

Persistence
by
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Based on real events

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5th Draft.

BLACK SCREEN

We hear "AVE MARIA" played on a VIOLIN.

Slowly a polish phrase appears. (subtitled)

"I impulsively familiarized myself with the thought, I may be useful one more time for my motherland to fight the German occupant."

Then a name appears:

mjr A.K. Mieczyslaw Czerniak ps "Michalski"

FADE IN:

1 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY 1 *

A flower arrangement on a wooden surface, which is a coffin, transported by a cart. A large group of people is following the cart, up front a little GIRL with her mother. She is holding her mother's hand squeezing her in a supportive way. On the side a violin Player, who plays the song we are listening to. *

HOPE(9) in a lovely dark dress, walks next to her mother. *

A loud and air slicing COMMAND catches HOPE's attention. *

2 HOPE POV 2

A group of ELDERLY moves into the alley. Dressed in BLACK and BLUE SUITS. They wear a BARRETTE with a CROWNED EAGLE attached, a red and white RIBBON on their LEFT arm and a same colored SASH around their torso.

OLD ADAM *

W prawo marsch! *

A man OLD ADAM(75) leads a group of 10 people marching in a ROW of two man each. The front row, two women carry a GUIDON each. Their chin up high, they approach the buggy respectfully.

3 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY 3

Witnessing this scene the driver stops facing OLD ADAM, the GROUP splits in two lines and surrounds the BUGGY.

HOPE looks at them, not understanding what is going on.

BRONEK(65) at the same time goes to the VIOLIN PLAYER. He takes the VIOLIN of the MAN who is almost paralyzed. Then BRONEK returns to his unit starting to play their hymn. *

OLD ADAM *

Na ramie! *

The people around the coffin prepare to lift the coffin. *

Then OLD ADAM adjusts the flower arrangement, which is misplaced through the bouncing. *

OLD ADAM (CONT'D) *

Wzniesc! *

The DOLLY drives out of their way, while they begin to march, followed by the WOMEN with the guidons and BRONEK. The crowd moves too, led by MARIA and HOPE.

As HOPE watches them, they start to hum the melody BRONEK is playing Blyskawica's hymn. *

4 EXT. COFFIN-LINE - DAY 4

The music gets slowly into the background, as the camera moves closer to OLD ADAM. He looks pensive, then we hear voices, that grow louder as we get closer to OLD ADAM's face.

ADAM (V.O.)

Sluchaj, schowajmy ja. *

5 INT. BARN - DAY 5

PIOTR(18) thin and athletic, shoulders a rifle and aims at a big haystack. ADAM is watching him.

Piotr is making some shooting noises with his mouth.

ADAM

Dawaj! To nie zabawka. *

ADAM takes the gun out of PIOTR'S hands, who instantly looks disappointed.

PIOTR moves towards a big haystack and digs a hole into the hay. Looking at ADAM, who aims the gun now towards PIOTR. PIOTR rolls his eyes. ADAM smiles, by lowering the gun.

ADAM moves towards PIOTR to hide the gun, as OLGA(22), a beautiful young woman comes in holding some white and red ribbons.

The music fades out. *

OLGA

Hej - Czymajcie chlopaki. *

She gives the ribbons to them.

With a big smile both run towards OLGA and take these ribbons of her.

PIOTR

Patrz. *

PIOTR is trying it on and gesticulating power with the arm the ribbon is on.

ADAM
Iziemy do niego. *

PIOTR
Po co, przeciesz moze byc kompletnym wrackiem!?

ADAM
Nie nie bo...

PIOTR
(mocking ADAM)
... Bo co, bo tata ci tak powiedzial? *

ADAM punches PIOTR gently with the ribbon and smiles, they go.

ADAM
Nie bo on nam pomoze. *

Music starts as they leave the room. *

6 EXT. MIETEK'S HOUSE - DAY - 1942 6

ADAM and PIOTR are approaching a house's door. It almost seems bigger than it is. Then they look at each other. *

As the boys approach the house's door it opens and the music fades out. *

A MAN(48) comes out of the door, turning around. He wears a little bag, one doctor's used to have. He's speaking to a woman as he walks out. *

A woman JOZEFA(46) appears, while the DOCTOR is moving back. A little boy(13) cuddles to JOZEFA, who nods.

