the Colonel.

The Colonel bows his head into his hands.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO
 Doesn't anyone follow orders around
 here? I mean, sure why not take a
 vote?

SEMYONOV
 (To Colonel Kukharenko)
 It will give me time get him up to
 speed.

The Colonel puts his hands over his head, looking down.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO
 Very well. Go GO! And if you miss
 that train, then I will have BOTH
 OF YOU arrested and court
 marshaled.

Semyonov and the Baron salute and turn and exit the office.

EXT. BLAGOVESHCHENSK STREET - DAY

Semyonov and the Baron are walking back along the street
 towards the Train Station.

THE BARON
 Why did you do that? He could have
 had you arrested and shot?

SEMYONOV
 Don't worry about him. He is from
 the academy. All Bark. Not like a
 real soldier's soldier. Besides, I
 made a bet with the other men you
 will fail to speak to the princess.

THE BARON
 Oh, I will get to speak with her.

At that moment they witness the train pull slowly past in
 front of them from the station, gaining speed.

SEMYONOV
 Not if we miss THAT train.

EXT. TRAIN LEAVING THE STATION - DAY

Both men sprint and close the final yards to the train as
 the carriages GROAN and SQUEAL in gaining motion.

Semyonov is the first to get alongside.

He manages to grab hold of the side rail of a carriage and
 swing himself onto the train.

The Baron is not as quick.

The train is gathering speed, as carriage after carriage starts to move past.

He tries again to grab hold of something --anything, but the carriages slip by.

SOLDIERS (O.S.)
(shouting)
Baron! Baron! Look back.

The Baron turns to see behind him, shouting from the last carriage.

-- a stock car with its side door open and several Cossacks heads yelling encouragement.

Rezukhin is leaning dangerously out of the carriage ready to grab the Baron.

Just as the last carriage is about to pass, Rezukhin GRABS the arm of the Baron and HAULS him up onto the train... causing the Baron to SMASH his leg against the metal side of the carriage.

INT. COSSACK GUARD CARRIAGE, TRAIN TO IRKUTSK

Semyonov and the Baron are now sitting in the Cossack carriage with Rezukhin, Veselovskii and other soldiers, DRINKING and LAUGHING.

SEMYONOV
(Pointing at the right leg
Baron)
I see you may have a memento of our
first adventure Baron?

The Baron looks down at a blood stains just below his knee and rolls up his trouser to reveal a nasty gash

-- a collective "ah" from the occupants of the carriage before more laughing.

REZUKHIN
Now you are a real Cossack!

SEMYONOV
I will get a needle and thread
comrade.

The Baron grins as he rolls his trouser leg back down.

THE BARON

No need.

(beat)

It is not that deep.

As if the sight of fresh blood represents the queue for some beauty pageant for scars, one by one the Cossacks in the carriage begin rolling up sleeves and trousers, to show-off memories of past exploits...

Rezukhin rolls up the arm of his left shirt revealing a long and deep scar.

More "ahs" from the soldiers in the carriage.

VESELOVSKII

(To Rezukhin)

Comrade, it is but a paper cut. Let me show you the memory of the last man who tried to kill me.

Veselovskii unfurls his shirt and shows a deep scar on his left side, to "ahs" from the soldiers.

As Semyonov and the other Cossacks are distracted watching the display, no one at first notices the Baron has unbuttoned his shirt to reveal the unmistakable scars of bullet wounds to his upper arm and side.

When they turn and see a much larger round of "ahs" erupt in the cabin.

SEMYONOV

The Battle of Port Arthur?

The Baron nods affirmatively as he begins to re-button his shirt.

Rezukhin slaps him on the back, followed by the other soldiers.

REZUKHIN

You are a real Cossack!

Collective laughing and clinking of bottles as the carriage door opens and an officer in an American Captain's uniform (ELMORE TAGGART) appears, holding more bottles of alcohol.

ELMORE TAGGART

I hope I am not interrupting?

Semyonov signals for him to come inside.

Behind him is a second officer in a French major's uniform (MAURICE JANIN), smoking a cigarette.

To the right of the French officer is a British officer in a major's uniform (EDMUND IRONSIDE).

EDMUND IRONSIDE
 (Looking at empty bottles
 around carriage)
 What a bloody mess!

As the foreign officers move forward, two Cossacks quickly clear the table of bottles and place a blanket over it, rearranging the chairs.

The Baron looks over at Semyonov who is warmly greeting each officer.

ELMORE TAGGART
 (To the Baron)
 You're new.
 (To Semyonov)
 Who is this?

THE BARON
 (To Taggart)
 I am Baron Roman Nikolai Maximilian
 von Ungern-Sternberg.

EDMUND IRONSIDE
 (To the Baron)
 Good for you.
 (To Semyonov)
 I am William Edmund Ironside and if
 we are not going to have a game of
 it, then I will have to go back and
 drown my sorrows in this excellent
 vodka.

General laughter as Semyonov waves for the men to sit down before grabbing the shoulder of the Baron and moving him in front of Edmund Ironside, who is settling into his chair.

SEMYONOV
 (To the Baron)
 This is Major Edmund Ironside.
 Don't worry. He is a British spy.

EDMUND IRONSIDE
 (To Semyonov)
 Manners Grigory -

More laughter as Semyonov introduces the French major Maurice Janin.

SEMYONOV

And this is French Major Maurice Janin. I don't think he is a spy as he is too busy stealing antiques.

Pointing to Elmore Taggart.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

And fellow is the American Captain Taggart and a rotten card shark with the American Trading Co. and -

ELMORE TAGGART

Hey, lay off the compliments Semyonov. Can we just play cards?

Semyonov sits down at the fourth chair as the Baron and the rest of the men watch on.

EXT. TRAIN TO IRKUTSK - NIGHT

The silhouette of the train, as it continues its journey, against the backdrop of a perfectly clear night sky.

INT. COSSACK GUARD CARRIAGE, TRAIN TO IRKUTSK

The carriage is now even more smoke filled as the card game continues.

The American Captain Elmore Taggart now has a huge pile of gold coins in front of him, with the British Major Edmund Ironside a modest pile and the French Major Maurice Janin and Semyonov with the smallest.

SEMYONOV

(Pushing his coins into the central pile)

All or nothing comrades!

Semyonov puts his cards down as the three other players give each other brief glances as Semyonov remains stone faced.

ELMORE TAGGART

Well I guess this is it my friend.

The American now pushes a pile the same as that of Semyonov into the central pool.

ELMORE TAGGART (cont'd)

Show me.

Semyonov reluctantly rolls over his cards to reveal he has nothing, followed by French Major Maurice Janin and British Major Edmund Ironside before Taggart reveals his winning cards to a collective sigh.

EDMUND IRONSIDE
What fiendish craft is this you
Americans have?

Semyonov gets up from the table slowly and moves over to the Baron who is reading a book.

ELMORE TAGGART
(To the Baron)
Baron, we have a spare chair.

The Baron looks up at the three officers sitting at the table like vultures waiting for their next prey as Semyonov snatches the book from him.

The Baron glares at him as Semyonov skims the book.

MAURICE JANIN
(To Semyonov)
What is he reading?

SEMYONOV
The Strategies of Ghengis Khan.

Muffled laughter.

MAURICE JANIN
(To the Baron)
You'd be right at home with
Alexandre. He's a bookworm like
you.

THE BARON
(To Semyonov)
Who?

SEMYONOV
Alexandre Miller. The Russian
Consul in the other carriage. He
thinks card games are beneath him.

ELMORE TAGGART
(To the Baron)
Are you going to play or what?

SEMYONOV
He is more interested in the
princess.

More laughter as the Baron scowls at Semyonov.

MAURICE JANIN

(To the Baron)

Very well. If you win, I shall
introduce you.

The Baron looks back at Semyonov who is smiling.

He returns his attention to the three officers sitting at
the table.

The Baron nods and walks over to the table.

INT. COSSACK GUARD CARRIAGE, TRAIN TO IRKUTSK

The carriage is now quiet, as soldiers are sleeping and
snoring, including Semyonov.

At the makeshift card table, the Baron and the three foreign
soldiers continue to play cards.

On the table in front of the Baron is a large pile of coins,
with the American Taggart almost broke as well as British
Major Edmund Ironside.

Only French Major Maurice Janin has any coins compared to
the Baron.

MAURICE JANIN (cont'd)

(To the Baron)

You know war is coming.

Taggart and Ironside scowl at the Frenchman who shrugs his
shoulders.

MAURICE JANIN (cont'd)

(To Edmund Ironside)

The man is reading military
strategy for goodness sake.

THE BARON

(To Maurice Janin)

Yes I know.

EDMUND IRONSIDE

Well Baron, it is going to be a
slaughter. Best you find yourself a
good field commander with real
experience and don't do anything
foolish.

At that moment, Frenchman Maurice Janin pushes his entire
pile of coins into the central pot.

The Baron looks at him and smiles, pushing an equal pile of coins into the centre.

ELMORE TAGGART

I guess then we have a good old fashioned stand off.

The Baron and the Frenchman stare at each other until, finally Maurice Janin sighs and throws in his cards.

MAURICE JANIN

Well played Monsieur.

(Pause)

What did you have?

The Baron reveals his cards as nothing.

EDMUND IRONSIDE

Excellent bluff Baron. Now it is time for Maurice to honor his promise.

INT. 1ST CLASS CARRIAGE, TRAIN TO IRKUTSK

The 1st Class Cabin is quiet, with people either sleeping or reading.

On one double seat is an unnaturally crisp looking Russian Officer (ALEXANDRE MILLER) (30's) busily reading.

Maurice Janin leads them into the cabin, followed by the Baron, Edmund Ironside and Elmore Taggart to the rear.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

(Without looking up)

Enjoyed your games?

Maurice Janin and the Baron stop in the aisle just in front of Alexandre Miller.

The Baron glances at the book title Miller is holding.

MAURICE JANIN

(To Alexandre Miller)

Alexandre, Baron von Ungern-Sternberg.

(To the Baron)

Baron, the Russian Consul to Outer Mongolia.

Alexandre Miller looks at the Lieutenant's uniform of the Baron.

A wry smile emerges on the face of Miller, before returning to reading his book.

THE BARON
 (To Alexandre Miller)
 Clausewitz is a complete waste of
 time.

Alexandre Miller glances up at Baron with a look of slight surprise and disdain.

ELMORE TAGGART
 (Whispering to Edmund
 Ironside)
 Here we go.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 (To the Baron)
 And that is your expert opinion
 Baron?

The Baron smiles.

THE BARON
 Compared to Julius Caesar or
 Napoleon, I would say yes. The
 strategies of Von Clausewitz only
 work if both sides believe Economic
 might alone wins a war.
 (Pause)
 But all it takes is one good
 general and -

The Baron stops speaking as Alexandre Miller gets up from his chair and everyone is staring behind the Baron.

Erdene is now standing behind them, accompanied by Maurice Janin.

The Baron turns to see Erdene smiling.

ERDENE
 (To the Baron)
 We meet again.

For a moment, the Baron is tongue tied as Maurice Janin starts laughing.

MAURICE JANIN
 (To the Baron)
 Monsieur. Surely you can do better.

THE BARON

(To Erdene)

I hope your father will forgive me
if I caused any offense.

ERDENE

(To the Baron)

I cannot speak for my father, but I
am happy to again meet you.

The Baron smiles broadly as Erdene also smiles as Maurice Janin signals to the Baron.

MAURICE JANIN

(To the Baron)

Monsieur. Maybe you wish some
privacy to continue your
conversation in the dining cabin?

The Baron nods as he await a queue from Erdene.

She hesitates, before nodding her head ever so slightly.

Erdene turns around to leave the carriage the way she
entered.

The Baron follows a few steps behind.

They are almost at the door to exit, when Damdini Sukhbaatar
BURSTS into the carriage, followed by Namnansuren now
dressed in his official Mongolian Court clothes and hat.

Namnansuren scowls as he locks eyes with the Baron as
Damdini Sukhbaatar steps to one side to allow him to pass.

NAMNANSUREN

(To Erdene)

Return to our carriage at once.

ERDENE

(To Namnansuren)

But father, as you can see the
carriage is full of people, I was
only -

NAMNANSUREN

(To Erdene)

Do as I request. If not as your
father, then as steward of our
people.

Erdene bows and briefly glances back at the Baron before
leaving, as she scurries past Namnansuren who is now
standing in front of the Baron. The Baron bows to him.

THE BARON
 (To Namnansuren)
 Your Highness, I am sorry if I -

NAMNANSUREN
 (To the Baron)
 I cannot force you off this train,
 as I remain a guest of Russian
 hospitality. But I forbid you from
 ever speaking to my daughter again.

Namnansuren turns and leaves the carriage followed by Damdini Sukhbaatar who glares at the Baron with a look of disgust.

For a moment, the Baron remains standing and staring towards the end of the carriage, as if Erdene was still standing there, before Alexandre Miller comes up behind and pats him lightly on the shoulder.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 (To the Baron)
 I hope you are a better soldier
 than you are a diplomat?

General laughter in the carriage.

EXT. IRKUTSK TRAIN STATION - DAY

The train is now stopped at the Irkutsk Station as the Cossack Guard patrol the platform and around the train.

The Baron is at the opposite end of the platform to the first class carriages as he watches the Mongolian Delegation and Erdene depart.

Semyonov walks up behind the Baron and speaks into his left ear.

SEMYONOV
 A dream comrade. Nothing more. Let
 it go.

The Baron ignores Semyonov and continues watching and staring in the hope Erdene looks sideways in his direction.

A moment followed by another before she disappears, never turning.

Only when the last Mongolian guard is out of view does the Baron turn around to Semyonov.

THE BARON

If not the master of my dreams,
than what am I?

EXT. COSSACK HEADQUARTERS, BLAGOVESHCHENSK - DAY

The Baron strides alone to the entrance to the Cossack Headquarters and salutes the guards before entering.

INT. COSSACK COLONEL'S OFFICE - DAY

Inside the office, Colonel Kukharenko is still condemned to writing and signing more papers...while a soldier is standing next to his desk, nervously holding another batch of files.

He finishes signing the last page and places them on top of the rest being held by the soldier.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO

Done. Finally for the week.

We hear a knock at the door.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)

Enter.

We watch as the Baron strides in and salutes the Colonel.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)

(To Soldier)

Now get these off to St. Petersburg
and if any more files come today,
lose them or burn them. I have had
it with paperwork.

The soldier nods, straining to look over the mountain of paper held in his arms, turns and leaves.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)

(To Baron)

So Baron, you finally decided to
grace us with your presence.

The Baron hands over a set of papers to the Colonel who lets off an audible groan, looking at the documents.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)

What is this?

THE BARON

I am requesting an immediate transfer as a Military Attache to the Russian Delegation at Urga in Outer Mongolia.

Colonel Kukharenko looks up and starts laughing, leaning back in his chair and putting his arms behind his head.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO

Are we now? Why not to the Royal Household, while you are at it?

THE BARON

All the paperwork is correct.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO

I have no doubt.

The Colonel reaches over and lights a cigarette.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)

But you see Baron, it is not up to me. Your request will have to be processed by the Imperial Foreign Office which could take months or even years. So you see you are stuck here with me, whether you like it or not.

The Colonel gets up and looks over at the window as he continues to speak, puffing at his cigarette.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)

Anyway, in the end it is the Diplomats who have the final say on the officers attached to their delegations.

Colonel Kukharenko turns and watches as the Baron produces an envelope from his pocket and places it atop the other papers.

COLONEL KUKHARENKO (cont'd)

You mean this Colonel?

The face of the Colonel drops as he moves back to the desk and hastily slices open the envelope -- the cigarette hanging from his mouth.

He impatiently flicks open the letter, mumbling to himself. to pull out the letter inside, reading it impatiently.

The cigarette falls from his mouth onto the desk and bounces onto the floor as the Colonel lets his head fall into his hands.

THE BARON

Thank you sir.

The Colonel doesn't look up, but waves with one hand as the Baron salutes, turns and leaves.

EXT. BLAGOVESHCHENSK STATION - DAY

We watch as Baron Ungern-Sternberg hands his horse to a porter before turning around to greet Semyonov, Rezukhin and Veselovskii standing in front of him.

SEMYONOV

I will miss you comrade. We could have won a lot of money at cards together.

Chuckles from Rezukhin and Veselovskii.

The Baron embraces Rezukhin followed by Veselovskii, before walking slowly over to Semyonov.

The men set off walking toward the first class carriages at the other end of the train.

THE BARON

(To Semyonov)

We will meet again Grigory Mikhaylovich. But now I have to do this.

Semyonov nods as the men stop at the door to the carriages.

SEMYONOV

Till then, Baron.

Semyonov and the Baron hug, before the Baron steps onto the train and out of view.

EXT. CARAVAN, ROAD TO URGA, OUTER MONGOLIA - DAY

Against the sparse backdrop of sub-alpine grasslands and violently hewn mountains, a caravan of people on horseback, travel in single file along a dusty track.

Compared to the immensity of the landscape, they seem insignificant until we move closer and closer to see one of the riders is the Baron, accompanying an assortment of traders and pilgrims.

