

SHALOM

by

Christopher Scott Tremblay

Christopher Scott Tremblay  
244 Brookstone Drive  
Mount Holly, NC 28120  
Home Ph. 704-812-8808  
cstrem10@aol.com  
WGAW Registration # 1338395

SHALOM

EXT. BERLIN COUNTRYSIDE - SUMMER 1925 - RAILROAD TRACKS

Two boys run and play kicking a ball along the railroad tracks. They come to a bridge crossing over a river.

They stop for a moment and look over the bridge.

EXT. BELOW THE BRIDGE - SAME

Two Jewish fisherman tend to their nets on the riverbank.

One of the fisherman carries his net to the edge of the bank and heaves it out over the water.

The NET goes sprawling out over the water glistening in the morning sun.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - SAME

The boys quickly run across the bridge and bounce down over an embankment to the bank of the river.

EXT. RIVERBANK - SAME

The current moves slowly and the young boys pick up a couple of flat rocks and skip them downstream across the placid river.

The boys quickly get bored and take a seat to watch the fisherman pull in their catch.

The fisherman pull in their great nets and watch the fish dance inside the nets in the bright sun.

They open the nets and place their catch on a nearby wagon.

EXT. SEATED ON THE ROCKS NEAR THE RIVER - MOMENTS LATER

YOUNG MICHAEL CAMPION - Age 10, blonde hair, blue eyes, Caucasian German boy. A little spitfire.

YOUNG MICHAEL CAMPION  
Come on, I'll race you  
across the bridge.

YOUNG AARON GREENFELD, age 10, brown hair, brown eyes, Jewish German boy. Also, a little spitfire.

Aaron looks up at his friend and smiles and they quickly get up and sprint up the embankment.

Michael bends down to tie his boots and then quickly straightens up.

The two boys stand side by side glaring down the runway.

YOUNG MICHAEL

On your mark. Get Set. Go!

The two boys take off running in a mad dash over the bridge. Michael takes the early lead after a few meters but at a third of the way, Aaron catches him and passes him.

The two boys sprint over the bridge with Aaron in a slight lead and the fisherman staring up at them from below.

Suddenly, Michael trips and falls and Aaron barrels ahead and we SHOW him speeding past the end of the bridge.

EXT. END OF BRIDGE - SAME

He jumps up and yells in celebration, but then quickly turns to look for his friend.

EXT. ON THE BRIDGE - SAME

Michael is slowly picking himself up and is bleeding from his lip.

EXT. END OF THE BRIDGE - SAME

Aaron watches Michael slowly pick himself up.

YOUNG AARON GREENFELD

Are you ok?

EXT. ON THE BRIDGE - SAME

Michael lazily waves to him with a disappointing look. He tries to take a step but is suddenly pulled back as his boot is caught in the tracks.

He tries to release his

BOOT

but can't free it from the tracks. He begins to panic and violently tries to remove his foot from the tracks.

EXT. FROM THE TUNNEL - SAME

Suddenly we HEAR a distant whistle from the tunnel.

EXT. ON THE BRIDGE - SAME

Michael hears the whistle and looks up towards the tunnel two hundred meters from the bridge.

EXT. END OF THE BRIDGE - SAME

YOUNG AARON  
Hurry, the train!

EXT. ON THE BRIDGE - SAME

YOUNG MICHAEL  
I'm stuck!

EXT. END OF THE BRIDGE - SAME

Aaron quickly runs back for Michael and tugs at his boot.

YOUNG AARON  
It won't budge.

Aaron gets a panicked look in his face and cries for help!

YOUNG AARON (CONT'D)  
Help! Help somebody!

EXT. ON THE RIVER - SAME

One of the fishermen HEARS Aaron's cry for help and sees Michael struggling on the tracks.

He quickly drops his net and the other fisherman looks at him perplexed.

We HEAR the whistle as the fisherman sprints up the embankment.

The fisherman scrambles to the tracks and just as he gets there the

HEADLIGHT

from the train appears from the tunnel.

The fisherman takes a BEAT, then dashes towards Micheal and Aaron across the bridge.

EXT. ON THE BRIDGE

YOUNG AARON (CONT'D)

Hurry!

The fisherman quickly runs up to them and tugs at Michael's boot as the train sounds it's whistle.

EXT. SEVERAL METERS FROM THE BRIDGE - SAME

The train quickly approaches the bridge, now only meters away.

EXT. ON THE BRIDGE - SAME

The fisherman struggles with Michael's boot.

FISHERMAN 1

It is no good.

The fisherman quickly pulls out a jackknife. Michael gets a panicked look on his face.

YOUNG MICHAEL

Ahh!

Suddenly, without hesitation the fisherman cuts the STRING of the boot releasing Michael's foot.

They the quickly scramble to their feet as the train approaches them head on.

They make a mad dash towards the end of the bridge and at the last second dive out of the train's way and into the soft wheat field on either side of the tracks.

The fisherman's

HAT

flies off his head and ROLLS to a standstill.

Several train cars blaze by them as them come rolling to a stop.

Michael and Aaron attempt to catch their breath and the fisherman gets to his feet and walks over to his hat.

The fisherman picks up his hat and places it back on his head.

Young Michael gets up and approaches the fisherman and thanks him.

YOUNG MICHAEL  
Thank you.

The fisherman winks and responds.

FISHERMAN 1  
Shalom.

The fisherman shoots them both a quick wave and then makes his way back over the bridge.

YOUNG MICHAEL  
What does that mean?

Aaron walks up behind Michael.

YOUNG AARON  
Peace be with you...

Michael turns and looks at his friend then turns back towards the fisherman.

YOUNG MICHAEL  
(Whispers to himself) Shalom...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPRING 1935 - UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN - NATIONAL TRACK  
CHAMPIONSHIP - DAY

Several runners are stretching their legs on the tracks. The  
STADIUM is  
filled with spectators.

Several other athletes on the green throwing the javelin and  
performing the shot put.

The runners begin to line up for the start of the race.

Aaron and Michael older now, are lined up side by side  
amongst the other collegiate runners.

The starter gets them set and then quickly fires the  
GUN

The RUNNERS take off around the track for the three mile  
race.

The stadium is filled with cheering fans as Aaron quickly takes the lead and sets a fast pace.

Lap 1 comes to a completion and the fans cheer as the runners pass the grand stand.

ON AARON GREENFELD

AARON is in his early twenties, a Jewish young man with brown hair and brown eyes. A fiery spirit, full of life and vigor. A recent graduate from the University of Berlin. He is extremely competitive, an excellent runner and an Olympic hopeful.

Aaron's long time friend Michael Champion pulls in front of him and takes the lead. They bump elbows as Michael passes him.

AARON GREENFELD  
Watch the elbows.

MICHAEL CAMPION  
Push over.

Michael increases the pace.

The LAP COUNTER turns the lap card to

LAP 12

as the two runners begin to break away from the pack.

ON MICHAEL CAMPION

MICHAEL is in his early twenties, German young man with an intimidating presence, tall, athletic build, with blonde hair and blue eyes. He is very competitive and an Olympic hopeful, a Rhodes Scholar and a recent Graduate from Oxford University.

Aaron drafts off of Michael giving himself a rest as they round turn 3. The

BELL

sounds and the crowd cheers as they begin the final lap.

Aaron pulls up beside Michael and then quickly takes the lead with the rest of the pack well behind making a futile attempt to chase them down.

Aaron leads by a couple of strides as they come out of turn 2.

Michael increases his speed and pulls up alongside Aaron down the back stretch.

The rest of the PACK is well behind as they come into turn four.

The CROWD roars as they begin their kicks and give everything they have down the stretch.

The crowd's cheers intensify as they approach the finish as Aaron edges out Michael by a half a stride.

The crowd cheers and Michael and Aaron give each other a quick hug then Aaron takes his victory lap.

CUT TO:

INT. PUB - HOURS LATER - NIGHT

The PUB is full of patrons. Michael is playing darts with a few friends.

The pub filled with smoke and busy with people drinking and socializing.

Suddenly, Aaron enters the bar and shyly makes his way through the crowded pub.

Michael's friend Eric notices Aaron making his way through the crowd.

ERIC  
Isn't that your friend?

Michael sees Aaron making his way through the crowd and waves at Aaron over.

Aaron recognizes him with a wave and slowly makes his way over to the dart game.

Eric studies Aaron closely as he makes his way towards them.

ERIC  
Is he a Jew?

Michael shoots him a look.

MICHAEL  
That's an odd question...

Eric gives him a sour look and Michael holds his stare.



Michael quickly changes his mood and is suddenly all smiles as he greets Aaron approaching them.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Good to see you made it, I was  
starting to have my doubts.

AARON  
I got busy.

MICHAEL  
This is Eric, a friend of mine from  
the University.

ERIC  
Hi, pleasure meeting you.

Eric does his best not to blow smoke from his cigarette in Aaron's face as they shake hands.

MICHAEL  
Can I buy you a drink?

AARON  
I don't...

MICHAEL  
I forgot, I forgot, you don't  
drink. How about a cold cider?

Aaron nods and Michael gestures to the bar. They pass several pretty blonde patrons smoking cigarettes.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
I'm really gonna miss that.

AARON  
Miss what?

MICHAEL  
Beautiful women.

AARON  
Why should you have to?

MICHAEL  
I enter the military next month.

Eric interrupts.

ERIC  
I've been trying to talk him out of  
it.

They finally reach the bar and Aaron stops and faces him.

AARON  
Military? What about the Olympics?

Michael smirks.

MICHAEL  
Don't worry, I be there for you to  
draft off.

AARON  
Don't flatter yourself, I wasn't  
drafting you my friend.

Michael smiles.

MICHAEL  
Oh no, so what do call what you  
were doing out there today?

AARON  
Strategy.

MICHAEL  
Oh, is that what that was?

They look at it other and laugh.

MICHAEL  
Bartender, one cider!

AARON  
Make it scotch, we'll drink to the  
race.

They give each other a look and break out in laughter.

EXT. STREETS OF BERLIN - LATER

Michael and Aaron stumble along the sidewalk and as a few  
girls approach them.

MICHAEL  
Ladies!

Michael abruptly stops directly in front of them. He lifts  
his hand in a psychological gesture but can find the words.

AARON  
Pay him no attention, he's full of  
whiskey.

The girls giggle and then continue on their way.

MICHAEL  
To thine own self be true!

AARON  
Not bad, a little late, but not  
bad.

Michael holds the pose and then collapses in his drunkenness.

Aaron goes over to him and struggles to lift him up. Aaron throws Michael's arm over his shoulder and they stumble off in the shadows of the misty street light.

EXT. STREETS OF BERLIN - PAST CURFEW - SAME

Michael stumbles along as Aaron does his best to hold his friend up as they walk the foggy street now past curfew.

The streets are deserted with the exception of some approaching footsteps.

We HEAR the footsteps of the officer not so far off. Aaron does his best to help Michael appear sober.

Suddenly, Aaron notices the police officer walking towards them on the other side of the street.

AARON  
Stand up straight, try to act  
sober.

MICHAEL  
Yes commander.

AARON  
Come on, get serious.

We SEE the boots of the officer and HEAR his steps get louder.

AARON (CONT'D)  
Here we go.

MICHAEL  
What...

Michael looks up and Aaron tries to stop him.

AARON (CONT'D)  
Don't. Don't look up.

But, it's too late, the officer notices Michael stumbling and it's obvious to the officer that he is intoxicated.

Aaron realizes they're in trouble but tries to act casual.

OFFICER

A little late for a walk isn't it gentleman.

AARON

Sorry officer, it was such a beautiful evening we couldn't help ourselves.

OFFICER

Papers.

AARON

Of course.

Aaron struggles to search for his papers in his jacket pocket as Michael leans on him for support.

The OFFICER grows impatient and notices Michael's awkward behavior.

Michael feels the officer's stare and gives a false smile.

Aaron finally finds his papers and hands them to the officer.

The officer studies Aaron's identification for a moment and than hands it back over to him.

OFFICER

Greenfeld. What kind of name is that?

AARON

Jewish.

The officer is taken a back and shoots him a sour look.

Michael shoots Aaron a sarcastic look mocking the officer.

The officer gives him a long stare then turns his attention on Michael.

OFFICER

Now yours.

Michael appears surprised and points to himself.

The officer looks away impatiently and sighs as Michael begins searching for them.

He begins to sway as he searches frantically, he pulls his identification from his back pocket.

The officer watches him unimpressed as Aaron does his best to casually sturdy him.

Michael finally finds his papers and just as he hands them to the officer he blacks out and falls to the ground.

The officer immediately turns his attention on Aaron.

OFFICER

This man is intoxicated, you're under arrest.

AARON

Officer please, I admit were out a bit late, but we mean no trouble.

OFFICER

No trouble, I know you Jews better than you think.

The officer gives him a cold look and Aaron holds his stare.

OFFICER

Help him up.

Aaron throws Michael's arm over his shoulder and struggles to get his comatose body to his feet.

OFFICER

Now move ahead.

Aaron gives the officer a hard stare. The officer draws his gun and Aaron suddenly realizes he's serious.

OFFICER

I said move.

Aaron struggles with the weight of his friend and slowly walks ahead as the officer follows them with gun drawn.

INT. BERLIN CITY PRISON - MOMENTS LATER

Several cells filled with prisoners, the prison is old and has held it's share criminals. The cells are filthy and are spattered with stale fecal matter on the cell walls.

Michael is leaning against the bars with his hands hanging through the bars and Aaron is sitting in the back corner of the cell looking up to the ceiling.

Suddenly, we HEAR footsteps as two sets of BOOTS quickly making their way towards their cell.

Michael picks up his head and smiles as he recognizes his sister Helena's beautiful face walking towards him.

The prison guard unlocks the cell and motions them to exit the cell.

Michael exits the cell first and Helena gives him a hug.

Aaron is standing behind him and Michael introduces Aaron to Helena and they shake hands.

#### ON HELENA CAMPION

Helena is Michael's older sister, she is blonde, smart and very beautiful. Only one year apart in age and very close. A professional musician who has always looked after her baby brother.

#### EXT. OUTSIDE THE CITY PRISON - MOMENTS LATER

Michael puts his arm around Helena to thank her.

MICHAEL

Thanks, I owe you one.