DOCTOR
Give him time to recover. I'll pop back next week. *

The DOCTOR leaves. JOZEFA closes slowly the door as she realizes that two young BOYS stand in front of it. ADAM and PIOTR who just listened to this conversation, don't dare to move.

PIOTR
Mamy sprawe do mietka. *

JOZEFA
Nie. *

JOZEFA already closing the door, when suddenly ...

ADAM

Ale jesteśmy jego przyjaciółmi, chcieliśmy
go tylko odwiedzić może się poczuje
lepiej.

*
*
*

Then they enter the room.

*

7 INT. MIETEK'S ROOM - DAY

7

MIETEK(28), a skinny man with bandaged hands and already healed bruises on his face, is lying on a bed. His hair cut in a military way. He rips out some bread, that lies on a plate and rolls it to a ball then he eats it.

Above the bed a picture of General Pilsudski.

A KNOCK and ADAM appears and enters the room with PIOTR.

MIETEK

Tys syn Gruszki?

*

ADAM takes a step forward nodding and rips his cap from his head to be polite. PIOTR follows ADAM to enter the room.

ADAM

Czesc, jak się czujesz - to znaczy jak
zdrowie wszystko w porządku?

*
*

MIETEK

(reluctant smile)

Zyje.

*

PIOTR

Co tam się działo?

*

ADAM pokes PIOTR with his elbow. *What the heck?*

MIETEK remembers but obviously he doesn't want to talk about it. He nervously rolls a piece of bread to a ball.

MIETEK

Rozumiem nie przyszłiscie bez powodu.

*

ADAM

Zgadza się. Stworzyliśmy grupę
konspiracyjną. Mamy trochę broni w
stodole, potrzebujemy zabys nas podszkolił
...

*
*
*
*

ADAM pulls out a white and red ribbon.

MIETEK

Nie wiecie o czym mówicie.

*

Break.

PIOTR

Jak to!

ADAM

Poczekaj. Mamy dwie mozliwosci. Zostac w domu do momentu az nas wysiedla, albo walczyć z okupantem który zabral nam dom. Dla mnie wybor jest jasny.

MIETEK

Wiem doskonale w jakiej sytuacji jesteśmy. I mozesz mi wiezyc ze przezyłem wiecej niz bym chcial. Wy poprostu nie wiecie czym mowicie.

PIOTR

Byles w bledzie chodzmy stad.

ADAM

Moj dziadek walczył w powstaniu styczniowym ja nie pozwolę żeby to się powturzyło. Z toba czy bez ciebie.

ADAM throws the ribbon at Mietek.

They turn and go as Mietek grabs the band and makes a fist around it.

8 EXT. LONELY GLADE - NIGHT

8

Several boys and girls, most of them 18, are standing and sitting in the grass. OLGA is chatting to one of her friends. ADAM is holding a rifle, PIOTR a handgun, both are thoroughly occupied examining the metal.

OLGA

Pryjdzie?

ADAM

Nie wiem.

PIOTR

Jak nas wyda szkopa to przysiegam ze...

ADAM

Nigdy by tego nie zrobil.

PIOTR

Z kad wiesz?

ADAM

Ojciec mi powiedzial zna Mietka od dziecka!

PIOTR turns around, he aims at Adam with a stretched arm, closing one of his eyes.

PIOTR

A co jak go przegabacili? Dwa lata w obozie! Pomysl przeciesz go widziales.

*
*

Suddenly somebody takes PIOTR's gun punching his hand, to ease it's grip. With another quick move PIOTR lies on the ground wondering what happened.

MIETEK stands above PIOTR, holding his hand gun now, in his left pocket the band ADAM gave him.

*
*

ADAM and some of the boys hold their unloaded guns pointed at MIETEK, OLGA terrified as they realize who this is.

*

MIETEK

Nigdy nie wyciagajcie broni tak przed siebie bo nawet moj braciszek by mogl wam ja wyrwac z rak! Czymajcie ja blisko ciala. Pistoletu bedziecie uzywac tylko na krotki dystans i to wam moze uratowac zycie

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*

MIETEK holds a hand towards PIOTR to help him up.

MIETEK (CONT'D)

A ty. Nigdy nie celuj do kogos kogo nie chcesz zabic.

*
*

The group eases as the music starts to play.

*

FADE TO BLACK.