EXT. TEMPLE, ROAD TO URGA, OUTER MONGOLIA - DAY

We watch as the Baron and the caravan pass a Buddhist Temple being attended by pilgrims and marking the entrance down into the valley and the city of Urga below them.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Urga, Capital of Outer Mongolia"

EXT. URGA STREETS - DAY

The Baron is now riding his horse (Balius) along a dusty street of Urga, surveying the bright colors and feudal looking buildings.

Children chase briefly alongside his horse, holding out their hands, before the Baron nudges the horse into a faster trot, leaving them behind, before letting the horse slow again.

EXT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE, URGA - DAY

The Baron pulls his horse up in front of a two storey building, guarded by two Cossacks and draped in a large Imperial Russian flag.

The Baron alights and ties his horse to a railing in front of the building, before saluting the guards, opening the door and stepping inside.

INT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE, ENTRANCE HALL

Inside, the contrast is stark, as the interior resembles a wealthy home from St. Petersburg, with polished tiles, and clean painted walls and a giant picture of the Tsar hung prominently in front of a stair case.

A guard steps forward and salutes the Baron as the Baron begins to dust himself off, before an officious looking man (MINEI GUBELMAN) steps forward and frowns as he watches the clouds of dust coming off the uniform of the Baron.

MINEI GUBELMAN

I am Minei Gubelman, Chief of Staff
to the Imperial Russian Consul.

The Baron extends his hand as Minei Gubelman ignores it and turns around and starts walking away down a connected hallway.

The Baron withdraws his hand and quickly follows to catch up.

MINEI GUBELMAN (cont'd)
 (Pointing down the hallway)
 The Soldier's Quarters are this way.

Minei Gubelman briefly turns to the Baron.

MINEI GUBELMAN (cont'd)
 You might want to clean up before you meet the Consul.

The Baron nods and before he can say a word, Minei Gubelman has already turned and walked away.

INT. RUSSIAN CONSUL PRIVATE OFFICE, HALLWAY

The Baron is now in a clean white officers uniform standing in front of a set of double doors with Minei Gubelman, as Gubelman inspects the appearance of the Baron. He reaches over and adjusts the collar of the Baron.

MINEI GUBELMAN
 (To Baron)
 Better. You might just last the week after all.

Minei Gubelman knocks firmly on the door.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (V.O.)
 Come in!

Minei Gubelman opens the door and the Baron follow him in.

INT. RUSSIAN CONSUL PRIVATE OFFICE

Inside the spacious private office of the Consul, Alexandre Miller is already up from his desk to greet the Baron before they are even fully in the room. The Baron salutes just as Alexandre Miller extends his hand to greet him.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 (To the Baron)
 No need for such formalities between ourselves Baron.

Minei Gubelman quickly gives Alexandre Miller a surprised stare, before Miller catches it as he is shaking the hand of the Baron.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 (To Minei Gubelman)
 Thank you Minei.

Miller waves to Gubelman to leave, with now staring at the other two men with a look of surprise and passive disgust.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 (To Minei Gubelman)
 You can leave us.

Minei Gubelman hesitates for one more moment as he watches Alexandre Miller ignore him and usher the Baron to a seat opposite his private desk.

Minei lets out a passive huff, before he retreats, thumping closed the double doors.

Alexandre Miller steps over over to a side cabinet and selects two glasses, before pouring some alcohol from a fine looking crystal decanter.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 Don't worry about Minei Gubelman.
 He is officious and pretentious but ultimately harmless.

Alexandre Miller turns and hands one of the glasses to the Baron before they raise their glasses.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 To Russia!

THE BARON
 To Russia!

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 May she survive the growing
 madness.

Alexandre Miller reaches over to the Baron with an open packet of cigarettes.

The Baron declines as he continues to sip his drink.

Alexandre Miller shrugs his shoulders and lights up.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 Mongolia is like a rough uncut
 jewel, cast between ancient
 mountain gods.

Alexandre Miller sips his drink in between puffs of smoking.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 So long as our mother Russia is
 crippled by political intrigue and
 coming war, we do not have the will
 to seize it for ourselves. Yet the
 Chinese brood over Mongolia every
 single moment.

THE BARON
 You saw for yourself, the Prime
 Minister hates me.

Alexandre Miller smiles.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 Namnansuren Khan.

THE BARON
 Yes Namnansuren the Khan of -

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 Sain Noyon. Don't worry. That is
 not such a bad thing. You see the
 real power in Mongolia is the Bogd
 Khan and the third most powerful
 Buddhist leader behind the Dalai
 Lama and Panchen Lama.

Alexandre Miller stands up and grabs the bottle of alcohol
 and tops up their glasses.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 War is coming Baron. I need someone
 with enough courage and
 intelligence. We will be meeting
 the Bogd Khan in audience this
 afternoon.

THE BARON
 What do you want me to say?

Alexandre Miller smiles again.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 Just be yourself. They say the Bogd
 Khan can see into the souls of men.
 Maybe he will see yours.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE - DAY

An ancient palace, guarded by troops in traditional dress, as monks move in and around the corridors. Alexandre Miller and the Baron arrive and the palace guards pull back their weapons allowing them to pass.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE, HALLWAY

The Baron and Alexandre Miller enter into a hallway, where they are greeted by Mijiddorjiyn Handdorj and two guards.

HANDDORJ
(To Alexandre Miller)
Consul.

Handdorj bows.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
Foreign Minister.

Alexandre bows and the Baron follows suit.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
Foreign Minister Handdorj let me
introduce my new Military Attache
Baron von Ungern-Sternberg.

Handdorj frowns, without extending any courtesy.

HANDDORJ
(To the Baron)
Yes I have heard of you.
(pause)
Please follow me.

Handdorj and the guards turn and Alexandre Miller gives a quick smirk to the Baron as they follow the officials further into the Palace.

INT. BOGD KHAN COURT

Alexandre Miller and the Baron accompany Handdorj into a great hall.

At one end on a raised platform the BOGD KHAN is sitting, while Namnansuren is seated in front,

--officials and attendants are ushering monks, petitioners and others in and out of the sight of the Bogd Khan.

As they move forward, the Baron spots the British Major Edmund Ironside in conversation with some court officials.

The Baron briefly makes eye contact with Ironside.

Handdorj stops at two guards, marking a void space between the Bogd Khan and his attendants.

Handdorj signals the COURT ANNOUNCER.

COURT ANNOUNCER

The Imperial Russian Diplomatic Agent and Consul, Alexandre Miller and his Military Attache, requesting an audience with his holiness the Bogd Khan.

Alexandre Miller and the Baron are ushered forward and stop in front of the Bogd Khan, where Alexandre Miller bows and the Baron follows suit.

Namnansuren meanwhile appears preoccupied with documents and does not look up.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

Your Holiness, may I present my new Military Attache Baron Roman Nikolai Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg.

Namnansuren pops his head up like a Meerkat at the announcement and locks eyes with the Baron.

Within moments, Namnansuren starts to turn bright red with anger.

NAMNANSUREN

(To Alexandre Miller)

What is the meaning of this outrage? Why have you brought this man here?

(To Handdorj)

Escort the Russian Consul out of the palace. His Holiness is unable to receive him at this time.

Handdorj bows and four guards surround Alexandre Miller and the Baron indicating them to leave.

They turn and start walking back towards the exit to the great hall.

BOGD KHAN

Stop!

The guards and everyone in the court freezes.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)
 (To Namnansuren)
 Am I not the Jebtsundamba? Then
 allow these men to speak.

NAMNANSUREN
 (To Bogd Khan)
 My Venerable Lord, you are. Yet
 this man is not worthy to be in
 your presence and is without
 respect.

BOGD KHAN
 (To Namnansuren)
 That may be true. But is that not
 for me to judge my Prime Minister?

Namnansuren now bows deeply and sheepishly and waves his hands at the guards to return Alexandre Miller and the Baron to the sight of the Bogd Khan.

When they have returned, the Bogd Khan gets up from his sitting position and climbs down the back of his raised platform aided by two attendant monks.

The Khan moves forward toward Alexandre Miller and the Baron.

Miller at first is in shock and just stares at the young deity as he approaches before he snaps in and adopts the deepest bow.

The Baron follows his queue.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)
 Rise. Rise. Let me see you.

Slowly Miller rises from his bow, followed by the Baron to see the young Bogd Khan standing just a few feet from him.

Miller looks even more shocked. The Khan smiles and signals to the Baron.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)
 Come forward...

The Baron glances at first at Miller who nods hesitantly at him.

The Khan smiles at The Baron, touching the side of his uniform to gasps around the court, especially Namnansuren.

The Bogd Khan turn back to the direction of Namnansuren.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)
 (To Namnansuren)
 I have decided that I shall speak
 with our guest privately.

Namnansuren and the rest of attendants bow again deeply.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)
 (To Namnansuren)
 If he is as you say, then he shall
 no more be welcomed in our lands.
 But if he is more, then let him
 reveal his heart and mind.

The Bogd Khan starts walking and signals for the Baron to accompany him.

A set of guards rush forward and behind, along with attendant monks, leaving Alexandre Miller still standing in the great hall.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE HALLWAY

The Bogd Khan and the Baron walk along the corridor as all the monks bow deeply as they pass.

BOGD KHAN
 (To the Baron)
 I hope you do not judge our people
 on the pride of one, or the mystery
 of another?

THE BARON
 (To the Bogd Khan)
 I have never met a holy man before.

The Bogd Khan stops at a set of doors opening up into a lush garden, where he indicates for the Baron to enter first.

BOGD KHAN
 (To the Baron)
 That makes two of us.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE GARDENS - DAY

The Bogd Khan and the Baron enter the indoor gardens and through beautiful plants and flowing ornamental ponds.

The Bogd Khan indicates for the Baron to sit on a long wooden bench in front of a large ornamental pond.

THE BARON

It is beautiful here.

BOGD KHAN

But an illusion. A dream of what might be.

(Pause)

Our country could be like this paradise, given time. Yet it may also fall victim to the troubles that plagues the rest of the world.

THE BARON

Our Consul said you are a psychic.

The Bogd Khan starts to laugh.

BOGD KHAN

And my Prime Minister fears you will seize and corrupt his only daughter.

(Pause)

It seems we are not so different after all as we both suffer the misunderstandings of others.

The Bogd Khan suddenly stops laughing and stares at the Baron who seems uneasy at the gaze and shifts a bit further away.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)

If we settle our minds, then any man or woman reveals themselves by what they say or do not say and what they do or do not. Yet the deeper question is why?

The Baron shakes his head.

THE BARON

Why?

(Pause)

Is that what you are asking me?

The Bogd Khan remains silent.

THE BARON (cont'd)

Why am I here? Why did I join the army? Why do I want to see Erdene?

(Pause)

I do not know exactly what you mean. I have literally thousands of questions in my head that start with why?

The Bogd Khan stands up.

BOGD KHAN

Good. And when you are ready, I
will send for you and you can tell
me.

The Baron nods and follows the Bogd Khan out of the garden.

EXT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE, URGU - NIGHT

The Baron returns to the Russian Consulate alone, saluting
the solitary guard outside before opening the door and going
inside.

INT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE, ENTRANCE HALL

Inside, the Baron is taken aback as waiting in the entrance
hall for his return is a smiling Alexandre Miller and grumpy
Minei Gubelman.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

(To the Baron)

All went well with your private
audience with the Bogd Khan, I
trust?

The Baron nods to Alexandre Miller as he moves closer.

THE BARON

(To Alexandre Miller)

He wants to meet again, but didn't
say when.

MINEI GUBELMAN

(Mumbling)

He missed the opportunity.

Alexandre Miller swings his head around and frowns at Minei
Gubelman who steps back and scampers away.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

(To the Baron)

In good time.

Alexandre Miller moves over to a set of doors to the
reception rooms and opens them. He stops and turns for the
Baron.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
(To the Baron)
For now, there is someone who
wishes to speak with you.

Alexandre Miller steps back allowing the Baron to enter into the reception room alone.

INT. RUSSIAN CONSULATE RECEPTION ROOMS

Inside the reception rooms is Erdene in a simple dress, waiting standing with an expectant look, before she smiles broadly at the Baron as he enters.

The Baron quickly looks around the room to see if there is anyone else he has missed.

ERDENE
It is just me, I came alone.

Alexandre Miller closes the doors to the Reception Rooms. Erdene and the Baron are finally alone.

Erdene steps forward and hands the Baron a folded white square and a set of prayer beads. He accepts them, smiling at her as he unfolds the white square to reveal a long white traditional Buddhist khata.

ERDENE (cont'd)
It is called a khata and a
traditional gift of good intentions
and life.

The Baron looks at the prayer beads.

THE BARON
Thank you, it is beautiful.

ERDENE
It is customary to give some
positive gift in our culture. I
also wanted to ask for your
forgiveness for my father.

The Baron laughs.

THE BARON
Your father is just trying to
protect the honor of his beautiful
daughter.

The Baron moves forward and bows down, kissing the right hand of Erdene, who starts blushing, as the Baron steps back.

THE BARON (cont'd)

This is a sign of respect and affection in our culture.

(pause)

In all my life and in all that I have seen, I have never encountered someone who encapsulates the extraordinary beauty of this world. It is why I had to see you again.

ERDENE

My father will be away on business seeing the Chinese General Xu Shuzheng in two days. If you wish I can meet you then outside the city walls and then travel to the Duma in the mountains overlooking the whole valley.

The Barons nods affirmatively as he wraps the scarf around his belt.

THE BARON

I would be honored Princess.

Erdene laughs.

ERDENE

Erdene. You can call me Erdene.

THE BARON

Very well Erdene, I accept your invitation.

The Baron moves closer as Erdene hesitates and turns towards the door, before looking back at the Baron.

ERDENE

I must go. There are eyes everywhere.

(Pause)

In two days?

THE BARON

Yes, in two days.

Erdene smiles as she opens the door, leaving the Baron standing alone.

INT. STABLES, PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE - DAY

A Mongolian stable hand is finishing brushing down a beautiful black horse, with an ornate saddle.

He unfastens the reins and escorts it out of the stables.

EXT. COURTYARD, PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Standing in the courtyard is Erdene, with Damdini Sukhbaatar and several guards already on their horses.

The stable hand bring the black horse to Erdene where she accepts the reins, before the stable hand places a step to the side of the horse and Erdene steps up and onto its back.

INT. SOLDIERS QUARTERS, RUSSIAN CONSULATE

The Baron is standing in front of a basin and a mirror, preparing and checking and preparing his uniform, when Minei Gubelman comes barging in smirking.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Your rendezvous will have to wait.

The Consul wants to see you.

Minei Gubelman turns around and leaves.

The Baron briefly finishes preparing his uniform and follows.

INT. RUSSIAN CONSUL PRIVATE OFFICE

Alexandre Miller is reading a clutch of papers, smoking a cigarette when there is a knock at the door, before Minei Gubelman and the Baron enter.

As soon as he sees the Baron, he stubs out his cigarette and gets up from his chair to greet them.

He grabs an envelope and a satchel from the desk and steps forward to the Baron.

THE BARON

You sent for me?

ALEXANDRE MILLER

I know you have a little field trip arranged today.

Alexandre Miller hands the Baron the envelope, while he still holds the satchel bag.

THE BARON

What is this?

The Baron opens the envelope and reads the short contents.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

The Bogd Khan wants to see you this morning. You are expected to attend as soon as we are finished.

Alexandre Miller opens the satchel bag to reveal gold trimming and epaulets of an Imperial Captain of the Russian Army.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)

But first, I congratulate you on being promoted to Captain of the Imperial Russian Army.

Alexandre Miller hands the gold trimming and epaulets to the Baron, who juggles them into his left hand before saluting with his right.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)

Soon we will be leaving for St. Petersburg for a Treaty Conference concerning Outer Mongolia and you will be in charge of security as my military attache.

The Baron nods affirmatively.

THE BARON

I understand.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

Make no mistake Captain. This conference is vital for mother Russia to secure her southern and eastern borders, so I am counting on you.

The Baron nods again, salutes and leaves the office.

EXT. CITY WALLS - DAY

Erdene, Damdini Sukhbaatar and her guards continue to wait patiently outside the city walls, as people pass on the road.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE, HALLWAY

The Baron is escorted by Mongolian guards through the Palace Hallway.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE HALLWAY

The Baron steps along the same hallway he had previously walked with the Bogd Khan to the doorway to the gardens.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE GARDENS - DAY

The Baron enters the inner gardens.

Inside, he finds the Bogd Khan is sitting and smiling on the same seat they sat and spoke previously.

He signals for the Baron to sit next to him on the seat.

BOGD KHAN

The Universe never moves in straight lines. I am sorry about the interruption to your journey with Erdene.

The Baron looks at him strangely, before the Bogd Khan laughs.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)

Remember, I am no psychic. Yet there is little that happens in his kingdom that I am not aware, especially the movements of my closest advisors and their family.

(Pause)

You will meet soon enough. Yet, this is not why I have called you.

