

READ ONLY

CONFIDENTIAL

ESCAPE

(WORKING TITLE)

by

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BASED ON A TRUE STORY

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EXT. HANOVER JEWISH GRAVEYARD - DAY

SUPER: January 1926 - Hanover, Germany

A WIDOW, standing grave-side with her 3 CHILDREN (girl aged 5, boys aged 6 and 10) mourns as her husband's coffin is lowered into the ground. Jewish mourners make a large fuss. The widow leans over to her younger son.

HENNI HEIN

Georg, I'm afraid your father's death means that you will have to go off to boarding school. You must be strong.

Her 6-year-old son cries silently.

EXT. HANOVER TRAIN STATION - DAY

SUPER: One week later

The tearful young boy boards a train with an older man, and leans out to wave to his mother and two siblings on the platform, but they have already turned to leave.

EXT. CASTLE ON A HILL - DAY

SUPER: Schloss Marquartstein Boarding School in Bavaria

The old man walks the boy up a driveway to the castle, is greeted by the headmaster, and leaves. The boy, forlorn, follows the headmaster into the castle, struggling with a suitcase larger than himself.

INT. SCHLOSS MARQUARTSTEIN SCHOOL DORMITORY ROOM - NIGHT

The darkened large room (lit by a candle) is filled with iron beds, each holding a boy aged 6 to 8. Georg Hein/Peter Stevens is seen lying in a bed, crying silently.

INT. LONDON BANK - DAY

SUPER: April 1939

A young WELL-DRESSED MAN (20) asks a CLERK if he can speak with a manager (conversation unheard). He is ushered into an office where the BANK MANAGER invites him to sit.

BANK MANAGER

How may I be of service, sir?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
My name is Georg Hein, and I understand that my mother has sent me a rather large wire transfer from Germany.

BANK MANAGER
Oh yes, Mr. Hein. We've been expecting you. But, if I recall correctly, the transfer was for you and your two siblings?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
That's true. However my brother is quite ill, and my sister is working in rural Scotland.

BANK MANAGER
Nonetheless, we will require your assurance that the funds will be divided between the three of you.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Yes, I'm happy to sign to that effect. They'll each get their fair share.

BANK MANAGER
Very good. If you'll wait here, I will bring you some papers to sign.

The bank manager leaves, but returns with a file with the documents already prepared. Hein signs them, and the Manager counts out the sum of GBP 6,000 in 100 Pound notes.

BANK MANAGER (CONT'D)
That's quite the small fortune, Mr. Hein. Are you sure you wouldn't like to put it on deposit with us?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Thank you, no. I have plans for the money.

BANK MANAGER
Good-bye then. Please let us know if there's anything else we can do.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Cheerio!

Stevens shakes hands with the Bank Manager and exits.

EXT. LONDON CASINO - NIGHT

Stevens, dressed in a tuxedo, exits a cab in front of the casino and approaches the DOORMAN. A sign says 'Foreign Nationals Only'.

CASINO DOORMAN
Good evening, sir. May I help you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in best upper-class
British accent)
I'd like admittance, please.

CASINO DOORMAN
(pointing to sign)
Oh, I'm sorry, sir. No British
citizens are allowed.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Quite alright, my good man. I'm
actually a German citizen.

Hein hands the doorman his German passport, which the man examines. It clearly shows Nazi government symbols, and the name and photograph page is stamped with a big red capital "J".

CASINO DOORMAN
Of course, sir. Please excuse me.
Your accent showed no trace of
that. Be my guest!

Doorman pulls aside the rope and invites Hein to enter.

INT. LONDON CASINO - NIGHT

Hein goes to the CASHIER and exchanges all 6,000 Pounds for 100 Pound chips. A MANAGER sees this and shepherds Hein to the tables.

CASINO MANAGER
Good evening, sir. May I be of
assistance? Would you like
something to drink? Some champagne,
perhaps?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
That would be very nice, thank you.

The Manager waves to a WAITRESS, whispers something to her, and she quickly returns with a bottle of champagne and a flute.

Stevens begin placing bets at the roulette table and immediately starts losing. But he seems happy, nonetheless.

This goes on for hours. Eventually, he is happily drunk, but has lost everything he came with. He leaves.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 (drunkenly, to himself)
 That'll show the bitch! She never
 loved me anyway.

INT. LONDON OLD BAILEY COURTROOM - DAY

SUPER: July 15, 1939

JUDGE
 Georg Hein, you have been charged
 with petty theft and fraud, and on
 the evidence given today, I find
 you Guilty. Young man, this is no
 way to begin life in a new country.
 You must change your ways now, or
 you'll end up in a very sorry
 place. In the meantime, I sentence
 you to three months in prison.

Hein is led away in handcuffs.

INT. PRIVATE CLINIC - DAY

SUPER: July 16, 1939 - Hanover, Germany

HENNI HEIN (53) is sitting up on a bed, wearing a nice dress. A kind elderly DOCTOR is leaning over her bedside, speaking very quietly.

JEWISH DOCTOR
 I must be absolutely certain that
 you understand what is about to
 happen, Frau Hein.

HENNI HEIN
 Doctor, I am of sound mind, and
 know exactly what I am doing. My
 dear husband died 13 years ago.
 Hitler, the madman, came to power 7
 years ago. Since then, the Nazis
 have stolen everything we own. I
 was able to get my three beautiful
 children to safety in England, but
 I have no chance to escape myself.
 Should I let them have their
 sadistic way with me? No!
 (MORE)

HENNI HEIN (CONT'D)

If I must die, and we must all die,
then I choose to do it on my terms,
not on those of the Nazis! I beg
you Doctor, please help me!

The Doctor prepares a solution by crushing many pills into a flask, and adding some orange juice. He mixes it carefully and hands it to Henni. She gulps it down, and then lies down on the bed while the doctor holds her hand. Her eyelids droop and close. Eventually the doctor takes her pulse, and shakes his head. Standing, he pulls the bedsheet over her head.

INT. BRISTOL PRISON, UK - DAY

SUPER: September 1, 1939 - Nazi Germany has just invaded Poland.

A twenty-year-old man in prison uniform, stands before a GUARD at a table. The Guard is reviewing papers and snacking on a sandwich.

GUARD

Name?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(with upper class British accent)

Georg Hein, sir.

GUARD

Hein, you were sentenced to 3 months for petty theft. You have served 6 weeks of that sentence, but we are releasing you today because your bloody Nazis have just invaded Poland. Here's a train ticket to London. When you arrive, report to the first Police Station you find. They'll know what to do with you.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Yes, sir.

EXT. BRISTOL PRISON, UK - DAY

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS, now dressed in a suit, walks away from the prison gate watched by TWO GUARDS.

PRISON GUARD #1

Bloody Nazi.

PRISON GUARD #2

No. He's a Jew. The Nazis hate the Jews.

PRISON GUARD #1
Them Germans is all the same to me.
Bloody Nazis.

INT. LONDON TRAIN STATION - DAY

Hein disembarks from a train.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(to himself)
Report to a Police Station? They
must think I'm bloody mad.

Stevens sees two POLICEMEN striding purposefully up the platform in his direction. He gives them the slip.

EXT. PEACEFUL ENGLISH CEMETERY, LONDON - DAY

Hein strides along a row of headstones, looking for something. He stops and approaches one of the stones and begins writing a note.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(to himself)
There he is. Peter Stevens. Nobody
will ever know.

INT. BRITISH GOVERNMENT OFFICE - MORNING

Hein approaches the counter.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I have lost my birth certificate
and need a new copy please.

CIVIL SERVANT
Name?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Peter Stevens, sir.

CIVIL SERVANT
Date and location of birth?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
April 13, 1917. London, sir.

CIVIL SERVANT goes and looks up details in a big ledger, returns to a desk and types up a form. He returns to the counter and gives the form to Hein, who hands over a few coins in payment.

SUPER: September 3, 1939

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS has joined the Royal Air Force as Peter Stevens, and is training as a bomber pilot.

SUPER: Christmas 1940 - London's Metropolitan Police have begun a manhunt for an enemy alien named Georg Hein (he might be a Nazi spy).

INT. METROPOLITAN POLICE STATION LONDON - BACK ROOM - DAY

A DETECTIVE INSPECTOR in a suit, sitting at a desk, calls to a DETECTIVE SERGEANT in uniform, who approaches the desk.

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR BARKER
Oy, Sergeant Webster! Got a job for you.

SERGEANT WEBSTER
Yes, sir. What's up?

DETECTIVE INSPECTOR BARKER
Do you remember we opened a file back in October, young enemy alien German named Hein had gone missing? Well, we've had a tip today. A woman who works as the receptionist at his Solicitor's office, Lake & Son, a Mrs. Bell, called to say that he'd sent the firm a Christmas card. She reported it, as she knows he's a wanted enemy alien. So I go and visit Mrs. Bell at her home. She picked the envelope out of the bin, and says it was from someone in the Royal Air Force. It was postmarked "Shrewsbury". Then I call the police detachment at Shrewsbury and have them visit the local RAF airfields.

INT. SHREWSBURY POLICE STATION - DAY

A MIDDLE-AGED DETECTIVE in a suit sits at a desk in a room with 5 other desks. His telephone rings. He answers it.

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER
Hello, D.S. Fletcher, Shrewsbury.

The Detective listens intently and begins taking notes.

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER (CONT'D)
All right, I've got it. We'll call you back in a day or two.

D.S. Fletcher pops his head into the office of his boss and explains.

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER (CONT'D)

Just had a call from the Met Police in London, sir. They're looking for a missing enemy alien and they think he's joined the RAF. They've asked us to go visit the local RAF bases and find him.

The Detective Inspector nods to Fletcher to go ahead.

EXT. HEAVILY-GUARDED GATE OF RAF SHAWBURY - DAY

Detective Sgt. Fletcher in old black car, approaches. Fletcher presents his credentials to the armed GUARD. The Guard enters his hut picks up the phone. A few seconds later, he walks to the car window, points to where Fletcher can park his car near the base Command Office. He raises the barrier and waves Fletcher through. Fletcher drives to the low brick building, parks in front of it. He exits the car, walks past a sign reading 'RAF Shawbury - Base Commanding Officer' and enters. He approaches a counter and is met by an RAF SERGEANT.

RAF SERGEANT

Yes, sir, how may we help?

Fletcher shows his credentials.

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER

Detective Sergeant Fletcher, Shrewsbury Police. I'm looking for a man of yours named Hein. Georg Franz Hein.

RAF SERGEANT

That name sounds German, sir. We don't have any of them here, you know!

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER

Be that as it may, Sergeant, I'd like to speak with the Commanding Officer about him please.

RAF SERGEANT

Right, sir. I'll see if he's available.

RAF Sergeant walks over to a glassed-in office marked 'Base Adjutant' and knocks at the open door. The OFFICER inside waves him in, and listens. About 5 seconds later, the distinguished grey-haired Adjutant (late 40s) rises and walks to the counter.

RAF ADJUTANT

I'm Wing Commander Simpson. The base Commanding Officer is tied up at the moment. How may I help?

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER

D.S. Fletcher, Shrewsbury Police, sir. We have reason to believe that a German citizen named Georg Franz Hein, age 20, is here. He's a wanted man as an enemy alien.

RAF ADJUTANT

Well, D.S. Fletcher, it's not like the Royal Air Force to accept Germans into our ranks.

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER

I'm sure it isn't, but all the same, we've a tip that he's here. Would you check for us, please? I'm sure you can imagine how much damage a German spy could do from within the RAF, sir.

RAF ADJUTANT

Fair enough. Give me a minute, would you?

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER

Certainly, sir.

Adjutant goes over to a wall of filing cabinets, looks at the index in front of each, then opens a drawer. Fingering through a thick load of files, he goes through twenty of them, looking at the name on each individual tab. He returns to the counter, shaking his head.

RAF ADJUTANT

I've had a look through all our personnel records, detective, and we have no German citizen here named Hein. No English citizen either, for that matter!

D.S. Fletcher grunts, turns and leaves.

RAF ADJUTANT (CONT'D)

(to RAF SERGEANT)

That's one for the books! They sure don't hire policemen for their brains!

The two men share a chuckle.

INT. SHREWSBURY POLICE STATION - DAY

Detective Sergeant Fletcher is sitting at his desk, speaking on the phone.

DETECTIVE SERGEANT FLETCHER
 (into phone)
 Sergeant Webster in London? Right,
 Detective Sergeant Fletcher,
 Shrewsbury here. It's concerning
 that missing German citizen, Mr.
 Hein. I've been to RAF Shawbury
 myself. They checked, and they've
 never heard of him. They almost
 laughed me out of the place, I can
 tell you. "Imagine that", they
 said, "a German pilot in the RAF!"
 They just about fell down in fits.

INT. METROPOLITAN POLICE STATION, LONDON, BACK ROOM - DAY

Webster hangs up the phone.

SERGEANT WEBSTER
 (angrily, to himself)
 Where *is* that Kraut bastard?

EXT. RAF NORTH LUFFENHAM GRASS AIRFIELD - NIGHT

SUPER: August 6, 1941 - Stevens and his crew have flown several operations together, and all has gone well so far, but Britain is barely holding its own against a much stronger enemy.

On a blackboard is a chart of the Squadron's Pilots and their mission totals. Stevens' total is 16.

Stevens and his crew stand beside their Hampden, dressed in flight gear. Three of them are smoking cigarettes. Someone at the aircraft next to theirs is bent over double, vomiting.

JOHN MATTHEWS
 (to DOUGLAS WARK, privately)
 Dougie, what's this Stevens fellow
 like?

DOUGLAS WARK
 He's a right snobbish bastard. Won't
 socialize with his crew. Considers
 himself too good for the rest of us,
 if we're not officers. But I think
 he's a decent enough pilot.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (checking his watch)
 All right lads, time to get moving.
 Karlsruhe, here we come.