*

FADE IN:

9 EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

9

An abandoned angel watches the dark night as MIETEK passes by and watches it briefly.

*
*

10 EXT. FACTORY WALL - SAME TIME

10

PIOTR armed with a MP40, watching for enemies, stands next to a ladder, that leans on a brick wall.

A SOUND and PIOTR looks up as BRONEK comes down the wall, with some guns on his shoulder.

PIOTR

Gdzie jest Jelen!?

*

BRONEK

Byl tuz za mna.

*

PIOTR

Gdzie jest teraz!?

*

BRONEK shrugs his shoulders. PIOTR puzzled and nervous rubbing on the gun.

Suddenly MIETEK appears, holding a handgun, followed by another young boy, LEON. As they stop LEON watches the surroundings.

MIETEK
Chlopaki musimy isc. *

PIOTR
Jelen zostal w fabryce. *

MIETEK sighs thoughtfully.

MIETEK
Dobra idzie sami zaniescie bronie do
stodoly grazyny. - Ja tu na niego
zaczekam. *

PIOTR
Zostane z toba. *

MIETEK
Powiedzialem Idz! *

PIOTR
Przydam ci sie. *

Pointing at his MP40. The rest moves.

Then ADAM appears with rifles on his shoulder and ammo around his neck.

PIOTR (CONT'D)
A ty gdzie byles szkoda ci sie zrobilo?
Wszystko chciales zabrac? *

ADAM standing on the ground.

ADAM
O co ci chodzi co ziemniakami chciales
szczelac!?

MIETEK
Czicho! Idziemy. *

12 INT. CEMETERY - GERMANS 12 *

Two GERMAN SOLDIERS holding a MP40 and a rifle and shooting
blindly at the tombstones. *

13 INT. CEMETERY - MIETEK, ADAM, PIOTR 13

MIETEK pushes the two boys into a toilet.

MIETEK

In here!

The music stops as the door closes. *

14 INT. TOILET - NIGHT 14

The light in the room is on. MIETEK, ADAM and PIOTR huddled to the back of the room, waiting and ready to shoot. *

The Shooting gets louder and louder, then stops as we hear a door being opened. *

The doorknob turns slowly and the door opens a bit.

The nervosness is rising. PIOTR clenches the handle of his machine gun, but MIETEK lays his hand over PIOTR's to stop him from a foolish mistake. *

15 INT. TOILET - NIGHT 15

MIETEK, ADAM and PIOTR behind the wall hardly breathing. *

The shooting stopped and we hear a bit later a toilet flush and a gun being picked up and loaded. The shooting goes on in a distance. *

PIOTR grins and MIETEK shows him to be quiet and to wait. MIETEK listens carefully, then goes towards the door. As he opens it, he checks the outside and sneaks out. Smiling, he shows ADAM and PIOTR to follow.

16 EXT. TOILET - NIGHT 16

ADAM and PIOTR leave the Toilet. As the door closes it reveals a LADIES ROOM sign attached to the door.

17 EXT. LONELY GLADE - NIGHT 17

A camp fire is burning, the boys and the 3 girls sit around it, laughing. In the back ground we can hear the nights voices. Crickets and owls perforate the laugh slightly. *

MIETEK takes out a cigarette and lightens it. Then grins.

PIOTR

Te szkopy nawet nie pomyslaly ze jestesmy tuz obok. *

BRONEK

Kurde a mnie tam nie bylo? *

PIOTR

Prawda. Wystarczyła by chwila i byloby po nas. Wspoczwalisbymy na krakowskim polu zapomnionych Spomnien.

*
*
*

MIETEK takes some bread and roles it to a ball, then eats it. He puts the rest back into his pocket.

PIOTR (CONT'D)

Ale wiecie co te Szkopy sa glupie i slepe!

*

MIETEK

Nigdy nie lekcewasz wroga. Rozumiesz?

*

(break)

Nigdy.

*

Silence breaks in. Until ...

ADAM

Co jeszcze musimy wiedziec?

*

MIETEK looks on the ground, rolling another ball of bread, then takes a drag of his cigarette.

MIETEK

Jestescie nikim bez przyjaciol ktorzy was wspieraja.