The Bogd Khan gets up and moves over to a flowering plant, picking a flower before returning to be seated.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)

A terrible War is coming.

(Pause)

You know this. And our people will not be immune from it. Which brings me back to your question?

THE BARON

Why?

The Bogd Khan smiles briefly, before his face changes to a stern insistence.

BOGD KHAN

No man is asked to do more than he is able. Nor for you as a soldier to question your orders. All I ask is that you consider this question and hold our people in your heart and promise to speak with me on your return.

The Baron nods but with a face of confusion as the Bogd Khan gets up and hands him the flower. The Baron also gets up and follows the Bogd Khan as he walks slowly towards the exit of the gardens.

THE BARON

Yes, I promise. But I do not understand.

The Bogd Khan turns to the Baron and pats him on the shoulder.

BOGD KHAN

Your Russian Consul is waiting for you.

The Baron again looks at the Bogd Khan with a face of confusion before bowing and leaving the gardens.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE - DAY

The Baron walks past the palace guards and starts down the steps where he sees Alexandre Miller, Minei Gubelman and several Russian Guards already on horses, with Balius (The Baron's horse) next to Alexandre Miller already saddled and kitted.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

We leave at once to Irkutsk. We will meet the Mongolian delegation there and then head to St. Petersburg.

The Barons nods affirmatively and mounts his horse next to Alexandre Miller as the horses turn and ride off.

EXT. DUMA ABOVE URGA - DAY

High above the city of Urga, on the stone steps of an ancient Duma, sits Erdene sadly alone, looking down at the valley below.

She watches as a troop of riders in Russian uniforms, carrying the Russian flag, gallop out of the city along the road to Irkutsk.

EXT. IRKUTSK TRAIN STATION

At Irkutsk Train Station, the Baron is standing and waiting around on the platform with some Cossack soldiers.

He plays with the prayer beads from Erdene around his left wrist just out of sight.

He stops as Rezukhin and Veselovskii approach and salute first before embracing him.

REZUKHIN
(To the Baron)
A Captain now!

THE BARON
(To Rezukhin)
Where is Grigory Mikhaylovich?

REZUKHIN
He has already joined with a new unit under General Aleksey Brusilov near the border of Galicia and the Carpathian Mountains.

VESELOVSKII
He wants to be a war hero.

Brief chuckle between the men as the Baron watches as Prime Minister Namnansuren and his entourage arrive.

REZUKHIN
(To the Baron)
How was Mongolia?

As Namnansuren walks close to The Baron to step onto the train, there is an awkward tension -- with both men pretending the other does not exist.

A different reception when The Baron greets Elmore Taggart, followed by Edmund Ironside -- both men smile broadly before getting onto the train.

THE BARON
 (To Rezukhin)
 A mystery I am yet to fully
 resolve.

The Baron follows onto the train after them.

EXT. JOURNEY TO ST. PETERSBURG

The train journey to St. Petersburg:

- external scenes of lakes and mountains,
- of evenings, when the train seems to enveloped in silver mist when the moonlight hits the smoke,
- of day views of fields and villages -- as the train speeds onto its destination.

Inside the train:

- the Baron spending time with the soldiers in their carriage,
- in the 1st class carriage with Alexandre Miller, Edmund Ironside and Elmore Taggart,
- yet not once acknowledging or interacting with Namnansuren.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG - DAY

The train finally arrives at St. Petersburg.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "St Petersburg Station, 1913"

The Prime Minister Namnansuren and the Mongolian Delegation intersect with the Russian Delegation headed by Alexandre Miller outside the THE HERMITAGE PALACE GATES before entering.

The then Russians welcome the Chinese Delegation at the gates headed by XU SHUZHENG.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, SQUARE OPPOSITE THE HERMITAGE - DAY

The Baron, Rezukhin, Veselovskii and several other Cossack soldiers are standing in a square opposite the St. Petersburg Palace Gates.

There is snow on the ground and frosted breath.

VESELOVSKII

What I wouldn't give to be over
there, by a warm fire.

RESUKHIN

Are you a Cossack or not? This is
not cold.

POV: Now we see the view that The Baron and his men are
watching -- an assortment of shops at the other end of the
square -- in sight of the main palace gates.

A figure in the distance leaves one of the shops and moves
across the square toward the men.

It is Elmore Taggart.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, SQUARE OPPOSITE THE HERMITAGE - DAY

The Baron smiles as he approaches.

ELMORE TAGGART

(To the Baron)

Baron, for goodness sake, you'll
freeze out here.

(pause)

Come with me and I'll show you the
real heart of St. Petersburg.

Rezukhin looks at the Baron and shakes his head negatively.

The Baron looks over to Elmore Taggart, who points back at
the shops across from the square.

ELMORE TAGGART (cont'd)

(To the Baron)

It's only a Coffee Shop. If it
makes you feel better we can sit
near the front windows with the
Anarchists. Or you can still see
the gates of the palace from the
back tables with the Bolsheviks.

(pause)

One Coffee, on me. I will even show
you the seat where Pushkin had his
last coffee before his fateful duel
in 1837.

The Baron nods and he leaves the other soldiers.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, THE LITERARY CAFE - DAY

The Baron and Elmore Taggart approach the entrance to a Coffee Shop called THE LITERARY CAFE.

INT. ST. PETERSBURG, THE LITERARY CAFE

Elmore Taggart and the Baron are sipping coffees at a table at the front of the coffee shop as other patrons look on wearily. The Baron continues to glance over toward the gates to the The Hermitage.

ELMORE TAGGART

You are a strange fish Baron.

The Baron frowns as Elmore Taggart smiles.

ELMORE TAGGART (cont'd)

On the one hand, you are smart enough to be beyond all this and yet you choose to wear the uniform and follow the orders of madmen.

THE BARON

I am but a soldier.

Taggart laughs.

ELMORE TAGGART

Look around Baron.

Taggart gestures with his arm a grand sweep.

ELMORE TAGGART (cont'd)

Here in this tiny coffee shop is the future leaders of Russia.

The Baron smiles before briefly looking back out at the gates before looking back at Taggart.

ELMORE TAGGART (cont'd)

Yes, God help us.

(pause)

Yet here we are...a stones throw from the old palace of Tsars and Emperors -- at a place that represents the new Russia -- people full of ideas, bravado and romance.

THE BARON

You mean maniacs urgently trying to get themselves killed.

Taggart laughs again.

ELMORE TAGGART

Yes, you are probably right. Not the best military minds...But the fact is that the people of Russia have had enough of the corruption of the aristocracy. No offense.

THE BARON

None taken.

ELMORE TAGGART

Remember, the key question then is where will you be when all of this goes up?

The Baron looks back out at the gates of the Hermitage and Rezukhin, Veselovskii waving madly in his direction.

THE BARON

I have to go.

The Baron stands up abruptly, startling Taggart and extends his hand to Taggart.

THE BARON (cont'd)

Thank you for the coffee.

Taggart shakes his hand, before the Baron moves quickly to the exit of the coffee shop.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, THE LITERARY CAFE - DAY

The Baron is outside already pacing away as Taggart also exits the coffee shop after him.

ELMORE TAGGART

(shouting)

Remember the question until we meet again Baron!

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, THE HERMITAGE GATES - DAY

The Baron just makes it back to Rezukhin, Veselovskii -- to see Alexandre Miller and Minei Gubelman step out through the gates.

The Baron and Rezukhin stride over to meet them.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 (To the Baron)
 We leave for once for Urga.

The Baron nods affirmatively.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 You are to personally escort the
 Prime Minister with your best
 soldiers and remain with him on the
 train. Do you understand?

THE BARON
 The outcome?

Alexandre Miller shakes his head.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 Outer Mongolia is lost.
 (Pause)
 The Imperial Court has handed it to
 the Chinese Government of Duan
 Qirui.

Alexandre Miller, the Baron and Minei Gubelman stop walking.

Out through the gates, Prime Minister Namnansuren -- stony-
 faced -- appears with the rest of his entourage.

The Baron looks across at Alexandre Miller.

THE BARON
 (To Alexandre Miller)
 Why? It makes no sense.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
 Appeasement Baron. They would
 rather forget about the east and
 worry about the south and west.

The Mongolians walk straight past without a word.

The Baron catches a seething glare from Prime Minister
 Namnansuren.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)
 You have your orders then. No
 contact with any external parties.
 No Americans, British or French.

The Baron and Rezukhin salute, before falling in behind
 Prime Minister Namnansuren and the rest of the Mongolian
 Delegation.

The Baron gives one brief glance back at Alexandre Miller and Minei Gubelman.

EXT. TRAIN TO IRKUTSK - NIGHT

A train barrels along the tracks at night as the flicker of the internal lights of the carriages plays against the darkened landscape.

INT. TRAIN TO IRKUTSK

Inside the official Mongolian carriage, Namnansuren is busily writing at a desk.

Rezukhin is sitting on a chair closer to the doorway and no other Mongolian guards or officials are in the carriage.

The Baron enters and Namnansuren pauses for a moment, looking up at him.

The Baron taps Rezukhin on the shoulder.

THE BARON
(To Rezukhin)
Get some rest Borisovich. I'll see
you in the morning.

Rezukhin nods and gets up from the chair and leaves the carriage.

NAMNANSUREN
You cannot keep my men as prisoners
or hold me as hostage. This is an
outrage.

THE BARON
I am only following orders Prime
Minister.

Namnansuren laughs as the Baron moves over to a sofa chair close to the writing desk of the Prime Minister.

Namnansuren puts down his papers and moves over to a sofa chair opposite the Baron.

NAMNANSUREN
And yet your affections for my
daughter would see you travel a
thousand miles to a strange land.

The Barons scowls at him.

THE BARON

Do you question my honor to my
country?

Namnansuren smiles.

NAMNANSUREN

Whether your head likes it or not,
you are now bound to the destiny of
Mongolia. If you let me speak to
the French or Americans or not.

(pause)

Surely you cannot believe that what
you have done will mean nothing to
the Bogd Khan, or my daughter?

THE BARON

I am a soldier. I follow orders.

Namnansuren laughs.

NAMNANSUREN

If you were *just* a soldier, you
would not be here. Our blessed Bogd
Khan would not have sought to speak
with you personally.

(pause)

You may choose to lie to me, that
is your prerogative. But do not lie
to yourself Baron. You have always
had the power to choose.

The Baron stares at Namnansuren, before getting up and
walking back to the same chair that Rezukhin had been
sitting in.

EXT. IRKUTSK TRAIN STATION - DAY

The train pull into the platform at Irkutsk Station.

EXT. IRKUTSK TRAIN STATION PLATFORM - DAY

On the platform of the station is Erdene, standing with
Damdini Sukhbaatar and several Mongolian Guards.

Moments later, Namnansuren appears from the train and Erdene
rushes forward and hugs him.

Intimate whispers are spoken into the ear of Erdene by her
father.

Her face reveals the message as it transforms from joy, to shock, to anger just as The Baron steps onto the platform nearby.

At first Erdene does not seem to acknowledge the him.

He moves over to greet her, but as soon as The Baron is in close proximity, she scowls and slaps him hard across the face.

Alexandre Miller and Minei Gubelman watch transfixed nearby.

THE BARON
(to Erdene)
There was nothing I can do.

Erdene wipes her face.

ERDENE
Everyone has a choice.

She turns and catches up to her father Namnansuren as they leave the platform.

The Baron watches her leave before turning back to see Alexandre Miller and Minei Gubelman deeply now engrossed in a telegram.

The Baron steps over as Alexandre Miller looks up and snatches the telegram from Minei Gubelman.

He hands it to the Baron, as Gubelman scowls.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
(To the Baron)
Franz Ferdinand has been
assassinated in Sarajevo.
(pause)
It has started.

The Baron studies the telegram for a few more moments before looking up at Alexandre Miller.

He straightens himself to attention, holding out the telegram.

THE BARON
(To Alexandre Miller)
I request immediate release for
active duty to the 34th Regiment a
Galicia.

Alexandre Miller laughs.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

You can't be serious? It will be a
bloodbath!

Alexandre Miller keeps looking at the Baron who does not twitch as Minei Gubelman is now also smiling.

Alexandre Miller starts shaking his head as he takes back the telegram.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (cont'd)

I know you know that I cannot stop
you.

EXT. GALICIAN COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

A montage begins of a train traveling through beautiful lush and pristine countryside as we continue to hear Alexandre Miller speak.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (V.O.)

I also know you know first hand
that war can be hell.

The Baron enters a picturesque town... full of color and men in military uniforms.

The Baron walks past a group of soldiers standing at the edge of a town square, smoking and making cat calls at girls nearby.

The Baron smiles as he passes a cafe and grocer shop in the square with their bright colored awnings and the grocers display of fresh fruits.

ALEXANDRE MILLER (V.O.) (cont'd)

Yet this war will be something
altogether more terrible.

The Baron is given directions by another soldier pointing outside of the square before the soldier salutes and the Baron continues walking.

The Baron leave the square by a different entrance as he passes more soldiers.

EXT. EIGHTH ARMY HEADQUARTERS, PROSKUROV GALICIA - DAY

On the outskirts of the town, on a perfectly sunny spring day, full of color and men in military uniforms practicing, drills, riding horses in lines and activity, while a group of officers watch on, under shade of a white military tent.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Eighth Army Headquarters,
Proskurov Galacia 1914"

As the Baron approaches the tent, the guards at the front of the tent salute.

A moment later, comes the bounding figure of Grigory Mikhaylovich Semyonov come flying out of the tent toward the Baron.

SEMYONOV
(Shouting)
So you've given up on woman and
decided to join us!

The officers within the tent stop at the shouting and watch as the Baron and Semyonov embrace.

Semyonov grabs the Baron by the arm and pulls him into the tent, past the guards.

INT. OFFICERS TENT - PROSKUROV GALICIA - DAY

As Semyonov pulls the Baron toward a long table surrounded by officers, the wall of men separates to reveal just one - COLONEL PYOTR NIKOLAYEVICH WRANGEL, staring at the Baron.

The Baron stiffly salutes.

THE BARON
Roman Nikolai Maximilian von
Ungern-Sternberg.

Wrangel instead extends his hand to the Baron.

WRANGEL
I know who you are.

Wrangel then swivels back around to a large military map on which pieces are placed.

Wrangel then points to a particular part of the map.

WRANGEL (cont'd)
The objective of the Eighth Army of General Brusilov is to capture central Galicia to the Carpathian Mountains, supported by General Ruzski of the Third Army, while the Fifth Army of General Plehve and Fourth Army of General Salza surrounding the Austrians further north-west.

Wrangel points to a different point on the map.

WRANGEL (cont'd)

Our primary enemy is General Rudolph von Brudermann of the Austrian third army and a career soldier and formidable opponent. The job of the 34th Regiment will be to move ahead of the army and locate precisely the enemy and if necessary engage the enemy.

INT. URGA, RUSSIAN EMBASSY, AMBASSADORS BEDROOM

Sunlight bursting through the blinds of a bedroom, while Alexandre Miller remains fast asleep under the covers.

There is a knock at the door as an attend then as there a knock at the bedroom door before an ATTENDANT enters carrying a tray and a pot of tea and cup.

ATTENDANT

Your excellency.

The attendant waits nervously as around the room, the cabinet and light shade and fittings and the bed start to rumble.

Alexandre opens up his eyes and starts to stir as the rumbling gets louder.

ALEXANDRE MILLER

For goodness sake. No need to be rude.

Minei Gubelman BOUNDS into the room brushing past the attendant, who nervously catches the teapot before it is about to fall off the tray.

ATTENDANT

Sir, it wasn't me -

Alexandre Miller now has both eyes open and is upright in bed as the whole room and building is now shaking, before he looks over at Minei Gubelman hovering like a vulture.

MINEI GUBELMAN

The Chinese have invaded!

Alexandre Miller steps out of the bed, grabbing a dressing gown in the process, before opening the door to a balcony, causing dust and noise to fill the room, before stepping out.

EXT. URGA, RUSSIAN EMBASSY, AMBASSADORS BALCONY - DAY

There on the balcony, the Russians observe the line of horses, trucks and troops of the Chinese as they continue marching -- past stunned and frightened looking inhabitants of the city.

EXT. URGA, MAIN STREET IN FRONT OF RUSSIAN EMBASSY - DAY

A car carrying General Xu Shuzheng motors past the Russian embassy.

The Chinese general looks up at the Russians on the balcony.

Xu Shuzheng smiles and gives a faux salute before looking back ahead.

EXT. URGA, RUSSIAN EMBASSY, AMBASSADORS BALCONY - DAY

Alexandre Miller looks over at Minei Gubelman.

ALEXANDRE MILLER
Telegraph St. Petersburg. Tell them
what is happening.

Minei Gubelman nods dutifully and scurries away as Alexandre Miller returns to watching the passing parade of Chinese troops.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE STEPS - DAY

General Xu Shuzheng is now standing on the steps of the Bogd Khan Palace as Chinese troops behind him are finishing unfurling long Chinese flags over the front of the palace.

A nervous looking Namnansuren Khan, Erdene and Mijiddorjiyn Handdorj are standing behind and to the left of General Xu Shuzheng.