As Stevens climbs into his parachute harness, the rest of the CREW scramble to their positions. GIRARDET enters the nose compartment from the hatch underneath. WARK and MATTHEWS both enter from the underside hatch at the left rear of the aircraft.

Stevens climbs the four short steps of a flimsy-looking metal ladder placed against the rear of the left wing where it meets the fuselage. He walks forward along the wing toward the open pilot's canopy, and climbs in over the side. Settling into his seat, he gets himself adjusted while a MECHANIC reaches in and helps him buckle his safety belts.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

(over the intercom)
 Pilot to crew, check in please.

The crew takes turns confirming their readiness. Engine sounds fill their ears.

EXT. HAMPDEN BOMBER - NIGHT

The Hampden turns into the wind on a grass runway.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (over the intercom)
 Hang on everyone, here we go.

Stevens advances the throttles to full power and the Hampden gains speed on the takeoff roll, eventually climbing into the darkening sky.

INT. HAMPDEN BOMBER - NIGHT

The Hampden's interior is dimly lit.

GEORGE GIRARDET
 (over the intercom)
 Navigator to Pilot, enemy coast
 ahead.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (over the intercom)
 Go ahead and test your guns, lads.

The sound of quick bursts of machine gun fire is witnessed by tracers coming from the aircraft into the black night. Some time later, Stevens looks at his watch.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 (over the intercom)
 Pilot to Navigator, I see lots of
 flak up ahead. Is that the target?

GEORGE GIRARDET
 (over the intercom)
 Navigator to Pilot. Negative Steve.
 It might be a Nazi ruse to confuse
 us. I estimate us over the target
 in 20 minutes from now.

LATER: Stevens confirms the target is in sight. Fires are
 already burning in the centre of the city visible through the
 pilot's windscreen.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (over the intercom)
 Pilot to crew, target ahead.
 Opening bomb doors.

GEORGE GIRARDET
 (over the intercom)
 Steady, steady, right, steady.
 Bombs gone!

The little Hampden jumps upwards as the payload drops clear.
 Stevens makes the turn for home.

SUPER: Approx 3:30am, somewhere over Belgium.

DOUGLAS WARK
 (screaming over the
 intercom)
 Fighters! Corkscrew right!

Sound of machine guns as Stevens throws the Hampden into a
 spinning dive, trying to evade the Luftwaffe night fighters.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (over the intercom, excitedly)
 Pilot to Air Gunner. What is it?

DOUGLAS WARK
 (screaming over the intercom)
 Two JU-88s! And they're coming back
 in again! Corkscrew left!

Stevens again attempts evasive action, diving and spinning in
 the opposite direction. Bullets and cannon shells from the
 German fighters pierce the Hampden, this time whizzing by
 Stevens and impacting his instrument panel, making a complete
 mess of it. Suddenly, an immense explosion rocks the Hampden.

Stevens pulls his plane out of the dive, expecting it to be on fire, but it isn't.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(over the intercom)
Wark! What's going on?

There is no reply. But the controls still work and there is no fire. After a minute, Stevens is startled by a tap on the shoulder. Turning his head as much as he dares he sees Matthews, spattered in blood.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
What's happening, Math?

JOHN MATTHEWS
We're okay, Skipper. Dougie and I took minor shrapnel hits, but nothing serious. Doug managed to hit one of the bastards and blew it up into a thousand pieces. I guess that scared the other one off. I put out a small fire with the coffee from my thermos bottle. We're full of holes, but I guess she's still flyable, eh?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Yes, she's shot up pretty badly, but both engines are still running. I've lost most of my instruments, though, and I guess the intercom isn't working either. Any word from George? Go below and check.

Matthews nods in the affirmative and crawls down below the pilot's seat, moving forward through a tunnel into the nose. He finds a tangled mess of equipment, and Girardet lying on the floor unconscious. Blood spurts out of a massive open wound in his lower leg.

JOHN MATTHEWS
Jesus, George! Can you hear me?

No response. Matthews immediately grasps Girardet's leg wound, and tries to stop the bleeding. Reaching for the First Aid kit, he pulls out the largest bandage and begins wrapping Girardet's leg. He finds a piece of flexible rubber tubing in the kit, and wraps that around George's thigh as a tourniquet. Girardet writhes unconsciously with pain, and Matthews gives him a shot of morphine. Matthews crawls aft through the tunnel to report to Stevens.

JOHN MATTHEWS (CONT'D)
Skipper, George is pretty badly shot up.

(MORE)

JOHN MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

It looks like he took a cannon shell through the leg. I've bandaged him up as best I could and given him a shot of morphine. Should I drop him overboard and pull his ripcord?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

We don't know where we are, exactly, and there's no guarantee anyone would find him before he bleeds to death. Let's try and get him back to England as fast as possible. That will probably take about two hours. Can he last that long?

JOHN MATTHEWS

I'm not sure. Hope so.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Go check on Wark and make sure he's still okay. And report back to me on the state of the radio.

Stevens sets a course for England by the shortest and most direct route. His watch says 3:45am.

Matthews reports back.

JOHN MATTHEWS

Skipper, Dougie is okay, about the same as me. No serious injuries, just a few minor shrapnel and flesh wounds. But the radio is destroyed. Dougie tried to fix it, but it's too badly shot up.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Can George hold out?

JOHN MATTHEWS

He'll have to, won't he?

As Stevens flies the stricken bomber out over the North Sea, his watch reads 4:30. He banks the aircraft sharply to the left, and begins looking for airfields as he crosses the dark English coast. The sun begins to rise behind him in the east, and, up ahead, he sees an RAF base.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(to Matthews, behind him)

Math, get everyone ready for landing. We're almost home.

Stevens prepares the plane for landing, but on the final approach, the flaps and the landing gear do not work.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

(to Matthews, who is once
again behind him)

Shit, no flaps or landing gear! The fighters must have shot out the hydraulics and the backup. Fast now. Decide. Do you want to bale out, or chance a belly landing? Haven't much time.

JOHN MATTHEWS

(without hesitation)

Put her down gently skipper. We can't take a risk dropping George out now, he probably wouldn't make it.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Okay, a belly landing it is then. Make sure Wark knows and go and keep George safe.

EXT. RAF CONINGSBY, WHEELS-UP - DAWN

Hampden bomber approaches the runway, wheels up. Stevens pushes his canopy back and pilots the airplane down to the ground. Just before touching down, he cuts fuel to the engines to avoid a fire. The Hampden touches down perfectly, as if on wheels, and eventually skids to a halt, sideways, some 200 yards down the field. There is no fire.

Stevens jumps out of the cockpit onto the wing, and scrambles down to the ground. The propeller tips are all bent - noticeably backwards.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(yelling)

See if you can get George out safely. I'll go find an ambulance!

The sun is just above the horizon. Stevens' watch says 5:05.

He runs towards the nearest building, which is dark. The base is asleep, so Stevens, running, begins yelling for help.

Turning a corner around a building, he sees a FELLOW standing beside a truck.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

You! Can you drive this thing?
I've just landed with a plane full
of injured crew. Let's go! NOW!

They climb into the truck and drive away at full speed towards the grass field where the Hampden sits.

Matthews and Wark are slumped against the fuselage, but there is no sign of Girardet.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
Where's George? Still in the nose?

Matthews nods, and Stevens motions to the truck driver to come and help.

INT. HAMPDEN BOMBER - DAWN

They enter the plane through the lower rear gunner's hatch and crawl forward under the pilot's seat into the nose. Stevens sees carnage and blood spatter. He grabs the fire axe affixed to the side of the fuselage and uses it to cut a very large hole in the side of the nose. He gestures to the truck driver to exit through the hole and take Girardet's feet as Stevens passes George's limp body through the new opening.

EXT. HAMPDEN BOMBER - DAWN

They carry Girardet to the truck. Matthews and Wark join in the back. The driver gets in and drives quickly, heading for the base hospital. He starts blasting his horn and a DOCTOR and NURSE come out to see what is happening. Seeing the truck, they call inside for help. Three gurneys are rushed out and Girardet is the first to be taken inside. Matthews and Wark each climb, exhausted, onto the other gurneys and are wheeled inside.

INT. RAF CONINGSBY HOSPITAL - DAWN

A SENIOR OFFICER arrives to investigate all the noise, sees Stevens sitting inside the door wearing his flight gear, looking lost and forlorn.

WING COMMANDER
You! Who are you, and what have
you done to my airfield?

Stevens gets up slowly, but does not salute. He looks completely exhausted and crestfallen.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Pilot Officer Stevens, sir, 144
Squadron out of North Luffenham. I
had three injured crew on board and
yours was the first airfield I could
find. Pranged up the landing, I'm
afraid, sir. No wheels or flaps.

WING COMMANDER

You'd better come with me then, Stevens. We'll get your men sorted out. Just let me speak with the Doc first. By the way, you've landed at RAF Coningsby.

Wing Commander goes to the counter, asks to speak with the doctor. The doctor comes out and updates him on the condition of Stevens' men.

WING COMMANDER (CONT'D)

Your men are being given the very best of care, Stevens. Follow me.

INT. RAF CONINGSBY, BASE HEADQUARTERS - MORNING

Wing Commander turns on the lights and leads Stevens to his office. He gestures to Stevens to sit then sits down behind his desk, reaches into a drawer and pulls out a bottle of Scotch whiskey along with a glass. He pours a double into the glass, and passes it across the desk to Stevens.

WING COMMANDER

Here's my prescription for a young pilot who has just saved three lives, Stevens. Drink up. That's an order!

Stevens sips at the Scotch gladly, as his knees are shaking.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Will my crew be alright then, sir?

WING COMMANDER

Well, two of them just have minor injuries, shrapnel and flesh wounds from small machine gun fire, but nothing they can't survive. The doctor says they'll have to stay for a week or two, but they'll both mend nicely.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

And my Navigator, sir?

WING COMMANDER

Doc says that was a very close run thing. He's lost a lot of blood, but you got him here just in time. Now, give me the name of your squadron commander, and I'll brief him on what's happened.

(MORE)

WING COMMANDER (CONT'D)

We'll get you settled with food and a bed, and transport back to North Luffenham for tomorrow. Bloody good flying, Stevens. A textbook landing with no flaps and undercarriage? Bloody good indeed.

INT. RAF CONINGSBY, OFFICERS' MESS BUILDING - MORNING

Stevens enters. An ORDERLY shows him to a vacant room, where he collapses on the bed, fully dressed. Clock shows 6:10 AM.

LATER: Clock shows 4:40 PM. Stevens slowly wakes up. It takes him a few seconds to realize where he is and what has happened. He removes his flying suit to reveal his regular blue uniform.

INT. RAF CONINGSBY HOSPITAL - LATE AFTERNOON

Stevens enquires at the front desk, and is pointed towards the ward. He enters, and immediately hears "Skipper, over here!" shouted at him. He smiles and waves, then walks over to the neighbouring beds that hold his crewmen, Matthews and Wark.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Well, it looks as though you two are in for a brief vacation. How are you doing, lads?

DOUGLAS WARK

We'll be okay, Skip. Just a few small bullet holes. Nothing we can't handle.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Matthews says you shot down one of the attackers, Wark, and frightened off another one. Is that so?

DOUGLAS WARK

I guess so, sir. Math couldn't get a bead on him from his lower guns, so I was the only one with a shot. I must've got him in the fuel tank, because he blew up into a thousand pieces. Then his mate just turned tail and ran!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Well, that was some bloody good shooting, Doug. I'm going to recommend you for the Distinguished Flying Medal for last night's work. Any news on George?

JOHN MATTHEWS

The doctor was just here, Skipper. He said George will have a very long recovery, but he'll be okay. And he thinks they will be able to save the leg. So that's great news.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(relieved)

Oh, thank God! I'd hate to be responsible for a man losing his leg. Well, you two look after one another. I'll be off to check in on George, then it's back to North Luffenham for me. No rest for the wicked!

Stevens leaves the ward to go check on Girardet. He enters a private room, where Girardet lies in bed with his leg covered in bandages. Blood seeps through in a few small spots.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

How are you doing, George?

GEORGE GIRARDET

In a lot of pain, but I'll make it. They tell me I've got several operations in store over the coming months, but the surgeon is pretty sure he can save the leg. Steve?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Yes?

GEORGE GIRARDET

Thanks for getting us home. I'm not sure how you did it, but that must have been some incredible flying. According to Matthews, a perfect belly landing! Thanks, mate, you saved us all. I'm buying you many drinks when I get back!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Anyone could have done it. Take care of yourself, and come see us as soon as you're back on your feet.

Stevens gets up and turns to leave. He is still shaking.

INT. RAF NORTH LUFFENHAM, BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: September 7, 1941

Aircrews assembled, BINGHAM is on a raised platform. He pulls back curtains.

SQUADRON LEADER BINGHAM
Gentlemen, our target for tonight is The Big City. Berlin. There is a 20 mile ring of anti-aircraft cannon surrounding the city. Our aiming point is the main railway station. Berlin is at the extreme range of our Hampdens, so there won't be any lingering over the target. Do it right the first time, and we won't have to go back anytime soon. Good luck. Dismissed!

EXT. RAF NORTH LUFFENHAM, OPERATIONS ROOM - DUSK

MEN climb aboard a truck to go to their aircraft.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
See you in the morning for eggs and bacon, Reg!

ROAKE smiles and waves back.

Stevens, PAYNE and THOMPSON jump off the truck and immediately urinate on the tail wheel of their Hampden.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
Oy, Fraser, it'll be a long time before you get a chance to do this again. It's good luck.

FRASER runs over and joins them.

EXT. HAMPDEN DISPERSAL - TWILIGHT

The crew enters the plane, and Stevens starts the engines. Roake, in his Hampden, taxis out just in front of them, with Stevens following close behind.

Just as Stevens turns onto the active runway, two Police cars with flashing lights and blaring sirens can be seen and heard approaching his plane.