*
*

(break)

Zmuszali nas do pracy. Nagich na czaskajacym mrozie, dopuki nie padlismy. Wtedy poprostu nas bili. Raz juz nie moglem. Bylem poprostu wykonczony, przemarzniety. Gdyby nie dwuch kolegow ktorzy mnie ogrzali cieplem wlasnych cial, kto wie moze nie opowiadal wam teraz tej histori?

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*

OLGA is watching Mietek with curiosity. *He is more than I thought.*

MIETEK (CONT'D)

Wspierajcie sie nawzajem.

*

(puts his hand on ADAM's shoulder)

*

Pomagajcie sobie, bo moze przyjsc czas gdzie bedziecie miec tylko siebie.

*
*

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

18 EXT. ALLEY - DAY

18

MIETEK and ADAM go down an alley. ADAM is pulling down his band.

MIETEK

Sluchaj, w starciu z wrogiem zawsze najpierw namiez dowudce.

*
*

(MORE)

MIETEK (CONT'D)

Postaraj sie zaszcelic przedewszystkim
jego. I wtedy reszta latwo zmiadzyc.

*
*

ADAM

Utnij besti leb a tolow sam padnie.

*

MIETEK

Dokladnie.

*

OLGA approaches from behind.

OLGA

Clopaki, Widzieliscie Piotra?

*

ADAM

Nie a cos sie stalo?

*

OLGA

Szukalam praktycznie wszedzie, jak by
zniknol?

*
*

MIETEK

U poganow bylas?

*

OLGA nicks a NO.

*

OLGA

Nie, nie.

*
*

MIETEK

Dobrze to idz do domu i tam sie spotkamy.

*
*

ADAM and MIETEK go.

*

19 EXT. ALLEY - DAY

19

MIETEK and ADAM appear around a corner as MIETEK pushes ADAM back.

20 ADAM POV

20

The door of a house swings open and a SS OFFICER steps out lighting a cigarette. Stepping out of the building the OFFICER is followed by a German SOLDIER armed with a MP40, who leads a group of prisoners, young and old. In between them PIOTR and BRONEK.

21 EXT. ALLEY - DAY

21

ADAM can't believe what he is seeing. *But how?*

22 EXT. HOUSE HQ - DAY

22

Suddenly BRONEK slams the German SOLDIER next to him and runs around the corner. Using the confusion PIOTR runs towards a huge open field.

GESTAPO OFFICER
Auf was wartet ihr?! Erschießt ihn!

Immediately the punched SOLDIER takes some steps forward and kneels down, aiming at PIOTR. He pushes the trigger and lets the death bringing metal loose.

23 GERMAN SOLDIER POV 23

PIOTR runs towards and in a big field. Bullets slicing the air next to him. Then he gets hit into the shoulder by one, and falls down.

24 EXT. HOUSE HQ - CONTINUOUS 24

The GERMAN SOLDIER watches the field if PIOTR stands up.

GESTAPO OFFICER
Das mir das nich nochmal vorkommt!

The SS OFFICER angrily throws away his cigarette and pulls his LUGA out of its holster, while heading and swearing towards PIOTR.

25 EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS 25

ADAM watches the scene unwillingly, not believing.

26 EXT. OPEN FIELD - CONTINUOUS 26

LS: The OFFICER approaches PIOTR and prepares to execute the young* man, pointing the gun at PIOTR's head.

27 EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS 27

A loud and ear slicing BANG!!!! appears *

The sound of the shot echos in the village. ADAM's body shakes. *
After a second he wants to help PIOTR. *

MIETEK grabs him and pulls him back, but with anger and agony in his face ADAM manages to get away from Mietek, but MIETEK pulls him back and drags him away.

INT. OLGA'S BARN - LATER *

Bronek runs into the barn. *

ADAM *
Co chesz zrobic!?

MIETEK *
Ocalic wasze zycie! *

OLGA
(calmly)
Nie. *

MIETEK
Cos ty powiedziala? *

OLGA
Co chesz zrobic? *

MIETEK
Co chce zrobic? To co powinienem juz
zrobic dawno temu. Posle ich w diably tam
gdzie ich miejsce. *

OLGA
Nie pozwole na to. *

MIETEK
Sluchaj! Jestem twojim przelozonym i masz
to robic co ci kaze! Dawaj te cholerne
granaty! *

OLGA
(still calmly)
Nie zrobie tego! *

(break)

Wiesz rownie dobrze jak ja, ze jesli
zucisz granatem w ich kwartere i tak
odbije sie od zakratowanego okna i niemcy
wroca i zabija wszystkich we wsi! Tego
chesz? *

OLGA touches MIETEK's face.