Chinese troops line the street as a crowd of people has gathered to watch, while Alexandre Miller and Minei Gubelman shuffle through the crowd to get a better view.

XU SHUZHENG
(To Crowd)
People of Urga, you have nothing to
fear. See, your leaders are still
your leaders. Yet your protector is
now China and not Russia.

Xu Shuzheng turns to Namnansuren.

XU SHUZHENG (cont'd)
 (To Namnansuren)
 Wave to the crowd and show we are
 allies.

NAMNANSUREN
 (To Xu Shuzheng)
 The Mongolian people will never lay
 down as slaves. They will fight and
 resist you.

The crowd goes deathly silent, almost as if they
 collectively are straining to hear the conversation.

XU SHUZHENG
 (To Namnansuren)
 Then for the sake of their children
 and your daughter I hope you can
 persuade them otherwise.

NAMNANSUREN
 (To Xu Shuzheng)
 We are not afraid to die.

XU SHUZHENG
 I know Prime Minister.

Xu Shuzheng sweeps his hand around over the steps and the
 Bogd Khan Palace behind them.

XU SHUZHENG (cont'd)
 But if the house falls, so does it
 shrines and temples. The safety of
 the Bogd Khan is assured for now.
 But I can only assure such safety
 if the city holds. If it does not -

Namnansuren steps forward to be next to Xu Shuzheng and
 smiles as Xu Shuzheng grabs his hand and raises it to the
 cheers of the crowd.

EXT. PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE, URGU - DAY

Chinese soldiers are standing outside a building.

EXT. COURTYARD, PRIME MINISTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Namnansuren and Erdene are standing in the courtyard, with
 Damdini Sukhbaatar in the distance, as Erdene is preparing a
 horse.

NAMNANSUREN
His holiness will grant you
sanctuary.

Namnansuren hands Erdene a package of papers.

ERDENE
But I want to stay with you.

NAMNANSUREN
It is too dangerous. These papers
will get you through.
(Pause)
Trust no one.

Namnansuren looks over in the direction of Damdini
Sukhbaatar and back at Erdene.

Erdene embraces her father.

ERDENE
What will happen to you?

NAMNANSUREN
As long as I know you are safe my
daughter, then nothing of harm may
come to me. Now go, before it is
too late.

Erdene gets on her horse and wipes her tears. As Damdini
Sukhbaatar comes over and Namnansuren waves his hands.

NAMNANSUREN (cont'd)
It is fine Damdini. She is only
going on a short errand, so you can
keep me company.

Damdini bows his head and watches as Erdene leaves the
compound, past the Chinese guards.

EXT. AUSTRIA-HUNGARIAN LINES - DAYBREAK

An eerie silence as morning mist still hugs the fields.

An Austrian Officer moves from one machine gun nest under
the trees to another.

AUSTRIAN OFFICER
Stay alert.

The Officer stops behind one machine gun nest as he hears
bird noises, before the sound of trumpets across the fields.

AUSTRIAN OFFICER (cont'd)
Here they come.

In the distance appears one, then five then fifty then over a hundred horses without saddles or reigns, spread out across the lines.

AUSTRIAN SOLDIER
There are no riders.

AUSTRIAN OFFICER
They are Cossacks and they can hide like ghosts.

AUSTRIAN SOLDIER
But they are just horses...

The Officer steps forward.

AUSTRIAN OFFICER
Commence firing.

One or two guns CRACK before a few of machine guns start blazing as the horses continue darting and weaving.

None seem to be shot or injured.

Smoke from the gunpowder starts to fill and obscure the air.

AUSTRIAN OFFICER (cont'd)
Cease fire. Cease fire.

Slowly the machine guns and rifles stop as some of the horses finish jumping over the Austrian lines.

AUSTRIAN OFFICER (cont'd)
Advance.

The Austrian troops begin to advance from the tree line into the fields.

Moments later, when they are a few steps in front of the trees, out of the grass pop hundreds of Cossacks, including the Baron and Semyonov.

The CRACK of gunfire and SHOUTS and SCREAMS as men embrace in hand to hand combat.

Pretty quickly, the tide turns in favor of the Cossacks -- the Austrians no match to such brutal fighting.

As the result becomes inevitable, some of the Austrian soldiers begin retreating...

The Baron spots two Austrian soldiers running back toward a machine gun nest.

He gives chase....Just as the Austrians are ready to power up the machine gun, The Baron SHOTS them dead.

In a few more moments... the scene is quiet as the smoke starts to dissipate.

The Cossacks now comb the field to check the dead.

As The Baron moves from one body to another, the original AUSTRIAN OFFICER bloodied and lying on the ground looking dead -- but still very much alive.

The Baron approaches...The Austrian Officer prepares his sidearm.

Before the Baron is upon him, Semyonov strides over toward the Baron, grinning ear to ear.

THE BARON
(To Semyonov)
Great plan Grigory Mikhaylovich.

As if in slow motion, the Baron watches as Semyonov WHIPS out his service revolver and points it at the Baron and pulls back the trigger. Instinctively, the Baron jumps out of the way and onto the ground.

One SHOT rings out.

Behind the Baron, the figure of the bloodied Austrian Officer crumples to the ground dead.

The Baron picks himself up to see Semyonov smiling.

SEMYONOV
(To the Baron)
Sorry for that.

Semyonov pulls out a flare gun and fires the flare up into the air.

Off in the distance many hundreds of mounted Cossacks begin to appear onto the fields.

THE BARON
Now I have to find my horse.

EXT. CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS AUSTRIA HUNGARY - DAY

Against the backdrop of jagged mountains, Semyonov and other Cossacks including captain LEONID SIPAILOV are relaxing, drinking coffee and smoking around a fire next to a small stream.

They watch in the foreground the Baron -- with his shirt off and just a singlet -- clean his khata scarf in a small stream.

His prayer beads dangling from his belt.

Sipailov points to the beads.

SIPAILOV
(To the Baron)
Souvenir Baron?

The Baron stops washing, turns and smiles.

THE BARON
A gift. It is supposed to bring
protection and good luck.

Semyonov starts laughing.

SEMYONOV
(To the Baron)
That's funny. Because I thought the
last time she saw you, she slapped
you so hard, you have the scar to
prove it. So not so lucky after
all.

Sipailov and the rest of the men start laughing as the figures of Rezukhin and Veselovskii in fresh uniforms appear.

Semyonov is the first to spot them.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)
Stepan and Borisovich you have made
it!

Semyonov embraces each of the men, as the Baron gets up and embraces the men.

REZUKHIN
(To Semyonov)
We couldn't let Grigory
Mikhaylovich have all the glory,
could we?

More laughter as the stern figure of Wrangel accompanied by his aide come up to the officers and men.

The Baron is first to see him and stand to attention.

THE BARON
Attention!

Wrangel waves his hand.

WRANGEL
At ease.

SEMYONOV
Colonel?

WRANGEL
We've been ordered to pull back.

SEMYONOV
What? Pull back? We just smashed the whole third Austro-Hungarian army and the Carpathians and now they want us to withdraw? This is madness -

THE BARON
Grigory Mikhaylovich.

Semyonov stops.

WRANGEL
General Alexander Samsonov is dead and the 2nd Army has ceased to exist at Tannenberg. So it doesn't matter how far we have advanced into Hungary, if we lose all of Prussia.

(pause)
Tell the men to mount up. We move out tonight.

Semyonov and the Baron salute as Wrangel walks away.

SEMYONOV
I am telling you Baron. We will never be sitting here again in this war. At least not in Russian uniforms.

The Baron smiles as he wraps the khata around his neck and puts on his shirt.

THE BARON

Remember we were warned Grigory
Mikhaylovich. A bloodbath right?

Semyonov laughs.

SEMYONOV

Yes, a bloodbath.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE, HALLWAY

In the hallway, the traditional Mongolian guards stand aside as Damdini Sukhbaatar now in a smart uniform and accompanied by six other soldiers brush past, toward the main hall.

INT. BOGD KHAN COURT

The Great Hall is now virtually empty of people.

At one end, the Bogd Khan is reading on his raised platform, while Erdene is burrowing through documents on a table in front, in much the same manner.

She looks up at the sound of stomping boots to see at first the soldiers with guns accompanying an officer she does not at first recognize.

ERDENE

What is this outrage. You have no
right to be here.

COURT ANNOUNCER

The Head of Security and Public
Order, Captain Damdini Sukhbaatar.

Damdini Sukhbaatar motions to the soldiers to stay as he
moves forward.

ERDENE

You. A man my father trusted.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

We each do what we have to, so we
survive Princess.

ERDENE

By betraying your own people?

The Bogd Khan rings a bell until Erdene notices him frowning
at her.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
 As much as it may surprise you
 princess, I am here on official
 business of the Chinese Government.

BOGD KHAN
 How can we help you and the
 Government of China Captain?

Damdini Sukhbaatar smiles.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
 As Head of Security and Public
 Order, I am responsible for
 ensuring that peace is maintained
 and that any people seeking to harm
 that peace and security are brought
 to justice.

BOGD KHAN
 We also desire the safety of the
 people.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
 Yes your holiness. But it has come
 to my attention that there may be
 people who may be taking advantage
 of your good will and hiding
 fugitives within these walls.

BOGD KHAN
 What do you propose then?

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
 (To Bogd Khan)
 I ask only that you appoint a
 trusted agent, someone such as say
 Princess Erdene who will accompany
 me as we conduct a discrete search
 of the buildings and vouch that no
 dissidents are being provided safe
 harbor.

ERDENE
 (To Sukhbaatar)
 No, I will not do it. Not with
 you -

BOGD KHAN
 (To Erdene)
 Now Erdene. We all must do things
 sometimes we would otherwise not
 do. Sitting on this tower every day
 for example.

(MORE)

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)

(Pause)

The Captain wishes you no harm.
Accompany him and show him our
hospitality and keep me informed.

Damdini Sukhbaatar gives a creepy smile, as Erdene bows her head, before looking up straight at Sukhbaatar.

ERDENE

(To Sukhbaatar)

Very well. But I want you solemn oath here, in this place, that no harm will come to my father and that I may freely visit him.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

(To Erdene)

You know your father is willful Princess. How can I then make such a promis-

ERDENE

If you do not or cannot or will not, then I cannot accept the role being asked of me.

The Bogd Khan smiles as Damdini Sukhbaatar looks up at him, waiting, hoping for some instruction.

A few more moments pass. Damdini Sukhbaatar is now scowling.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

(To Erdene)

Very well.

ERDENE

(To Sukhbaatar)

Very well what?

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

(To Erdene)

I so swear.

Erdene bows to Damdini Sukhbaatar.

ERDENE

(To Sukhbaatar)

Then I look forward to accompanying you Captain during your inspection of the palace.

(MORE)

ERDENE (cont'd)
(To Bogd Khan)
But for now your holiness, I bid
leave to prepare to visit my father
under the solemn protection of the
Captain.

The Bogd Khan bows and Erdene leaves as the smile on the face of the Bogd Khan is now beaming.

INT. CHINESE PRISON

A group of Chinese soldiers are sitting on stools in a dimly lit medieval looking room.

A prisoner with a mop and bucket washes and brushes away blood from a bench and the floor nearby, as the door opens to reveal Erdene, followed by some other guards.

The Chinese soldiers stare at her leeringly, before she defiantly steps forward and hands one of them a set of papers.

He looks at them dismissively and back at Erdene, before grunting, turning and picking up a set of keys hanging on the wall.

CHINESE GUARD
Follow me.

The guard starts walking away down a corridor.

INT. CHINESE PRISON, SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

We now see Erdene and the guard walking down a flight of stone stairs, illuminated only by the old style flame sticks held by the Chinese Guard and Erdene.

He stops at the bottom of the steps at a door, before turning the lock and stepping back.

CHINESE GUARD (cont'd)
You have ten minutes.

Erdene at first hesitates, before bowing down and entering through the door.

INT. CHINESE PRISON, NAMNANSUREN CELL

Erdene enters carrying a torch... illuminating the grim and scratched walls.

ERDENE

Father? Father where are you?

She hears a shuffle and quickly turns around, shining the torch in front of her face, to reveal the mere shadow of a once proud man, dirty, broken and bloody.

Erdene recoils at first in fright.

NAMNANSUREN

Please daughter, move the light away. I do not want you to see me like this.

Erdene ignores his plea and rushes over, embracing his frail and dirty frame, until he too embraces her in the light.

ERDENE

What have they done to you? What has happened to the house and the servants?

Namnansuren lets out a weak laugh-cough.

NAMNANSUREN

But a memory my beautiful daughter. As soon so shall I be. But how then did you come here under such terms?

ERDENE

Damdini Sukhbaatar.

Namnansuren nods his head.

NAMNANSUREN

I do not condemn a man doing what he must to survive, even Damdini.

ERDENE

He is a traitor.

NAMNANSUREN

No. He is a realist as you also must be. No one is coming to save you. The Russian Baron is long gone.

ERDENE

Good.

Namnansuren lets off another cough.

NAMNANSUREN

Do not be so quick to judge my daughter. I regret not telling you this earlier, but the young Baron did truly have deep affection for you. He told me. I saw in his eyes the struggle with his own loyalty to Russia and his affection to you. Yet as much as I tried, I could not persuade him to compromise to my ego.

ERDENE

Why are you telling me this now?

NAMNANSUREN

What happened was not his fault. Maybe you should write to him. Maybe he is still alive after all this war.

Erdene starts crying.

ERDENE

I don't want you to die.

Namnansuren reaches over and strokes her hair.

NAMNANSUREN

My daughter you of all people know the answer to that. No-one we truly love ever really dies.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE, ERDENES ROOM

Erdene is sitting at a desk under candle light writing as Buddhist monks chant their evening prayers.

ERDENE (V.O.)

Dear Baron.

Erdene scratches out the words and start again.

ERDENE (V.O.) (cont'd)

Dear Roman Nikolai,

EXT. AUSTRIAN FRONT

The monotony and horror of trench warfare....

No longer green fields and countryside, but a thick mud and hellish moonscape -- where soldiers, sandbags, wire and corpses meld into one.

The Baron and Semyonov and their Cossack comrades of Rezukhin, Veselovskii and Sipailov are engaged in fierce hand to hand combat against Austrian-Hungarian troops.

The faces of men in rage and horror -- as some kill -- and others are brutally killed.

ERDENE (V.O.)

I hope and pray you are still alive. Much has happened since you left Mongolia. The Chinese have taken control and my father is their prisoner.

The aftermath of battle as men pick over the dead and tend to the wounded.

ERDENE (V.O.) (cont'd)

I also hope my gifts have protected you against all this violence in the world.

The Baron washes the blood off his body and out of the formerly white khata.

ERDENE (V.O.) (cont'd)

I wish to apologize as my father told me it was not your fault. I am safe under the protection of the Bogd Khan.

The Baron, Semyonov, Rezukhin, Veselovskii and Sipailov and their soldiers relax along the side of a road, as wounded and supplies parade past them.

ERDENE (V.O.) (cont'd)

I pray this letter gets to you safely and that you write to me and we meet again soon. Erdene

In the distance, midst all the inhuman conditions -- devoid of life or sense -- the strangest sight of two Buddhist monks in traditional dress... walking along the side of the road.

Soldiers stare at them, like some rare oddity as they pass without obstruction.

Semyonov spots them and wakes up a snoozing Baron.

SEMYONOV
(To the Baron)
Look. Look. They've come to take
you back comrade!

The rest of the soldiers laugh as the Baron half opens, then closes his eyes and returns to resting.

There is continued laughter and jeering as the two Buddhist monks get closer and closer until they stop.

In uncomfortable silence, two Buddhist monks now stand patiently in front of Semyonov and the Baron still with his eyes closed.

It is the silence that wakes The Baron.

He opens his eyes to look up and see the two Buddhist Monks standing in front of them bowed.

The Baron gets to his feet and looks at Semyonov who shrugs his shoulders.

THE BARON
(to monks)
Can I help you?

BUDDHIST MONK
Are you Baron Roman Nikolai
Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg?

The Baron nods and the older Buddhist Monk hands him a letter.

As soon as The Baron takes the letter, both monks turn and depart back down the road past the Russian troops and trucks.

The Baron rips open the envelope and starts reading.

SEMYONOV
Well? What does it say?

THE BARON
It says don't trust Semyonov with
alcohol or secrets.

The rest of the men start laughing as the Baron puts the letter back in the envelope and into his clothes and smiles.

EXT. SOUTH-EASTERN FRONT, TRENCHES - RAIN

A grim alien world devoid of any redemption surrounds. A stark reminder of the cruelty of men.

INT. SOUTH-EASTERN FRONT, TRENCHES

Sitting under a makeshift awning out of the rain and the mud, the Baron begins penning a letter.

THE BARON (V.O.)
 My dearest Erdene, your letter
 brought me light and beauty in an
 otherwise awful world.

EXT. THE WAR AND THE BARON

The monotonous slaughter and futility of trench warfare.