Roake begins his takeoff run, and Stevens follows him into the air, a few hundred yards behind. The police cars stop on the runway as Stevens' plane lifts off. Shortly after takeoff, Roake's 'plane loses an engine, enters a spin, hits the ground and explodes.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
FUUCCCKKKK!

INT. HAMPDEN - NIGHT

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(intercom)
Captain to Navigator. How much
longer?

ALAN PAYNE
(intercom)
About another hour until we're over
the target, skipper. In forty
minutes, you should be able to see
the flak as it comes up to meet the
first wave of bombers. There are
seven hundred of us out tonight.

LATER.

ALAN PAYNE (CONT'D)
(intercom)
There you are, skipper.

Flak shells explode all around them, as the burning city is
visible below.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(intercom)
All right, Doc. Opening bomb doors.

ALAN PAYNE
(intercom)
That's good, skipper. Left, left,
steady, steady. Bombs gone!

The Hampden jumps forward and skyward. The plane is rocked by
an explosion, and almost flips over. Stevens fights to get the
aircraft level again.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(intercom)
What was that? What happened?
Everyone all right?

ALAN PAYNE
(intercom)
I was blinded for a few seconds,
but I'm okay, skipper.

THOMPSON
(intercom)
Wireless Op okay, skipper.

IVOR FRASER

(intercom)

Okay in the tin, skipper. But I see fluid leaking past me from both wings.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(intercom)

Shit! It must be fuel, lads. I don't know how long she'll stay together. A spark from the exhaust could send us up like a roman candle. The fighters will be waiting for us. I'll try and keep her flying, but you'd best get out while you can. Abandon aircraft! Abandon aircraft!

As Stevens turns the aircraft for home, the three crew all grab parachute packs, clip them on to front of their harnesses. Payne opens the hatch under the nose and jumps. A parachute blossoms.

Thompson climbs down to Fraser's rear gunner station. Fraser releases the emergency hatch and it blows off. He sits on the floor with his legs dangling out of the hatch, turns, salutes Thompson and pushes out.

Thompson climbs down and jumps. As Thompson pulls his ripcord, he can barely make out Fraser falling below. He sees no parachute. Thompson's chute opens. Fraser hits the ground hard. Thompson lands on a Berlin street to a waiting group of soldiers.

Stevens dives the airplane toward the ground. GERMAN SOLDIERS run to where Thompson and Fraser landed. Fraser is obviously dead.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

(aloud)

Let's see. A hundred and forty gallons per hour, and four hundred gallons left, but both wing tanks leaking.

(shakes his head)

Impossible to get back to England. I'll fly as far west as I can, and then put her down before she becomes a glider.

SUPER: 70 minutes later

The Port engine sputters and dies. Stevens pushes the canopy back. As the Hampden gets below tree height, Stevens cuts the good engine and glides to a belly landing. Plane skids for a few hundred yards and comes to rest.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 Welcome to Holland!

EXT. FARM FIELD - NIGHT

SUPER: September 8, 1941 - 4:30 AM. Abbring family farm, north-east of Amsterdam.

Stevens climbs out.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 First things first. Make sure I
 leave nothing valuable or Top
 Secret for the Germans to find.
 They'll probably be here soon.
 Destroy the bomb sight, and set her
 on fire. Got to get the hell out of
 here!

Stevens climbs down into the nose, where he hacks at the bomb sight with an axe. He collects everything flammable, takes all maps and documents and stuffs them under the nose section of the plane, along with his insulated flight suit. Stevens takes a flare pistol and fires it through a hole into the nose section. Fire quickly begins to grow. He runs from the plane and spots a farm track. Stevens heads for it. Soon, he can see a barn lit by dim moonlight. He jogs toward the barn, looking for German soldiers. He sees a small farmhouse and head for it. Stevens knocks, waits, then knocks again.

DUTCH FARMER
 (through the door, in Dutch)
 Who's there? What do you want?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Please, sir, I need your help.

Farmer opens door a crack, motions him to enter, closes door.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

Farmer lights a candle.

DUTCH FARMER
 (in broken English)
 Who are you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 I am an RAF pilot and I have just
 landed my plane nearby. Can you put
 me in contact with the Resistance?

DUTCH FARMER

I am patriot, but you putting us in great danger. If Nazis know you here, they not only kill me, but also my family.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I understand. Can you contact the Resistance?

DUTCH FARMER

I do what I can, but please, you not stay here. Come back tonight 10:00 o'clock and I let you know then. Please go. Quick!

EXT. DUTCH SPORTS FIELD - DAWN

Stevens walks westward. After dawn breaks, he sees sports fields, with a small equipment hut. He jimmys the padlock and opens a flimsy door to reveal soccer equipment.

INT. SMALL SOCCER EQUIPMENT HUT - DAWN

Stevens makes a pile of equipment and lies down, but is too full of adrenaline to sleep.

EXT. SOCCER FIELD COMPLEX - LATE AFTERNOON

FIVE GERMAN SOLDIERS comb the area. One has a German Shepherd, which barks near the equipment hut.

GERMAN SERGEANT

Come out with your hands in the air! We know you are in there, British fliers!

INT./EXT. SMALL SOCCER EQUIPMENT HUT - LATE AFTERNOON

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(to himself)

Oh, Christ, I'm fucked! I'd better surrender.

(loudly)

I'm coming out. Don't shoot! Nicht schießen!

Door opens slowly.

GERMAN SERGEANT
For you, English terror flier, the
war is over!

GERMAN SERGEANT searches his prisoner. Soldiers form a line
behind the Brit and march him off to a waiting truck.

EXT. AMSTERDAM JAILHOUSE - EVENING

SUPER: Amsterdam Jail

Everyone exits the truck. GERMAN SOLDIERS march their prisoner
into the building.

INT. AMSTERDAM JAILHOUSE - DAY

German soldiers present prisoner to an OFFICER at the counter.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT
So, you crash-landed the Hampden,
and then set fire to it. Name!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Stevens, Peter. Pilot Officer.
Service number 88219.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT
Pilot Officer Stevens, you were the
pilot. Where are your other crew?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Stevens, Peter. Pilot Officer.
Service #88219.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT
It will be much easier for them if
you tell us where they are.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Stevens, Peter. Pilot Officer.
Service #88219.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT
Come now, sir. Don't you want your
loved ones to be notified you are
alive? Your squadron number, the
name of your commanding officer,
your base of operations, and your
target... please!

Stevens remains silent.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT (CONT'D)

(becoming angry)

Your crewmates will be treated as spies, and shot when they are captured. You will be our guest here until transport can be arranged. Good evening!

German soldiers march Stevens to a cell, and lock him in.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Oy, I'm hungry! When do we get our supper?

GERMAN GUARD

You have missed tonight's meal.

GUARD laughs and leaves the man alone in his dank cell.

INT./EXT. AMSTERDAM JAIL - DAY

Stevens is brought to a holding area, with seven other recently-captured Allied aircrew. All wear Air Force uniforms.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I'm Stevens. You?

MIKE LEWIS

(Canadian accent)

Lewis. How do I know you're not a Kraut stooge?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Good question. Know any decent pubs in London? Mine is the White Hart in Drury Lane.

MIKE LEWIS

Yes. What's the landlord's name?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

No landlord, it's owned directly by the brewery.

MIKE LEWIS

Okay, you're good. But nothing secret until we can establish bona fide facts.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Fair enough. Your wings look Canadian.

MIKE LEWIS
I'm from Toronto. You?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
London. Pancaked just outside of
town yesterday. Out of fuel. Hit by
flak in both tanks. You?

MIKE LEWIS
Shot down over the Dutch coast two
nights ago. I put her down in the
surf, captured the next morning.
Only two of you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Ordered crew to bale out when we
were hit. Hope they all made it.

The GERMAN LIEUTENANT arrives with a group of SIX SOLDIERS, all
armed.

GERMAN LIEUTENANT
These men will escort you to prison
camp. Do not try to escape. They
have orders to shoot anyone who
attempts to run.

MIKE LEWIS
Hey! We haven't had any food!

GERMAN LIEUTENANT
You will be fed when you arrive at
the camp.

The Prisoners file outside and climb into a truck, followed by
the guards.

INT. AMSTERDAM TRAIN STATION - EARLY EVENING

The prisoners are escorted off the truck and into the station.
A train arrives. They board it along with some of the armed
guards. Train leaves.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, LÜBECK GERMANY - NIGHT

Train arrives at Lübeck. Prisoners and guards disembark, march
through the station and get into trucks. They drive off.

EXT. OFLAG X-C LÜBECK - DAY

As dawn breaks inside a POW camp, the guards exit the trucks, followed by the prisoners. They are met and greeted by WING COMMANDER DAY.

WINGS DAY

Gentlemen, I am Wing Commander Day, the Senior British Officer. This rat-hole is filthy, and even the "goons" hate the place. The camp is overcrowded, there are lice everywhere, and so is the threat of typhus. Food is short. We have complained bitterly about the conditions, but the bastard Kommandant refuses every request. Our principle goal is to give the son of a bitch his dream: early retirement! You will be assigned to barracks and rooms, but before anyone will talk with you, you will undergo a security check. You must satisfy a senior officer of your legitimacy, or someone already here must vouch for you. Until one of those two takes place, you will be considered a German spy. Dismissed!

INT. OFLAG X-C BARRACKS - DAY

Lewis and Stevens are billeted in the same room. They join SIX OFFICERS already there. Triple bunk beds line three sides of the room. Lewis and Stevens pick bunks. The men introduce themselves.

MIKE LEWIS

(looks at his watch)

Time for me to go, gents. Got an appointment with a Squadron Leader Bushell.

He leaves. Stevens climbs onto a top bunk.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I'm Stevens. Can anyone tell me how to get a toothbrush, razor, towel, blanket?

TIM WALENN

Ahh, right. I'm Tim Walenn. The camp Supply Officer manages the limited stocks we receive from the Red Cross. That includes food.

(MORE)

TIM WALENN (CONT'D)

Major Petersen is your man, and he's in his office right now. Block ten, at the far end.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Thanks, Tim. My name's Peter, but everyone calls me Steve.

Lewis returns.

MIKE LEWIS

Stevens! You're next. Room 10.

EXT./INT. OFLAG X-C, ROOM 10 - DAY

Stevens knocks at Room 10.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL

Enter!

Stevens enters and stands to attention. TWO OFFICERS sit on the other side of a table.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Stevens, sir. Reporting as ordered.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL

My name is Bushell. To my left is Wing Commander Hyde. Without giving away any secrets, we just need to know whether anyone already here can vouch for you.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Not really sure, sir. Squadron Leader Davies? Flight Lieutenant Bob Barr?

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL

No, they're not here, but we know of them. Seventy-Nine Squadron at Coningsby, right?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Sorry, sir. Not even close.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

Okay, Stevens, we know that Barr and Davies were from 144 Squadron based at Middle Wallop.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
You've got the squadron right, sir.
I guess it's safe to tell you that
144 was previously located at
Hemswell, but moved to a different
base a few months ago.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL
And what is the name of the
Officers' Mess at Hemswell, Stevens?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
It used to be called the Hemswell
Cliff Hotel, sir.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL
Very good, Stevens. Welcome to
Oflag X-C.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
To whom does one speak about escape?
My German is rather good, and I have
a few plans I'd like to try.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL
Do not mention anything about escape
to anyone in the camp you don't
know. There is an Escape Committee,
and you are actually looking at it.
All escape plans must be considered
and approved by the committee. Just
how good *is* your German?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Letter-perfect, sir. My mother sent
me to boarding school in Bavaria for
seven years. When I got back, I
almost had to re-learn English!

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL
Very good, Stevens. Dismissed!

Stevens salutes and exits.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
He might come in handy!

INT. OFLAG X-C BARRACKS - DAY

The Men are relaxing on their bunks.

MIKE LEWIS
So, how did you get here, Tim?

TIM WALENN

I was an instructor on Wellingtons at an Operational Training Unit. One of the students was flying the plane on a non-combat training flight, and I went back to speak with the other students. Before I knew it, we were being shelled by flak, and we were hit. We all baled out, only to discover that we were in Holland!

MIKE LEWIS

(laughing aloud)

You should tell it to the Krauts, Tim. Maybe they'll take pity and send you home! Still, it's a much better story than mine. I was flying a Manchester inbound over the Frisian islands, and we were jumped by a night fighter.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

We were hit by flak over Berlin. Holed both wing tanks, and we only made it back as far as Amsterdam. Belly-landed in a farmer's field, and was captured the next day. How's the food situation, Tim?

TIM WALENN

Worse than pitiful, Steve.

FLASHBACK:

Walenn is seen in a cookhouse slicing dark German bread three millimetres thick, measuring a dollop of margarine, and a tablespoonful of some kind of meat and the same quantity of ersatz cheese or jam.

END FLASHBACK

TIM WALENN (CONT'D)

Lunch is usually a bowl of hot water they call soup, but it only has a few cabbage leaves in it and a few small boiled potatoes. Supper, if we're lucky, might be something from a Red Cross parcel. A slice of ham, maybe, to go along with another paper-thin slice of black bread. Preserve your energy, because you're going to get hungry.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
That's it? That's all we get?

TIM WALENN
We're supposed to be issued one Red Cross parcel per man every two weeks, but that rarely happens. This Kommandant is notorious for withholding parcels on a whim.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
What does everyone do to keep busy during the day, Tim?

TIM WALENN
A few will organize some outdoor sports.

EXT. OFLAG X-C EXERCISE YARD - DAY

Scenes of men playing cricket, soccer, golf.

INT. OFLAG X-C BARRACKS - DAY

TIM WALENN
Most of us do more passive things, like read. There's talk of setting up classes in whatever subjects someone might be qualified to teach. There's a drama society and an orchestra. Most of the costumes and instruments are provided by the Red Cross. We'd be lost without them. I mostly draw things, like birds.