MIETEK touches her Forehead with his as his body language
signalizes resignation.

MIETEK
Co ja mam zrobic Olga? Jak ja ich uratuje
oni sa tacy mlodzi. Jak ja mam ich
poprowadzic? *

OLGA
Mietku - znajdziesz sposob. *

Then MIETEK hears a rushing noise as BRONEK tries to get up and
sees BRONEK stepping out of his cover. MIETEK immediately
approaches him and grabs his face, then lifts his shirt if he is
shot. *

MIETEK
Bronek!?! *

MIETEK and BRONEK go out leaving a sorrowful OLGA behind. *

31 EXT. FOREST STONEWALL - EVENING

31

Devastated, lost, some of these youngsters sit on the forest's cold ground. Mietek shows an AK soldier how to sharpen his knife on a belt. *

BRONEK and LEON stand a bit away from the group as MIETEK gets to them.

MIETEK

Chlopaki, byl przeciek. Nie wiem jak ale ktos nas zdradzil. *

BRONEK

Podejzewasz kogos z nas?! Jak smiesz! *

MIETEK

Gdybym myslal ze to ktorys z was nie stalbym tutaj z wami. *

(break)

Musimy zabrac bron ze wsi. Szkopy wruca skonczy sie to katastrofa! Szykujcie sie. *

MIETEK touches BRONEK on his shoulder and looks into ADAM's direction.

BRONEK

(to LEON)

Nie dotykaj mnie! *

ADAM not part of the group sitting lonely on a rock, holding his red and white ribbon in his hands, starring at it.

MIETEK joins him.

MIETEK

Wiesz, przyszedl do mnie kiedys mlody i odwarzny chlopak. i przywrocil mi nadzieje. Byl ta iskra ktora przerodzila sie w ogien. Piotr w ciebie wiezyl. To jest nasz czas Adam to jest nasze przeznaczenie. *

ADAM

Zostawilismy go gnijacego w polu, takie jest jego przeznaczenie!?

MIETEK

Prostu wiem ze w ciebie wiezyl. *

ADAM

Dlaczego my? *

MIETEK takes his white and red ribbon, and cuts with his knife the lowest piece of fabric out, so he has a thin red line. Then he puts the ribbon gently on his knee and the knife into the ground

MIETEK

Nie jesteś sam. Jesteśmy z toba, bo to co robimy jest słuszne. Poprowadzę cię przez to, musisz tylko w to uwierzyć.

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*
*

MIETEK takes ADAM's hand and puts the self-made wristband on his wrist.

32 EXT. OPEN FIELD - NIGHT

32

PIOTR lies dead on the ground, in his head a hole from the bullet, which took his life. Peaceful he lies in the grass, dry blood all around him, his nervous behavior vanished.

Six men, ADAM, MIETEK, BRONEK, LEON and two other Home army service men approach his corpse. Gently they pick him up and lay him onto a self-made stretcher. Then ADAM under tears puts a rosary into PIOTR's hands and covers PIOTR's corpse with a grey military cover.

The six men lift the body gently up and carry him away, followed by 10 other young boys carrying guns. They are singing their hymn *which slowly fades into the violin version.*

*
*

33 INT. CHAPEL - PRESENT DAY

33

OLD ADAM stands in front of MIETEK's coffin, the sound of the song gets quieter. We see others standing attention next to the coffin.

SUDDENLY a little hand reaches for ADAM's left hand. The VOICES stop immediately as if he would wake up of a dream.

OLD ADAM looks down seeing HOPE holding his left hand.

*

OLD ADAM

Twój dziadek będzie zawsze z toba.
Poprowadzi cię, tak jak nas poprowadził.
Pamiętaj o tym, pamiętaj o nim. Jego ideały będą cię ochraniać. Ale musisz w to uwierzyć.

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*

OLD ADAM takes a wristband out and puts it on HOPE's hand.

*

OLD ADAM touches HOPE's cheek gently, smiles and stands up and goes back to attention.

HOPE looks at the coffin holding her new wristband. *What man was my grandpa?*

FADE OUT.