The Baron and his comrades are called again and again over the trenches into no-mans land... where we see the madness of men running against machine guns... yet the Baron surviving each time and returning to the Russian trenches -- sometimes alone.

THE BARON (V.O.)
 I have seen the worst of men and
 the best of men.

The gaunt image of TSAR NICHOLAS visiting the troops.

In a makeshift parade, we see him pin medals on the chests of Wrangel and the Baron and Semyonov.

Soon after, the Baron, still wearing his medal is desperately BAYONETING and SHOOTING at enemy soldiers...

...then saving the life of Semyonov -- before moving on to bayonet and kill half a dozen more Austro-Hungarian soldiers.

THE BARON (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Yet it is the thought that one day
 I will see you again, that makes
 each day in this madness
 worthwhile.

EXT. STREETS OF URGA MONGOLIA - DAY

A young boy is running with a letter along a dirt street toward the Bogd Khan Palace.

Before he gets to the steps, he is stopped by Damdini Sukhbaatar.

INT. OFFICE

Inside an office, Damdini Sukhbaatar sits at a desk, reading the intercepted letter.

THE BARON (V.O.)

When this war ends and I can leave.
I will return and God willing, will
do all in my power to help free
your father and Mongolia.

Damdini Sukhbaatar put down the letter as there is a knock at the door and a soldier opens it saluting, followed by Erdene looking nervous.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

Ah yes Erdene. Please come in.
(to soldier)
You can leave us.

The soldier nods, turns and leaves, closing the door.

Erdene scans the room, noticing a letter, before looking back at Sukhbaatar.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR (cont'd)

Have a seat.

ERDENE

I'd rather stand.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

Suit yourself.

(picking up the letter)

You know, it is not easy for me to
do what I have to do to protect the
people. I assure you, if it were up
to the Chinese some days, there
would be no city left.

ERDENE

Get to the point.

Damdini Sukhbaatar dangles the letter closer to Erdene until she snatches it from him and starts reading.

Her face is at once delight suddenly overwhelmed by dread.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

You know on just what you are holding in your hands right now, I I could have you shot and there is nothing that the Bogd Khan could do about it. Or have you sold as some girl slave to the soldiers.

Erdene puts her hand to her mouth.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR (cont'd)

But I am not going to do that.

Damdini Sukhbaatar gets up from his chair and moves right up to Erdene, now frozen in fear as he slides his hand across her face and neck and arm.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR (cont'd)

No. You are going to marry me.

Erdene looks shocked.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR (cont'd)

And if you displease me or dishonor me in anyway, then your father shall be dead. And if you try and run away, I shall have you and all the priests shot.

Damdini Sukhbaatar returns to his desk and pulls out a fresh sheet of paper and a pen.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR (cont'd)

Right now, you are going to write a letter to the Russian Baron telling him that you have changed your mind and that you have no feelings for him and are to be married, so it is pointless him returning to Urga.

Erdene hesitates. Damdini Sukhbaatar fixes a menacing gaze.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR (cont'd)

NOW.

Erdene blinks and sits down, grabbing the pen and starts writing.

ERDENE (V.O.)

Dear Baron, I write with heavy heart to tell you that I do not wish to see you again. I am betrothed to another man.

EXT. URGA

The wedding feast of Damdini Sukhbaatar and Erdene, pretending to smile... as the shell of her father sits to the side, carefully watched by two Chinese guards.

ERDENE (V.O.) (cont'd)
By the time you receive this
letter, we will already be happily
married.

Damdini Sukhbaatar take Erdene back to a room after the feast and as Erdene resists.

Damdini slaps her across the face, causing her to fall down.

EXT. AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN FRONT - DAY

Midst, the dead, the dying and the injured, the Baron, looking weary and exhausted -- seated next to a covered camp fire.

He is reading a letter intensely, as in the distance the figure of two Buddhist monks are walking away.

ERDENE (V.O.)
Please do not make this harder than
it already is by trying to contact
me again as I will not write or
wish to see you again.

The Baron throws the letter into the fire.

He stands up and paces around, with his hands on his head, before sitting back down and deeply rubbing his face...

He pulls out his service revolver, letting the barrel, sit across his knees...He plays with the cylinder, letting it click through its revolutions...

He shakes his head once more and puts the revolver back in its holster before looking up.

At a distance he can see Semyonov and Rezukhin running toward. Semyonov is juggling two bottles while Rezukhin is waving his arms.

SEMYONOV
(Yelling the Baron)
Comrade, it is over!

The Baron looks at him strangely.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

The Tsar has abdicated. We are going home. The war at least for Russia has ended.

Semyonov pulls the top off one of the bottles and takes a gulp before handing it to Rezukhin. The Baron is shaking his head.

THE BARON

You are wrong Grigory Mikhaylovich. The war for Russia is only just beginning.

SEMYONOV

That may be true. But we will never see this hell again...Better to die in the fields of the motherland than in some muddy hole in this godforsaken place...

Semyonov hands the other bottle to The Baron who takes a big sip.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, SQUARE OPPOSITE THE HERMITAGE - DAY

The city of St. Petersburg... no longer looking clean -- but covered in a gray-grime:

- garbage and refuse are left in piles along the roads,
- people hurrying along the footpaths, careful not to make eye contact.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "St Petersburg, 1917"

INT. ST. PETERSBURG, THE LITERARY CAFE

The Literary Cafe is full of people, speaking, smoking and drinking.

At a table is Semyonov and the Baron both still in military uniform and Maurice Janin, trying to be polite while sipping a coffee.

Elmore Taggart comes over to the table accompanied with ALEXANDER KOLCHAK.

ELMORE TAGGART

Let me introduce Alexander Kolchak.
(MORE)

ELMORE TAGGART (cont'd)

(Pause)

This is Grigory Mikhaylovich
Semyonov and Baron Roman Nikolai
Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg.
And of course you already know
Maurice.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK

Yes

Alexander Kolchak sips his coffee before looking at Maurice Janine.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK (cont'd)

(To Maurice Janin)

Prince Lvov and Alexander Kerensky
are living in a fantasy. We have no
military strength anymore and
without assistance from the Allied
Powers, Russia will be swallowed by
hungry wolves.

MAURICE JANIN

I can vouch for the Czech
Legionnaires.

ELMORE TAGGART

And I the Americans and Japanese.
No offense to you Baron.

THE BARON

(To the table and then
staring at Kolchak)

What happens then when we agree to
such forces coming onto Russian
soil? Is this not the Trojan Horse
we first feared?

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK

You may be a good soldier Baron.
But you are no politician. The
reality is we must have such
support if we are to survive.

Alexander Kolchak stands up and shakes the hand of Maurice Janin and Elmore Taggart.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK (cont'd)

I accept your proposal and I speak
for all true Russians that we will
resist the forces of anarchy.

Alexander Kolchak stands up, picking up his coffee and raising it as if making a toast.

The rest of the men look slightly embarrassed until Maurice Janin stands up also with his coffee and then Elmore Taggart and Semyonov and finally the Baron.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK (cont'd)
To Russia!

The men collectively clink their cups and sit back down.

THE BARON
(Mumbling to Semyonov)
May she survive the winter.

Semyonov gives the Baron a half smile, before the Baron stands up.

THE BARON (cont'd)
Gentlemen, it is an honor. But I
must be leaving.

The Baron extends his hand to Alexander Kolchak who shakes it firmly.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK
Do not go too far Baron. Your duty
to mother Russia shall soon be
calling.

The Baron nods to Alexander Kolchak, Elmore Taggart and to Maurice Janin, before turning and walking toward the cafe exit.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, THE LITERARY CAFE - DAY

The Baron is now outside the cafe walking away a few brief steps as Semyonov bounds out of the cafe after him.

SEMYONOV
(To the Baron)
So it is going to be like that
then.

The Baron keeps walking a few more steps, not bothering to turn around.

THE BARON
If you want to be a politician or
oligarch fine, that's your
business.

SEMYONOV
So you're just going to keep
walking away from your friend.

The Baron stops and turns around to look at Semyonov and spots Elmore Taggart has also left the cafe and is walking towards them.

THE BARON

Grigory Mikhaylovich, Alexander Kolchak is a peacock who is selling out true Russia. He hasn't got a clue and he will lose.

Elmore Taggart is now almost upon both men.

SEMYONOV

Then help him and guide him, please!

THE BARON

There is something I must do -

SEMYONOV

What chase after that girl again in Mongolia. She is gone. You said it yourself -

The Baron swings around and stares at Semyonov with a look of intense anger.

ELMORE TAGGART

(To the Baron)

Sorry to interrupt. I wanted to speak with you in private.

Semyonov looks at Elmore Taggart and at The Baron, who composes himself.

THE BARON

I trust Semyonov with my life.

Semyonov smiles.

SEMYONOV

So you should. I saved it enough times.

ELMORE TAGGART

(To the Baron)

I couldn't tell you in there, because Kolchak sees him as a bit of a competitor, but Pyotr Nikolayevich Wrangel has been captured by the Communist terrorists.

THE BARON

Where?

ELMORE TAGGART

Odessa. Look, Edmund Ironside has some people down that way who can help you. I know you consider him a friend and a good general. I just thought you should know.

SEMYONOV

So off to war against the communist terrorists then? I suppose it is as good a reason as any. Unless you have other plans Baron?

The Baron shakes his head negatively.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

Good, then let us go and kill some Communists!

EXT. WRANGEL HOUSE, ODESSA SHORELINE - DAY

Wrangel, sitting on a chair on a beautiful terrace overlooking the Black Sea.

He is playing chess with another man (COMMUNIST GUARD), as several other Communist Soldiers sit around, reading books, or playing cards.

In a moment, there is the BLISTERING POPS of gun fire followed by the BOOM and RATTLE of two explosions.

Wrangel doesn't look up as the Communist Guard playing chess seems to melt into his chair in anxiety.

COMMUNIST GUARD

(nervously to Wrangel)

Wait here.

WRANGEL

Don't be too long, we have a game to finish. Otherwise, I will have to find someone else to play.

The Communist guards jumps inside.

The sound of gunfire moves closer, as Wrangel still does not flinch.

Suddenly the Communist soldiers are returning fire on the balcony...

Only then does Wrangel gets up to move inside, only to be confronted by three Communist soldiers pointing guns at him... including the Communist Guard.

COMMUNIST GUARD

I am sorry General. I have orders.

Yet before any of the Communists can fire, there is a hail of bullets.

The Communist soldiers drop to the ground dead.

Wrangel steps over and surveys the damaged wall and shattered windows of the house.

The Baron, followed by Semyonov, Veselovskii, Sipailov and Rezukhin come into view.

Wrangel is shaking his head ...ignoring them for a moment, still reviewing the damage.

SEMYONOV

Wrangel, are you not happy to see us?

WRANGEL

(pointing)

Look at the damage! You destroyed my house.

REZUKHIN

But we rescued you.

WRANGEL

Why? I was perfectly happy.

Wrangel acknowledges the Baron who briefly smiles in return.

SEMYONOV

Well, whatever. We will build you a brand new Duma. In the meantime, we have orders to get to Chita. Kolchak is poised to declare a republic.

Wrangel huffs.

WRANGEL

(To the Baron)

What? So more men and women can die for a new political cause, eh Baron?

THE BARON

Don't ask me. I am just a soldier.

Muffled laughter.

EXT. CHITA - DAY

A bustling scene of organized chaos outside the main railway station of Chita, as white Russian soldiers pour in and out of the building while there is almost a complete absence of civilians.

Midst the bustle, the Baron, Wrangel and Semyonov arrive, pushing their way past the troops.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Chita, 1918"

EXT. CHITA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

We now see the Baron, Wrangel and Semyonov arrive by foot outside a heavily guarded cinder block building. The troops salute and the men enter the building.

INT. CHITA HEADQUARTERS, PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE

Alexander Kolchak is leaning over a map on a long board room table, in an art-deco office with several other White Russian commanders, as The Baron, Wrangel and Semyonov arrive.

SEMYONOV

It is worse than St. Petersburg at Christmas here.

Muffled laughter as Kolchak remains stone faced.

Alexander Kolchak makes eye contact with Wrangel and they nod in acknowledgment of one another.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK

Baron, I am promoting you to Major General. You will be in charge with coordinating new military units around Dauria and Irkutsk while Major General Semyonov is to the east in Siberia.

The Baron nods and smiles at Semyonov.

THE BARON
 (To Semyonov)
 Major General.

SEMYONOV
 (To Baron)
 Major General.

They look back at Alexander Kolchak who is not smiling.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK
 The Communists have concentrated
 their forces near Yakut. Major
 General Semyonov, your forces and
 division will command the east and
 Siberia, with assistance from the
 Americans.

Semyonov nods approvingly. Kolchak looks to Wrangel.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK (cont'd)
 (to Wrangel)
 Major General Wrangel, you will
 command our southern forces.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK (cont'd)
 (to The Baron)
 And Major General Ungern-Sternberg
 you will be tasked in pulling
 together all the different militias
 of tribes, cultures, religions and
 races to defend our western flanks.

The Baron nods approvingly.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK (cont'd)
 Ungern-Sternberg your commanders
 are at Dauria waiting for you.
 Russians, Buryats, Tatars,
 Bashkirs, Mongols all united under
 one purpose: to stopping the
 communists.
 (pause)
 Your division is to be called the
 1st Asiatic Cavalry.
 And you are authorized to use
 whatever force or tactics are
 necessary to stop the Communists
 from cutting Russia in half.

EXT. CHITA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The Baron and Semyonov step outside the building to be greeted by a beaming Veselovskii holding the reins of a saddled horse -- It is Balius.

The Baron instantly recognized the horse and rushes over to pat him.

VESELOVSKII

It wasn't easy. They shipped all our horses back east when we were assigned to the trenches.

(pause)

But we all went searching. And one old Cossack quartermaster remembered. So we went looking just outside of Irkutsk and found him still alive along with some of our other horses.

The Baron steps over and embraces Veselovskii.

THE BARON

Thank you Stepan Borisovich! Thank you from my heart!

Semyonov comes over and slaps The Baron across the back.

SEMYONOV

You can't be the general of the last great cavalry army in Europe and Asia without a great horse, now can you?

EXT. 1ST ASIATIC CAVALRY HQ, DAURIA - DAY

The Baron arrives proudly to a small reception of cavalry in front of a building on the back of Balius.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Chita, 1918"

The Baron dismounts to be greeted by Sipailov, followed by Rezukhin and Veselovskii.

THE BARON

(laughing)

They told me my commanders would be waiting for me. Not that it would take years to train them out of bad habits...

Elmore Taggart and then Edmund Ironside step out of the building.

ELMORE TAGGART
You made it at last!

THE BARON
(to Edmund Ironside)
Thank you for the help with
Wrangel.

Edmund Ironside grins.

EDMUND IRONSIDE
I am glad we could be of some
service.

Edmund Ironside then glances at Elmore Taggart, before looking back at The Baron.

EDMUND IRONSIDE (cont'd)
Taggart and I agreed that if
neither of us could succeed in
recruiting you, at least we could
do is see you have a decent go of
it against the Communists.

Sipailov then signaled the Baron.

SIPAILOV
(to Baron)
Come let us show you what you have
inherited.

The Baron followed by the rest step into the building.

INT. 1ST ASIATIC CAVALRY HQ

Inside, the officers and staff stand to attention.

On the walls are maps of central Russia and Mongolia...with lists and names and icons for military units.

Sipailov steps forward to the main map.

SIPAILOV
General, your Division is made up
of approximately three thousand men
as two brigades and a support
regiment.
(pause)
The first brigade is led by
myself -

REZUKHIN
 (to the Baron)
 And the second by me.

The Baron slaps his head.

THE BARON
 God help us.

VESELOVSKII
 (to the Baron)
 And I am commanding the support
 regiment.
 (nodding to Ironside and
 Taggart)
 We have some great surprises thanks
 to our friends here today.

EDMUND IRONSIDE
 I am sorry we could not do more...
 But technically we were never here.

SIPAILOV
 We have ten aircraft, eight British
 artillery pieces and twenty
 Japanese machine gun teams.

REZUKHIN
 Oh, and speaking of God General.
 You might need to stretch that.
 Apart from our Japanese troops
 being Shinto, you have hundreds of
 Muslims, Jews and Buddhists apart
 from Christians --

SIPAILOV
 And Tartar, Mongol, Turkic, Uralic,
 Buryat and Japanese apart from
 Russian.

The Baron shakes his head.

ELMORE TAGGART
 I've never heard of something like
 this before. If you pull this off,
 you'll be frightening more than a
 few Communists -

THE BARON
 (to Sipailov)
 I want to address all the troops
 within the next two hours before we
 ship out.

Sipailov nods and moves away.

EDMUND IRONSIDE

I hope you pull something out of
that military history books
General. You're first victory is
getting your army to work
together...

EXT. 1ST ASIATIC CAVALRY HQ, DAURIA - DAY

The Baron on his horse parades up the line as countless
soldiers on horseback and in formation awaiting his speak
and orders.

THE BARON

I know all of you assembled here
today are volunteers and patriots.
You are Christian, Jew, Muslim,
Buddhist, and Taoist. You are
Russian, Tartar, Mongol, Turkic,
Uralic, Buryat and Japanese.