HELENA CAMPION

You owe me more than one. It's no wonder they arrested you, you smell worse than a wretched pub.

MICHAEL

It's all his fault.

Aaron smiles and shakes his head.

HELENA

Don't worry I know much better.  
(beat) Where do you live?

AARON

Not far, just down the street.

HELENA

We'll take you, get in.

AARON  
You sure it's no trouble.

Helena smiles.

HELENA  
No trouble.

Aaron smiles.

Helena drives through the city streets as Michael's head lays back passed out.

They pass several buildings and Aaron points out his street.

Suddenly, Helena pulls to a stop and Aaron exits the car.

AARON  
It was nice meeting you, thanks for  
the ride.

Helena rolls down her window.

HELENA  
Thanks for caring for him,  
sometimes he doesn't know when to  
quit.

AARON  
Not a problem.

They hold each others look.

HELENA  
Good bye.

AARON  
Bye.

Aaron watches as Helena drives off, then dashes up into the darkness of the entry way.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF BERLIN - ON THE RUNNING TRACK - DAYS LATER

Several Olympic hopefuls including Michael and Aaron pace themselves around the track.

Aaron is leading them and running at a strong pace.  
Germany's Olympic coach Henrick Hagen is watching from the stands with stop watch in hand.

Aaron makes his way around turn three and extends his kick.

Henrick studies his stop watch as Aaron accelerates into turn four and sprints towards the finish.

Michael follows him just a few meters behind. Aaron gives it everything he has as he crosses the finish line and Henrick clicks his watch.

Michael approaches Aaron as he catches his breath.

MICHAEL

Why are you pushing so hard, your  
making us all look bad?

Aaron gives him a look.

AARON

What do you mean?

MICHAEL

We've still got three months before  
the trials.

Aaron looks at him strangely.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Every time you run, you run like  
its your last race. Keep doing  
that and you'll burn yourself out.

Michael trots off onto the infield to stretch with the team.

Aaron shoots Michael a foul look as he jogs away.

HENRICK HAGEN

Greenfield!

Aaron picks up his head as the coach motions him over. Aaron jogs over to him.

HENRICK (CONT'D)

14.08... Fast enough to win last  
years trials. (beat) Nice work.

Aaron smiles.

HENRICK (CONT'D)

Go stretch. I don't need my best  
runner tightening up.

Aaron nods and jogs over to the infield with the rest of the team and takes a seat near Michael.



MICHAEL  
What did he say?

AARON  
He doesn't think I'm pushing hard  
enough.

Michael gives him a serious look and Aaron smiles.

Michael loosens up shakes his head and the two of them look  
at each other and laugh.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY OF BERLIN - ON THE FLATS - DAYS LATER

Aaron walks down one of the city streets and stops at a news  
paper stand.

The headlines read "National Socialist Party Gains Strength."  
Aaron grabs the news paper and struggles to find some change  
to pay the man at the stand.

He finds the correct change then quickly turns to go but  
suddenly runs into Helena walking in the opposite direction  
and she drops several books to the ground.

Aaron scrambles to help her.

HELENA  
Oh!

AARON  
Oh, I'm terribly sorry...

They recognize each other from the other night.

AARON  
Helena, right?

Helena's pushes her beautiful long blonde hair out of her  
face and smiles.

HELENA  
Yes.

AARON  
Aaron, from the other night?

HELENA  
Of course. You're the one that  
drank my brother into an oblivion.

AARON  
Is that what he told you?

Helena smiles.

HELENA  
Just kidding.

Aaron looses up.

AARON  
Sorry, I should have been watching  
where I was going.

HELENA  
No, no, I'm always walking with my  
head down.

Aaron smiles and Helena smiles back.

AARON  
How are you?

HELENA  
Good. And you?

AARON  
Great. Sorry again for the about  
the other night.

HELENA  
Stop apologizing, it was nothing,  
I'm uses to bailing Michael out.

Aaron laughs and lowers his head. Then looks up at her and they have a moment of silence between them. Aaron breaks the silence.

AARON  
Well, I don't want to hold you up.

HELENA  
Oh it's no problem I'm just headed  
to the library, to drop off these  
books.

AARON  
Can I help you?

HELENA  
Oh, that's not necessary.

Helena struggles to balance the books.

AARON  
No, really I'd like to, it looks  
like you've got your hands full.

HELENA  
You sure you don't mind?

AARON  
Not at all, I was just headed to  
grab a cup of coffee.

HELENA  
Gosh, I could use a cup.

AARON  
Let me help you, then and we'll  
grab a cup together.

Helena smiles.

HELENA  
I'd like that.

Aaron smiles and helps her with her books and they walk off.

EXT. COFFEE SHOP - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron and Helena are laughing and enjoying each other's  
company from outside the coffee shop.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - SAME

HELENA  
Michael says you're a fantastic  
runner.

AARON  
He does huh?

HELENA  
Yes, he respects you very much. Why  
do you enjoy running so?

BEAT

AARON  
I don't know. It's always given me  
a sense of freedom.

Helena shoots him a curious look.

HELENA  
You're not going to try to impress  
me with a save the world speech are  
you?

Aaron smiles.

AARON  
No. Not me...

Helena smiles and they laugh. She glances at her watch.

HELENA  
Oh my gosh, I'm late.

AARON  
Late? For what?

HELENA  
I have a recital at the concert  
hall.

Helena scrambles to put her coat on.

AARON  
Recital?

HELENA  
Yes, I'm a violinist in the city  
symphony.

AARON  
Can I watch?

HELENA  
Not this time, some other time  
perhaps.

Helena lays down some cash.

AARON  
No, it's on me.

Helena smiles.

AARON  
Can I see you again?

HELENA  
Yes, call me.

AARON  
What about Michael?

HELENA

He'll just have to learn to share.

Helena smiles, kisses him on the cheek then darts away and leaves Aaron with a smile on his face.

EXT. ON THE FLATS - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron walks down the sidewalk and stops in front of a sports shop.

The store displays a sign showing "Sabastien Sports." He sees a new pair of running shoes and admires them for a moment.

He smiles then enters the store and suddenly we're in.

INT. SABASTIEN SPORTS - SAME

Aaron walks into the sports shop and walks directly over to the running shoes displayed in the window.

Suddenly, an old salesman appears behind him.

SALESMAN

They're our finest pair of runners.

Aaron shoots him a quick glance.

SALESMAN (CONT'D)

Limited addition, hand made, best on the market.

Aaron grins.

AARON

How much?

SALESMAN

25 cents.

Aaron picks up the shoe and looks it over. The shoe is red with one white strip down the arch of the shoe.

Aaron runs his hand down the tread of the shoe and then eyes it from a side view.

Aaron takes a beat and lays the running shoe back on the display, admiring it for one last moment.

Suddenly, without a word he quickly turns and heads for the exit.

SALESMAN

Only a couple in stock, they won't last!

Aaron looks back and shoots him a smile.

EXT. WOODED TRAIL - ONLY A FEW WEEKS LATER

Aaron and Michael are running side by side through a wooded trail.

MICHAEL

I leave for Munich next month.

AARON

Next month?

MICHAEL

Yeah. (BEAT) There's a new party forming and they're quickly gaining strength.

Aaron listens.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

There's so much talk about a revolution. I want to join as soon as I can so make rank quicker.

AARON

What about the Olympics?

MICHAEL

I'll have plenty of time to train.  
(BEAT)) Race you to the field.

Michael sprints ahead and Aaron falls back a couple of strides.

They quickly sprint through the forest as they pass through the wooded trail then suddenly dash out into an open field.

Aaron chases Michael and pulls up alongside as they sprint towards the middle of the open field.

They finally come to a stop and frantically try to catch their breath.

MICHAEL

My sister's smitten.

Aaron is breathing heavily.

AARON  
Huh? What do you mean?

Michael paces around him still trying to catch his breath.

MICHAEL  
I mean she likes you.

AARON  
Yeah?

MICHAEL  
Yeah.

Aaron looks down and takes a beat.

AARON  
I won't you know... Not if you  
don't approve.

Michael shoots him a look.

AARON (CONT'D)  
Our friendship means more.

Michael takes a beat and looks down to the ground. Then  
lifts his eyes to him.

MICHAEL  
If she's happy... then... (beat)

Aaron nods his head.

AARON  
Michael...

Michael cuts him off and stops pacing around.

MICHAEL  
Don't take this personally, but our  
friendship doesn't change who you  
are.

Aaron is taken aback as he listens.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Look, let's face it, it not a good  
time to be a Jew in this country  
right now.

Aaron is stunned by Michael's words and is hurt as Michael paces around

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Listen, I don't give a shit. But  
there are those who do. (BEAT) I'm  
sorry, I just don't want her to get  
hurt.

Aaron dips his eyes and looks to the ground and Michael turns and jogs away. Aaron watches him as he disappears into the woods.

INT. DEUTSCHE OPERA BERLIN - SEVERAL MONTHS LATER - EVENING

The Berlin symphony plays Beethoven's "Romance For Violin No. 1 In G" before a full house. Helena is seated in the middle of the violinist section and playing gracefully.

Aaron is seated at the side of the theatre watching Helena with a smile.

The conductor finishes the ballot with a violent swoosh of the hands and a bow to his players.

The audience stands and erupts with a applause.

INT. THEATRE FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron waits for Helena at the front of the theatre. Suddenly Helena appears and quickly approaches him.

AARON  
Bravo, Bravo...

Aaron greets Helena with kiss on each cheek.

AARON (CONT'D)  
You were wonderful.

Helena blushes and smiles.

HELENA  
Thank you...

AARON  
I've never seen anything performed  
so passionately.

Helena smiles and is congratulated with cheers and clapping by several onlookers as Aaron escorts her out of the theatre.



EXT. ON THE FLATS - SAME

Aaron and Helena are walking arm in arm.

HELENA  
I'm so starving.

AARON  
Where should we go?

HELENA  
Somewhere simple and cozy.

Aaron thinks to himself.

HELENA (CONT'D)  
Ah, I know...

She takes Aaron by the hand and leads him across the street and then down the side walk.

AARON  
Have you heard from Michael?

HELENA  
Yes.

AARON  
How is he?

HELENA  
He's well... You know Michael, he's never been good with authority.

AARON  
It's got to be difficult for him.

HELENA  
It is, but even more so for my parents.

AARON  
He'll be fine, he's strong.

Helena smiles as they continue their walk.

HELENA  
There it is, just up ahead.

They approach the restaurant and we SEE a sign displaying the name of the restaurant "Offenbach Stuben" and a stairway leading to the restaurant.

They quickly make their way up the stairway and Helena goes for the door. Aaron however is suddenly stopped in his tracks.

AARON

Helena.

Helena glances.

HELENA

Come on, no time for games, I'm starving.

AARON

Aaron lowers his head.

HELENA

What? What is it.

Aaron doesn't move he simply stares in the direction of his astonishment.

Helena walks towards Aaron and sees his anguish then looks in the direction that holds him spellbound.

A sign reads

NO JUDE

Helena looks into Aaron's eyes and pulls him in close to her and they embrace.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BERLIN - DAYS LATER - DAY

A construction worker walks along the side walk towards a construction site carrying his lunch pail.

He stares up at the ironworkers hard at work on the construction of a building.

Several ironworkers are welding and guiding beams into place.

Aaron walks along an iron beam high above the ground. We SHOW the dizzying view of the ground far below.

Aaron motions the crane operator to hoist the beam for setting. The

BEAM

is slowly lifted to where the man is standing and another man assists him at the other end of the beam and they gently guide it into place.

Suddenly, we HEAR the lunch whistle sound.

Several of the ironworkers stop what they are doing and break for lunch.

Aaron's father Abraham cuts off his torch and lifts his safety mask.

Aaron spots him from high above.

AARON

Papa!

Abraham smiles and shoots him a wave.

Several of the ironworkers have gathered and sit perched high atop a beam socializing as they eat their meals as though sitting on a park bench.

We SHOW the breath-taking view as they casually sit and eat their meal.

ON ABRAHAM GREENFIELD

Abraham is short but rugged man, with dark brown hair and darker eyes, and thick Jewish accent. He has nerves of steel and is no non-sense but has a heart of gold. He has worked hard his whole life to provide for his family. He has five children, three boys including his youngest son Aaron and two girls.

INT. ELEVATOR - SAME

Abraham and Aaron descend in the elevator passing several flights of floors and finally comes to a abrupt stop at the bottom and the exit the elevator.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - SAME

They walk towards the a clearing on the river bank overlooking the Elbe river.

EXT. VIKTORIA PARK - ON THE RIVERBANK - SAME

They take a seat near the river bank and Aaron opens their lunch pale and hands Abraham his sandwich.

Abraham unwraps his sandwich and takes a bite. He leaves his dirty fingerprint on the white bread.

Then he sits back and breathes a deep breath and enjoys the view of the river as he chews.

ABRAHAM  
I love this city.

Aaron looks out over the river.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Such a beautiful city.

We SHOW the breathtaking view of the river beyond them as several boats pass by in front of them.

Aaron dips his eyes and takes a bite out of an apple.

AARON  
I've made a decision. I'm going to  
open my own business.

Abraham looks up at him.

AARON (CONT'D)  
It's true, after the Olympics.

Abraham is overwhelmed with joy and embraces his son.

ABRAHAM  
I'm proud of you.

BEAT.

AARON (CONT'D)  
Things are changing papa. People,  
politics, attitudes. Our country is  
hurting terribly. Good solid  
businesses will change that.

Abraham listens as he stares out over the river.

Aaron dips his eyes and takes a BEAT.

AARON (CONT'D)  
I met someone...

Abraham smiles.

ABRAHAM  
Tell me.

AARON  
She's beautiful.

ABRAHAM  
Is she Jewish?

AARON  
She's blonde.

ABRAHAM  
Your grandmother will have your  
head as well as mine. We'll dye  
her hair.

Aaron laughs and Abraham smiles.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Are you serious about her?

AARON  
I think so.

ABRAHAM  
Good for you. I'm happy. (beat)

Abraham takes a sip of his Sarsaparilla.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Life is too short, it is important  
to do what makes you happy.

Aaron shoots him a look and suddenly we hear the deafening  
sound of the construction whistle ending lunch.