MIKE LEWIS
So you're an artist then, Tim?

TIM WALENN
Well... An amateur artist, yes.

INT. OFLAG X-C BARRACKS - DAY

Stevens knocks on the door of Bushell's room.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Do you have a moment for me, sir?

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL
Oh, Stevens. I was wondering when I might be hearing from you. Let's go bash the circuit, shall we?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Sir?

Bushell motions to Stevens to follow him outside.

EXT. OFLAG X-C - DAY

The two Officers begin walking around the exercise yard perimeter.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL

Bashing the circuit is Kriegie-terminology for walking around the exercise yard. Important talks are always best held out of doors, out of the range of microphones that might be planted in the block.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Sir, you just used a word that sounded German, but I didn't quite get the context.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL

Oh, you mean Kriegie? It's the short form of the German word "Kriegsgefangener", which you should understand, if your German is as good as you say it is.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Kriegsgefangener. War prisoner. Prisoner of war?

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL

That's it.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I want to escape, and as soon as possible. I don't yet have a mechanism in mind for the escape, but I want to have all of my preparations done in advance in case an opportunity should present itself. So I need to know how to get civilian clothing, and money, and food. And, of course, false identity papers, maps, train tickets.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL

The problem is that we, the "X Organization", are just beginning to take shape here in Lübeck.

(MORE)

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL (CONT'D)

We don't yet have the resources to provide what you want. Would you help us so that we could supply all of those things, and more, to every escaper who asks?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I'd be happy to do my bit.

SQUADRON LEADER BUSHELL
We'll call upon your expertise when we have need. One other thing: what makes you so positive you will succeed with your escape?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I know who and what they are, sir. I can become one of them.

EXT. OFLAG X-C EXERCISE YARD - DAY

The Germans are finishing Appell.

COLONEL VON WACHTMEISTER
Tomorrow, due to overcrowding at this camp, all Royal Air Force officers will be moved to a new camp. I have no more information. The RAF officers should be packed and ready to leave at 0900 hours.

EXT. OFLAG X-C LÜBECK PRISONER OF WAR CAMP - DAY

SUPER: October 6, 1941

Aircrew assemble at the main gate.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Here's our chance, Mike. I'm escaping. Are you with me?

MIKE LEWIS
We don't have any German money or civilian clothing or identity papers. And we only have a little bit of food.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Not to worry, Mike, I've got a plan.

Gate opens, and 20 armed GERMAN GUARDS file in and surround the prisoners, led by Wing Commander Hyde.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
Off we go, men!

EXT. LÜBECK TRAIN STATION, FREIGHT YARD - DAY

The men arrive at Lübeck station and are loaded into cattle cars. Each rail car is labelled "40 hommes - 8 chevaux".

INT. TRAIN FREIGHT CAR - DUSK

A rail car with straw on the floor. Toilets are two buckets. Stevens and Lewis whisper to small groups of other Prisoners. Soon the train slows down as it begins to take a curve. Prisoners stand and shake out their blankets.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Okay, Mike. Follow me.

Stevens is hidden from the guards by blankets. He removes the air vent grille and tosses it outside. He throws his kit bag and food stash out, and dives through. Lewis shoves his luggage out and dives through after him.

EXT. GERMAN FREIGHT TRAIN - DUSK

Stevens, then Lewis, tumble to the ground. They get up and search for their packs on the ground. Seconds later, the train comes to a screeching halt.

INT. TRAIN FREIGHT CAR - DUSK

One GERMAN GUARD inside the rail car points his rifle at the Prisoners. Another goes to the large door, unlocks the padlock and slides open the door.

EXT. GERMAN FREIGHT TRAIN - DUSK

Outside, the Guard sees Lewis and Stevens and begins shooting. The pair change direction, and head towards evergreen trees.

GERMAN GUARD
Halt! Halt!

MIKE LEWIS
Christ, Steve! Run!

Bullets whiz by as other guards begin firing.

After entering the forest, Stevens burrows into a mound of logs. Lewis follows.

INT. PILE OF LOGS, PINE FOREST - NIGHT

Twenty seconds later. Rifle fire. After sporadic shooting, it decreases, then ceases. Then yelling and whistles, but at a distance. Train whistle blows. The steam engine starts.

MIKE LEWIS

Jeezus! Now what, Steve? Head north and try to cross the Baltic toward Sweden? Or south?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I can't swim. I vote for Switzerland.

MIKE LEWIS

That's hundreds of miles away. Sweden's closer.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Without papers or civilian clothing we'll be spotted in five minutes. If we take our time and travel slowly off-the-beaten-path, we can get to the Swiss border.

MIKE LEWIS

That would take days!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Trust me, Mike. I've got a plan. But we might not be safe here if the goons send local police to search. We should cover some distance while it's dark. Sleep by day. Move by night.

MIKE LEWIS

If we're going to move now, it'll be easier to walk along the train tracks rather than through a forest where we have no idea of direction.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Right! Let's go.

EXT. NORTH GERMAN PINE FOREST - NIGHT

The Two Pilots head back towards the train tracks.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I think we're somewhere south of Hamburg. We'll follow the tracks westwards.

EXT. NORTH GERMANY TRAIN TRACKS - DAWN

Stevens and Lewis walk along the train tracks. They see a small railway work shed.

MIKE LEWIS

Sun's coming up. We should find a place to hide. That shed?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Sure.

They approach the shed. Using a a prybar found on the ground, Lewis jimmys the lock. Lewis enters, Stevens follows.

INT. GERMAN RAILWAY WORK SHED - DAWN

An old cot is folded up against a wall.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

Need to get some shut-eye while the sun is up. Flip you for the cot!

Lewis wins the coin flip. Lies down. Stevens removes his jacket, rolls it up for a pillow and lies on the floor. Both sleep instantly.

INT. GERMAN RAILWAY WORK SHED - DAY

Stevens wakes and looks at his watch. It says 5:30pm.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Mike, wake up. It's 5:30. We should make a plan.

MIKE LEWIS

(still drowsy)

Right. So explain to me how you're going to get us about five hundred miles to Switzerland. We're still wearing air force uniforms.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

What I'm about to tell you could get me killed, Mike. I figure we're not too far from Hanover. I have prewar friends there and they will give us everything we need, except for I.D. papers.

MIKE LEWIS

(incredulous)

Are you crazy?

(MORE)

MIKE LEWIS (CONT'D)

No prewar friends will help us.
They're far more likely turn us over
to the Gestapo!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

They will help us, Mike. And they
won't turn us in to the Krauts.
They're family.

MIKE LEWIS

Distant cousins? How can you be sure
they won't rat us out?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

No, Mike. My mother.

MIKE LEWIS

What the hell's your mother doing in
Germany?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

She's lived here all her life.

Lewis considers that.

MIKE LEWIS

So you were born in Germany?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Correct.

MIKE LEWIS

How do I know you're not a German
spy?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I am indeed a German citizen. My
father died in 1926 when I was six.
My mother sent me to boarding
school in Bavaria, and then sent
all three of her children to
England... after Hitler came to
power.

MIKE LEWIS

Why would she do that? Why didn't
she leave go with you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

It took every penny she had to get
us out of Nazi Germany. There was no
money left to get herself out. The
Nazis stole everything from us.

MIKE LEWIS
 (thinking to himself, then quietly)
 Does that mean?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Yes, Mike. I'm Jewish.

MIKE LEWIS
 Jesus, Steve! I guess that isn't
 your real name.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 I won't tell you my real name in
 case we get recaptured.

MIKE LEWIS
 So, I guess the RAF has no idea who
 you really are! There's no way they
 would sign up a German citizen as a
 pilot!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Peter Stevens was the name of a boy
 in my London High School who died.
 He was two years older than me, but
 close enough in age that I could
 make it work for the RAF. Listen, we
 should get moving. I'd like to hop a
 freight train to Hanover. Then we
 can visit my Mum and get supplies.

MIKE LEWIS
 Okay... Steve. Now it feels strange
 calling you that. You know that if
 the Nazis ever find out about your
 true identity, they'll put a bullet
 in the back of your head.

EXT. NORTH GERMANY TRAIN TRACKS - DUSK

They walk along tracks and find a stationary freight train.
 Stevens reads a manifest affixed to one car.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 We're in luck! This one is going to
 pass through Hanover. We need to
 find a good hiding place.

They search for a place to hide. Lewis points to a long narrow
 shelf, under a car.

MIKE LEWIS
 What about there?

Stevens nods. They climb into their new hiding spot. Within minutes, the train blows its whistle and moves away.

EXT. GERMAN FREIGHT TRAIN - DAWN

SUPER: Following morning

The train slows at the outskirts of a city. Sign reads "Hanover". As the train stops, Stevens and Lewis jump off and run toward trees.

MIKE LEWIS

Okay, now what? We need to disguise these uniforms.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Right.

MIKE LEWIS

I've done some crazy shit in this war. Finished two full tours. Just as I was getting ready to go on leave after my sixtieth trip, the squadron C.O. begged me to do one extra. That's when I got shot down. But this is just nuts... Walking through downtown Hanover in broad daylight?

They remove their dark blue battle dress tops and turtlenecks. They put on the uniform tops, and then the sweaters. They emerge from the forest and make for a nearby road.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

We're looking for Rumannstrasse, which is not too far from the central railway station downtown. We'll stick to side streets.

They walk through a residential neighbourhood towards the city centre. Turning a corner they see a street sign for Rumannstrasse and are soon standing in the street.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

It's the next building. Think you can find a place to hide out for five or ten minutes?

Lewis heads for the side of a building and crouches behind a bush. Stevens gets to the entrance of #19. He looks at names beside the buzzers and enters the building.

INT. GERMAN APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

At apartment #204, Stevens knocks. A WOMAN opens the door six inches.

OLD LADY IN APARTMENT
(in German; subtitled)
Yes?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German; subtitled)
Oh, I'm sorry, I was looking for
Frau Hein, who used to live here.

OLD LADY IN APARTMENT
Frau Hein? You hadn't heard?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I don't know what you mean.

OLD LADY IN APARTMENT
Frau Hein took her own life six
weeks before the war began.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Oh, really? No, I hadn't heard.

OLD LADY IN APARTMENT
Were you related to Frau Hein,
young man?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Oh, she was an old friend of my
parents. I'm sorry to have troubled
you, madam.

The door closes.

EXT. HANOVER RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD - CONTINUOUS

Stevens heads out to find Lewis. He reaches the large bush at the side of building and slumps down to the ground, looking crestfallen.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
She wasn't there. So it's on to
Plan B.

MIKE LEWIS
You look pretty shaken up. What
happened?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
The lady in the apartment told me
my mother committed suicide two
years ago.

Stevens turns away so that Lewis won't see the tears rolling
down his cheeks.

MIKE LEWIS
Christ, Steve! You didn't know? I'm
so sorry.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
No. No, I didn't...

MIKE LEWIS
I'm so sorry, Steve. Not to be
insensitive, but have we got a Plan
B then?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I have an aunt and uncle who live
nearby. They'll help us.

INT. GERMAN APARTMENT BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

Lewis accompanies Stevens into an apartment building. Stevens
knocks quietly on a door. Hearing nothing, Stevens knocks again.
The door opens a crack.

NOTE: Dialogue in this scene is spoken in German and subtitled
in English.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
Uncle Max, it's me, Georg. Henni's
son.

The door opens. Uncle Max gestures to them to enter quickly.
Door closes.

UNCLE MAX FLATOW
Georg, what in the world are you
doing here? We thought you were in
England! Toni! Come!

Seeing her sister's son for the first time in years, Stevens'
aunt breaks down. She rushes over and hugs him.

AUNT TONI
Georg? How did you get here? We
thought you were safe in England!
Where are your brother and sister?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
It's good to see you, Aunt Toni. It will be safer if I tell you as little as possible, and if you forget I was ever here.

AUNT TONI
Yes, I understand.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
This is my friend. He does not speak German.

Aunt Toni and Uncle Max nod.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
We can't stay but we need your help. We need civilian clothing and whatever food and money you can spare.

UNCLE MAX FLATOW
The Nazis took all we had. And, just last month we heard they have begun deporting German Jews towards the East. We don't know exactly what that means, but we can guess. It is impossible for us to leave Germany. You can have whatever money and food we have.

AUNT TONI
Do you know about your mother?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I have only just heard. You know I hated her because she sent me away when Papa died.

AUNT TONI
Georg! Come now! She was your mother. She did what she thought was best.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
No! She never loved me.

AUNT TONI
That's not true! She spent every penny the Nazis didn't steal to send the three of you to safety. Let's get you something to eat. Max, see what you can find.

Max leads Stevens and Lewis into a bedroom. He opens a closet.

They each find clothes. Uncle Max hands them two small cases. They change and put their uniforms into the cases. Max takes them to the dining room. Aunt Toni arrives with food.

UNCLE MAX FLATOW

Don't get the wrong idea. We do not normally eat so well anymore. But Toni knows this is a special occasion... and we don't believe we will be here much longer.

They devour the meal. Uncle Max disappears. He returns, holding a billfold and a cloth bag, which he hands to Stevens.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

What's this?

UNCLE MAX FLATOW

This is the little cash we have left, and some of the family jewels we've been able to hide.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

We're very grateful. Thank you. Thank you.

UNCLE MAX FLATOW

Think nothing of it. We hope it will help you get to safety.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

We should leave now, in case anyone saw us arrive and reports our visit to the Gestapo. I don't know what to say. But... again, thank you.

The two young men rise.

AUNT TONI

Dearest Georg, please remember us, your mother, and the rest of your family. Know you are loved. Now go. Good luck, and shalom, dear nephew!

The pair put on overcoats. Aunt Toni hands Stevens a bag of food. He blows a kiss back at his aunt and uncle as they leave.

EXT. GERMAN APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

We'll go straight to the railway station and figure out our options once we're there.