(pause)

Every Religion. Every race of
Asiatic peoples, the likes of which
we have never seen united as one.
I will not betray your trust or
hope.

A loud roar from the assembled soldiers.

EXT. 1ST ASIATIC CAVALRY TRAINING - DAY

The various troops from different backgrounds of the Asiatic
Cavalry, run through drills and training.

THE BARON (V.O.)

*Before me is the truth that no
force in Heaven or upon this earth
can deny - We have come together
not because we wish for the old
ways of the past, but because we
know the real evil facing our
future.*

EXT. BATTLE FOR YAKUT - DAY

Now the Baron and his troops engaged in real battle against
the Communist Red army ...as building burn and explosions
erupt and men fall in combat...

THE BARON (V.O.)

Communism is not a true philosophy. Instead, it is an offering of romantic slogans to lost souls, willing to sacrifice themselves to those who wish nothing more to achieve total power - as living gods by another name. Power by any means. Power, no matter how evil the act.

EXT. MOPPING UP AFTER BATTLE FOR YAKUT - DAY

The Baron's troops are mopping up after the battle as what seems like thousands of Communists are dead or dying, strewn across the the city battlefield landscape.

THE BARON (V.O.)

Let there be no doubt - that if we fail, our children and their children's children will be enslaved by a force of evil the likes of which this world has never seen. Let this then be the time we stand up. Let this be for a cause greater than ourselves.

As the Baron on horseback canters slowly past the carnage and his victory, his troops ROAR and thrust their guns and flags into the air.

The Baron acknowledges their cheers, by lifting his cap as he rides along, acknowledging them all.

EXT. YAKUT CITY SQUARE - DAY

The city is still smouldering and traumatized from battle.

The damaged city square -- now full of Asiatic Cavalry.

A group of soldiers are busily tearing down a communist flag, replacing it with the Imperial Russian flag.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Yakut, 1918"

In the center of the square, surrounded by Asiatic Cavalry soldiers is hundreds of Communist prisoners huddled together.

There is a ROAR from the Asiatic Cavalry when The Baron, accompanied by Rezukhin enters the square.

Rezukhin points the Baron to a building to the right of them not destroyed.

REZUKHIN

That is the building the Division priest wants as a temporary church. But the Rabbi also wants it as a Synagogue and is fighting with the Islamic Imam.

THE BARON

Let them work it out between themselves or no one is getting it.

Leonid Sipailov steps up to the Baron and Rezukhin and salutes, before pointing to the prisoners.

LEONID SIPAILOV

(To the Baron)

These ones we found working in the main Communist Headquarters. The officers fled or committed suicide. So what do you want me to do with them?

THE BARON

I want to see them first.

The Baron walks slowly along the line of prisoners, who keep their heads down.

The Baron stops and looks more closely at one in particular.

THE BARON (cont'd)

(To Sipailov)

That one.

Sipailov motions to one of the guards to move over.

LEONID SIPAILOV

(To prisoner)

Prisoner, show your face.

Slowly the prisoner lifts his face to reveal it is a dirty and haggard Minei Gubelman.

THE BARON

(To Minei Gubelman)

Minei!

Minei Gubelman ignores him and looks away.

THE BARON (cont'd)
 (To Minei Gubelman)
 Minei, it is you. Say something!

MINEI GUBELMAN
 (To the Baron)
 My name is Yemelyan Mikhailovich
 Yaroslavsky and if it be your
 decision, then I shall die with my
 comrades.

The Baron laughs.

THE BARON
 (To Leonid Sipailov)
 Release him and bring him to my
 office.

LEONID SIPAILOV
 (To the Baron)
 And the others?

The Baron drops his head.

THE BARON
 (To Leonid Sipailov)
 You know what to do.

Leonid Sipailov salutes as the Baron turns and walks away.

EXT. ASIATIC CAVALRY HQ - DAY

Minei Gubelman is escorted by two guards into a building.

INT. THE BARON'S OFFICE, ASIATIC CAVALRY HQ, YAKUT

Inside an office, an attendant is standing with a bowl as the Baron takes off his shirt to reveal the khata scarf is now red stained with blood.

The Baron throws the shirt off and throws the blood stained khata over a chair before washing his face and hands with the bowl of water.

There is a knock at the door.

THE BARON
 Enter.

Minei Gubelman escorted by two guards enters the room.

The Baron finishes wrapping the blood stained khata around his neck and starts buttoning up his shirt.

THE BARON (cont'd)
 (To the guards)
 It is OK. You can leave us.

The Baron gets up and walks over and grabs two glasses and a bottle and brings it over to Minei Gubelman.

MINEI GUBELMAN
 I do not need your hospitality. Nor
 will I betray the Revolution.

The Baron starts laughing.

THE BARON
 If there is one thing that war has
 taught me Minei -

MINEI GUBELMAN
 My name is not Minei, it is
 Yemelyan Mikhail -

The Barons waves his hand as he passes a glass.

THE BARON
 Yes, I heard you the first time. It
 is not to take life too seriously.
 (Pause)
 To our inevitable deaths.

The Baron clinks his glass against the glass of Minei Gubelman and gulps down the vodka, before returning to the other side of the desk.

A few moments later Minei eventually starts sipping his drink.

THE BARON (cont'd)
 I have seen the headless corpses of
 men, who were sitting twenty miles
 from the front who were killed by
 mishap with carting shells to the
 front. And I have seen men run
 naked through a minefield,
 completely mad, yet without a
 scratch. So you tell me then when
 we die?

MINEI GUBELMAN
 I vow that before this war is over,
 I shall have the last laugh.

The Baron looks down and finishes signing a piece of paper.

THE BARON
 Maybe you will. Maybe you won't.
 But it won't be by my hands.
 (shouting)
 Guards.
 (To Minei)
 Minei, you are not a soldier. As
 much as you love your revolution.

The guards come bursting into the office as the Baron stands up and hands papers to them.

THE BARON (cont'd)
 (To Guards)
 Take this man to the outskirts of
 the city. Make sure he has supplies
 and civilian clothes and then set
 him free.

Minei Gubelman looks stunned.

THE BARON (cont'd)
 (To Minei Gubelman)
 Good luck Minei.

EXT. URGA - DAY

Erdene escorts a simple cart, on which is a body wrapped in white.

She is accompanied by four Buddhist monks.

Damdini Sukhbaatar pushes past them to Erdene, who then slaps him hard across the face.

ERDENE
 You promised.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
 It is not my fault.

ERDENE
 You promised and now my father is
 dead.

Damdini grabs her arm and she pushes him away.

ERDENE (cont'd)
 Don't touch me. Don't you ever
 touch me again.

Erdene wipes away her tears.

ERDENE (cont'd)

I may be your wife. But you are
dead to me and I will not sleep
with you or attend you again.

Damdini Sukhbaatar stops walking and steps aside, letting
the cart and Erdene and the Buddhist monks continue down the
dirt road.

EXT. DAURIA BATTLEFIELD - DAY

The Baron stands on a stool, gruesomely conducting the
stringing up of a dead body of a Communist onto a stake.

LEONID SIPAILOV

Why do you do all this? It seems
such a huge waste of effort when we
could just let the bodies rot.

The Baron laughs.

THE BARON

Propaganda Leonidivich.

(pause)

The Communists think they are the
best propagandists, but everyone
remembers the stories of Vlad the
Impaler.

BORIS REZUKHIN

But they were already dead first.

THE BARON

How will they know? Let their
imagination run wild. So much the
better for us if they think they
are fighting the Devil himself.

We pull back to see a long line of hundreds and hundreds of
bodies impaled on stakes lining the road as far as the eye
can see.

EXT. CHITA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The Baron walks alone to the same heavily guarded cinder
block building we saw earlier.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Chita, 1919"

INT. CHITA HEADQUARTERS, PRESIDENTIAL OFFICE

Wrangel, Semyonov and several other officers are already in the room as Kolchak is pre-occupied in the corner, trying out a new uniform with a tailor. Wrangel is the first to spot the Baron as he enters the room.

WRANGEL

(To Baron)

Your reputation has grown since the last time we met.

THE BARON

Baron Pyotr Nikolayevich you know better than most war is hell and one must do what he can to unsettle the enemy.

SEMYONOV

Ah here he is, the Bloody Baron!
Baron von Blood.

THE BARON

Don't believe everything you read
Grigory Mikhaylovich.

SEMYONOV

Pulling us out of the field for this meeting is a big gamble for Kolchak. What have you heard?

THE BARON

That you are even a bigger drinker and womanizer now than you ever were.

General laughter as Alexander Kolchak steps over in his new uniform.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK

The French have betrayed us. The Czech Legionnaires are pulling out on orders of Maurice Janin.

SEMYONOV

What about the About the Americans? Surely they don't want to see the Communists take over.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK

As far as I can tell, they are playing both sides so whoever comes out on top they have an obligation.

(MORE)

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK (cont'd)
 I leave for a meeting tonight in
 the hope of persuading the
 Americans and British to help
 defend the Russian Republic, which
 is why I call you all here. I am
 putting Grigory Mikhaylovich
 Semyonov in charge until my return.

THE BARON
 Then God help us.

Semyonov punches the Baron on the arm.

SEMYONOV
 Careful. I might just send you on a
 mission to Moscow.

ALEXANDER KOLCHAK
 That is all.

The men salute as Alexander Kolchak leaves the room.

EXT. CHITA, RAILWAY STATION - DAY

Semyonov, The Baron and Wrangel are standing out in front of
 the railway station, surrounded by a cordon of soldiers.

SEMYONOV
 So what do you think?

THE BARON
 I don't like it. I think it is a
 trap. But with the Czech
 Legionnaires gone, we have a huge
 hole in our south and western
 flank.

From the entrance of the train station, two Buddhist monks
 emerge.

SEMYONOV
 What about you Wrangel?

WRANGEL
 I am a soldier, not a martyr. I'll
 take my divisions into the gap and
 hold as best I can and pray that
 the Americans and British pull
 through.

As the two Buddhist monks are almost upon the guards
 surrounding the generals, Semyonov spots them and starts
 shaking his head.

SEMYONOV

(To the Baron)

What is it with you and Buddhist monks?

(pause)

And how do they keep finding you?

The Baron shrugs his shoulders and motions to the guards to let the two Buddhist monks pass through.

The Baron bows to the monks and the monks bow to him and hand him a letter.

However, this one is beautifully wrapped in gold leaf.

As soon as they hand over the letter, the monks bow and depart.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

(To the Baron)

Fancy. Who is it?

The Baron opens the letter and starts scratching his head.

THE BARON

It is from the Bogd Khan.

WRANGEL

Who?

SEMYONOV

Some shaman the Baron met when he was in love in Mongolia.

The Baron darts a deadly stare at Semyonov who pauses for a moment, before the Baron calms.

WRANGEL

What does it say?

THE BARON

It just says "Everything yields but the heart. Remember your promise".

SEMYONOV

See, that is why I never follow shamans.

THE BARON

He is the second to the Dalai Lama and considered a living incarnation of Buddha.

The Baron nods to Wrangel before turning and starting to walk away

SEMYONOV

Hey! I am in charge now. Where are you going?

THE BARON

To fulfill a promise.

EXT. DUMA ABOVE URGA - DAY

High above the city of Urga, on the stone steps of an ancient Duma, Erdene is sitting once again, sadly alone, looking down at a garrison of Chinese soldiers doing exercises.

THE BARON (O.S.)

I am sorry it took me so long to finally get here.

Erdene, looks in shock at the voice coming from behind.

She moves around to her right.

ERDENE

Who is this? Why do you still torment me?

THE BARON

It is only me, Roman Nikolai.

Erdene swings around to see the Baron standing there, holding a bunch of flowers.

In an instant she sees his face and falls into his arms, weeping.

ERDENE

Oh how I have dreamt of this.

Erdene embraces for a moment long, before pushing back, looking perplexed at first before fearful.

ERDENE (cont'd)

But the guards? How could this be? Am I dead, is this only a dream.

The Baron smiles and moves forward again, kissing her hand.

THE BARON

The Chinese guards have been taken care of. You have nothing to fear.

(MORE)

THE BARON (cont'd)
 I have been watching the city and
 for you for eight days now. Waiting
 for this moment. You are safe now.

Erdene now kisses him on the lips and they embrace again,
 before Erdene once again breaks the embrace and looks at the
 Baron.

ERDENE
 You have changed.

THE BARON
 War does that.

The Baron shows the prayer beads around his arm and the off
 colored khata around his neck, no longer blood red, nor
 white.

THE BARON (cont'd)
 I have never forgotten...

Erdene smiles and then frowns, before stepping back.

ERDENE
 He made me write that letter.
 Damdini Sukhbaatar. He is very
 dangerous and will not stop.

THE BARON
 Do not worry. I did not come alone.

The Baron takes Erdene by the hand and escorts her to the
 other side of Duma away from the city.

There she sees the faces of hundreds of the soldiers of the
 Baron.

She looks back at him, anxiously.

ERDENE
 But there are many thousands of
 Chinese soldiers.

THE BARON
 That won't stop my men.

EXT. DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR HOUSE - AFTERNOON

The former home of the Prime Minister is now the home of the
 Captain of Secret Police and Security.

The furious figure of Damdini Sukhbaatar stomps through the
 gates to the nervous salute of the guards.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
Where is she?

The guard shrugs nervously as Damdini slaps him hard across the face and moves inside.

INT. DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR HOUSE, ERDENES ROOM

Damdini Sukhbaatar bursts through the door of a room in which is scattered the clothes and items of Erdene.

He looks under the bed and in the closet, before letting out a yell...and in a fit of fury, smashes a mirror on the wall and upturns a cabinet.

Two soldiers come in to see if Damdini Sukhbaatar is hurt.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
Find her. Take everyone out and
find her.

EXT. MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - NIGHT

The Baron and Erdene are sitting at the site of a camp fire, high in the mountains, as troops surround them just outside the light of the fire.

The Baron pokes a stick into the fire and embers swirl up into the night sky.

ERDENE
You fought in that terrible war?

The Barons nods.

ERDENE (cont'd)
Was it as bad as they say?

THE BARON
Worse. But it is over now.

Erdene smiles.

ERDENE
But I see it still changed you.

Erdene laughs.

ERDENE (cont'd)
It seems we all change.

The Baron nods his head negatively.

THE BARON

Not you. You are still as beautiful
as I first remember.

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - NIGHT

The silhouette of the secret police on horseback winding up
the pass closer to the camp.

EXT. MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - NIGHT

The Baron covers Erdene with a blanket to stay warm.

ERDENE

So what will you do? The Chinese
have many men and machine guns and
artillery.

The Baron smiles.

THE BARON

Get some rest. In the morning we
shall plan our attack and surprise
them -

At that moment we hear the sound of gun shots, before
volleys of guns start going off.

The Baron gets up and grabs his rifle as Rezukhin comes
rushing over.

REZUKHIN

It is a patrol from the city.

THE BARON

Don't let any escape.

Rezukhin swings around and returns toward the firing as The
Baron and Erdene follow.

The Baron stops and looks back at Erdene.

THE BARON (cont'd)

Stay here. It is too dangerous.

ERDENE

No less dangerous for you.

EXT. MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - NIGHT

The troops of Damdini Sukhbaatar continue to fight until the guns of the Secret Police fall silent.

THE BARON
Is that all of them?

REZUKHIN
I think so.

Erdene points at the distant shape of two riders at full gallop heading towards the gates of the city.

ERDENE
There is your answer.

THE BARON
There goes the element of surprise.

EXT. DUMA ABOVE URGA - DAY

In the ancient Duma overlooking Urga, the Baron and his commanders study a map of the city below.

Sipailov points to a position on the map.

SIPAILOV
Xu Shuzheng has approximately four and half thousand troops dug into positions around the position.
(pointing)
The heavies lines are here against any frontal assault to cross the river.

THE BARON
An artillery?

Sipailov points to two other sections of the map.

SIPAILOV
His heavy artillery is positioned to his left and right flanks, guarding access from the valley.
(pause)
But the other problem is, at least half of his forces are in embedded positions throughout the city with the population.

VESELOVSKII

(to the Baron)

I know you are concerned about casualties with our men. The simplest is still to shell the city. We could still save the monks in their palace...

The Baron shakes his head.

THE BARON

No. We are not going to burn the city. I want the population unharmed.

Collective sighs around the map.

REZUKHIN

Then we could lose half our forces or more in urban fighting alone. Is that what you want?

The Baron steps back.

THE BARON

We just need to come up with a plan that unsettles them and plays with their minds...

SIPAILOV

I wonder if the Chinese have fully heard of the Blood Baron?

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF URGA - MORNING

A rag-tag looking troop of some thirty marauders approach the front lines of the Chinese outside Urga.

At 400 yards, the Chinese start to open fire.

The marauders scatter and ride away back to the mountains.

Soon after, a unit of Chinese cavalry of over 200 ride out of Urga to give chase.