Abraham takes the cake and stuffs it into his pocket.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
Back to work, give me a hand.

Aaron helps his father up and gives him a look.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
I know that look. What is it?

AARON  
I passed by a restaurant last  
night. It had a sign posted on it.

Aaron stares into his father's eyes and Abraham holds his  
son's stare.

AARON  
It said "No Jews."

Abraham dips his eyes but Aaron holds his stare.

ABRAHAM  
Times are difficult. People are  
blaming each other for their  
difficulties. It will pass...

Aaron does his best to smile and to appear confident.

Abraham smiles and shoots him a wink then begin their walk  
back towards the construction site.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ON THE STREETS OF BERLIN - DAYS LATER

Aaron and Helena walk out of a movie theatre.

The theatre reads "Now Playing: Charlie Chaplin's The Great  
Escape," as they down the sidewalk arm in arm. They joke and  
laugh passing several shops.

HELENA  
That has got to be the funniest  
movie I've ever seen.

Aaron smiles. Then something suddenly catches his eye and he  
stops and looks into the show room window.

HELENA  
What? What is it?

Aaron doesn't say anything but just stares.

HELENA (CONT'D)  
Aaron?

AARON  
They're gone...

HELENA  
What? What's gone?

AARON  
The red shoes.

Helena gives him an bewildered look.

AARON (CONT'D)  
The running shoes. I've been  
saving. (beat) But they're gone.

HELENA  
Let's go inside, they might have  
more in the back.

AARON

No...

Aaron takes a BEAT and stares inside.

Helena sighs and gives him a compassionate look.

HELENA

Well let's not pout. Come on,  
let's take a walk.

Aaron stares inside the display window then concedes and they make their way towards the river.

CUT TO:

EXT. NAZI MILITARY TRAINING FACILITY - MUNICH - SAME

Several military units are in training practicing their drills.

Several other units run the obstacle course.

A formation of brigades make their way towards the auditorium.

Michael walks in uniform with his unit as they enter.

INT. AUDITORIUM - SAME

Michael enters in the auditorium with his unit along with several other units.

Each unit is in unison and is meticulously watched by their commanders.

Michael takes a seat next to one of his comrades Alfred Krupp a soldier he befriended during basic training.

The Kommandant addresses the auditorium now full of soldiers and presents a propaganda film sowing the seed of hatred for the Jews.

The men's faces are stoic as they watch the film.

The film comes to an end and the Kommandant addresses the filled auditorium.

KOMMADANT

Men of Germany, brothers of the  
Aryan race.

(MORE)

KOMMADANT (cont'd)  
Today is the beginning of a new  
generation a new era for Germany.  
The Nordic race will rule the  
world, and you... you have the  
privilege of being part of the  
greatest nation.

They crowded auditorium begins a fiery chant and several  
begin to stand and chant "No more Jews...", "No more Jews..."  
Michael is hesitant.

Alfred quickly stands and begins to chant along with his  
unit.

Michael looks up at Alfred. Alfred looks down at him shooting  
him a puzzled look, then encourages him to stand as he chants  
the words, "No more Jews..."

Michael slowly stands and looks at Alfred and the entire  
crowd in the middle of the fiery chant with their arms  
raised, "No more Jews..."

Michael then slowly begins to chant and his chant becomes  
more powerful as the whole auditorium erupts into a fiery  
chant.

The Kommandante looks to his fellow commanders and gives them  
a well please look. Then he turns his stern look back to the  
chanting auditorium.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GREENFELD'S HOUSE - DAYS LATER

Several people are gathered at the Greenfield's house  
including Helena.

The house is decorated with birthday decorations for Aaron.

Aaron's mother is watching behind the curtain from the  
window.

ADINA GREENFELD  
He's here. Quick, shut off the  
lights.

Aaron trots up the outside stairway through the filtered  
curtain from inside the crowded house. He opens the door,  
hits the lights and is suddenly ambushed with shouts of  
"Surprise" from inside the crowded house.

Aaron reacts with a look of surprise and smiles as his family  
and friends surround and greet him.



Adina approaches him and gives him a hug and kiss. Aaron's brothers and sisters wish him a happy birthday and then he sees Helena.

Helena smiles and walks over and gives him a hug.

HELENA  
Happy birthday.

AARON  
Thank you. (beat) I can't believe  
this. Thank you everyone!

Friends and family dance to the music as Aaron opens his gifts.

Helena walks over to Aaron and hands him a present. Aaron takes a moment and looks up at her, then looks down and opens her gift. He quickly unwraps it.

Aaron stares at the box for a moment and looks up at Helena. He opens the box to find the

RED RUNNING SHOES

he has been wanting for so long. Aaron looks up at her and she smiles down on him.

AARON  
But how?

Helena simply smiles.

Aaron shakes his head and then stands up and gives her a hug and kiss on the cheek.

The elders look on as then a couple of children tease him.

A little girl gives a little boy a kiss on the cheek. The elders react in laughter.

Aaron and Helena watch and laugh. Aaron quickly dashes over and gives the little girl a kiss on the cheek.

She blushes, then wipes it off.

Their family and friends look on in laughter.

EXT. GREENFIELD'S HOUSE - HOURS LATER - EVENING

Aaron and Helena are seated on the steps of the house talking.

HELENA  
I should be going.

Helena gets up and Aaron follows her down the steps.

AARON  
Thank you for coming.

Helena smiles and gives him a quick kiss. They look into each others eyes for a brief moment, then begin a passionate kiss.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. 1939 SUMMER - OLYMPIC TIME TRIALS - BERLIN - DAY

Aaron is walking down the halls of the German training facility and spots Michael talking with Alfred who is also a runner.

AARON  
Michael?

Michael turns and sees Aaron and at first is happy to see him. Aaron quickly approaches them.

AARON  
I thought that was you. How are you?

Alfred looks Aaron up and down as though he is studying him.

MICHAEL  
Aaron. Good to see you.

AARON  
How's the military treating you?

MICHAEL  
It's alright.

Alfred gives him a look.

MICHAEL  
I mean it's great, it's, it's going well. How about you?

AARON  
Not bad. Just working a lot, trying to raise capital for my business.

(MORE)

AARON (cont'd)  
I'll be opening a sports shop soon.  
(beat) What do you say we get a  
drink after the race?

Michael's friend continues to study Aaron.

MICHAEL  
Yeah, maybe we'll see.

Aaron is feeling a little awkward.

AARON  
Ok, great. Good seeing you.

Aaron smiles then nods to Alfred then walks off.

Michael stares as he goes.

ALFRED  
Is he a Jew?

Michael still staring at Aaron.

MICHAEL  
What?

ALFRED  
Is he a Jew?

MICHAEL  
He's just an acquaintance.

Alfred inspects Michael's face and Michael quickly changes the subject.

MICHAEL  
Come on, let's get to the track.

Alfred then turns his stare to Aaron as he disappears around the corner of the hallway.

EXT. ON THE TRACK - MOMENTS LATER

Several runners are lined up at the starting line stretching and loosening up for the time trials of the three mile distance run.

Aaron and Michael stand side by side. Aaron is wearing the running shoes Helena bought him for his birthday and Michael takes notice.

MICHAEL  
Nice shoes.

AARON

Your sister's birthday gift to me.

Michael shoots him a weak smile.

STARTER

Runners take your marks.

The runners line up for the start.

STARTER

Get set.

The runners wait in anticipation for the gun. Then suddenly the starter fires the

GUN

and the runners take off down the track.

Aaron quickly takes the lead with Michael right behind him. The runners are several laps into the race.

Aaron and Michael are battling it out with Alfred right behind them.

Alfred passes Michael and makes a move for the lead. Aaron sees him coming upon him and they bump arms. Alfred jousts Aaron with his elbows and Aaron falls behind him.

Aaron quickly regains his composure and quickens his pace. He pulls up alongside Alfred and gives him a taste of his own medicine rubbing him out using his elbows.

Alfred falls behind and Michael quickly passes him.

Michael chases Aaron and we here the final bell with one lap to go.

ANNOUNCER

One lap to go.

Aaron speeds up, then slowly pulls away from Michael.

Michael fights to stay with him.

Alfred pulls up just behind Aaron and Michael as they leave the rest of the pack behind.

Aaron and Michael are running side by side as they go into turn three.

Alfred sprints up towards Aaron and steps on his

HEEL

Aaron suddenly goes tumbling to the track as Michael runs past him.

Alfred stumbles as Michael makes his turn around turn three, now in the lead.

Aaron sees the pack quickly rushing by him as he struggles to his feet.

Michael and Alfred are several yards up ahead.

Aaron sprints after the pack with everything he's got.

Michael sprints down the down stretch with Alfred right behind him.

Aaron passes a couple of runners as he sprints down the stretch.

BLOOD

trickles down Aaron's leg from the laceration to his knee from the fall.

Michael crosses the finish line winning the race and qualifies for the Olympics.

Aaron finishes in fifth failing to qualify and approaches Alfred.

AARON  
You cheated.

ALFRED  
What? How?

AARON  
You know how!

Michael and the German coaches see the two of them arguing and quickly approach them.

MICHAEL  
What's going on?

AARON  
Your friend tripped me.

ALFRED  
The man's insane, he tripped over himself.

AARON  
That's a lie!

Aaron gets into Alfred's face.

ALFRED  
Get away from me, Jew.

Alfred shoves him back and Aaron lunges for him.

Suddenly Michael and the coaching staff jump in to break them up.

HENRICK  
Break it up!

AARON  
He cheated...

ALFRED  
He's a liar...

HENRICK  
That's enough, it's over.

AARON  
What!?

HENRICK  
You heard me. It's over...

Aaron shakes his head and angrily walks off.

Michael watches him as he exits the track, then he looks at Alfred.

Alfred grins.

Michael looks to the ground torn and confused.

INT. TRACK LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Michael approaches Aaron who is already showered and changed.

MICHAEL  
I'm sorry. I know how much this  
meant to you.

Aaron doesn't acknowledge him as he bags up his belongings.  
He shuts his locker and zips his bag then heads for the door.

Aaron opens the door to the exit.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Aaron!

Aaron stops and turns then gives him a stern look.

AARON

Good luck at the Games...

Aaron exits the facility and the door slams behind him.

Michael dips his head in guilt.

EXT. 1940 OLYMPIC GAMES - OLYMPIC FIELD - MUNICH - DAY

A parade of SS soldiers lead other military units around the Olympic track during the opening parade and salute Hitler as they pass him in the middle of the grand stand.

Hitler acknowledges the salutes with a fierce and stern look in his eye and a salute of his hand now and then.

The military parade marches in formation down the Olympic track.

The stadium is filled with German fans who sing and chant the German National Anthem.

EXT. OLYMPIC GAMES - ON THE FIELD - LATER

An athlete dashes down the track and performs the long jump.

Another launches a javelin and it flies through the air and spears the ground.

Another athlete tosses the shot put and the ball goes flying through the air then hits the ground. The referees run in to mark it.

CUT TO:

INT. GREENFIELD'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Abraham sits staring at the television in anticipation of the race. Aaron enters the living room.

ABRAHAM

Sit. Quickly. They're starting.

Aaron takes a seat next to his father and stares at the television.

He sees Michael is on television pacing around with the other Olympic runners inside the track prior to the start of the race.

Aaron sits on the edge of his seat in anticipation of the race to begin.

The runners take their positions and the starter fires the gun.

Michael sprints out of the blocks and takes an early lead.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLYMPIC STADIUM - SAME

Michael runs out in front leading the pack.

A couple of Americans approach from behind to challenge him. He quickly increases his pace forcing them to chase him.

The pack begins to thin quickly as they runners struggle to keep up with the fast pace Michael has set. The challengers lengthen they're stride in pursuit of him.

CUT TO:

INT. GREENFIELD'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Aaron watches with intensity as Michael leads the race. We SHOW Michael on television leading the race as he makes his way into one of the turns on the track.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLYMPIC STADIUM - SAME

The CROWD cheers at the sound of the bell signaling the final lap.

Michael leads the race into the final turn as he pulls away from the two American runners.

Michael sprints ahead and crosses the finish line as the fans cheer wildly in the stands.

Michael paces around to catch his breath as several of the runners approach him and shake his hand to congratulate him for his victory.

CUT TO:



INT. GREENFIELD'S LIVING ROOM - SAME

Aaron watches the television and sees Michael being congratulated. The

CLOCK

shows Michael's time of 14:57.

Aaron lowers his head knowing that he could have beaten his time. He rises from his seat and starts to walk out of the living room.

ABRAHAM

You know.

Aaron stops but doesn't look back.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)

When I was a boy we used to play football in the streets. I used to dream about being the best football player in all of Germany. My father became ill and died when I was very young. Our family was very poor. We all had to work to help out. (beat) It didn't leave much time for competitive football.

Aaron listens.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)

I remember walking by the football fields on my way home from work one day and seeing the other kids playing. I've never felt so sorry for myself as I did that day. I felt like I had been cheated, like I was entitled to more. (beat)

Aaron listens more intensely.

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)

I was angry at the world and God. Your uncle Jacob happened to be passing by and saw me sobbing as I watched them play. He walked up beside me and watched them with me for a moment without saying a word. Then finally he said... 'Never forget Abraham, that God has a plan for you also.

(MORE)

ABRAHAM (CONT'D)  
You must trust in that plan.'  
(BEAT) Then he walked away.

Aaron picks up his head and shoots his father a look.

AARON  
I could've won that race poppa.

Then he exits without another word and Abraham nods understanding his son's plight.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. GREENFELD'S SPORTS SHOP - YEARS LATER

A sign displays GREENFELD SPORTS from a small building.

INT. GREENFELD'S SPORTS SHOP - SAME

Aaron rings up his last customer and watches a boy and his father leave with a smile on their face.

Aaron grabs a broom and sweeps up a bit. Then he takes off his apron tosses it behind the counter.

EXT. GREENFELD'S SPORTS SHOP - SAME

He exits his store locking the door and turning the open sign to

CLOSED

INT. AARON AND HELENA'S HOUSE - LATER

Aaron enters the house and his two children run to his arms greeting him.

CHILDREN  
Daddy!

AARON  
Hi love! Where's your mother?

LITTLE GIRL  
She's upstairs, crying.