INT. HANOVER TRAIN STATION - DAY

The pair consult timetables on the wall.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 We shouldn't take any express trains, as they'll be packed with people, as well as soldiers on leave and the Gestapo. If we stick to small local trains making lots of stops, we might be able to avoid any police checks.

Lewis nods.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 I'll get the tickets. You wait here.

Stevens goes to the Ticket Office window and returns with tickets. He passes one to Lewis. The pair walk to a minor platform. A small train arrives. They board.

INT. LOCAL GERMAN TRAIN - DAY

A FEW PEOPLE are scattered about with shopping bags. Lewis and Stevens pick an empty pair of benches in the middle of a lightly-occupied car, and sit.

MIKE LEWIS
 If we face each other, we can see any police or Gestapo approaching from either direction, and get up and walk the other way.

Stevens nods. The CONDUCTOR arrives. They hand him their tickets.

GERMAN TRAIN CONDUCTOR
 (in German, subtitled)
 Frankfurt? On this train? That will take you all day!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (in German, subtitled)
 Yes, I know. But the tickets were much cheaper than on the express.

The Conductor nods, clips the tickets and moves on.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 I think it's probably safe to take one-hour watches. If you see something, kick me. You sleep first.

Lewis leans back and closes his eyes.

INT. LOCAL GERMAN TRAIN - DUSK

Lewis kicks Stevens awake. Farm fields and pine forests are visible through the window. The train travels slowly.

MIKE LEWIS

Got any food left? What time are we supposed to arrive in Frankfurt?

Stevens pulls out the paper bag from his aunt, and empties it onto the little table. There is one sandwich. Each eats half.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

About 10:40. The station may be crawling with Gestapo.

INT. FRANKFURT TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

A platform sign says 'Frankfurt'. The train pulls into a side track.

The station clock shows 10:55pm. Several police and Gestapo can be seen at the entrance to the express platforms. They check every Passenger's papers. Stevens and Lewis stay on the local train side of the station and consult the timetable on the wall.

MIKE LEWIS

Oh! That's not until 5:35 tomorrow morning!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

We must keep to the plan. It's the first departure for any small train heading south. Come on. Let's eat.

Stevens finds a food counter and orders sandwiches.

Outside, they sit on a bench to eat. Stevens goes to buy train tickets to Singen. He returns and shows Lewis a station wall map of Germany showing the route from Frankfurt to Singen near the Swiss border, then disappears again.

INT. FRANKFURT TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Stevens ambles back to the bench.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

There's a waiting room with a dozen people asleep on benches. I think it might be safe enough for us too.

MIKE LEWIS

Sounds good.

They head for the waiting room. Stevens points to an empty bench. They settle in for the night.

At 2:40am TWO RAILWAY POLICE enter. One of them looks bored, but walks over to where Lewis and Stevens are sleeping and gently nudges Lewis awake.

GERMAN RAILWAY POLICEMAN
(in German, subtitled)
Identity check! Papers!

Lewis shakes Stevens awake.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
What? We've got tickets for a morning train. We're foreign workers.

GERMAN RAILWAY POLICEMAN
Papers!

Stevens slowly raises his hands.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
We are escaped Prisoners of War.
(in English)
I'm British and my friend is Canadian. Please take us to the Luftwaffe.

Policeman blows his whistle, pulls out a pistol. His companion rushes over.

GERMAN RAILWAY POLICEMAN
(in German, subtitled)
They're escaped POWs!

Second Policeman draws his pistol and motions for the two escapees to walk out of the waiting room and into an office marked Reichsbahn Polizei.

INT. GERMAN RAILWAY POLICE OFFICE, FRANKFURT STATION - NIGHT

The two Pilots are searched and are put into adjoining cells. Each lies down to sleep. In the office, a POLICE SERGEANT searches through telexes and finds a notice about two escapees. Policeman picks up the phone.

GERMAN RAILWAY POLICEMAN
(in German, subtitled)
Reichsbahn Polizei, Frankfurt Main station. We have captured your two escaped pilots. Lewis and Stevens.
(MORE)

GERMAN RAILWAY POLICEMAN (CONT'D)
 What shall we do with them?
 (listens for the response)

GERMAN RAILWAY POLICEMAN (CONT'D)
 (in German, subtitled)
 Understood.

INT. GERMAN RAILWAY POLICE OFFICE, FRANKFURT STATION - DAY

Lewis and Stevens lie on their bunks in their cells. At 12:20pm, a Policeman arrives with two meal trays.

MIKE LEWIS
 Food! Finally!

Two thin slices of black bread, a thin slice of meat, a bowl of watery soup with a couple of small potatoes and a cup of coffee on each tray.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Jesus, I'm starving!

They devour their meal.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 (in German, to the Policemen)
 More, please?

Policemen just laugh. Later, two German ARMY PRIVATES and a SERGEANT enter the office. Orders are placed on the counter.

GERMAN ARMY SERGEANT
 (in German, subtitled)
 We're here for the two British
 Pilots. Our orders are to deliver
 them to Oflag VI-B at Warburg.

Policeman reviews papers.

GERMAN RAILWAY POLICEMAN
 (in German, subtitled)
 Your papers are in order.

Stevens and Lewis are led out of office into the train station by German Army guards.

EXT. OFLAG VI-B PRISONER OF WAR CAMP, WARBURG - DAY

SUPER: October 12, 1941

A truck arrives at the gate. It is checked and drives through. It stops in front of the Kommandant's office. The two prisoners climb down along with the guards.

GERMAN KOMMANDANT, OFLAG VI-B
 (in accented English)
 Gentlemen, you have been very lucky.
 I understand that you were wearing
 some civilian clothing when you were
 recaptured. You could have been shot
 as spies! But the Third Reich is
 civilized. You each deserve two
 weeks in the Cooler, but it is full
 at the moment. Dismissed!

Lewis and Stevens are led through a gate with double barbed wire inner fences. They are swarmed by the TWENTY PRISONERS who had been on the train with them.

Stevens sits down on the ground. He is shaking with relief.

MIKE LEWIS
 Can someone tell me where to find
 the Senior British Officer? We need
 to get some bunks.

Another Prisoner points to a nearby hut. The SBO appears and walks toward Lewis and Stevens. They stand to attention.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 At ease! Welcome to Warburg. We've
 got rats, fleas, bronchitis and
 diphtheria. Everyone is keen to learn
 about your escape. Did you, by any
 chance, see anything of Roger Bushell
 on your travels? He and a Czech
 officer jumped from the train at the
 same time.

MIKE LEWIS
 No sir. We had no idea.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 Dismissed!

INT. POW ROOM, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DUSK

Lewis sits at the small table in the centre of the room, and Stevens lies in his bunk. Others lie on their bunks and read or nap. Two prisoners are sitting at the table playing chess. A mouse runs across the floor.

MIKE LEWIS
 Hey, there goes supper!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 We might not be at that point today,
 but soon. Hey, whose turn is it to
 cook supper?

A POW enters the room carrying a pot.

TIM WALENN
 Come and get it!

The pot is placed on the table. Dinner is eight thin slices of
 black bread, a pitcher of thin soup containing a few potatoes,
 and one can of spam.

MIKE LEWIS
 That's it? That's all there is?

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

SUPER: Mid-November, 1941

Many prisoners walk around the camp. Light snow on the ground.
 Everyone wears a heavy coat. Stevens walks with two Senior
 Officers.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 So, Stevens, you've got an escape
 plan? I've heard that your German
 is excellent.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Yes, sir. My German is perfect.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 I have final approval over all
 escape activity. Lewis tells me you
 acquitted yourself well on the
 train escape. Bad luck about the
 identity check. What's your plan?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 I'd like to arrange a gate walkout,
 sir. If I can get a German uniform,
 and a fake German rifle, I'm sure I
 can bluff my way out of the camp
 while escorting a work party of ten
 prisoners. Prince Palmer is pretty
 good in German, and he's agreed to
 be the back end guard for the group.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 Okay, I think we can get you
 everything. Tim Walenn is our chief
 forger.

(MORE)

WING COMMANDER HYDE (CONT'D)

We call his department Dean & Dawson, after the London travel agency. Do you know Walenn?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Indeed I do, sir. He was my roommate at the last camp.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

How soon would you be ready, Stevens?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Beginning of December, sir.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

Right! Plan approved. I'll speak to the tailors and bashers to get you two German uniforms and rifles.

INT. CLASSROOM, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

Tim Walenn teaches drawing. SIX MEN attempt to copy a painting. Stevens enters.

TIM WALENN

Hello, Steve! Want to join?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

You have something for me, Tim?

TIM WALENN

Right.

Walenn nods and taps twice on a table. One man jumps to the doorway and stands guard. Others fish inside their desks. Walenn visits each man, who gives him some papers.

TIM WALENN (CONT'D)

We've got your German Army identification papers, your pass to leave the camp, travel permission and gate pass. And the same for Palmer. The work party chaps can see me individually for their papers.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Bloody marvellous, Tim!

As Stevens leaves the room, the hallway MONITOR sees a GERMAN GUARD enter the building and taps on the door frame three times. The Men hide their work. By the time the German guard gets to the classroom door, all is back to normal. Tim is teaching art class again.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

Between two huts, a group of TEN PRISONERS assembles, two by two. Stevens and Palmer, dressed as German guards and carrying carved pieces of wood that look like German rifles, join at the front and rear of the column.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Forward, march!

'Prisoners' with Stevens at the head and Palmer at the rear, march toward the main gate. At the gate the column comes to a halt.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
(in German, subtitled)
We're taking this work party of orderlies into town for Hauptmann Lenz. He wanted some boxes moved to the camp. We should be gone about six hours.

GERMAN GATE GUARD #1
(in German, subtitled)
Pass, please.

Stevens hands over his counterfeit gate pass.

GERMAN GATE GUARD #1 (CONT'D)
(in German, subtitled)
You can pass.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Thanks.

The GERMAN GUARD opens the inner gate. He motions to the GUARD on the outer gate to open it as well. Stevens orders the party to march forward.

The work party marches down the outer road, away from the camp. When they are about two hundred feet away, the inner German gate guard blows his whistle to get Stevens' attention.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
Halt!

Stevens sees the gate Guard motioning to him to return to the main gate. Stevens walks back to Palmer.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
It looks as though they want us to return for some reason. If they knew we were escaping, they'd be running and shooting.

PRINCE PALMER

If we don't go back, they might realize something is wrong and start shooting. We'd better go back and see what he wants.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Agreed.

Stevens orders the work party to return to the camp gate. The party halts, and Stevens walks up to the gate.

GERMAN GATE GUARD #1

(in German, subtitled)

I just realized your gate pass is missing the signature of the Officer of the Day. I could get into real trouble. Do me a favour? Just march the prisoners back in and get that signature, would you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(in German, subtitled)

Sure, no trouble.

The gates re-open, and Stevens and Palmer march the prisoners back into the camp.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

You won't believe this, lads. They made us return because our gate pass was missing the signature of the Officer of the Day. Anyone know who IS the Officer of the Day?

SBO arrives.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

(to Stevens)

What happened? We didn't hear any shots, or see any Germans rushing around.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Missing the signature of the Officer of the Day, sir. You wouldn't know who that might be, would you?

WING COMMANDER HYDE

I'm afraid the Kommandant forgot to tell me this morning, Stevens. I guess you'll have to call it off.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
We were so bloody close. Do you
think we might have another go in a
week or two?

WING COMMANDER HYDE
The Escape Committee will discuss it
and let you know, Stevens.
Dismissed.

INT. POW ROOM, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

Stevens and Palmer remove fake German overcoats and wrap their
fake rifles in them. The pair pry a wallboard open and hide
their German uniforms and rifles. They seal it back up, and don
their British uniforms.

PRINCE PALMER
D'you really think we could try this
again, Steve?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
If Wing Commander Hyde approves it,
I'm game!

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

Stevens and Palmer meet up with Wing Commander Hyde bashing the
circuit.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
Ah! Stevens, Palmer. Do you still
want to give your scheme another
try? The Escape Committee has
approved it.

PRINCE PALMER
Absolutely, sir. Just give us
another few days for the guard
schedules to have changed. We
wouldn't want to run up against the
same ones.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
Everyone else in the group still
want to go?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Yes, sir. Absolutely!

EXT. EXERCISE YARD AT OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

SUPER: December 8, 1941

The same group of Prisoners assembles between the huts, with Stevens and Palmer in their fake German uniforms. They march to the gate.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
We're taking this party of orderlies into town to do some work for Hauptmann Lenz. He wanted some boxes moved to the camp. We should be gone about six hours.

GERMAN GATE GUARD #2
(in German, subtitled)
I don't recognise you. Let me see your Paybook.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Paybook? I don't carry my Paybook with me. Do you? It's back in the Guardhouse!

GERMAN GATE GUARD #2
(in German, subtitled)
Well, you'll have to go back and get it.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Seriously? Where is your Paybook?

GERMAN GATE GUARD #2
(in German, subtitled)
My Paybook is not the issue. I need to see yours. Go get it!

Stevens walks back to speak with Palmer. Palmer calls in German for the group to do an About-Face, and Stevens goes to his position, which is now at the back of the group. Palmer marches the Prisoners back into the main compound. Gate Guard blows his whistle furiously.

GERMAN GATE GUARD #2 (CONT'D)
Halt!

Prisoners stop. They scatter and run back towards the huts. Palmer sees what is happening and runs with them. Stevens stays. Gate Guard blows his whistle incessantly and yells at him.

GERMAN GATE GUARD #2 (CONT'D)
 (in German, subtitled)
 What are you waiting for? Arrest
 them!

Stevens nods, then runs off toward the huts.

INT. POW ROOM, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

Stevens changes out of his fake German uniform and hands it and the fake rifle to another Prisoner who hides it behind the wall panel. He sits on his bunk, shaking. Wing Commander Hyde enters.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 Well, Stevens. That was a close-run
 thing.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Yes, sir! The goon was suspicious
 right away. I wonder if the other
 guard had tipped him off...