EXT. MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - DAY

The Chinese cavalry have dismounted -- rifles out, searching for the marauders.

They step through a pass in the mountains to find themselves surrounded by the forces of the Baron.

EXT. MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - NIGHT

A clear night in the mountains above Urga.

The Baron and Erdene are sitting alone, looking at the valley below.

THE BARON

I cannot see you for the next few days. War is no place for a distracted mind -

ERDENE

(cheekily)

Do I distract you?

THE BARON

You know my feelings. But I do not want you to see what I have to do.

Erdene bows her head into the shoulder of the Baron, before looking lovingly at him.

She leans forward and kisses his forehead.

ERDENE

I know who you are. Do not worry. In the deeper teachings of our people, such notions of good and evil are considered but constructs of the mind -- borne from the root cause of continued suffering through ignorance. A man who seeks to save the suffering of many, by doing what he considers necessary, so long as it is without the poisons of greed, ill will or delusion, cannot be considered evil.

The Baron smiles and kisses her.

THE BARON

Even so, my best men will keep you safe, until we finish what must be done.

The Baron gets up and bows, before leaving Erdene.

EXT. VIEWING MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - NIGHT

Chinese soldiers patrol the perimeter of Urga.

Suddenly one shouts to two others -- pointing at the nearby mountains.

In the hills, campfires start to appear. Twenty, fifty, a hundred five hundred burning as bright red beacons against the clear night sky.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF URGA - MORNING

A morning fog hugs the edges of the city. The sun starting to burn its way through.

Out of the fog, strange and grizzly images begin to emerge -- the sight of dozens of dead Chinese soldiers -- impaled upon stakes in the ground.

The first Chinese soldiers to see the horror, scream to their comrades to move forward -- many hesitate...one or two do not move.

As more of the fog appears to lift, some of the Chinese soldiers begin to pull down their comrades.

More barking and shouting -- as teams of Chinese soldiers with machines move up into place -- between the macabre temporary forest of the dead.

EXT. VIEWING MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - NIGHT

Another clear night. The Chinese soldiers stuck in sandbagged emplacements far in front of the entrance to Urga whisper to one another -- as countless hundreds of camp fires burn as red dots in the mountains.

Yet there is no peace -- as dozens of blood curdling screams echo from the mountains across the valley below.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF URGA - MORNING

Upon morning there is no fog -- as the Chinese soldiers scan the horizon.

From a distance the Chinese soldiers spot four riders heading in their direction at speed...But there is something odd about them.

A Chinese officer moves forward with his binoculars to view.

He clearly sees the riders are their own troops, bound naked to the horses, carrying a strange cargo tied around the sides of the horses.

As the four naked Chinese riders approach, one soldier nervously shoots a rider off the horse and he falls...as the horse keeps going.

Soon, they see clearly see what they are carrying -- it is dozens of heads of other Chinese soldiers, bundled together.

One soldier cannot contain his terror and leaps out -- running back toward the city.

CHINESE SOLDIER

(screaming)

The Bloody Baron is coming to kill
us! He is coming to drink our blood
and eat our flesh -

A Chinese Officer shoots the soldier dead before he gets to the entrance of the city, before he swings around to the other soldiers, cowering in fear.

CHINESE OFFICER

Stand you posts. That is an order!

EXT. VIEWING MOUNTAINS ABOVE URGA - NIGHT

A cloudy and windy night. Even more campfires appear lit across the mountain ranges above Urga.

No longer the sound of screams heard, but beating drums and mad laughter echoing and swirling in the wind.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF URGA - MORNING

Upon a windy morning, the 2nd Cavalry brigade of Rezukhin slowly approaches the outskirts of Urga in a single line -- stretching across the valley.

Behind them, the 1st Cavalry brigade of Sipailov whirls around in great circles, creating huge clouds of dust -- and the illusion of a massive approaching army.

The Chinese defenders look nervous -- as orders are barked to their front lines.

The dust swirls toward the front lines of the Chinese, as we hear the trumpets of a charge.

Rezukhin's men are now in full gallop. The sound of Chinese artillery starting to fire.

Yet almost as if anticipating the artillery, the cavalry of Rezukhin split from the middle into two separate flanks -- the Chinese shells falling harmlessly in the center -- causing more smoke and noise.

Before the Chinese can even re-position their machine guns and re-calibrate their artillery, Rezukhin and his brave men and their horses have reached the western defenses of the Chinese -- and punch through.

On seeing their positions overrun, Chinese soldiers on-mass start abandoning their posts and running back into the city.

The Chinese are in disarray. The artillery barrage has stopped.

Now Sipailov rushes forward through the center with his men and horses, encircling the Chinese positions.

Soon the sounds of machine guns fall silent and only the sounds of gunfire and screams can be heard -- as men fight for their lives.

EXT. URGU CITY CHINESE DEFENDERS - DAY

A hold-out compound of Chinese soldiers -- still flying their flag -- is firing with machine guns and rifles at positions of the Asiatic Cavalry surrounding it.

The Baron steps up cautiously to a front position, where Rezukhin is positioned, co-coordinating his troops.

A pair of Asiatic Cavalry soldiers try to step around the side of the compound...only to be mowed down by one of several machine gun nests.

THE BARON

(to Rezukhin)

Is Xu Shuzheng still in there?

Rezukhin shrugs his shoulders.

REZUKHIN

I've called for artillery to come in. When they get here, we will blast it to pieces.

The Baron shakes his head negatively.

THE BARON

Every second of resistance, we
diminish the doubt of those Chinese
soldiers still hiding out around
this city.

(pause)

We have to crush this now!

Rezukhin nods and signals to the troops on the other sides
of the street around the compound.

With a roar, Rezukhin steps forward with dozens of soldiers
and rush toward the compound -- guns blazing.

The other soldiers see him and also step out roaring and
screaming toward the compound.

Soon, the streets are as if consumed by a roaring and
screaming torrent of violence aimed at the compound.

Explosions rip at the front of the building and in a few
seconds more the sounds of machine guns fall silent.

A white flag on a rifle is hung from outside the broken door
of the compound.

REZUKHIN

CEASE FIRE!

An eerie silence as a few dozen Chinese soldiers sheepishly
exit the compound in the direction of Rezukhin standing in
front.

As the Chinese continue to move out of the compound,
Rezukhin turns to the Baron, further behind and gives him a
smile and salute.

At that moment, a single shot rings out from the compound
and Rezukhin collapses to the ground -- causing everyone,
including the Chinese to scramble.

THE BARON

FIRE!

A blaze of gunfire cuts down every Chinese soldier looking
for cover, as Asiatic Cavalry push past the dying Chinese
and into the building to more screams and gunfire.

The Baron rushes over to Rezukhin and falls to his knees. He
raises the head of Rezukhin into his lap -- he is already
gone.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE

The Baron is escorted by Mongolian guards through the Palace Hallway.

INT. BOGD KHAN PALACE HALLWAY

The Baron walks along the same hallway he had previously walked several times with the Bogd Khan to the doorway to the gardens.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE GARDENS - DAY

The Baron enters the inner gardens.

Inside he finds an older Bogd Khan sitting and smiling on the same seat they sat and spoke all the years before.

He signals for the Baron to sit.

BOGD KHAN

Thank you.

THE BARON

No, it is I who should be thanking you, your holiness. If not for your letter.

The Bogd Khan starts laughing.

BOGD KHAN

Thus is proven the maxim as we are in agreement the pen has overcome.

THE BARON

I am afraid it will not be that easy. The Communists continue to advance and may still attack and the Chinese could launch a major counter attack any day. Maybe if we have enough time, we can train five to ten thousand. But we do not have the weapons.

The Bogd Khan puts up his hand.

BOGD KHAN

Surely you know the answer what is lasting? For a man taught to kill, knows only to kill or be killed and when he dies nothing remains. Yet when a man is taught to live in a civilized manner, his legacy is life and knowledge.

THE BARON

So you don't want me to train you an army?

The Bogd Khan smiles.

BOGD KHAN

Against the superior forces of China or the Communists are as formidable as you say, then such an act would ultimately be futile. Instead, I would rather hope you show our people how to unite with common purpose and hope as is the miracle of your own men.

THE BARON

But it could all in a month or a year if we cannot defend.

BOGD KHAN

A crow raided a nest as is its nature. Yet in the nest it found an acorn. So the crow resolved to grab the acorn first and then the egg and fly away. Yet the seed stuck in his neck and he choked dropping dead from the sky onto a field. Some years a mighty tree grew from that seed.

THE BARON

Are you saying I am that crow.

The Bogd Khan laughed loudly.

BOGD KHAN

War is the crow my son. You are the seed for my people.

EXT. MONTAGE OF URGA TRANSFORMATION

Flashes of images of the transformation of Urga such as the end of street dogs and the introduction of street lighting.

 BOGD KHAN (V.O.)
 Thus, if it be a month or a year,
 it will grow.

The Baron orchestrates the building of new irrigation channels.

 BOGD KHAN (V.O.) (cont'd)
 Show our people and give them the
 means and dignity and they will
 never forget.

The cleaning of streets.

EXT. URGA - BOGD KHAN PALACE - DAY

A blaze of color and pageantry as a parade of Buddhists celebrate the formal ceremony of the crowning of the Bogd Khan as leader and ruler.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Urga, 1921"

A ceremony in honor of the Baron, being given beautiful blue and gold traditional Mongolian robes.

EXT. THE BARON HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Russian Asiatic Troops standing outside the former headquarters salute an officer who arrives and steps inside.

INT. THE BARON OFFICE

The Baron is signing documents when there is a knock at the door.

 THE BARON
 Enter.

A White Russian Officer salutes and hands the Baron an envelope. The Baron uses a paper knife to tear it open and waves for the Officer to leave.

 LEONID SIPAILOV
 Who is it?

The Baron starts reading the letter.

THE BARON

Grigory Mikhaylovich for the fifth time this month, demanding I abandon Mongolia and instead engage the Communists at Irkutsk.

Sipailov starts laughing as the Baron frowns and he stops laughing.

LEONID SIPAILOV

It would be sheer suicide Baron.

The Baron nods, as he grabs a clean sheet of paper and starts writing.

THE BARON

And I will tell him so.

The Baron begins writing a letter.

THE BARON (V.O.)

Grigory Mikhaylovich, I received your latest demand for me to leave Mongolia and engage the Communists to the east.

EXT. MONTAGE OF THE BARON IN MONGOLIA

The images of the Baron continuing to transform Mongolia and the opening of schools and even a hospital.

THE BARON (V.O.)

Both you and I know that without proper support of the British or Americans, such a strategy would be suicide.

The Baron and Erdene celebrate their marriage and the streets of Urga full of color and celebration.

THE BARON (V.O.) (cont'd)

Yet without any support from the West, we continue to help the Mongolian people and to train more fighters.

The transformation of the roads and smiling children playing.

THE BARON (V.O.) (cont'd)
 So, I shall remain at Urga until
 the West decides to commit the
 necessary support or the collapse
 of the Republic, whichever is
 first, but not before.

EXT. URGA - DAY

A lone rider -- a White Russian soldier -- approaches the
 outskirts of the city.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Urga, 1923"

As he nears the soldiers standing sentry at the main gates,
 the rider slumps from his saddle onto the ground.

The guards rush forward and pick him up.

As they try to lift him, the rider reaches into his pocket
 and produces a message, before slipping into
 unconsciousness.

INT. MILITARY HEADQUARTERS

General Sipailov is hunched over a table, with other
 officers, when a soldier steps forward with the same message
 and hands it to Sipailov.

Sipailov reads it, before turning around and marching toward
 an office. He knocks.

THE BARON (O.S.)

Enter.

INT. BARON'S OFFICE

The Baron looks at the expression of Sipailov as he enters.

THE BARON

What is it?

Sipailov shakes his head negatively.

SIPAILOV

It is from Semyonov. Chita is lost.

(pause)

The Red Army under Henrich
 Christoforovich Eiche is simply too
 vast.

THE BARON

And Semyonov?

SIPAILOV

Grigory Mikhaylovich has withdrawn the government and army to Vladivostok. He is still trying to negotiate with the Americans for support.

(pause)

But --

THE BARON

What?

SIPAILOV

Semyonov has ordered you come to Vladivostok. He demands he said the 'Bloody Baron' come and use his powers to destroy the Red Army.

Sipailov hands the Baron the letter. The Baron quickly glances him silence, before dropping it onto the desk.

The Baron bows his head into his hands.

SIPAILOV (cont'd)

Wrangel did manage to evacuate with some refugees through Crimea. He made it to Croatia. But the war is over for him.

The Baron raises his head and gets up from his chair, turning to look out the window.

THE BARON

We can't win. Not against an army of over a million - even if only half can shoot.

SIPAILOV

One bit of good news I can report is that we captured the Mongolian Communist Terrorists. We have Damdini Sukhbaatar and four of his associates in prison now.

(pause)

So you want them interrogated before we execute them?

THE BARON

(strong)

No! Don't touch them. I will go over and interrogate Damdini Sukhbaatar myself.

Sipailov nods and leaves the office.

EXT. URGA PRISON

The Baron approaches the main Urga prison building.

INT. URGA PRISON

Inside, the guards are surprised to see The Baron.

The commandant (COLONEL LAVRENYEV) steps forward and salutes the Baron.

THE BARON

I wish to see the prisoner Damndini Sukhbaatar.

The Colonel signals for the Baron to follow him.

They walk down several dank corridors and stop outside a cell.

The guard opens the door.

THE BARON (cont'd)

I will speak with the prisoner alone.

The guard salutes and steps back.

INT. PRISON CELL

The Baron enters a cell.

Inside, Damdini Sukhbaatar stands up when The Baron enters.

THE BARON

I trust you are not too hungry or cold?

The face of Damdini Sukhbaatar is a mix of fear and confusion.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

I do not understand?

(MORE)

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR (cont'd)

(pause)

Why would the Devil treat me with kindness this way? Is this some kind of trick or mind games?

The Baron shakes his head negatively.

THE BARON

We no longer have time for games.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

Does Erdene know you found me?

THE BARON

I will speak with her later.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

If you do not wish to kill me, then she surely will.

THE BARON

Let us speak plainly, you and I.

Damdini Sukhbaatar shrugs his shoulders.

THE BARON (cont'd)

The Americans have given their support to Joseph Stalin to succeed Lenin.

(pause)

With the Americans money and know-how, the Communist experiment is going to survive and transform this country into a giant slave factory. So it is only a matter of time before they come here.

Damdini Sukhbaatar smiles.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

Then my death would not have been in vain.

The Baron laughs loudly.

THE BARON

Why is it every revolutionary and socialist I have ever met is so eager to want to throw away their life for a lie?

Damdini Sukhbaatar stares at The Baron defiantly.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
You will not break me.

THE BARON
I am not going to have you killed.
Nor even your comrades. Instead I
want to make sure you are ready.

Damdini Sukhbaatar looks confused.

THE BARON (cont'd)
Thanks to help from the Europeans,
Mongolia now has an electricity
grid, sanitation, schools,
hospitals and its first roads.
Everything you said you wanted to
give the Mongolian people as a
Socialist, yes?

Damdini Sukhbaatar nods his head.

THE BARON (cont'd)
But if the Red Army of over a
million men under Henrich
Christoforovich Eiche turn to
Mongolia, then without any local
leadership here, then nothing will
survive.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
What do you propose then?

The Baron smiles.

THE BARON
The first step is easy. Any
prisoner that survives the cruel
and evil Bloody Baron...well...That
is a distinction even a Chinese
commander or Bolshevik party leader
in Moscow would love to claim.
(pause)
The hard part will be the politics.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR
What do you want from me?

THE BARON
Do not harm Erdene, even if she
despises you. Keep the Bogd Khan
safe. Most of all, keep the people
of Mongolia safe.

EXT. THE BARONS HOME

The simple home of The Baron and Erdene, guarded by a handful of soldiers.

INT. THE BARONS HOME BEDROOM

The Baron is finishing packing his kit on the bed -- a minimal set of possessions.

Erdene steps in and stares at him.

THE BARON

I was going to tell you the other week that we picked by Sukhbaatar -

Erdene shakes her head.

ERDENE

I don't care about Damdini Sukhbaatar. He is dead to me.

(pause)

I don't want you to go...

The Baron smiles and steps over to embrace Erdene lovingly.

He steps back and looks at her as she starts to cry.

THE BARON

You know I cannot stay.

The Baron tries to embrace her again and she resists.

ERDENE

(angrily)

You don't really love me. You say you do. But if you loved me you would stay...

The Baron shakes his head.

THE BARON

That is not true. You know it.

The Baron tries again to console Erdene. This time places his hands on her shoulders and waiting for her to stop sobbing.

THE BARON (cont'd)

Erdene I love you. I fell in love with you the moment I first saw you. And I will never stop loving you.

(MORE)

THE BARON (cont'd)

(pause)

But if I stay, then the whole Red Army will come here and destroy everything I love.

ERDENE

You are the great Daichin Tengri, the red god of war...You have destroyed enemies twenty times your size.

The Baron shakes his head negatively.