AARON  
Crying?

Aaron looks up towards the staircase.

AARON  
Go finish your supper. I'll be  
back down.

INT. Aaron AND HELENA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM ROOM - LATER

HELENA stares down at a

FAMILY PHOTO

with tears in her eyes of Aaron and their two children  
sitting in front of them.

She gets up from the couch and begins to pace around the room  
as Aaron enters.

AARON  
Helena what is it?

HELENA (CONT'D)  
I fear for the children. (BEAT)  
Look...

She grabs a newspaper from her dresser and hands him the  
HEADLINE that reads

NO JUDE PERMITTED IN CITY LIMITS

Aaron reads the headlines in disbelief.

AARON  
It's worsening...

HELENA  
We have to leave.

BEAT.

AARON  
I can't. I can't leave my  
family...

HELENA  
We're your family. Think of the  
children.

Aaron lowers his head and takes a BEAT.

AARON  
Perhaps we should separate.

HELENA  
(Hysterical) What? What are you saying?

AARON  
Listen to me.

HELENA  
(Hysterical) No, I won't leave you!

AARON  
Helena! Please. (BEAT) You'll be safe with your parents in Kuhlungsborn. It's not safe for you here either. (BEAT) Not as long as your married to me. Your are right, we MUST do what's best for the children.

Helena gives him a blank stare. Aaron holds her gaze for a brief moment, then they embrace.

HELENA  
What will happen of us?

Aaron fixates on the HEADLINE without a word.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KUHLLUNGSBORN - DAYS LATER

The OCEAN parallels the road as a car drives along the coast.

It passes several fishing boats in the harbor. A fisherman wades in the shallows along the beach and tosses a CAST NET out over the water.

Helena and the children stare out at the sea as Aaron concentrates on the road.

They pass by several little shops as they drive through the little village. They cross over a small covered bridge and then enter Helena's parents driveway.

We SHOW an opulent beach home as they enter into the driveway and showing then stopping in front of the house.

Helena's parents quickly appear to greet them. Helena and the children leap out of the car and are immediately embraced by her mother.

HELENA  
Hello mother.

HELENA'S MOTHER  
Hello sweetheart.

HELENA'S DAUGHTER  
Grandma!

Helena's daughter holds up some flowers.

HELENA'S MOTHER  
Oh, for me? How sweet? Come  
inside now everyone, I was just  
fixing some sandwiches for a  
picnic.

Aaron steps around the car and shakes Helena's father's hand.

HELENA'S FATHER  
How was the drive?

AARON  
Fine.

HELENA'S FATHER  
Come in, you must be hungry.

Aaron nods his head and Helena's father leads him inside.

INT. HELENA'S PARENTS HOUSE - LATER

Helena's father shows Aaron to their quarters.

Aaron lays his family's suitcases on the floor and looks out  
the bedroom window overlooking the beach.

He takes a deep breathe to take in the moment.

EXT. ON THE BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON

Aaron, Helena and her parents are gathered around seated at a  
picnic table on the beach eating as the children run around  
and play in the sand.

Aaron's son runs up and begs him to enter the water.

Aaron walks down to the edge of the water and slowly wades in  
up to his knees. Suddenly he stops and does not enter deeper  
into the water.

AARON'S SON

Why do you look sad, papa?

Aaron smiles.

AARON

You're such a smart little boy.

Aaron picks him up and gives him a big hug.

AARON (CONT'D)

Go play with your sister.

The child dismisses Aaron's apprehensions and jumps and plays in the water and joins his sister.

Helena takes notice of Aaron's apprehensions of entering the water as she looks on from the picnic table.

INT. HELENA'S PARENTS HOUSE - GUEST QUARTERS - EVENING

Aaron stares out over the moonlit sea from his guestroom.

Helena approaches him and clutches onto him.

HELENA

Stay with us, I beg you.

Aaron shoots her a look.

AARON

We've talked about this. You know  
I can't leave my family behind.

HELENA

So what are you doing to us?

AARON

It's different, you're safe here.  
I'll be back for you as soon as  
there is no more threat to you or  
to the children.

EXT. HELENA'S PARENTS HOUSE - NEXT DAY - MORNING

Helena and Aaron stand outside the car with the children and they embrace one last time.

HELENA

I love you.

Aaron nods and Helena kisses him. Then he climbs into the car and starts the ignition and drives off.

Helena stands in silence as she watches Aaron drive away.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CAPITAL BUILDING - AUDITORIUM - WEEKS LATER

Hitler intensely stares out over his military audience.

They remain silent with stoic faces as they watch and anticipate his next move.

Then he slowly begins to address them.

HITLER

We are approaching the end of an era when Germany was once a forgotten and blemished nation. A new dawn awaits us. A new and pure Germany shall emerge from the shadows of oppression. (beat) She shall remain strong, pure, and forever unblemished. A pure race will bring success and Germany will once again prosper. The Aryan race will rule forever. And our nation will be pure again. (beat) This is our duty, it is my commitment.

The audience responds with an eruption of applause and reply chanting, Hiel Hitler over and over again.

CUT TO:

INT. GREENFIELD'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

Aaron and his family are seated around the table eating silently. There is a disturbing silence among them.

Aaron can no longer withstand the silence and excuses himself from the table and his family watches him as he exits.

INT. GREENFIELD'S HOUSE - AARON'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron paces around his room, he notices the pictures of Helena and their children on his desk.

He picks up the picture and sits down on the bed. Tears begin to pour down his cheeks. He takes a deep breath and gathers his strength and tries to regain his composure.

As he wipes the tears from his face he sees the

## RED RUNNING SHOES

He gently lays the picture on the bed and stands back up and staring down at them.

## EXT. STREETS OF BERLIN - LATE EVENING

Aaron jogs down some familiar streets and is overcome by a sense of peace as he runs.

But the peace he feels is short lived when he comes upon several places of business displaying signs of

"NO JEWS"

displayed on doors and windows.

With increasing anger and speeds up his pace. He takes off in a sprint and we SHOW the anguish on his face.

No matter how far or how fast he runs he cannot escape the signs until he finally breaks from the streets and dashes towards an open field.

He runs faster and faster through the field as the sweat pours down his face, until he disappears over the crest of a hill and into the night.

EXT. NOVEMBER 9, 1938 - KRISTALLNACHT - STREETS OF BERLIN -  
NEXT DAY - EARLY MORNING BEFORE DAWN

The SS Storm Troopers swarm the streets as they occupy the city.

Several of the troops arrive in trucks as others march through the streets and storm the apartments and homes of the Jewish occupants.

The troops force several Jewish families from their homes and into the streets.

A Jewish man struggles for his suit case with a German soldier. The man loses the tug of war and falls to the ground.

The soldier pulls his pistol and shoots him point blank in the head.



INT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - SAME

Abraham scrambles in the basement and hide his two small grandchildren in a small compartment.

ABRAHAM

Stay here and you'll be safe.

The small boy and girl are stare up at him in fear.

Abraham gives them a wink and then shuts the compartment door. He takes off running up the basement stairs.

Several members of the family are in the kitchen.

He grabs his wife by the arms and hugs her.

ABRAHAM

Quickly, we must pray.

Abraham quickly leads his wife and family to the living room. They light some candles and he begins to lead them in prayer.

EXT. OUTSIDE ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - SAME

Suddenly, several soldiers storm to the front of Abraham's house. A soldier kicks the door with his foot several times.

INT. ABRAHAM'S HOUSE - SAME

Abraham and his family are gathered around the living room in prayer. The women begin to tremble and tears flow from their eyes.

We HEAR the German soldiers trying to beat down the front door. Suddenly we HEAR the door busted open and Abraham's wife flinches.

We HEAR the soldiers quickly storm through the halls as they pray. The soldiers footsteps get louder and louder. Abraham's voice raises and his words quicken.

Suddenly the German soldiers are upon them and grab and shove them as they rampage through out the home.

One of the soldiers grabs Abraham and shoves him down the hallway. Abraham falls and rolls to the floor. The German soldier kicks him in the side and rolls him out in the street.

His wife screams as she watches then she too is grabbed by the arm and quickly moved outside. The women wail as they are lined up outside their home.

There are seven family members all lined up in front of their home except for Abraham who is fading in and out of consciousness as he struggles to get to his feet.

Blood drips from his hands and forehead from striking the pavement.

The Captain quickly lights a cigarette then blows out the smoke and signals his troops to shoot them.

The troops fire and Aaron's family is wiped out in an instant as they fall to the ground.

CUT TO:

EXT. - FIELD UNDER LARGE SHADED TREE - SAME

Aaron suddenly awakens beneath a large tree but lays disoriented in the shade of the tree. He is in the middle of a field having fallen asleep their the night before during his run.

Suddenly he quickly scrambles to his feet and gains his sense of direction.

He listens for just a moment in the direction of the gunfire and the sirens. Then he takes off running towards the town.

EXT. STREETS OF BERLIN - MOMENTS LATER

Aaron comes upon the city and sees the German soldiers removing the Jewish families from their homes in the streets.

We HEAR the sound of gunfire in the distance as he sprints towards his home. He comes upon a small apartment building and carefully peaks around the corner.

He looks across the street and notices the windows broken in his store and sees smoke seeping from the windows. He lowers his head and is terribly upset.

Suddenly, a pack of German soldiers storm across the street to pillage another Jewish owner's business.

Aaron waits for them to get out of sight and then sprints towards his home. As he approaches he SEES his family lying dead in front of their home.

He drops to his knees and slowly crawls from family member to family member. He stretches out his arms in an attempt to gather them all into him and sobs amongst them.

Suddenly we HEAR a single set of footsteps as a pair of  
BOOTS

come to a stand still.

The captain kicks some dirt and pebbles to get Aaron's attention. But he doesn't react to the debris hitting him as he's slumped over his family.

The Captain kicks the dirt a second time and again Aaron shows no reaction.

Tears flow down his face and as he looks up to the captain and two of his men standing before him.

CAPTAIN  
It is a shame.

Aaron glares up at the captain. The captain looks Aaron in the eye and holds his stare for a moment.

CAPTAIN  
Take him.

One of the two soldiers aggressively approaches Aaron and strikes him in the head.

WE GO TO BLACK

INT. STATE HOUSE - SPRING APRIL 12, 1941

Hitler delivers a fiery speech declaring the Jewish population second-class citizens.

STOCK FOOTAGE of Hitler giving a speech in German.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRAIN - DUSK

A long train emerges from the wilderness with several cars being pulled by its engine. The train approaches a long bridge in the moonlight.

The train crosses the lengthy bridge with smoke steaming from its engine, then disappears underneath a tunnel carved out of a mountain.

INT. TRAIN CAR - SAME

We HEAR the deafening sound of the train's whistle inside the tunnel. We HEAR the screams of several Jewish women packed inside the darkness of the cars.

Several Jews struggle to stand upright in the darkness of the precarious train car as it sways in the darkness.

Aaron holds onto a rafter of the train trying to keep his balance and attempts to catch a glimpse of the outside world between the boards of the train car.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRAIN - LATER

We HEAR the mighty blast of the train's whistle as it exits the tunnel and enters a thick forrest.

The train passes around the mountainous German terrain and in and out of several forests.

The SUN

begins to rise over the crest of a mountain as the train enters a wide open valley.

INT. TRAIN CAR - LATER

Aaron is leaning against his arm and is awakened by the beam of light streaking through the crack between the boards of the train car.

A young boy and young girl lean against their mother as her head rests upon Aaron's shoulder.

Aaron looks to see who's leaning against him and sees a young pretty Jewish woman.

She suddenly awakens and shyly removes her head from his shoulder.

They look down simultaneously to find her children sleeping.

Aaron and the young woman look at each other and she forces a smile then she shyly turns away.

The cabin is full of Jews fighting for air.

SARAH

Where do you suppose they are  
taking us?

Aaron slowly shakes his head.

AARON  
I don't know...

Sarah's eyes swell up and we see a tear run down his cheek.

Aaron takes a deep breath.

AARON  
Are you alright?

SARAH (NODDING)  
Yes, yes...

Sarah gives him a blank nod in acknowledgement. Aaron lowers his head.

Sarah's little boy repositions himself to try to stay comfortable. She looks down at her children and Aaron looks on.

AARON  
How old are they?

SARAH  
Five and six.

Aaron smiles.

AARON  
They remind me of my own.

Aaron lowers his eyes and takes a beat.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
Where is your family?

Aaron stares out over the lifeless bodies in the train car.

AARON  
They fled to Weser.

BEAT.

Sarah notices Aaron's running shoes on his feet and tries to break the awkward silence.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
Those are funny shoes.

Aaron glances down at his feet and smiles.

AARON  
They're track shoes. (beat) My wife  
gave them to me.

Sarah shoots him a curious look.

SARAH  
You're a runner?

AARON  
I used to be.

Sarah takes a beat still staring at his shoes.

SARAH  
I bet you were good.

Aaron forces a smile and nods.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRAIN - AFTERNOON

The train descends down the long mountainside.

The SUN shines all its brilliance as several

VULTURES

circle the train cars overhead.

INT. TRAIN CAR - SAME

An elderly Jewish man gazes out through the cracks of the  
train car. He wavers as he fades in and out of consciousness  
from heat exhaustion.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRAIN - SAME

The SUN shines brilliantly.

INT. TRAIN CAR - SAME

The elderly man closes his eyes and leans on a middle aged  
man beside him. The middle aged man nudges the elderly man  
off of him. The elderly man wavers and reopens his eyes.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRAIN - SAME

The SUN shines brilliantly.

INT. TRAIN CAR - SAME

The elderly man's eyes flicker and suddenly loses consciousness and falls on the middle aged man, pushing him into several others.

We HEAR the screams of women and several people gather around the elderly man lying on the floor of the car. Two guards suddenly appear.

Aaron quickly tends to the elderly man and checks his pulse. He looks up to Sarah and shakes his head.

Sarah lowers her head and a young woman bursts out in tears.

Both guards quickly make their way to the commotion stepping on people as they go and kicking them out of the way.

YOUNG JEWISH WOMAN

Papa! Papa!

The young Jewish woman sobs as several others react with expressions of grief.

The two guards appear above her and looking down at her. One tosses a piece of bread to her with the hopes of shutting her up, the other smiles, then turns away.