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 Quite possibly.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 When the goon finally figured out
 there really was something fishy
 with our group today he looked right
 at me and ordered me to arrest
 everyone. The bastard was clueless!

Hyde laughs aloud and leaves.

INT. BARRACKS CORRIDOR, OFLAG VI-B, WARBURG - DAY

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 What balls the man has! If he
 doesn't get himself killed, he'll
 get a medal.

EXT. GERMAN PRISON CAMP OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

SUPER: September 5, 1942 - Oflag XXI-B Schubin, Poland

A large group of PRISONERS marches into the camp. They assemble in the exercise yard.

WINGS DAY
 For those of you without a map, we
 are about 250 miles east of Berlin.
 (MORE)

WINGS DAY (CONT'D)

Yes, the goons are getting increasingly worried about escapes, so they have moved us about as far away from England as they can get us.

Prisoners laugh, then disperse. Escapees, including Stevens, pace off distances from the barracks to the warning wire.

EXT. OFLAG XXI-B, EXERCISE YARD - DAY

Wings Day and several other Officers bash the circuit. Day motions Stevens to join the group.

WINGS DAY

Stevens, do you know Eddy Asselin and Tex Ash? Asselin is Canadian and Tex is an American pilot in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

No, sir, I haven't had the pleasure. How d'you do, gents?

TEX ASH

Howdy!

WINGS DAY

These two are working on a tunnel scheme which I think is unique and has a good chance of success. You don't need any more details, but they would appreciate your help with false documents. Would you mind working with Tim Walenn again?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Pleased to help, sir.

EDDY ASSELIN

Cheers... *Stevens!*

INT. CLASSROOM, OFLAG XXI-B SCHUBIN - DAY

Stevens approaches Walenn.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Hi, Tim. You're looking for me?

TIM WALENN

Care for a bash of the circuit?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Sure!

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

Tim Walenn and Stevens patrol the exercise yard perimeter.

TIM WALENN

We'll need a large number of false identity documents in the spring.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Okay. How many is a large number?

TIM WALENN

Thirty to forty.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Bloody hell! Somebody's not fooling around! Okay, what specifically?

TIM WALENN

We'll need your talents for the special requests. Letters from employers authorizing the bearer to travel on their behalf, commercial introductions...

INT. GROUP LATRINE, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

LOOKOUTS watch for German guards. EDDY ASSELIN and TEX ASH in long underwear stand in the group latrine. It has thirty openings in a single bench along the wall in one open room. Asselin points to the toilet hole furthest from the entrance. He sticks his head down into the cesspit.

INT. CESSPIT, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

Asselin's head visible sticking down through an opening. The stench is so strong he retreats to pull a scarf over his nose. His head again pokes down to see a concrete ledge either side of the pit about six feet down from seat level.

INT. GROUP LATRINE, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

Asselin lifts his head back out of the cesspit and moves his scarf down.

EDDY ASSELIN

It's going to be a pretty filthy job, Tex. Once we break a hole through the concrete and begin work on the tunnel proper, I think the smell shouldn't be much of an issue. But getting started won't be fun.

The cesspit is surrounded by concrete walls four inches thick. Ash grabs two planks and hands them to Asselin. He takes them into the cesspit and places them on the two ledges, a foot apart. He drops into the cesspit and stands on them.

EDDY ASSELIN (CONT'D)

Seems to work.

Asselin stands on boards in the cesspit and swings a pickaxe at the concrete sidewall in time to Christmas carols sung by a CHOIR OF PRISONERS outside the building.

EDDY ASSELIN (CONT'D)

Shouldn't take long. Looks like it's four inches thick, and we need an opening two feet square.

TEX ASH

And we can drop the concrete and dirt right into the cesspit. The goons will never even see it, as it will all be covered in shit. The honey wagon will haul it away every week! Let me try.

They trade places and Ash swings the pickaxe at the concrete.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG XXI-B - DAY

Snow on the ground. The few men bashing the circuit shiver. Asselin and Ash head toward the latrine.

INT. GROUP LATRINE, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

As a LOOKOUT keeps watch, Asselin and Ash strip down to their long underwear and disappear into the toilet hole. Other PRISONERS sit, pants down, scattered around the bench toilet.

INT. CESSPIT, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

Asselin and Ash disappear through the large hole in the concrete wall into a dirt tunnel lined with boards spread at every foot. The tunnel is lit with fat lamps. Ash digs at the face using a scoop made from cans, while Asselin removes the loose dirt, returns it to the tunnel entrance in bags and empties them into the cesspit.

TEX ASH

How much further to the wire?

EDDY ASSELIN

Surveyors say we're under it now.
We just need to go another thirty
feet to get far enough from the
fence to avoid being seen.

INT. BARRACKS ROOM, OFLAG XXI-B SCHUBIN - NIGHT

The residents clean up after supper. Everyone is dressed for
outdoor weather.

TIM WALENN

Christ, is that all? I've just
eaten, and I'm still starving.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Afraid so, Tim. We haven't received
any Red Cross parcels in weeks.

Asselin visits Walenn and Stevens. They all speak quietly and
with caution.

EDDY ASSELIN

Good evening, gents. Just wanted to
touch base and see where we are
with the school goods we requested.

TIM WALENN

All done, Eddy. Just let us know
when you'd like them.

EDDY ASSELIN

Great! Tim, you're already on the
list for my forthcoming class.
Would you like to take part as
well, Steve? Should begin in a week
or two.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I'm sure that I'd enjoy it
immensely! Tim, I guess that means
I will also need to avail myself of
your services.

TIM WALENN

No worries, Steve. We've got you
covered. I'll just need a few
select details.

EXT. GROUP LATRINE, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - NIGHT

SUPER: March 5, 1943 - Between 5:30 & 6:40pm

33 ESCAPEES go to the camp latrine, one or two at a time. The Men who have put in the greatest effort, and those with the best German language skills, are to enter the tunnel first.

Stevens drills and corrects the German-speaking Escapees as they stride around the perimeter in twos and threes.

INT. GROUP LATRINE, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - NIGHT

ORGANIZER puts escapees in number order. Asselin and Ash go first, wearing civilian clothing and carrying small briefcases. Men in all kinds of dress enter the latrine to use the tunnel. Stevens arrives at the latrine wearing a civilian suit and dress shoes under an overcoat. He reports to the organizer.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Number 21.

MIKE LEWIS
Hello, Steve. Everyone is really grateful. Wizard job!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
My pleasure, but the real artistry was down to Tim Walenn and his mob at Dean & Dawson.

MIKE LEWIS
Sure was. You're next, Steve. Good luck!

Stevens hands his briefcase down through the toilet seat and enters the tunnel. As he climbs down, Wings Day arrives, wearing civilian clothing.

INT. LATRINE ESCAPE TUNNEL, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - NIGHT

Stevens waits in the antechamber. Before long he is pushing his briefcase ahead of him and crawling forward on his belly. His watch says 9:45pm.

Lamp flames flicker. The Man ahead squirms forward.

Stevens sticks his head up into the darkness.

EXT. OUTSIDE OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - NIGHT

All searchlights are focussed toward the inside of the camp. Stevens crawls out of the tunnel and heads away from the camp. His watch reads 10:40pm.

He walks along the edge of main road and meets up with another escapee, SERGEANT BROCK. They walk together, but then enter Bromberg train station separately.

Wall clock says 4:30am. Stevens buys a ticket to Berlin.

He spots Five Other Escapees, including Asselin and Ash. He nods at them discretely. A passenger train arrives. Stevens boards in a 2nd Class carriage.

INT. PASSENGER TRAIN - DAWN

Stevens sits alone in a double seat. No other escapees sit in his car. The express train passes through Schubin, but does not stop. First stop is Poznan.

RAILWAY POLICE move through the train demanding identity papers. As one POLICEMAN arrives, Stevens hands his papers without being asked. Papers examined, Policeman grunts approval, moves on.

Train departs.

INT. BERLIN MAIN STATION - DAY

Train arrives in Berlin at 2:10pm.

As Stevens leaves the train, ARMED GUARDS and SEVERAL MEN in suits and overcoats check papers. Stevens awaits his turn.

GESTAPO MAN #1
(in German, subtitled)
Papers.

Stevens hands his papers to Gestapo. Papers are examined closely. Stevens waits.

GESTAPO MAN #1 (CONT'D)
(in German, subtitled)
What is your business in Berlin?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
I have a letter here authorizing
travel to our various factories. We
make uniforms for the Wehrmacht and
the Luftwaffe.

Stevens hands a letter to Gestapo, who reads it.

GESTAPO MAN #1
(in German, subtitled)
And why are you not in the armed
forces yourself?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (in German, subtitled)
 My father died and left me to run
 the company. It is important work

GESTAPO MAN #1
 (in German, subtitled)
 All is in order. You may pass.

Stevens exits the platform and finds a train timetable. He buys a ticket to Cologne. The ticket shows departure 10:00pm. It is 2:30pm. He stops at a food counter, buys a sandwich and leaves the station.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BERLIN - DAY

Stevens eats the sandwich walking around Berlin. Extensive bomb damage is visible. He smiles.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BERLIN - NIGHT

Stevens returns to the station at 9:35pm, boards a train.

INT. GERMAN TRAIN - NIGHT

The 2nd class carriage is full. Stevens sits beside a SOLDIER. Train leaves. Stevens appears to nap.

INT. GERMAN TRAIN - NIGHT

At 1:20am, Stevens is awoken by GESTAPO.

GESTAPO MAN #2
 (in German, subtitled)
 Papers!

Stevens hands over his documents. Gestapo removes his glasses to take a closer look.

GESTAPO MAN #2 (CONT'D)
 (in German, subtitled)
 These papers are forged! You are
 under arrest!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 (in German, subtitled)
 My papers are not forged. They are
 as genuine as you are.

GESTAPO MAN #2
 (in German, subtitled)
 These papers are forged, I say! You
 are under arrest! Come with me.

Stevens stands. His hands are cuffed in front and he is led away to an empty compartment and kept under guard.

Train pulls into Hanover at 1:45am. Stevens is led off the train under ARMED GUARD.

INT. HANOVER TRAIN STATION - NIGHT

Stevens is taken through the station to a waiting car and placed in the back seat. Gestapo sits beside him. Car drives off.

EXT. HANOVER GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

The car arrives at Gestapo HQ. Stevens is led inside.

INT. HANOVER GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Stevens is taken to a counter. He is questioned and gives his British identity.

GESTAPO MAN #2
 (in German, subtitled)
 Name?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Stevens, Peter. Flight Lieutenant,
 Royal Air Force, service number
 88219. I am an escaped Prisoner of
 War and demand treatment according
 to the Geneva Convention.

GESTAPO MAN #2
 (in English, with a German accent)
 I do not believe you are an escaped
 British Officer. Your German and
 your false papers are too good. You
 are a British spy!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 I am not a spy. I am an escaped
 Prisoner of War. My name is Peter
 Stevens, Flight Lieutenant, Royal
 Air Force, 88219. I escaped from
 Oflag XXI-B at Schubin. Call them
 and check.

GESTAPO MAN #2

You speak German too well, much better than a real Englishman. In the meantime, you will be a guest of the Hanover Gestapo. Take him to cell 38.

Stevens is led away to cell #38. Moaning is heard from several cells. Handcuffs are removed and he is locked in. The light is on. He tries to sleep.

INT. HANOVER GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Stevens is led to an interrogation room. Bright lights glare.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR

Who are you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Stevens, Peter. Flight Lieutenant, Royal Air Force. Service number 88219.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR

How did you manage to travel six hundred kilometres through the Reich in twenty-four hours? Who are you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

You will have found my POW identification tag in my clothing. Which, by the way, is clearly a British officer's uniform that has been altered to appear civilian. But it is not civilian, and you know it.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR

The penalty for espionage is death! How were you able to travel so far from Schubin so quickly?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

By train. I caught an early morning train from Bromberg to Berlin. I changed trains in Berlin, and caught the next train going from Berlin to Cologne at 10:00pm. It was on that train that I was arrested.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR

And what did you do in Berlin between the time you arrived and the time you left?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I wandered around quiet residential
neighbourhoods, stopping just long
enough to buy food wherever I could.
Call Oflag XXI-B.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR
You do not give orders to the
Gestapo! Where did you get money to
buy food? When and where did you
parachute into Germany? You know
that we have drugs to make you give
us this information.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
You can threaten me all you like,
but I've already told you the truth.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR
Guard!
(sarcastically)
We will see, Flight Lieutenant
Stevens.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR (CONT'D)
(to the Guard)
Take him away!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
By the way, I haven't eaten since
yesterday. When do I get some food?
Under the Geneva Convention, I am
entitled to regular meals.

INT. HANOVER GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Gestapo #2 sits at a desk, speaking on the telephone.

GESTAPO MAN #2
(in German, subtitled)
Oflag XXI-B Schubin? Hanover
Gestapo. We arrested a man last
night who claims to be a British
officer who escaped from your camp.

Listens.

GESTAPO MAN #2 (CONT'D)
What do you mean, there were thirty-
four escapees? He says he is Flight
Lieutenant Peter Stevens, service
number 88219.

He listens again, briefly.

GESTAPO MAN #2 (CONT'D)
He really is one of yours? I hope those in charge are made to pay for this disruption. I understand that our troops on the Russian Front are always in need of good people. We believe Stevens is a spy. Send someone to get him. Heil Hitler!

INT. HANOVER GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - DAY

SUPER: Following day, March 8, 1943

Guard unlocks the door. Stevens is handcuffed and led back to the interrogation room.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR
Do you still insist that you are an escaped British officer named Peter Stevens? Because we know that is not true!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
My name is Peter Stevens. Have you called Oflag XXI-B?

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR
We are investigating. Now, for the last time, who are you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I was captured in September, 1941.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR
The penalty for spying on the Third Reich is death.