THE BARON

This is different now. They have made me the personification of everything they fear and hate. I am their ultimate nemesis...Their armies by the hundreds of thousands march to songs about the evils of the Bloody Baron. They have to destroy me, no matter what cost or how long...I cannot win.

Erdene thumps his chest.

ERDENE

But you must!

Erdene starts sobbing again as The Baron pulls away.

THE BARON

I cannot.

ERDENE

Then I refuse to say goodbye. This is the last time you will see me.

Erdene stomps out of the room, leaving The Baron alone.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE HALLWAY

The Baron walks past the Bogd Khan palace guards as they salute him.

EXT. BOGD KHAN PALACE GARDENS

The Bogd Khan is sitting reading on the same seat in the Palace Gardens at the Baron approaches.

THE BARON

I will miss these gardens.

BOGD KHAN
They will miss you.

THE BARON
When the last forces of the
Republic fall, it is only a matter
of time.

(pause)
If I stay, the Communists will
surely destroy the city.

The Bogd Khan smiles.

BOGD KHAN
You have done everything you could.

THE BARON
I have put Leonid Sipailov in
charge of defenses. But if the city
is surrounded, he will not let the
city be destroyed in a siege.

(pause)
Damdini Sukhbaatar and his men are
safe and will not be harmed.

BOGD KHAN
You are are good man. You have
thought of everything.

The Baron shakes his head negatively, before putting his
head in his hands and starting to sob.

THE BARON
Please don't call me that...You do
not know...You could not imagine
the horror of that I have done ...
the stories are true.

The Bogd Khan places his hand gently on the back of the
Baron, who remains slumped and sobbing.

BOGD KHAN
No man is completely a monster. No
woman is purely a saint. We are all
human.

(pause)
What matters is that we can see
ourselves and life -- every piece
of ourselves. As you do.

The Baron lifts his head up, his eyes raw.

THE BARON

What am I then? A Bloody Devil? a
soldier? some kind of madman?

The Bogd Khan laughs again.

BOGD KHAN

You have always been able to answer
your own questions.

(pause)

As you prepare to leave us, your
mind reveals you to be a man who
can see all of himself...who has
given much and lived humbly. Do not
fear the falsities and slander of
the wicked. In time, the truth of
what did here will be known.

The Baron stands up and wipes his face. The Bogd Khan also
stands.

BOGD KHAN (cont'd)

There is no word we speak for
goodbye as you mean it. Only that I
shall see you again soon.

Both men bow to each other, before the Baron turns and
leaves.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF URGA, MONGOLIA - DAY

The figure of The Baron on horseback, with a dozen other
soldiers riding out from the city.

EXT. THE BARONS HOME - DAY

At the highest point of the home, Erdene is standing and
watching the horizon as The Baron and his small troop ride
away.

She is clutching his Buddhist scarf.

EXT. URGA PRISON

Erdene approaches guards outside the main prison building in
Urga.

They salute and let her inside.

INT. PRISON CELL

Damdini Sukhbaatar is sitting and writing at a desk lit by candle light in a prison cell.

The SQUEAK and SQUEAL of the door opening breaks his concentration.

Erdene steps into the cell -- a burly prison guard stands behind her.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

(defiant)

I was wondering when you would finally come.

ERDENE

(coldly)

Don't flatter yourself.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

So have you come to exact your revenge?

Erdene waits. Letting the silence drain the confidence from the face of Damdini.

ERDENE

If it were up to me, you would have stopped breathing long ago.

(pause)

No, I have only come to tell you that a truly great and honorable man, who helped protect and help our people has gone.

Damdini now looks panicked. Erdene smiles.

ERDENE (cont'd)

You have nothing to fear. He put Leonid Sipailov in charge with express orders that no harm come to you or any of your rat friends...

(pause)

But...scouts have said a huge Soviet army is heading this way. So I do not know what will happen to any of us.

Damdini shakes his head.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

I will not hurt you.

ERDENE

I don't believe anything you say.

DAMDINI SUKHBAATAR

I understand now. And I do not blame you. I was jealous. I was obsessed. But then...

(pause)

I thought the only reason he had kept me alive was as a bargaining chip with the Chinese...But now the Soviets?

ERDENE

Maybe, because he loves our people and this land more than you have ever done. And that if you were ever half the man he is, you might help make something for our people.

Erdene swings around and leaves the cell.

EXT. VLADIVOSTOK, SEMYONOV HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A city under siege...smouldering...dark and eerily quiet.

The Baron and his small band of men step through the wire and barricades carefully...A few moments and two White Russian troops pop up their heads.

They motion for The Baron and his men to come over.

INT. VLADIVOSTOK, SEMYONOV HEADQUARTERS, BUNKER

The Baron steps into a dimly lit room.

He looks around -- there appears to be not a soul -- until there is the clink of a bottle dropping to the floor.

In the corner is the forlorn and drunk figure of Semyonov -- half sitting up and slumped against the wall.

The Baron approaches and Semyonov looks up, before looking down and picking up a bottle.

Semyonov shakes it -- it is empty.

He looks up again as The Baron approaches.

SEMYONOV

Do not haunt me ghost -

The Baron embraces Semyonov, before Semyonov breaks the embrace and looks The Baron up and down.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)
You are not a ghost! It is really
you!

As quickly as Semyonov is smiling, his moods darkens.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)
Why did you come?

The Baron looks at him strangely.

THE BARON
You wrote to me telling me if I
didn't then you were surrounded and
dead.

SEMYONOV
(angrily)
We are already dead! WHY DID YOU
COME?

Semyonov starts pacing the room. His mood changes again.

SEMYONOV (cont'd)
(sounding more manic)
But I didn't expect you to come. I
wanted you to feel rotten and
guilty like I did, not to throw
away your paradise.
(pause)
Why did you come?

The Baron smiles and steps over to embrace Semyonov.

THE BARON
Because you are my brother.

A smile finally bursts onto the face of Semyonov, before he begins to weep.

SEMYONOV
Friend. I have doomed you.

THE BARON
Nonsense. You are the great
Semyonov.

SEMYONOV
And you are the Bloody Baron. Every
single Communist soldier is
petrified of you...
(MORE)

SEMYONOV (cont'd)

(pause)

You know they sing songs about you.
How you will come at night to slit
their throats and eat their souls..

THE BARON

We've been in worse situations.

Semyonov sits down and shakes his head.

SEMYONOV

Not like this... General Eiche and
half the Soviet Army is out there.
I will be lucky to hold until the
12th of this month.

THE BARON

Where is the other half?

Semyonov looks at him sadly.

The Baron lowers his head as Semyonov pats him across the
shoulders.

SEMYONOV

I am sorry old friend. Sipailov is
a good general. But even he cannot
stop an army of half a million.

From the darkness emerges the figure of Elmore Taggart. He
steps over cautiously.

ELMORE TAGGART

Hello Baron...

The Baron looks up and in an instant he charges at Taggart,
as Semyonov restrains him.

THE BARON

(yelling)

Snake! Betrayer!

SEMYONOV

He is here to help us!

Semyonov holds The Baron tightly as Elmore Taggart steps
slowly forward.

THE BARON

(angrily)

The Americans are the reason the
Republic is almost lost...They
betrayed us all.

ELMORE TAGGART

I am sorry what has happened Baron.
Truly I am. But me risking my life
being here should be proof enough
that I still care.

The Baron sighs and Semyonov releases him.

THE BARON

(sarcastically)

Like Stalin and your bankers there
in New York. Now it is the
Communists who are your
favorites...Just another pawn.

Semyonov shakes his head.

SEMYONOV

Taggart is here to give us safe
passage. He heard you had left
Mongolia.

(pause)

I thought you were dead for sure.
But he said you would come.

THE BARON

(growling)

Safe passage like Kolchak?

SEMYONOV

It is real old friend! We leave
tonight and tomorrow we will be
safe in the United States!

The Baron shakes his head.

THE BARON

And what about our men?

Taggart shakes his head negatively.

ELMORE TAGGART

I can only take both of you...

The Baron steps back from both of them.

THE BARON

No, Grigory Mikhaylovich. You go. I
will stay with your men...Buy you
some time before I greet my
admirers.

Elmore Taggart shrugs his shoulders before shaking the hand
of The Baron.

THE BARON (cont'd)
 Anyway I do not think it would look
 wise for your President to give
 sanctuary to The Devil...

Semyonov laughs before he warms hugs The Baron.

SEMYONOV
 Goodbye my friend.

The Baron watches as Semyonov and Taggart leave the bunker
 with two guards.

EXT. MONTAGE OF RED ARMY SURROUNDING URGA

A sea of Red Army flags surrounding Urga and the glistening
 of artillery pieces.

SEMYONOV (V.O.)
 Any your precious Mongolia.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM: "Urga, 1923"

EXT. VLADIVOSTOK - DAY

The Baron and Semyonov hatch a plan for the Baron and his
 men to escape through the lines of the Communists. Yet as he
 is about to make the escape, the Red Army send message that
 Urga is surrounded and if he does not surrender, they will
 destroy the city and all the inhabitants.

The Baron surrenders on the condition that his men be able
 to leave the city peacefully. The Soviet commanders give
 their word.

EXT. URGA - DAY

The soldiers of the Baron leave the city peacefully and are
 arrested...taken to the edge of the city and executed en
 mass.

EXT. CHITA SEMYONOV - DAY

The Baron, in thick arm chains -- is led by a cordon of
 soldiers past a crowd of regular Red Army soldiers.

In front of them is a waiting train.

As he passes by, some soldiers cross themselves..others kiss and hold up religious icons in front of themselves...as if to ward off contracting some kind of infectious evil from The Baron.

The guards lift The Baron onto the train.

INT. CARRIAGE

Inside the carriage, the guards chain and padlock The Baron into an iron chair within an iron cage, before closing the door to the carriage.

EXT. URGA - DAY

The return of Damndini Sukhbaatar to power, surrounded by Red Army Guards.

INT. IRKUTSK CELL

The darkest and dankest of prison cells.

Just enough light to make out the Baron curled up against the only dry wall -- his legs in chains.

The heavy CREAK and GROAN of the cell door opening.

The Baron looks up slowly - squinting to focus.

Standing in front of him is the stone faced figure of Minei Gubelman in a Red Army Officers uniform and two soldiers -- their rifles drawn at The Baron.

THE BARON
Minei, your alive!

The Baron gets, up adjusting his chains and steps closer to Minei Gubelman -- the few meager feet his chains allow him.

Minei Gubelman turns to the soldiers.

MINEI GUBELMAN
(to soldiers)
Leave us!

The soldiers salute, pivot on their heels and leave, closing the gate behind them.

MINEI GUBELMAN (cont'd)
Tomorrow you will face the justice
of people.

THE BARON

I am ready whatever my fate.

Awkward silence. Minei Gubelman looks less sombre and more nervous -- the same character we saw in Mongolia.

THE BARON (cont'd)

Why did you come all the way down here to tell me this?

(pause)

Don't tell me you are the judge?

The Baron starts laughing...Minei growls.

MINEI GUBELMAN

No one will believe anything you say...To them you are Lucifer and the Devil incarnate...The ultimate liar.

THE BARON

Thank you for the compliment, Minei.

Minei huffs and puffs, before touching his side revolver, waiting to see The Baron watching him.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Oh yes. I could shoot you dead right here and now...And no one would even question why-

THE BARON

If that is what you want to do...

The Baron smiles warmly at Minei Gubelman who remains a conflict of emotions and nervousness.

THE BARON (cont'd)

Don't worry Minei. I won't embarrass you as the judge. I won't even tell anyone that I even know you...

Visible relief on the face of Minei.

He turns back in the direction of the cell door.

He turns back to look at The Baron -- a condescendence and snide look resumed on his face.

MINEI GUBELMAN

You know you helped the Communists win the war don't you?

(MORE)

MINEI GUBELMAN (cont'd)

(pause)

We recruited hundreds of thousands of gullible Christians and Jews upon the fearful exploits of the Devil and monster known as the Bloody Baron.

THE BARON

One day the people will know the truth...

Minei Gubelman laughs.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Don't be so sure Baron. Most people are too lazy and frightened to search for the truth. They will accept whatever they are told -- even if they have their doubts. This is the new machine we have created. What you helped create...

Minei turns to leave

THE BARON

(shouting)

Remember Minei, Even the greatest empires fall someday.

INT. IRKUTSK TRIAL - DAY

ANNOUNCER

All rise. The Court is now in session. Commander Yemelyan Mikhailovich Yaroslavsky presiding.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Baron Roman Nikolai Maximilian von Ungern-Sternberg, you stand accused of committing more than 60 separate charges of atrocities, acts of barbarity and depravity.

THE BARON

So you say. Where is the evidence?

Minei stomps the gavel and the room erupts.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Order.

THE BARON

This is a court of law is it not?

Minei Gubelman nods nervously.

THE BARON (cont'd)

Then how can this be a true court of law if you plan to convict me on hearsay. Either this a mock court for show or a real court, which one is it?

More rumbling and yelling.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Order. I shall direct the prisoner when to speak or when he is being spoken to.

Minei Gubelman nods nervously.

THE BARON

Then this cannot be a true court of law if you be both the judge and jury and executioner, can it?

More rumbling and yelling.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Order. One more word and will bar the prisoner from the proceedings and carry on in his absence.

The Baron shrugs his shoulders.

THE BARON

Whatever suits you.

INT. COURT ROOM

Minei Gubelman returns to the court.

ANNOUNCER

All rise.

MINEI GUBELMAN

Will the accused please stand.

The Baron stands.

MINEI GUBELMAN (cont'd)

We the court find the accused guilty of the crimes charged against them. I therefore sent-

THE BARON
Aren't you forgetting something
first Yemelyan Mikhailovich?

Minei Gubelman stares at the Baron

THE BARON (cont'd)
The last words of the condemned
maybe?

MINEI GUBELMAN
If you think you still have
something to say to me.

THE BARON
Not to you Commander. I have
already forgiven you. I mean for
the record to everyone else.

Minei stutters.

MINEI GUBELMAN
I suppose it is customary then.
Does the condemned have any last
words before I pass sentence?

The Baron smiles and takes a deep breath, as if a weight is
lifted.

THE BARON
If it pleases the court, I knew my
fate was sealed the moment I
surrendered.

EXT. EXECUTION GROUND

The Baron is led out the back of the building to a court
yard -- a set of wooden posts in the ground.

Behind them, the wall has been hollowed out and chipped away
by bullet holes.

THE BARON (V.O.)
*I do not fear death. Everything
made of this world must eventually
wither and die. But we are both of
this world and not of this world
and so nothing ever really dies.*

The soldiers place The Baron in front of one of the wooden
posts.

They don't even bother tying him up. They raise their rifles and we CLOSE IN on a smiling Baron, before we LOOK UP at the gray sky.

The sound of a volley of shots echo around the courtyard. We do not see the Baron fall.

EXT. IRKUTSK CITY STREETS

Erdene with three Buddhist monks walk through the dirty streets and stop in front of non-descript building displaying a giant red communist flag.

They step inside.

THE BARON (V.O.)

*I do not regret my life. Though I
will never see old age, I feel I
have lived in one lifetime more
than anyone could possibly imagine.*

EXT. BODY PIT - DAY

Erdene is standing next to a Red Guard Soldier, covering his face.

In front of them is a great pit of bodies, covered in quick lime.

Midst the horror, three Buddhist monks, sift through the pit looking for a body - The Baron.

They pull away a body and we CLOSE UP on the face of The Baron - still with a smile on his face - serene and at peace.

THE BARON (V.O.)

*I do not worry for my name or
reputation after my body dies.
People lie. I have seen men and
women lie for all kinds of reasons,
especially for their own survival.
Therefore, I do not condemn those
who came forward today and lied
under oath to save themselves or
their family.*

EXT. OUTSIDE URGA, MONGOLIA

A stream of monks sing, dance and chant around a great funeral pyre.

Embers swirl up into the twilight sky - like giant fireflies.

THE BARON (V.O.)

Will I be remembered as some kind of monster? Maybe all that people will remember of me is the propaganda that I was some kind of Mad Baron, or Bloody Tyrant, the Bloody Baron.

The Baron bis led out to the back of the building to a field and a set of posts in the ground with the back wall pock-marked with bullet holes. The Baron smiles.

The sound of the volley of shots and the screen goes black.

EXT. URGA STREET TO BOGD KHAN PALACE - DAY

Erdene in mourning dress, is holding a vase of ashes leading a procession of Lamas.

People are lined on either side of the road as the procession makes it way toward the Bogd Khan standing on the front steps of the palace.

Erdene stops in front of Bogd Khan and hands the vase of ashes to him.

THE BARON (V.O.)

I do not care what those who did not know me, think of me in years to come. What matters is what those who did know me think and the truth in their hearts. Nothing is lost to the Universe. Everything yields by the heart. I forgive you.

He bows to her and holds up the vase before opening it and in the wind, letting clumps of the ash out in short movements so that it catches the wind and blows away.

We pull back from the scene and the city of Urga to similar breathtaking landscape of majestic mountains and grassy plans that we first saw at the beginning.

THE END.