The young woman lies there weeping and clutching her father with the bread lying upon her lap.

INT. TRAIN CAR - DAYS LATER

The mood is very somber in the train car. People are sitting silently with little expression on their faces. The car reeks as flies swarm the dead.

A man sits catatonic, while another is out of his mind as he sits talking to himself. We cannot tell the dead from the sleeping. Aaron sits curled up watching the man who is talking to himself and is suddenly startled by the sound of the trains mighty whistle.

Many awaken and struggle to rise to their feet as the dead remain behind on the wooden floor.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRAIN - SAME

The TRAIN approaches MAUTHAUSEN prison camp. The train approaches the large

## GATES

just outside the camp. The German guards open the large gate of the camp.

## INT. TRAIN CAR - SAME

The Jews struggles looking over each other's shoulders and between the cracks of the wooden train car in an attempt to catch a glimpse of the outside world.

## EXT. OUTSIDE THE TRAIN - SAME

A large sign on the gates displaying the name

## MAUTHAUSEN

as the train slowly approaches the gates of the camp. The train slowly enters through it's gates.

Several German soldiers are lined up on both sides of the tracks with guard dogs (German Shepards), awaiting the train to come to a stop.

The train slowly pulls forward until the entire train is pulled into the prison camp.

## INT. TRAIN CAR - SAME

The Jewish passengers eagerly look through the cracks of the boards trying to catch a glimpse of what is awaiting them.

## EXT. ON THE GROUNDS OF MAUTHAUSEN - SAME

The train continues to pull forward and we SHOW the enormous length of the mile long train. We HEAR the screeching of the tracks as it slowly comes to a stop. The German guards quickly move in and open the train car doors.

Several Jews quickly exit out and many fall and are trampled on. The German guards shout orders in an attempt to keep the mass flow of Jews under control.

The first wave is mass chaos with Jews fighting to breath in fresh air. Many stumble to the ground and several pass out.

Aaron grabs Sarah's children and they quickly exit the train.



Sarah screams as she's tripped up and falls to the ground. She is trampled by several people exiting the cars.

Aaron quickly turns back and helps her to her feet as a river of people rush by them.

AARON

Are you ok?

Sarah nods and they quickly follow the German guard's shouting orders.

INT. TOWER - SAME

The Kommandant stands high above on a tower with his two commanding officers, Michael and Alfred. They look on as the German guards scurry around as their dogs bark orders in attempt to organize the populous and force them to line up in military formation.

Both Michael and Alfred stand tall and unflinching as they watch the movement below them.

EXT. ON THE GROUNDS OF MAUTHAUSEN - SAME

A German guard tries to control his German Sheppard who is wrestling with Jewish man with his arm in its mouth.

The exodus of Jews continues to flow from the train cars and out onto the grounds on both sides of the train tracks of the camp.

We follow Aaron and Sarah as they scurry around in an attempt to follow the German guards shouting orders.

The German guards align the Jews up in military formation separating the men from the women and children.

Several of the guards search the insides and beneath the train cars with their dogs.

INT. TRAIN CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Two German soldiers go car for car searching the insides only to find a few dead passengers lying still on the floor of a few cars.

EXT. ON THE GROUNDS OF MAUTHAUSEN - SAME

A German soldier salutes the Kommandant signaling the completion of the train cars and then motions the engineer to exit the death camp.

The train sounds it's whistle and the train slowly moves forward exiting the death camp.

The train slowly passes by the massive population of Jews on the grounds of the death camp.

Several Jews hopelessly watch the train as it exits the camp and leaves them for dead.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE GROUNDS OF MAUTHAUSEN - HOURS LATER

A massive line of people starting near the entrance of Mauthausen and extends into the nearby forest just outside the grounds of the camp.

The Jews patiently await their unknown destiny many of them still carrying the remainder of their belongings.

The massive line extends deep into the woods and then diverges into two lines, one that encircles a nearby pond and then leads back to the camp and another continuing deeper into the woods towards a large

WHITE STABLE-LIKE BUILDING

The German guards divide the lines into two line one containing those who are healthy and able to work, and the other the weak.

The elderly and little children continue deeper into the woods leading to the white stable building.

Aaron, Sarah and her children slowly approach the diverging line.

Several Jews ahead of them are seated while waiting to be told where to go.

An elderly couple moves slowly in front of Aaron and Sarah, and as they move towards the diverging line faint screams can be heard in the distance and in the direction of the white stable building.

Sarah's daughter begins to cry but she is quick to hold her close and wipe away her tears.

The elderly man in front of them notices the little girl's tears and pulls out a handkerchief from his pocket. He slowly unwraps the handkerchief and reveals a cookie, then offers it to her.

The little girl accepts the gift and stops crying. Sarah nods in appreciation.

SARAH

Thank you.

The elderly man smiles and nods then returns to his wife.

Sarah's daughter happy now, enjoys the cookie. A

As they approach the diverging line the elderly couple are moved to the line leading towards the deeper woods.

Aaron is approached by a German soldier is abruptly moved to the line leading back to the camp.

Sarah too is then directed towards the same line, but suddenly feels a tug on her arm as the soldier grabs her children away from her and places them in the other line. Sarah lunges for her children and tugs at the German soldier's leg.

She is quickly reprimanded by another soldier, who strikes her on the side of the head and knocks her to the ground. Aaron goes to help her but is grabbed from behind by a young Jewish man.

ON JACOB SILVER

Strong athletic, but short in stature. He's street smart, optimistic, instinctive, quick witted, with brown hair, brown eyes.

JACOB SILVER

Don't be a fool.

Aaron is fixated on Sarah who is laying unconscious and bleeding from above her right eye.

He quickly runs over to her and picks her up and carries her. Jacob leans into Steven Lav.

ON STEVEN LAV

Educated, tall skinny, wears glasses, geeky, but intelligent and very pessimistic to the point of almost cowardly.

STEVEN LAV  
Stupid bugger...

Steven watches in fear as the German soldiers whisk Sarah's children away towards the unknown.

JACOB  
(To Steven) Come on.

Steven looks at Jacob as he were crazy but slowly follows.

JACOB  
Is she alright?

AARON  
I don't know.

Aaron lays her down and gently shakes her to.

AARON  
Sarah. Sarah...

She quickly comes to for a moment, but then fades back out. A couple of German guards patrol the line. Steven notices them.

STEVEN  
Get her back to the line.

They quickly pick her up and rush her back into formation.

EXT. DIVERGING LINE INTO THE WOOD - SAME

We follow the elderly couple as they move deeper into the woods with several Jewish prisoners leading the way.

EXT. HOLDING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Several German guards in a holding area on the edge of the wooded area directly approximately fifty Jews at a time only approximately a hundred yards from a white stable like building.

In the distance, several Jews enter into the LONG WHITE BUILDING.

We HEAR the screams off in the distance coming from the white building.

The elderly couple glance at each other and look down at Sarah's children now holding their hands. They don't utter a word but instead stare straight ahead.

The guards motion for the next group of Jews to form a line and march to the white building.

EXT. OPEN FIELD - SAME

We follow the elderly couple walking along a matted down path towards the building.

EXT. OUTSIDE WHITE STABLE-LIKE BUILDING - LATER

The German guards mush the parade of Jews into the building.

The elderly couple and Sarah's children slowly approach and enter the building and a German guard closing the door behind them.

The elderly woman has a look of despair across her face.

We PAN along the side of the building as they enter and HEAR the screams. As we continue to PAN we expose a

HOSE

hooked up to the exhaust pipe of an old automobile with it's engine running.

GOTO BLACK

EXT. ON THE GROUNDS OF MAUTHAUSEN - HOURS LATER

We SHOW a panoramic view of the death camp. Several prisoners lined up in two separate formations.

EXT. EASTERN FORMATION - SAME

Alfred leads a large formation of female prisoners on the eastern side of the camp.

EXT. WESTERN FORMATION - SAME

Michael leads large formation of male prisoners on the western side of the camp.

EXT. EASTERN FORMATION - SAME

Several German guards patrol the formations with their guard dogs.

Sarah's stands expressionless, catatonic and lifeless.

EXT. WESTERN FORMATION - SAME

On the far side of the camp Aaron looks towards her way but she does not acknowledge him, as she remains still.

EXT. EASTERN FORMATION - SAME

Suddenly, Alfred shouts orders demanding the female prisoners remove their clothing.

Slowly, and reluctantly they begin remove their clothing. Sarah, however is still and non-conforming.

Alfred notices her and quickly approaches. He stands before her stoic, methodically looking her over. Suddenly, he bellows out orders (in German) commanding his guards to remove her clothing.

Suddenly and violently they strip her shirt from her and then her dress. Alfred stands poised then quickly removes his revolver from his holster and points it directly at her head.

The two guards complete their orders and leave her trembling in formation. Alfred quickly moves her to the front of the formation gaining the female prisoners' full attention.

ALFRED

Such a pretty girl. Too bad you're  
unable to follow orders?

Alfred signals the guards and they hold her on either side. Alfred swings her around and tosses her to the ground. He undresses his pants and begins to violently rape her.

CLOSE ON SARA

Sarah screams and struggles but her fight is futile against his strength. All is lost, her face goes stoic.

The women in formation try to hide their faces from the horror.

CLOSE ON THE TWO GUARDS

as the stand expressionless as he continues the malevolence.

CLOSE ON ALFRED

exhausted from his rage, he picks himself up, then circles her and stares down at her.

Sarah looks at him with tears streaming down her face.

Alfred pulls out his revolver and raises it above his head.

ALFRED

(Out of breath he shouts) This is  
what happens when a Jew disobeys my  
orders.

Alfred points the revolver to her head as she looks up at him...

EXT. WESTERN FORMATION - SAME

We HEAR the sound of the gun shot.

Aaron quickly turns and sees Sarah laying lifeless and naked.

He looks on in horror and then succumbs by bowing his head.

EXT. EASTERN FORMATION - SAME

The women in formation do their best to keep their composure, we HEAR a few women wailing in sorrow, while many weep in silence.

INT. WESTERN FORMATION - SHOWER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A large of line of male prisoners moves quickly and is forced into the showers.

The German guards splash a repugnant blue liquid on them.

The guards quickly exit the showers and leave the prisoners standing in the darkness.

Suddenly a alarm sounds and a light flickers on and the prisoners look around in anticipation.

Suddenly, freezing cold water spews out of the shower sprinklers. At first the prisoners go into shock and then realize its only water.

They quickly rinse the blue nauseating liquid from their bodies.

Suddenly, the showers are shut off and the guards quickly rush the prisoners from the showers to another room.

INT. UNIFORM ROOM - SAME

A couple of prisoners approach the guard stand and give up their shoes and clothing.

A guard tosses the shoes into a stable containing an enormous pile of prisoners'

SHOES

A guard hands one of the prisoners a pair of pants and a shirt, and is given a small pair of wooden clogs.

The prisoner tries to quickly slip on his garments as he is quickly rushed through the line. His pant legs are so long he trips over them and his shirt too small to button.

Aaron approaches the stand naked with his red running shoes and old clothing in hand.

GERMAN GUARD

Name.

AARON

Aaron Greenfeld.

GERMAN GUARD

Place your belongings on the table.

Aaron looks at his running shoes and takes a beat and looks at the guard.

The guard stares back.

Aaron slowly places his clothes and red running shoes, now stained with dirt and places them on the table. The guard removes them and hands them to another soldier who tosses them amongst the mass pile.

Aaron is quickly lead away but turns his head to catch one last glance of his

RED RUNNING SHOES



standing out in the middle of the mountainous pile of the prisoner's shoes.

CUT TO:

EXT. HANOVER, GERMANY - KATHERINE'S PARENTS RESIDENCE - IN A FIELD - SAME

The SUN sets over a large open field.

Aaron and Katherine's children are running and playing in the field.

Katherine shouts out and waves to her children and calls them in for dinner.

The children immediately run and enter the house.

INT. KATHERINE'S PARENTS HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Katherine and her family are seated around the dinner table and everyone is concentrating on their food before them and eating quietly.

INT. MOMENTS LATER - KATHERINE'S ROOM -EVENING

Katherine is seated at her desk as she writes Michael a letter with a candle as her light and a fireplace beside her for warmth...

CUT TO:

INT. MAUTHAUSEN - MICHAEL'S QUARTERS - NIGHT

Michael is reading Katherine's

LETTER

KATHERINE (AS SHE WRITES)  
Dearest Michael, I hope this letter finds you well. I feel so helpless as I write you. I have had no word from Aaron since we last parted from our parent's home. The children are doing well, but miss their father terribly. Mother and father worry for you, but are confident you will return safe from the war.

(MORE)

KATHERINE (AS SHE WRITES) (cont'd)  
I know you have a duty to country,  
but I beg you to do anything in  
your power to protect my husband  
should you cross paths. He is the  
father of my children and I cannot  
go on without him. May God watch  
over you and keep you safe. Your  
beloved sister, Katherine.

Michael looks up and stares out the window of his quarters  
and takes a sip of his whisky as he ponders his sister's  
plea.

INT. MAUTHAUSEN - MEN'S SLEEPING QUARTERS - NIGHT

A German guard enters Aaron's sleeping quarters and makes his  
way through the barracks making sure all is in order.

We HEAR the wooden bunks squeak as the male prisoners  
struggle to find comfort from laying on the wooden bunks.

We HEAR mumbling as the guard passes by a few of the bunks.  
Slivers of moonlight show through the barracks as the guard  
approaches Aaron's bunk.

Aaron lies on his back and stares up at the bunk above him.  
The guard takes little notice of him as he holds his stare on  
the wooden bunk above him.

EXT. MAUTHAUSEN - STONE LABOR YARD - DAYS LATER

Aaron slams his pick into the rock breaking it in two. He  
struggles as he tries to pick it up. He carries the rock as  
best as he can holding it up against his chest, but the rock  
slips from his arms and onto the ground after only moving a  
few steps.

BALTAZAR SADOWSKI, a prisoner, watches as Aaron struggles.  
Baltazar, a Catholic priest in his late thirties and a  
veteran at the camp, knows the ins and out of prison life.  
He is tall, athletic, bright, and compassionate.

BALTAZAR SADOWSKI  
Not like that. Like this...