Stevens is led to a different cell, lies down. He hears screams.

INT. HANOVER GESTAPO HEADQUARTERS - DAY

SUPER: Following day, March 9, 1943

Guard unlocks the cell door. With manacled hands and feet, Stevens is led away to a waiting area near the main entrance. Two Luftwaffe GUARDS wait. Papers are signed and Stevens is handed over to them.

LUFTWAFFE GUARD #1
You were lucky! The Gestapo are proper bastards. We are taking you back to Oflag XXI-B at Schubin.

EXT. OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

SUPER: March 11, 1943

A truck arrives at the main gate. Stevens is taken toward the camp office.

KOMMANDANT
(in German, subtitled)
Which one is this?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Flight Lieutenant Stevens, sir.

KOMMANDANT
(in German, subtitled)
Arrested by the Gestapo in Hanover?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Yes, sir.

KOMMANDANT
(in German, subtitled)
You were lucky. The Gestapo does not deal nicely with anyone, let alone escaped prisoners. They have a very short fuse, as you Englishmen say, and their patience is coming to an end. Fourteen days in the Cooler for your silly escape!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Sir, how many got away, and how many have been recaptured?

KOMMANDANT
(in German, subtitled)
Thirty-four escaped, and you are the thirty-second to be returned.

Stevens is marched off to the Cooler as OTHER PRISONERS watch.

INT. COOLER AT OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

Upon entering, he sits on the floor, sweating profusely. The door is locked.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

SUPER: Two weeks later.

Stevens is led from the Cooler into the main part of the camp. Other returned Escapees gather around him.

EDDY ASSELIN
Hey, Steve, how far did you get?

TEX ASH
Any serious bother?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I was nabbed by the Gestapo on a train near Hanover. They made my life hell for a few days. I was bloody happy to see the Luftwaffe guards coming to get me, I can tell you! What about you two?

EDDY ASSELIN
We were only out for a day and got surrounded by a group of German farmers with pitchforks. The bastards wanted to kill us!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Who's not back?

TEX ASH
You haven't heard, then? Jimmy Buckley and Jurgen Thalbitzer stole a canoe and tried to cross from Denmark to Sweden at night. Thalbitzer's body was found washed up on the Danish coast. No sign of Buckley. We guess he got run over by a freighter. Bad luck, that.

Wings Day approaches.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Good morning, sir!

WINGS DAY
Morning, Stevens. Join me on the circuit?

They walk off together.

WINGS DAY (CONT'D)
Sorry to see you back. We thought you had the best chance of all. What happened?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Bloody Gestapo.

WINGS DAY

Rather unpleasant, I'd wager.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Look sir, there's something I need to tell you in private.

WINGS DAY

What's on your mind?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

You remember I escaped from a train with Mike Lewis about eighteen months ago? During the time we were out I told Mike a certain secret. He's been bugging me to let you in on it.

WINGS DAY

Sounds ominous.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

It could be, sir. You see, I'm not really English at all, and Stevens isn't my true name. I was actually born in Germany, and my mother sent me to England when I was 14, just after Hitler came to power.

WINGS DAY

Quite some secret, Stevens. Jewish?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Yes, sir. Nobody knows but you and Mike. Not even the RAF.

WINGS DAY

We'll keep this just between the three of us then? Dismissed.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Thanks very much, sir.

Stevens walks away.

WINGS DAY

(to himself)

Bloody hell! If the goons ever find out, he'll be eating a bullet.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG XXI-B SCHUBIN - DAY

SUPER: April, 1943

Prisoners gather for morning Appell.

WINGS DAY

Quieten down, men! I've just been informed by the Kommandant we will be moving... Once again.

ASSEMBLED PRISONERS

Various moans and groans.

WINGS DAY

The Krauts have built Stalag Luft 3, a large camp just for Air Force prisoners. South west corner of Silesia. The goons claim this camp is escape-proof. It's built on sand, meaning that digging tunnels will be almost impossible. We're leaving in two hours, so get packing. And we'll show Hermann Goering that he's made a serious mistake, putting all of his "bad apples" in one basket, shall we?

ASSEMBLED PRISONERS

Various cheers.

WINGS DAY

Dismissed!

INT. BARRACKS, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

Prisoners pack whatever they can carry.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, OFLAG XXI-B, SCHUBIN - DAY

Prisoners march out of camp. Most are overladen.

EXT. TRAIN STATION, SAGAN - LATE AFTERNOON

Prison train stops at Sagan station. Platform is surrounded by ARMED GUARDS and guard dogs as prisoners disembark. They form a column and march through a forest to Stalag Luft 3, East Compound.

EXT. STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - NIGHT

Prisoners already inside the camp perform everyday activities. New arrivals wait at the entrance. Once the gates are open, the new Schubin POWs enter and are surrounded by existing residents.

ASSEMBLED PRISONERS

Oy! What's new in the world? Did you bring any girls?

WINGS DAY

All right, men, that'll do. There will be plenty of time for 'organizing' in the morning.

EXT. STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

Hyde addresses the new arrivals after morning Appell.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

Welcome to the East Compound of Stalag Luft 3. It was almost empty when you arrived from Schubin last night because the goons recently opened a new North Compound, and most of the former residents here were transferred over there. The Germans believe this camp to be escape-proof. We want you to prove them wrong.

ASSEMBLED PRISONERS

Various cheers.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

Wing Commander Day, who came down with you, will be transferring to North Compound. Dismissed!

Prisoners mill about. Wings Day, Hyde and others, motion to Stevens to walk around the compound perimeter.

WINGS DAY

Stevens, you know most of the group. The X Escape organization for East Compound is short a few bodies. Would you be willing to take over as Head of Contacts?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Absolutely, sir!

WINGS DAY

If you can bribe a goon for something, you have food, cigarettes and money available to you. If you have to blackmail a goon to get something, go ahead.

(MORE)

WINGS DAY (CONT'D)

The most immediate needs are a 35 millimetre camera, film, photographic paper, maps and train timetables. The items are for Dean & Dawson so they can produce portraits for fake ID papers, along with ink, clothing dyes and rubber blocks to make official stamps. Then we need whatever supplies are required for escape schemes themselves: tools, wiring etcetera. Do you know who has the camp radio?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Actually, it's well-hidden in my room, sir.

WINGS DAY

Good. You'll be responsible for its use and security. Remember it's entirely likely the goons have microphones hidden inside the huts.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Roger, sir. Understood.

WINGS DAY

You will report to Aidan Crawley, and/or Wings Hyde. We're an unusual breed, Stevens. Most prisoners want nothing to do with escaping. Take Mike Lewis. He jumped off a train with you. You know a man was killed in that escape, don't you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Yes, sir. I heard that he fell under the wheels of the train and was cut in two.

WINGS DAY

Correct. Tragic. Anyway, Mike told me he has done his duty and is finished with escaping. Can't blame him. About 90 percent of the prisoners feel that way. Oh, they're happy to act as lookouts, or do penguin duty, dropping dirt down the inside of their trouser legs. But actual escape? No.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

What about you, sir? You're in your mid-forties, you fought in the First War and were shot down in 1939.

(MORE)

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

You've taken part in several escapes.

WINGS DAY

I guess it just goes to prove the old adage, "There's no fool like an old fool!" Good luck, Stevens.

EXT. EAST COMPOUND EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3 - DAY

SUPER: August, 1943

Men in shorts wait to vault over a wooden horse in the exercise yard. Men are malnourished. Stevens walks the circuit.

OLIVER PHILPOT

Hi, Steve. May I join you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Sure, Ollie. What's up?

OLIVER PHILPOT

I need a favour please, old man.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Whatever you need.

OLIVER PHILPOT

You see that gang of vaulters over there? You know there's a tunnel being dug under the horse, right?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Crazy! How can I help?

OLIVER PHILPOT

It's my documents, Steve. Dean & Dawson have got most of the usual stuff, but I'm planning to go as a Norwegian commercial traveller, representing the Margarine Producers Association. So, I'll need whatever special passes will allow unimpeded travel through the Reich. And I'd like to get an introduction letter from the Association, please.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Follow me.

Stevens leads Philpot to Hut 69. A man leans against the outside door frame. Stevens winks at him. He nods.

INT. EAST COMPOUND HUT 69, STALAG LUFT 3 - DAY

Stevens and Philpot enter barracks. Down the hallway, Stevens removes a hidden hatchcover from the floor. He hands it to Philpot. Stevens jumps down through the hatch to the ground under the hut, roots around, and comes back holding a thick book. Hands it to Philpot, and replaces the hatch. Philpot looks at a book titled 'Der Ausländischer Arbeiter in Deutschland - The Foreign Worker in Germany'. They go to Stevens' room.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Okay, you'll definitely need an
Arbeitskarte and a Bestätigung.

OLIVER PHILPOT
I hope that's all. Then I'll just
need the Margarine Association
letter.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
It's a pity Tim Walenn was
transferred over to North Compound,
but I'll get Dean & Dawson working
on them for you. Give me a draft of
what you want your letter to say.
Then I can translate it into
German, and give it the right kind
of feel. Should be able to get you
all this in, say, a week?

OLIVER PHILPOT
Perfect!

Philpot leaves. Stevens dives back through the hallway floor hatch with the book, and reappears empty-handed.

EXT. EAST COMPOUND EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3 - DAY

FOUR MEN carry the vaulting horse from the storage shed to the exercise yard. They put the horse down into the exact position it occupied previously, near the wire. Handles are withdrawn from slots. Men form a line to begin vaulting.

INT. WOODEN HORSE, EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3 - DAY

A MAN wearing shorts braces himself against the insides of the horse. Hooks above him hold empty sandbags. After the horse is put into place and the handles removed, he kneels and searches the surface dirt to find a tunnel entrance. Scooping dirt, he pries open a hatch using a trowel, leans the wooden hatch against the inside of the horse, then climbs down into the tunnel. He crawls carrying empty sandbags, reaches the face and begins digging.

He scoops sand into bags, and pushes the bags behind his feet. Looks at his watch, turns and pushes the full bags ahead of him down the tunnel. He hangs the bags from hooks inside the horse, replaces the wooden hatch and covers it with dirt. Handles inserted, he braces himself as it is carried back to the shed.

German guards watch, bored and unsuspecting.

INT. EAST COMPOUND HUT 69, STALAG LUFT 3 - NIGHT

SUPER: September, 1943

Stevens waves at Philpot to enter.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Ollie. You know everyone, I think.

OLIVER PHILPOT
I understand you have a library
book I've been waiting for. Are you
done with it, by any chance?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Right over here.

Stevens takes papers from under his mattress. Slips them into a book and hands it to Philpot.

OLIVER PHILPOT
Been anxious to read this.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Hope the ending is what you wished
for!

(whispers)
Listen, Ollie, do you think there's
room for one extra? I'm getting
itchy here.

OLIVER PHILPOT
(in a whisper)
I'll ask, old man, but it's not
really my show. And I don't know how
to get four men inside the horse.

EXT. EAST COMPOUND EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3 - DAY

SUPER: October 20, 1943

Morning Appell.

Prisoners of East Compound are gathered in rows in the exercise yard and being counted by GERMAN GUARDS.

Prisoners move around, making it impossible for the goons to get an accurate count. GERMAN OFFICERS are frustrated. Head German blows a whistle and shouts an order to the guards, who raise their weapons.

GERMAN OFFICER
Gentlemen! Enough of your games!
Stand still and be counted, or
someone will get hurt!

Prisoners stop, and the count proceeds. Guards present tallies to the Officer in charge.

GERMAN OFFICER (CONT'D)
Three missing! If this is some kind
of game, you won't like the result!

German Officer orders a Non Commissioned Officer to search the barracks. Guards report back that nobody has been found. Officer blows his whistle. KOMMANDANT arrives.

KOMMANDANT VON LINDEINER
Gentlemen! I understand three of
your companions have decided to
abandon you. I warn you the Gestapo
will not protect you in the same way
the Luftwaffe does. Escape is a
deadly pursuit. When your friends
are recaptured, we might not be able
to save them.

EXT. EAST COMPOUND EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3 - DAY

SUPER: New Year's Day - 1944

KELLETT joins Stevens bashing the circuit.

GROUP CAPTAIN KELLETT
I know you're in charge of the camp
wireless, Stevens. And you're privy
to the news received during nightly
BBC broadcasts. Last night's
included a coded message. All three
of our escapees have made it safely
back to England!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
All three of them? The whole camp
will go berserk!

GROUP CAPTAIN KELLETT
We don't want any reprisals from the
goons, so let's be judicious in our
reactions, shall we?
(MORE)

GROUP CAPTAIN KELLETT (CONT'D)

And bloody good work to you and everyone on the Dean & Dawson team, Stevens.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Pleased to help, sir.

GROUP CAPTAIN KELLETT
One other thing, Stevens. Aidan Crawley has a list of goods needed for another big escape plan.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
A big escape, sir? I'm on the X Organization executive, and I haven't heard anything about it!

GROUP CAPTAIN KELLETT
Need to know basis, Stevens. Need to know.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

SUPER: January, 1944

Stevens and AIDAN CRAWLEY bash the circuit.

AIDAN CRAWLEY
I've got a list of required goods.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
The list Kellett mentioned? The one for the big escape I'm not supposed to know about?

AIDAN CRAWLEY
This camp is getting quite large now... four thousand prisoners. And it will get even bigger. We can't let the goons get wind of this one. I don't know any details.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Understood. What's top of the list?

AIDAN CRAWLEY
The usual: radio receiver, German passes, special inks and heavy paper for documents, a camera, photographic paper, razor blades, coloured dyes for clothing. And anything else that might be useful.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
That's quite a list, Aidan!

AIDAN CRAWLEY
One last thing. The quantities need
to be massive.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
How massive?

AIDAN CRAWLEY
(touching his nose)
Not even I know the answer to that.
Rumour mill says more than 200.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Jesus bloody Christ!