Baltazar picks up the rock and places it over his shoulder,  
showing Aaron how to carry the rock more easily.

BALTAZAR  
Get it on your shoulder.

Baltazar throws the rock to the ground as a couple of the guards watch them closely. Aaron picks up the rock and heaves it onto his shoulder.

BALTAZAR

That's it...

Aaron looks at him and gives him a nod of thanks. Baltazar smiles as a parade of Jewish prisoners struggle up the rugged staircases with the large stones.

Jacob and Steven struggle slowly up the rugged staircase taking one step at a time.

AARON

Anymore tips.

Baltazar grins.

BALTAZAR

Never stare. Never draw attention to yourself. And if you talk, do it under your breath.

Aaron looks at this man curiously and smiles.

BALTAZAR

And never smile. There's no such thing as happiness here.

Aaron's smile quickly turns into a frown as one of the prisoners loses his footing and falls backwards into the oncoming prisoners struggling up rocky stairway.

Several prisoners tumble down the stairs and their stones follow them downward.

Aaron and Baltazar side step the avalanche of bodies and rock. Suddenly, a stone crushes the leg of a prisoner as it tumbles downward and he yells in agony.

Several prisoners dodge the oncoming onslaught as it goes crashing to the bottom.

The German guards force the injured and trampled prisoners back up the stairs, lashing at them and stand ready to strike anyone bold enough to resist.

The shaved heads of the prisoners drip with sweat and blood.

Steven begins to hallucinate and wobbles back in forth as he struggles to keep his balance. Jacob reaches out to steady him.

Steven's lips are dry and cracked from dehydration he stops for a moment looking upward to the blue sky and is blinded by the sunlight. For a moment his is at peace with the warmth of the sun upon his face.

Suddenly, a German soldier comes upon Stephen forward, he staggers and falls to his knees.

Stephen struggles to pick up his stone and fights to remain conscience as he continues his climb.

He is blinded by the sun and begins to hallucinate. His hallucinations intensify as he SEES a stream ahead of him, he drops his stone and begins to climb frantically toward the hallucinating stream. He staggers and sways but passes several other prisoners.

The German guards laugh as they watch from below. As he reaches the imaginary stream at the top of the rugged stairs, he drops to his knees and begins cupping his hands as though he were cupping getting water to drink.

He dips his hands into the ground and smudges dirt on his face believing it is water.

The German soldiers mock and laugh at him. Suddenly a pair of boots stand before him and his illusion is interrupted.

He stairs up at Alfred who helps him to his feet.

Aaron and Baltazar look on from the stairway.

ALFRED

What is the matter? You look  
exhausted? You must be thirsty?

Steven frantically nods his head.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Come, I will lead you to water...

Steven is hesitant at first.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Come on...

Steven steps forward and the German Commander takes him by the arm and then looks back giving his comrades below are sardonic look as they continue their laughter and place their bets.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Quickly.

The commander quickens his pace. Their steps become faster and faster and suddenly he shoves the prisoner off the face of the cliff.

The prison lets out a horrifying scream as he falls to his death.

Baltazar and several other prisoners turn away in disgust.

The commander wipes his hands clean and then stands atop the stairs as he stares down at the prisoners held spellbound, even the guards are silent.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Is anyone else in need of water?

The prisoners look away in fear and continue their work including Jacob. But, Aaron keeps his stare on Alfred.

BALTAZAR

Stop staring, I told you not to stare.

Alfred sees his stare and recognizes him. Aaron realizes Alfred's recognized him and quickly lowers his head and continues his work.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

You there!

Aaron slowly raises his head up to him.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Come...

The prisoners steal several glances but try not to make it obvious as Aaron makes his way towards Alfred.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

You. You look familiar...

BEAT.

Aaron lowers his head.

ALFRED

Yes. Now I remember... Yes, of course. We raced, in Munich.

The prisoners look on in anticipation.

ALFRED (CONT'D)  
You're Michael's colleague aren't  
you.

Aaron remains silent.

ALFRED (CONT'D)  
You know I still feel terrible  
about you tripping over your own  
feet during the event.

Alfred laughs.

ALFRED (CONT'D)  
But of course, you didn't see it  
that way did you...

Alfred face turns sour and Aaron remains silent.

ALFRED (CONT'D)  
(BEAT) Well, Michael will be very  
interested to know that his Jewish  
colleague is among us.

Aaron stares ahead in silence daring not to make eye contact.

ALFRED (CONT'D)  
Yes, indeed. (beat) Back to work.

Aaron turns and goes back to chipping stone as Alfred looks  
on.

INT. MAUTHAUSEN - COMMANDERS LOUNGE - EVENING - HOURS LATER

Several guards are in the lounge talking and enjoying a game  
of poker.

The room is dimly lit and clouded with smoke. Michael is  
drinking a beer and gazing out the window watching the guards  
patrol the grounds.

Suddenly Alfred enters the room. He sees Michael by himself  
and approaches.

ALFRED  
How are you comrade?

Michael gives him a brief stare.

MICHAEL  
Hoping for a quick victory.

ALFRED

Yes, aren't we all...

Michael gives a shy smile.

MICHAEL

Beer?

Michael offers holds out a beer.

ALFRED

Thank you.

Alfred takes a big swig and lets out a deep breath enjoying the taste of the beer.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Ahhh... (beat)

Michael gazes out the window.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

You'll be interested to know that we have a colleague of yours amongst us here at Mauthausen.

Michael shoots him a perplexed look.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

I'm sure you'll remember him. The one we ran against in the trials.

MICHAEL

(beat) Aaron? I mean, Aaron Greenfeld?

ALFRED

Yes. I thought you'd remember. He's in my command.

Michael stands up and paces around.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

What is the matter?

Michael shoots him a glance.

MICHAEL

It's just taken me by surprise is all. Where is he being held?

ALFRED

The "D" quarter.

MICHAEL

Do you mind if I see him?

ALFRED

Be my guest. Do as you wish.

MICHAEL

Thank you.

Michael quickly walks towards the lounge exit and Alfred watches curiously as he approaches the door.

ALFRED

Comrade!

Michael shoots him a look and Alfred holds up his glass in a toast.

ALFRED

Heil Hitler!

MICHAEL

(solemnly) Hiel Hitler...

Michael exits the lounge.

INT. PRISONERS BARRACKS - LATER

Michael and Jacob are lying on their backs in their bunks.

JACOB

I can't stop thinking about Steven.

AARON

(beat) Try to get some rest...

JACOB

Rest? How can you find rest? (beat)

I used to be strong... And now...?

(beat) Now, I am but a skeleton...

We SHOW the dark outline of an old man laying in his nearby bunk in the darkness and listening to them.

AARON

Rest for tomorrow...

JACOB

(beat) Tomorrow? Tomorrow is dead,  
as we are dead.

From out of the darkness we HEAR the voice of the old rabbi in the nearby bunk.



OLD RABBI (V.O.)  
(beat) "Sanctify yourself...(beat)  
Sanctify yourself, for tomorrow the  
Lord will work wonders for you."

We HEAR Jacob sob.

EXT. ON THE GROUNDS OF MAUTHAUSEN - NEAR THE D QUARTERS -  
MOMENTS LATER

Michael walks quickly towards Aaron's barracks. He passes several guards with their dogs patrolling the grounds and they salute each other as they pass.

He quickly comes upon D Quarter, he smells the rank and putrid stench coming from the prisoners barracks.

He hesitates and stops abruptly, just as he comes upon open the door.

He looks up and takes a BEAT.

He turns in anger and quickly walks away back towards his quarters.

INT. LOUNGE - SAME

Alfred and some other soldiers are playing poker. Suddenly another soldier enters the lounge and makes an announcement.

GERMAN SOLDIER 1  
A gift from the Kommodant.

Suddenly several German women enter the lounge. The soldiers in the lounge show their excitement by whistling and gawking.

The women smile and are immediately welcomed over by the other soldiers.

A couple of the girls immediately walk over and sit on the soldiers laps and playfully.

One of the girls, takes a cigarette from Alfred's mouth and gives him a seductive look.

Then she takes a drag from the cigarette with their eyes locked on each other the whole time.

INT. MICHAEL'S QUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Michael quickly enters his room and tosses his hat on his bed and quickly removes his coat.

He stops for a moment to catch his breath and feeling nauseous and quickly walks to the bathroom.

INT. MICHAEL'S BATHROOM - SAME

Michael stands for a moment before the commode then quickly bends over and vomits.

Exhausted, he slides down and sits on the floor in an attempt to catch his breath. He slowly rises and turns on the water.

He cups his HANDS and washes his face. He grabs a towel and wipes his face as he walks back into his bedroom.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - SAME

Michael walks over to a side table and picks up a pack of cigarettes.

He taps one out of the package and lights it.

He takes a deep breath and blows out the smoke. Then he unbuttons his shirt and rolls up his sleeves as he makes his way towards his bedroom window.

He opens the window and sits on the sill, then leans his head against the frame.

Michael stares out the window as he takes another drag of his cigarette. He looks out over the grounds and listens.

Crickets chirp outside the window but otherwise the night is silent. Just as he relaxes, there is a sudden knock at the door.

He glances at the door but is not anxious to get up. He hears several more knocks and slowly rises and walks over to the door.

Michael takes a last drag from his cigarette and flicks it out his window.

MICHAEL  
Who is it?

ALFRED  
Alfred!

MICHAEL  
What is it, it's late...

INT. OUTSIDE MICHAEL'S ROOM - SAME

Alfred is with a couple of the women from the lounge. He tries to keep them quiet as they giggle in a drunken stupor.

ALFRED

I have a surprise for you comrade.

The women giggle.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

I promise... You won't be disappointed.

INT. MICHAEL'S ROOM - SAME

Michael leans his head against the door and reluctantly opens it.

ALFRED

Surprise!

Alfred and the women enter the room and Alfred begins the introductions.

ALFRED

Meet Hilda and Ingrid. Gratuities from our honorable Kommandant.

The both women smile and give Michael a preferential look. Michael tries to act hospitable and offers them a seat.

MICHAEL

Please. Sit...

The women take a seat next to each other on a nearby couch and continue to gawk at Michael.

ALFRED

Allow me to pour us all a drink.

Alfred quickly pours them all a drink of whiskey from the nearby table and Michael helps him.

Alfred quickly turns to face the ladies and approaches them with their drinks.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Ladies, do you know that you are standing in the presence of greatness.

The women smile.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

The man you see before you won the  
gold medal in the Olympic games.

The women continue to smile and gawk as Alfred takes a seat  
next to them.

INGRID

Really? What did you win it for?

Michael tries to answer but Alfred cuts him off.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

Allow me... The three mile medley.  
(beat) A race that tests both mind  
and heart.

The women sit and listen earnestly.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

To the fastest runner ever.

Alfred holds his drink up high.

Michael paces embarrassingly with his drink in his hand.

MICHAEL

He exaggerates...

ALFRED

There you go again with your  
feigned humility. Come, sit with  
us.

MICHAEL

I'd love to but I'm awfully tired.  
So if you don't mind, I'll turn in.

ALFRED

Did you hear that ladies? I've  
been granted the responsibility of  
entertaining you both myself.  
(beat) Very well. Goodnight,  
comrade... (To the women) Ladies...

Alfred rises up and assists the women out of the room.

MICHAEL

Thank you, again. Another time  
perhaps.

The women smile as they exit.

ALFRED  
Another time...

Alfred raises his brow and nods.

Michael shuts the door behind them, then turns and leans against the door in thought.

EXT. GROUNDS OF MAUTHAUSEN - NEXT DAY - SUNRISE

The SUN rises over the concentration camp.

The camp is deserted with the exception of a few guards patrolling the grounds with their dogs.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - SAME

The sun shines on the back of Michael's head as he lies in his bed sleeping.

Suddenly, a SIREN sounds alerting the guards that a prisoner has escaped.

EXT. ON THE GROUNDS - SAME

The guards quickly round up the prisoners in formation on the grounds.

INT. MICHAEL'S BEDROOM - SAME

Michael is awakened by the siren and quickly gets dressed.

EXT. MAUTHAUSEN - ON THE GROUNDS - MOMENTS LATER

The prisoners are aligned in formation as the guards inspect each column.

Michael stands at attention on the right side of the Kommandant.

A German guard goes through the roll call with Alfred. Alfred reports the information that the guard issued him.

ALFRED  
Kommandant, one of the prisoners has escaped.

The Kommandant's face reddens.

KOMMADANT  
I want him found. Do you  
understand?

ALFRED  
Yes, Kommadant!

KOMMADANT  
Does he have family?

ALFRED  
No, Kommadant.

KOMMADANT  
Anyone he befriended...

ALFRED  
Pardon sir?

KOMMADANT  
Who was he close to, a friend  
perhaps.

Alfred swings around and eyes one of the Jewish prisoners and  
points him out.

ALFRED  
That man...

KOMMADANT  
Bring him to me...

Alfred motions the guards to seize the man and the guards  
immediately move in on him.

The prisoner's wife is not far from him in another formation.  
She begins to tremble in fear, but tries to remain  
expressionless.

They grab her husband by the arms on either side of him and  
quickly move him in front of the Kommodant.

KOMMADANT (CONT'D)  
What do you know about your  
friend's escape.

JEWISH PRISONER 1  
I know nothing...

The Kommadant dips his head and then quickly strikes the  
prisoner across the face.

The prisoner's wife trembles with tears in her eyes. Their daughter stands beside her mother also weeping in silence.

KOMMADANT

Now tell me. What you know of you friends escape?

JEWISH PRISONER 1

I tell you, I know nothing...

The Kommadant strikes him again and drops the prisoner to his knees.

The prisoner's wife with tears dipping from her eyes.

A skeleton of a man weeps nearby at the scene.

KOMMADANT

Tell me!

The prisoner is too weak to react and barely motions his head to gesture that he knows nothing.

The Kommadant's patience grows weary as he begins to pace.

KOMMADANT (CONT'D)

Very well.

Suddenly the Kommadant pulls his pistol and points it against the prisoner's head.

The prisoner's wife trembles uncontrollably with her eyes closed and weeping.

Michael and Alfred stand at attention keeping their eyes on the formations.

BALTAZAR (V.O.)

Wait!

The shout provokes the Kommadant's attention and looks at out over the formation.

Suddenly Baltazar slowly moves out of the formation.

BALTAZAR

My name is Baltazar Sadowski. I am a Catholic priest from Poland. I wish to take this man's place. He has a wife and children.

The Kommadant is taken aback and looks at Michael and Alfred.

Baltazar slowly approaches the prisoner and places his hand on the man's shoulder. Then kneels beside the prisoner.

BALTAZAR

Please sir, I beg you. Let me take his place.

BEAT.

KOMMADANT

Very well...

Michael and Alfred look at one another. Michael doesn't flinch as the Kommandant quickly approaches.

The prisoner's wife trembles with dried tears.

The Kommandant looks out over the formation as he applies the pistol to the priest's head. The prisoner and his wife make slight eye contact.

We HEAR the sound of the pistol, the prisoner closes his eyes and the priest falls slumped over dead to the ground.

Two guards quickly move in and remove the priest's dead body and the Kommandant quickly walks away with Michael and Alfred by his side.

Aaron and Steven watch as they pass by their formation and Aaron recognizes Michael for the first time, and is held spellbound as he stands at attention.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. STONE YARD - WEEKS LATER - AFTERNOON

Several prisoners are hard at work hammering away at the blocks of stone. A few guards slowly pace around in the heat of the day as they keep watch.

Aaron and Jacob are not far apart as they strike their axes against a large stone.

Aaron slams his axe into the stone, barely making a mark.

Jacob sways from heat exhaustion as he sweats profusely while clumsily swinging his axe at the stone.

JACOB

I need water...

Aaron and a Polish prisoner look over to him.



## POLISH PRISONER

Shut up, you'll get yourself shot.

Aaron looks over to Jacob who's clearly losing his wits. Aaron realizes Jacob is losing it, as he methodically slams his axe into the stone.

Jacob moves his stare towards the nearest guard as he violently slams his axe into the stone.

The guard walks only few feet away from him only barely acknowledging his presence and then turns and walks the other direction.

Jacob is sweating profusely but does not wipe it from his brow. His voice is going hoarse.

## JACOB

I need water I tell you...

The Polish prisoner looks over to him with a grimacing look.

## POLISH PRISONER

Shut your damn trap, man...

Jacob barely acknowledges him as he struggles to raise his axe.

The German guard slowly makes his turn back in their direction.

Jacob keeps careful watch on the guard. Jacob begins to talk to himself in a whisper.

He looks up to the blinding SUN and is blinded by the light. He begins hallucinating and sees sun spots. Weaker now, his face and mouth quiver as sweat pours from his face.

Suddenly, Jacob stops hammering at his stone but remains bent over humming to himself.

Aaron notices and tries to get Jacob's attention but he's too far gone.

## AARON

Jacob. Jacob...

The Polish prisoner looks over at him and shakes his head menacingly.

Suddenly, a couple of German guards notice Jacob slumped over.

The Polish prisoner quickly refocuses on his stone hitting it even harder.

The guard closest to Jacob runs over and starts yelling and shouting orders at him. Jacob is slumped over and struggles to comprehend as the guard continues to shout at him.

Jacob's face suddenly turns to vengeance and he raises up and pushes the soldier back.

The soldier trips and falls to the ground, and looks up in horror at him.

Jacob laughs insanely as he sees the fearful soldier looking up at him.

Suddenly, another guard notices Jacob with his axe raised and ready to strike the fallen guard.

(In slow motion) The German guard from a far raises his pistol.

Aaron sees the pistol and cries out.

AARON (SLOW MOTION)

No!

The German guard from afar fires his pistol, shooting Jacob in the chest.

Jacob is stunned and falls to the ground. SILENCE fills the air as the prisoners fix their gazes on Jacob.

(In real motion). Not far off Michael is giving instructions to a group of German guards. He acknowledges the gunfire and quickly runs to the scene. As he approaches he sees Jacob laying dead on the ground.

Aaron sees Michael approach and can't quite believe his eyes. Embarrassed at first he tries to hide his face, but when he realizes there is no where to go, he lets down his guard and Michael sees him for the first time as their eyes meet.

Michael keeps his composure and addresses the guards.

MICHAEL

How did this happen?

GERMAN GUARD TWO

He attacked him, so I fired.

MICHAEL

Is he dead?

GERMAN GUARD TWO  
Yes, commander.

AARON  
He needed of water...

Michael's attention is turned to Aaron, as one of the German guards takes two steps towards him and strikes him in the face, then stares him down.

Aaron submits and slowly turns back toward Michael.

MICHAEL  
Corporal!

Michael motions for the Corporal to bring Aaron over to him. The Corporal grabs hold of Aaron and hauls him over to the scene.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Did you know him?

Aaron nods and looks Michael in the eye. Michael stares straight back at him.

For a BEAT, they look at each other eye to eye without saying a word, then Michael turns his look away from him.

MICHAEL  
Get him out of here.

The German guards quickly remove Jacob's body. And another guard blows the whistle signaling the prisoners back to work.

Aaron stares and slowly returns to work as Michael walks away.

Michael stops and looks back for a brief moment, watching Aaron go back to work striking the stones. He takes a BEAT, Then he continues on his way.

CUT TO:

KOMMADANT'S QUARTERS - MONTHS LATER - WINTER - DAY

The Kommadant sits at his desk reading a newspaper as Michael and Alfred sit positioned in front of him.

KOMMADANT  
They say we are losing the war.  
(BEAT) What do you say?

Michael and Alfred look at each other.

ALFRED

Non-sense. We have the strongest military defense in the world. We have defeated more nations than any empire. Once we defeat the Soviets, we will be unstoppable...

BEAT.

KOMMADANT

And what of the Americans? They have joined the Russians and are beginning to push through the front line.

Alfred tries to remain confident.

KOMMADANT (CONT'D)

Take a look at those men, do they look unstoppable to you?

A couple of German guards are huddled together trying to stay warm smoking their cigarettes.

The Kommadant pours himself some whiskey and offers them a glass.

They decline and the Kommadant takes a big swig.

KOMMADANT (CONT'D)

Look around you, the morale of our men troubles me. Death surrounds them. We must continually remind them that we are the stronger race.

ALFRED

What do you suggest?

KOMMADANT

We must eliminate this stench that is drowning our men. From now on I want the dead buried far outside the grounds.

MICHAEL

What are you saying Kommadant?

The Kommadant turns his attention to Michael.

KOMMADANT

Make the weak dig their own graves. And do whatever it takes to clean the stench.

(MORE)

KOMMADANT (cont'd)  
By orders of the Fuhr, exterminate  
those with any sign of weakness and  
bury them deep.

The Kommadant fixes his glare on them both.

EXT. WOODS - NEXT DAY - EVENING

Alfred leads several guards marching several Jewish prisoners in formation out into the woods, including the elderly, the handicapped and young children.

After several hundred yards into the woods, Alfred stops the convoy and commands them to begin digging.

The Jewish prisoners begin to dig into the snow, several of the elderly sit down from exhaustion and are shot for stopping their work.

A large grave is dug and several feet deep and several feet wide.

Alfred gives the command for all the Jews to stand before the large grave. Then he gives the command for the firing squad to shoot.

As they fire, several Jewish prisoners drop to their death at the same time.

Blood splashes onto Alfred's face as the shots are fired.

A few wounded Jewish prisoners are grabbed by the German soldiers and flung into the graves alive.

A Jewish prisoner tries to escape the grave as he clings to life but he is spotted by a German guard and is quickly shot dead.

Suddenly, we HEAR a large DOZER and see it approach the site.

Several injured Jewish prisoners feebly struggle to escape as the bulldozer approaches.

The guards part on opposite sides as the bulldozer pushes through and pushes the dirt onto the dead as well as the living in the grave.

The bulldozer backs up and then pulls forward again pushing more dirt, and packing it over the grave.

MONTAGE

The German guards shoot several Jews aligned before another grave. The Jewish prisoners fall back into the graves.

Again, Alfred is splashed by the blood of a Jewish soul. He gets frustrated and upset and wipes the blood from his face with a handkerchief.

INT. OFFICERS QUARTERS - ALFRED'S SUITE - WEEKS LATER - NIGHT

Alfred is sitting behind his desk in his study with his legs kicked up staring out the window and sipping on a scotch.

Suddenly, there is a KNOCK at the door and Michael enters.

MICHAEL

Comrade.

Alfred gets to his feet and walks over to the bar and pours himself a drink.

ALFRED

Ah, comrade. I was just pouring myself a drink. Care for one?

Michael nods and Alfred pours him a drink into a small glass and hands Michael the glass.

MICHAEL

To victory.

ALFRED

To the end of this bloody hell pit...

Michael is taken aback and watches Alfred shoot his head back.

MICHAEL

Cheer up comrade, word has it the Russians are moving back. They won't last the winter.

Alfred forces a smile.

ALFRED

Have a seat, friend.

LIVING ROOM AREA - SAME

They walk to the living area and sit across from each other.

Michael studies Alfred noticeably drunk. Alfred sits for a moment looking out the window.

ALFRED (CONT'D)

When you first joined, did you ever expect to be wiping the blood of a Jew from your brow, day after day after day.

MICHAEL

I didn't know what to expect. But I've come to realize that war is hell and we are the horror that follows.

ALFRED

Yes. Quite right.

Alfred stares out the window, then rises from his chair and walks to the window and stares out with his back to Michael.

Several guards lead a parade of Jews in formation in the fog, leading out to the woods, never to return.

ALFRED

So long...

MICHAEL

I beg your pardon?

Alfred turns his attention back to Michael.

ALFRED

Not you comrade. So long to those Jews, never to return.

Michael dips his head and takes a swig of his whiskey.

MICHAEL

Do you ever consider...

BEAT.

Alfred shoots him a strange look. Michael dips his head.

ALFRED

Consider what, comrade?

Michael shakes his head and sighs.

MICHAEL

Nothing...

Michael lets loose of the glass allowing Alfred to take it.

ALFRED

Are you alright? Have another.

Michael shakes his head.

MICHAEL

No. Thank you. I must be going...

Michael gets up from his chair and walks to the door and exits as Alfred watches him curiously all the way.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE KOMMADANT'S QUARTERS - NEXT DAY

Michael approaches the Kommadant's quarters and quickly walks up the steps and swings open the door.

INT. KOMMADANT'S QUARTERS - SAME

Michael walks down the hallway and approaches the Kommadant's office.

Two guards stand at attention before the door. They salute Michael and he salutes back.

One of the guards opens the door and announces his presence to the Kommadant.

GERMAN GUARD 3

Commander Campion here to see you sir!

MICHAEL

Heil, Hitler.

KOMMADANT

Heil, Hitler.

A picture of the Furrh hangs on the wall behind the Kommadant's study.

KOMMADANT (CONT'D)

Have a seat commander.

MICHAEL

Thank you, Kommadant.

The Kommadant lights a cigar and offers one to Michael.

KOMMADANT

Cigar?



MICHAEL

No thank you.

KOMMADANT

What's on your mind Commander.

MICHAEL

Sir, I have an idea that may help  
to raise the spirits of our men  
here in the compound.

The Kommadant nods for him to continue.

Michael notices the

PICTURES

of the Olympic Games on the wall of the Kommadant's study.

MICHAEL

May, I...

The Kommadant nods and Michael gets up and takes a closer  
look at the pictures. He takes a beat remembering the games.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I ran in those Olympics.

KOMMADANT

So, I am aware. It was an  
extraordinary accomplishment.

MICHAEL

Thank you, Kommadant.

Michael turns his attention back to the Kommodant.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What if we had our own little games  
here, at the compound?

The Kommodant shoots him a curious look.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

A race between me the Olympic  
champion and one of the Jews. I  
have all the confidence I will win.  
And I believe it would increase the  
morale of our men.

KOMMADANT

It sounds like you already have  
someone in mind.

MICHAEL

As a matter of fact, I do. He was a fine distance runner. He actually beat me once, but he did not qualify for the Olympics.

KOMMADANT

What makes you think he would want to participate to our advantage?

MICHAEL

I don't. But if we can convince him that winning will give them hope, then maybe, just maybe he will.

The Kommadant laughs aloud.

KOMMADANT

Hope! You are much crueler than I commander.

The Kommadant suddenly stops laughing and takes a BEAT.

He gets up from his chair and looks out the window, staring out at his MEN.

MICHAEL

Look at them... They're cold and miserable. This will be a tangible victory. One they can see, and believe in. Yes. I believe this could rejuvenate them.

The Kommadant studies his men's weary movements from his window as

TWO GUARDS

huddle together to have a smoke and stare up at the snow fall.

The Kommadant nods and then turns his attention back to Michael.

KOMMADANT

I want to be informed of everything. How soon can you begin?

MICHAEL

He'll want a fair chance. It means regular meals, exercise and water.

KOMMADANT

We'll give him what he needs. When do you think he'll be ready?

MICHAEL

Three to four weeks time.

KOMMADANT

And you?

MICHAEL

I'm in the best shape of my life Kommadant.

KOMMADANT

Good, I want regular updates on his progress.

MICHAEL

Thank you, sir. We'll begin immediately.

They shake hands and Michael begins to exit.

KOMMADANT

Commander!

Michael quickly turns to face him.

KOMMADANT (CONT'D)

Are you certain you can beat him.

Michael nods.

The Kommadant turns and focuses his gaze out the window.

Michael exits and the guard closes the door behind him.

EXT. PRISONER BARRACKS - DAYS LATER

A siren sounds and several German guards rustle up the prisoners and force them to undress in the middle of the quad both male and female alike.

MUSIC is played as the prisoners stand shoulder to shoulder in the middle of the quad.

The German guards pass through the meek crowd huddled together. They quickly approach Aaron and grab him on both sides and quickly walk him through the crowd.

Aaron barely struggles as the two guards march quickly through the barracks and the crowd looks on in fear.

They quickly move Aaron out of the area and towards the Officers block and he holds his clothes in his hands.

EXT. OFFICERS BLOCK - SAME

We now HEAR the faint sound of the music in the background as the two guards quickly move Aaron up the small case of stairs to the Officers quarters.

They pause for and moment and yell at him in German for him to put on his clothes.

Aaron quickly dresses.

Another guard standing post opens the door to the Officer's quarters and the two German guards quickly rush Aaron in.

INT. OFFICERS BLOCK - SAME

The two guards move quickly through the officer's quarters and down a narrow hallway.

They suddenly come to a stop and we SHOW a name tag next to the door "COMMANDER CAMPION." The guard to Aaron's right knocks on the door and we hear Michael's voice from within.

MICHAEL

Come in.

INT. MICHAEL'S OFFICE - SAME

The guards enter with Aaron and stand at attention before Michael.

Aaron is suddenly struck in shock and bewildered. Suddenly, his confusion turns to anger at the sight of Michael standing before him looking immaculate and powerful.

The two guards salute Michael standing behind his desk.

TWO GUARDS

Heil Hitler.

MICHAEL

Heil Hitler.

The two guards exit the room and close the door leaving Aaron standing alone in the middle of the room, with Michael.

Aaron stares at the floor unable to lift his eyes in Michael's direction.

Michael moves out from behind his desk and opens his cigarette case and offers Aaron a cigarette.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Cigarette?

Aaron does not respond and holds his stare to the ground.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Very well.

Michael takes a cigarette and lights it up then sits in a nearby chair.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Won't you have a seat.

Aaron stands motionless still staring at the carpet.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You're making this very difficult  
for me.

Michael takes a drag from his cigarette as Aaron stands in silence.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
You're probably wondering why you  
are here.

Aaron holds his stare but listens.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Listen, I know you how you must  
feel...

Aaron interrupts him.

AARON  
You have no idea... (beat) You've  
taken my life, my family. (beat) My  
father was a laborer as was yours.  
You claim to fight for the good of  
our country. And my kind is blamed  
for its downfall. Tell me, what  
have we done?  
(MORE)

AARON (cont'd)  
(beat) What horrible act of treason  
have we committed? Tell me! What  
is my sin?

Micheal takes a beat and stares at him. Aaron holds his  
stare as a tear streams down his face.

Michael lights a cigarette and takes a deep breath and blows  
out the smoke.

MICHAEL  
I want to help you. My sister  
pleads for your life, because you  
are the father of her children.  
Out of respect for her I make you  
this offer, not out of pity.

Aaron shoots him a look.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
The Kommadant has witnessed the  
demoralization of our men. I've  
convinced him that a local victory  
may pick up their spirits.

Aaron listens.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
The Kommadant is a sportsman. I've  
convinced him to allow a race.  
German versus Jew. A win would  
pick up the spirits of our men.

AARON  
You're foolish to think, I'd ever  
consider such a thing?

BEAT.

AARON (CONT'D)  
(Exhausted) You must despise me.  
You humiliate me, and compromise my  
honor, with this offer. Why?

BEAT.

MICHAEL  
To provide you an escape, to  
reunite you with your family.

Aaron smiles, then laughs.

AARON  
You are the devil. (beat) Tell  
me, what trap do you set for me?

Michaels stares at him and Aaron holds his stare.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
(Furious) Enough!

Aaron is taken aback as the guards suddenly burst in.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
It's alright...

Michael nods easing the guards.

The guards take a BEAT, then leave them in privacy.

BEAT.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
(Solemnly) Do you accept my offer?

Aaron moves his stare to the ground and takes a beat.

AARON  
Why should I trust you?

MICHAEL  
On my family's blood, you have my  
word.

Michael takes a beat and takes a drag of his cigarette.

MICHAEL  
I will see to it, that you get what  
you need. You'll be provided  
adequate food, and a room in the  
infirmary. You'll have your own  
quarters and three weeks to  
prepare.

Aaron scoffs.

AARON  
Three weeks...

MICHAEL  
It's the best I can do.

Aaron stares at him.

AARON

What happens to them?

Aaron looks out the window to the QUAD where the prisoners are gathered.

MICHAEL

You can't expect me to save the world. But, your children need their father.

AARON

And what of their children?

Michael turns away.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

You have 24 hours... Then I expect your answer. (BEAT) I would consider it if I were you.

Aaron looks away.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Guards!

The two guards come in and quickly exit the room with Aaron. Michael walks to the window and watches the guards as they quickly Aaron back to his block.

INT. PRISONERS BLOCK - LATER THAT EVENING - NIGHT

Aaron lies awake thinking about Michael's offer and dreaming about his family. Suddenly, he remembers his father's words.

ABRAHAM (V.O.)

God has a plan for you, and will never forsake you.

Suddenly, Aaron flings himself from his bunk wrapped in a blanket and storms out onto the grounds.

He quickly makes his way to the OFFICER'S QUARTERS and up the stairs where he is met by two guards.

One of the Guards has a dog by his side who suddenly breaks out barking in a frenzy and Aaron suddenly comes to a halt.

AARON

I must speak with the Commander.

The two guards laugh at him and don't take him seriously.



AARON (CONT'D)

Please.

Aaron makes a move to pass them and the dog lounges at him and barks in a frenzy.

The guard tries to restrain the dog as the other guard quickly draws his gun.

Suddenly, Michael appears around the corner with a blonde beauty at his side and notices the commotion.

One of the guards draws his gun and presses it to Aaron's head as he's bent over.

MICHAEL

Halt!

The guards look up as Michael makes his way around the dimly lit porch and up the stairs.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

What is this?

GERMAN GUARD 4

He insists on speaking with you commander.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

It's alright, I sent for him.  
You're dismissed.

GERMAN GUARD 4

Sir?

Michael stands firm and stares the guard down.

MICHAEL

Dismissed!

The two guards submit to Michael's order and Michael helps Aaron up.

He waves to his mistress indicating he's alright and for her to wait a moment.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Are you trying to get yourself  
killed?

Aaron tries to catch his breath.

AARON  
I needed to tell you...

Aaron catches his breath.

AARON (CONT'D)  
I want to see my children...  
Again.

Michael takes a beat, straightens up and looks him in the eye.

MICHAEL  
Very well. I'll inform the  
Kommadant.

Aaron nods.

CUT TO:

INT. AARON'S QUARTERS - DAYS LATER

Aaron awakes to his alarm in the early cold morn. He slips on his uniform and slips out of his quarters.

EXT. ON THE GROUNDS - SAME MOMENT

He does a few stretches against the side of the building and then begins his trot.

He's followed by two guards as he jogs around the camp. After only a few yards he's too weak to continue.

He stops and looks up to the sky and slowly walks on. The two guards look at each other and let him be.

Aaron walks on in the distance contemplating his plight.

INT. AARON'S QUARTERS - DAYS LATER - EVENING

Aaron is laying on his bed staring at the ceiling. Suddenly, there's a knock at the door.

Aaron quickly goes to the door and opens it. Michael is standing before him.

AARON  
Come in...

Michael enters and removes his cover.

AARON  
What brings you here.

Michael paces around.

MICHAEL  
I wanted to see how you're progressing. How is your training coming? I haven't seen you running much.

AARON  
Three weeks isn't enough time.

MICHAEL  
That's all we have.

AARON  
Then you might as well just shoot me. I've barely enough strength for a 100 meters.

Michael notices Aaron's untouched dinner.

MICHAEL  
Then I suggest you eat more.

AARON  
Give it to them.

Aaron glances out the window towards a parade of prisoners marching on the quad.

Michael looks out towards the grounds

MICHAEL  
They... They are already dead!  
YOU... still have a chance at life.  
I suggest you make good use of it.

Aaron shoots him a look.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
We only have a few more days, I've done all I can. Now it's up to you.

Michael exits.

Aaron watches as he exits and then stares at the food. In a fit of guilt he knocks it onto the floor, then hangs his head.

EXT. ON THE GROUNDS - SAME MOMENT

Aaron appears from his quarters in the early dawn. He does a couple of leg stretches and then begins his trot.

The guards follow behind and he notices them as they follow.

Several prisoner look on curiously as Aaron makes his way jogging around the camp.

INT. SOUP LINE

Several prisoners are gathered around the soup line. Steven joins a few men in his circle of friends.

STEVEN

Did you hear?

POLISH PRISONER

Hear what?

STEVEN

About the race... Aaron is racing  
the Olympic champion.

The Polish prisoner chokes on his food as he breaks into laughter.

Then he suddenly turns serious.

POLISH PRISONER

And why do you think that is? They  
want to humiliate and demoralize us  
into our graves.

STEVEN

I think he can win. He was a great  
runner.

An old Rabbi listens nearby.

POLISH PRISONER

Don't be foolish! They'd never  
allow it...

BEAT

Steven looks down at his food.

OLD RABBI

(To Steven) It is good to be positive. If but only one of us survives this horror, it is a victory for all.

He taps him on the shoulder and exits.

The prisoners look around at each other as the Rabbi exits. A couple of them lose their appetite and get up from their seats, intentionally leaving their bread behind.

The Polish prisoner sees the BREAD lying on the ground and quickly grabs it and rips into it.

Steven watches him in disgust.

STEVEN

You know you'll never survive my Polish friend, because you're selfish and you don't believe in goodness.

The Polish prisoner peers up at him extremely disgruntled. He charges Steven and wrestles him to the ground. They swing wildly, tearing at each other's throats.

The crowd quickly disperses around them.

Suddenly, a couple of guards take notice and quickly jump in. They tear them apart and haul them away.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CONCENTRATION CAMP - MORNING

The morning SUN rises over the gates of the death camp. Aaron exits his quarters and begins a slow jog with the guards following closely behind.

MONTAGE

Aaron jogs through the woods with the guards on his tail. He jumps over a stream and jogs back towards the camp. He jogs around the barbed wire grounds. Several prisoners look on curiously and a few cheer him on as he passes by them. Aaron forces a smile and trots on. Finally, he comes to a rest in the evening light and looks out to the horizon forgetting all the horror for just a brief moment.

CUT TO:

INT. MICHAEL'S OFFICE - EVENING - WEEKS LATER

Michael is laying in his bed staring at the ceiling.  
Suddenly, he hears a KNOCK on the door.

He quickly gets up and opens it. Aaron is standing in front  
with two guards on either side of him.

Aaron gives him a firm nod.

Michael holds his stare acknowledging he's ready.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DAYBREAK - OUTSIDE THE INFIRMARY - NEXT DAY

Aaron stands outside the infirmary stretching only in shorts  
and a T-shirt. He is escorted by a two German guards only  
feet away watching his every move.

Suddenly, Michael appears in a black sweat-suit, jumping to a  
rhythm and warming up.

Both Guards and prisoners align the perimeter to watch the  
spectacle as the two runners line up.

Several guards keep close tabs on the Jewish prisoners  
aligning the quarters in anticipation of the event.

Aaron and Michael line up side by side and ready themselves  
in a runner's stance.

Steam flows from the runners' mouths into the cold distilled  
air as they breath calmly in anticipation of the sound of the  
gun.

Suddenly, the STARTER raises his

PISTOL

and fires a single shot into the cold still air. And  
suddenly they're off...

EXT. FORREST - MOMENTS LATER

They quickly enter the forrest running closely with Michael  
barely in the lead.

Aaron is breathing heavily as he pounds the trail on  
Michael's heels.

Michael looks back after passing through several twists and turns of the trail and notices Aaron quickly falling behind.

Suddenly, Michael spots the RIVER and comes to a halt.

EXT. IN THE FOREST - ON THE RUNNING TRAIL - DAY

Michael quickly begins to take off his shirt and sweats then tosses them to Aaron.

Aaron catches the clothing and shoots him a strange look.

MICHAEL  
Quick, put them on.

Aaron takes a beat and looks at the clothing, then quickly dresses.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
One thing you and I always shared  
was a love of running.

Aaron pulls the shirt over his head.

AARON  
No. It was more than that... We  
shared a friendship.

Michael looks up and shoots Aaron a look. Then nods.

Aaron finishes pulling the sweat-pants on.

AARON (CONT'D)  
Thank you...

Aaron offers him his hand and they shake hands.

MICHAEL  
Helena is waiting on the other  
side. Go now. Quickly!

Aaron takes one last look at Michael then begins to trot off.

Michael looks on for only a moment.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)  
Aaron!

Aaron stops and turns.

Michael smiles.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Shalom...

Aaron gives him a nod, then runs off and disappears into the forrest.

Michael watches until he loses sight, then turns and runs off naked in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

EXT. FORREST - SAME

We follow Aaron as he runs through the forrest. He dashes down the side of a hill dodging trees.

He breaks out into the open and looks across the river.

He takes one last look behind him and then begins to make his way across the river.

CUT TO:

EXT. FORREST - ON THE RUNNING TRAIL - SAME

We follow Michael running naked quickly on the trail.

A guard shoots a strange look at Michael as he quickly passes him in the nude and with Aaron nowhere in sight.

The guard looks back for any sign of Aaron.

Michael shoots him a wink as he passes him and the guard is taken a back.

Michael breaks into the open field back towards the concentration camp.

EXT. MAUTHAUSEN CONCENTRATION CAMP - IN THE TOWER - SAME

The Kommandant and his comrades see a single runner in the distance, coming towards them, but they can't quite make out who it is.

We HEAR the cheers of the crowd both German soldiers and Jewish prisoners alike.

The OLD RABBI looks on in anticipation.



Suddenly the soldiers go stoic as Michael passes the cheers totally naked.

Michael sprints faster towards them and the Kommandant realizes he's been set up.

His comrades look at each other confused and fearful.

Bruised and battered among the crowd of prisoners STEVEN realizes his friend has escaped. He smiles peacefully.

The Kommandant becomes visibly angered and quickly pulls his pistol and points it at Michael who is sprinting towards them.

CUT TO:

EXT. FAR EDGE OF THE RIVER - SAME

Aaron climbs out of the river and onto the shore and is only steps away from freedom.

He takes a moment to catch his breath and lies his head in the sand.

Suddenly, a SHOT rings out.

Aaron lowers his head with the realization that his friend is dead.

Aaron's eyes begin to swell up but he quickly pulls himself together and rises up.

He quickly trots up the embankment.

A black car is parked along side of the road.

Aaron cautiously looks across the road.

Suddenly, he spots Helena with her long blonde hair and her back towards him.

She turns and their eyes meet.

They hold each other's stare in disbelief for a brief moment. First her, then him.

Then, with tears in her eyes she smiles.

He smiles back, knowing, he is free at last...

FADE OUT

THE END