INT. BARRACKS HUT 69, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

HAUPTMANN PIEBER wanders through Hut 69. Stevens offers him a
cigarette. Pieber accepts.

NOTE: Dialogue is spoken in German, subtitled in English.

HAUPTMANN PIEBER
Thank you, Flight Lieutenant.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
It's nothing. Would you like the
pack?

HAUPTMANN PIEBER
Uh, I shouldn't really.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Follow me, Herr Hauptmann!

Stevens leads Pieber to Room 14. As they enter, Stevens motions
to others to clear out. They do.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
Hauptmann, I need your help. Some of
the boys would like to have their
photos taken as keepsakes. I've seen
you with a nice 35 millimetre
camera. Could I borrow it for a
week? I would reimburse you.

HAUPTMANN PIEBER
Herr Stevens, you know I cannot do
that. If you were seen with my
camera, I would immediately be sent
to the Russian front... or worse.
(MORE)

HAUPTMANN PIEBER (CONT'D)

And I have serious doubts about why you claim to need it.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Hauptmann, I am a man of my word. A British officer and a gentleman. The camera will never be seen by anyone, and I will personally guarantee it could not be traced back to you. I can make it worth your while. You are an educated and cultured man, as am I. We both know that this war cannot go on much longer. Germany has lost at Stalingrad, and the Russian Front is slowly collapsing back towards you. Without the Russian oil fields, Hitler will eventually run out of fuel for his tanks and planes. The U-boats have been defeated in the Atlantic, and Rommel's famous Afrika Korps was beaten last year. The Allies have landed in Italy, and have retaken half the country. Hitler cannot win. When this war is over, we'll remember who helped us, and who did not. I'm prepared to pay.

HAUPTMANN PIEBER

With what?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Food. I also have British cigarettes, which you can trade for almost anything. I have real butter, coffee, and Cadbury's chocolate. Pounds of the stuff. Imagine what you could get for your wife and children.

HAUPTMANN PIEBER

What you are saying might be true, Herr Stevens, but it would be treasonous for me to admit it. How can I be certain the camera would not be traced back to me?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

All right, get me another camera, not your own. One that could not be traced back to you. I can give you a fifty per cent down payment of two pounds of chocolate, two pounds of butter, and a pound of coffee.

HAUPTMANN PIEBER

Let me see.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Good! And I also need film and photographic paper, of course.

HAUPTMANN PIEBER

You do not want much, Herr Stevens, do you?!

Stevens helps Pieber hide goods under his uniform.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Your assistance will be remembered, Herr Pieber.

INT. BARRACKS HUT 69, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

SUPER: One week later.

Pieber knocks at Room 14.

Everyone leaves, except for Stevens. Stevens gets more food and cigarettes from his locker. Pieber opens his coat, removes a camera and supplies, replaces them with trade goods and leaves. Stevens checks with a Watchman to see if the barracks is clear of Germans. Stevens rushes back to hide the contraband behind a false wall panel.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

Stevens approaches a YOUNG GERMAN GUARD. German swoons over the smell of Stevens' cigarette.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

A lovely day, wouldn't you say, corporal?

GERMAN CORPORAL

I guess so. Your cigarette smells so good!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Oh, would you like some? I have a spare pack in my room.

GERMAN CORPORAL

Seriously? My girlfriend would kill for one.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Would three packs be enough?

GERMAN CORPORAL
It's not nice to joke like that
during these hard times.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
No joke. Meet me later in Hut 69,
room 14.

INT. BARRACKS HUT 69, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - NIGHT

Young German Guard arrives at Stevens' room. Other occupants
leave.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Welcome. It's nice to see you again.
Cigarette?

Stevens holds out a pack of British cigarettes. Guard takes
one. Stevens holds out a lit match.

GERMAN CORPORAL
I hope you don't mind if I save it
for later?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Of course not. Oh, how rude of me.
Would you like a fresh pack?

Stevens gets new pack from his locker. Hands it to the Guard.

GERMAN CORPORAL
Seriously? Thank you.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Would you like more? I have lots. We
get so many in the Red Cross parcels
and I only smoke 2 or 3 a day.

GERMAN CORPORAL
My parents are starving back home
in Essen. They could use cigarettes
to buy food. I'd be grateful.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Nobody likes to think of one's
parents starving. Would 10 packs
help?

GERMAN CORPORAL
Ten packs? Thank you so much!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I would just need one small favour.

GERMAN CORPORAL
What would that be?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Nothing important. I just need to
borrow your pay book for 2 days.

GERMAN CORPORAL
Oh, no! I don't think so.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Oh, well... if you don't want the
cigarettes, I understand. It's a
shame about your parents, though.

GERMAN CORPORAL
Yes. But I must have it back in two
days.

Guard hands his identification document wallet to Stevens.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Not a word to anyone, or you might
find yourself in snow up to your
waist, speaking Russian.

The Young German Guard leaves. Stevens gets contraband from the wall stash and leaves in the opposite direction down the hallway carrying a cloth sack. At Aidan Crawley's room, he nods. Other occupants leave. Stevens enters and hands the bag to Crawley.

AIDAN CRAWLEY
What's this, Steve?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Have a look, Aidan.

Crawley opens bag, roots around inside, and closes it.

AIDAN CRAWLEY
Bloody hell!

Stevens winks, smiles, and begins to leave.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
I need the book back in two days,
and the other in seven please.

Prisoners line up to get passport photos taken. The photos are printed and trimmed, and forgers place them onto false identification documents.

EXT. OUTSIDE WIRE, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - NIGHT

SUPER: Stalag Luft 3 North Compound - March 25, 1944

A GUARD patrols outside the camp fence.

Snow on the ground. The Guard stops to light a cigarette. Attention is drawn to a dark spot in the snow ten feet behind him, and ten feet in front of the tree line.

Guard sees a MAN dressed in a civilian overcoat coming out of a tunnel. He points his rifle in the air and fires, then points it at the man and yells.

GERMAN GUARD

Halt! Hände hoch!

The Man raises his hands. A siren wails. Searchlights shine on the Guard. TWO MEN in civilian clothes, carrying suitcases, rush through the trees deeper into the forest. All guards rush from the barracks into various compounds, pointing their rifles.

INT. HUT 104 NORTH COMPOUND, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - NIGHT

Men scurry out of a tunnel entrance into hut 104. The stove that normally covers the entrance is off to the side, with an extension pipe added to the flue on an angle to meet the chimney pipe. Guards rush into the hut, rifles pointed. As they see men coming out of the tunnel, they take them into custody. A GERMAN OFFICER takes charge and takes names.

INT. GESTAPO PRISON - DAY

SUPER: One week later.

TEN recaptured Stalag Luft 3 ESCAPEES are together in a large cell.

EXT. GESTAPO PRISON - DAY

The handcuffed Escapees are led to waiting cars, escorted by GESTAPO AGENTS. The cars leave the prison by different routes. One at a time, the cars are shown stopping at the side of deserted country roads. The Prisoners are motioned to relieve themselves while the Gestapo agents hold their pistols out as a warning. In ones and twos, while the Prisoners are emptying their bladders or smoking cigarettes, a Gestapo agent approaches from the rear and shoots each one in the back of the neck. Each crumples to the ground. In one or two cases, another shot to the head finishes them off while they are lying on the ground. The DRIVERS help the Gestapo agents load the dead bodies into the cars - and the cars are seen driving into a crematorium.

INT. KOMMANDANT'S OFFICE, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

GROUP CAPTAIN MASSEY enters.

KOMMANDANT CORDES

Group Captain Massey, I am directed by the Luftwaffe High Command to advise you that some men have been shot while attempting to escape.

GROUP CAPTAIN MASSEY

Shot? How many men were shot?

KOMMANDANT CORDES

Fifty.

GROUP CAPTAIN MASSEY

How many were only injured?

KOMMANDANT CORDES

Fifty of your officers were shot while trying to escape. That is all I can tell you.

GROUP CAPTAIN MASSEY

There will be severe repercussions for this action.

KOMMANDANT CORDES

This was not the Luftwaffe, this was the Gestapo. They bear complete responsibility for this.

EXT. NORTH COMPOUND, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

Massey returns to the North Compound to meet his SENIOR OFFICERS.

GROUP CAPTAIN MASSEY

Put out an order: No more escapes. The bastards have lost control. They murdered fifty of our men!

INT. BARRACKS HUT, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DUSK

SUPER: June 6, 1944

A MAN keeps lookout in hut #69. Stevens and TWO OFFICERS are gathered around the small table in the centre of Room 14. Stevens wears an earpiece connected to a homemade crystal radio. He writes feverishly. Stevens turns off the radio. He crawls under his bunk, fiddles with a joint in the wall and opens a trapdoor. He puts the radio away and closes the trap.

Others have read his notes from the BBC News.

TOM SLACK

That's it then, boys. The Allies
have landed in France. We'll be
home by Christmas!

INT. BARRACKS HUT, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - NIGHT

SUPER: October, 1944

Eight men in Stevens' room gather for supper. Tom Slack ladles watery cabbage soup and one cabbage leaf onto each plate, then slices bread.

TOM SLACK

I'm dreaming of a nice thick slab
of rare roast beef.

MIKE LEWIS

And I've got my fork stuck into a
juicy hunk of roast pork!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Crepes Suzette, slathered with
buttery orange cognac sauce.

INT. BARRACKS HUT, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - NIGHT

SUPER: Christmas Eve, 1944

Stevens and SEVEN ROOMMATES gather around the table in a jolly mood. Sparse decorations hang on the walls. They are planning their Christmas dinner for the following evening. One writes out a menu.

TOM SLACK

Isn't it great that we're being
given carte blanche with the Red
Cross parcels? This will be the best
meal we've all had since 1939! Or at
least since we were captured.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

My mouth is watering already! Roast
turkey, sausage rolls, potatoes and
carrots. Even plum pudding and mince
pies for dessert!

MIKE LEWIS

Damn. The Allied advance has stalled
in Belgium. That's still a bloody
long way from here.

(MORE)

MIKE LEWIS (CONT'D)

I know that the Krauts are falling to pieces... but that only makes it worse. What if the Soviets get here before our boys do?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

There's a rumour Hitler might order all POWs to be shot, like they murdered the Fifty. If the SS takes over, we're goners.

INT. ROOM 14, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - CHRISTMAS NIGHT

Men sing Christmas carols. Slack draws caricature of Stevens on the back of a menu. Slack shows it around. They laugh.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Brilliant, Tom! Got me to a "T".

Stevens is still laughing as Lewis enters with 2 pots of food.

MIKE LEWIS

Merry Christmas to all!

Lewis places pots on the table.

Men take turns serving themselves. Wing Commander Hyde enters.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

Merry Christmas, men! Don't eat too quickly. There wouldn't be much point in making yourselves sick and throwing it all up. We don't know when our next supply of Red Cross parcels will arrive... if ever.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Merry Christmas to you, sir!

After dishes have been cleared, Stevens listens to the BBC news. He takes notes. He turns off and hides the radio.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

Bloody Germans have broken through the Allied lines and are in the middle of a huge counter-attack in Belgium. And we can't provide air cover due to bad snowstorms in the area.

MIKE LEWIS

Five months and they've only reached Belgium? Jeezus! At this rate, we'll still be here next Christmas!

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3, SAGAN - DAY

SUPER: Mid-January, 1945

Stevens, Slack and Lewis huddle together just outside their hut.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I guess you heard...

MIKE LEWIS

Yes, the Germans appear to have withdrawn from a winning position. What've they got up their sleeve?

TOM SLACK

It can only mean one thing. The constant day and night bombing is working. They've run out of fuel and supplies. We're actually winning this bloody war!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

But will we still be alive to see the end of it?

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3 EAST, SAGAN - DAY

SUPER: January 27, 1945

Prisoners assemble for Appell. It is freezing cold with a foot of snow. Artillery fire is heard in the distance.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

Men, we're evacuating the camp tonight. Where we are going is unclear. The Germans will allow us sleds to carry clothing and supplies. Every Red Cross parcel will be issued. We'll leave no food behind. Dismissed!

Men rush around in clothing two sizes too large. Guards look anxious.

INT. VARIOUS BARRACKS ROOMS, STALAG LUFT 3 EAST, SAGAN - DAY

Men sort through clothing and blankets. Some create backpacks. Others hammer sleds from wood. Red Cross food parcels are issued and the contents emptied and stored in backpacks or wrapped in blankets. Men wrap cloths, towels or blankets around their feet and put on layers of clothing.

Some personal possessions are left behind.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD, STALAG LUFT 3 EAST, SAGAN - NIGHT

Men assemble in a loose formation. It is well below freezing and snowing.

WING COMMANDER HYDE

Off we go, men. We don't know how far we're marching tonight, but in these weather conditions, we must be careful.

A column forms behind Hyde, and marches slowly out through the gate. As they exit, German guards take up positions around the column. Two thousand prisoners head into the blizzard.

EXT. OPEN GERMAN ROAD - NIGHT

They march through wind and snow all night, stopping for occasional breaks to make coffee over an open fire. The column arrives at a town. The German guards commandeer a school so Prisoners can rest.

INT. GERMAN SCHOOL - DAY

The building is unheated. Prisoners spread blankets and lie on floor. They wear all their clothing.

EXT. OPEN GERMAN ROAD, MUSKAU - NIGHT

SUPER: January 30, 1945

A blizzard rages. The column of POWs and guards arrives at Muskau. Some are billeted in a barn, and some inside a church.

RESIDENTS trade bread for cigarettes. Some POWs experience dysentery. All indoor washrooms have lines of twenty men. Several dead are shown piled outside, frozen solid.

EXT. SPREMBERG TRAIN STATION - DUSK

SUPER: February 3, 1945

Men arrive at the Spremberg train station. They board unheated cattle cars marked "40 hommes ou 8 chevaux." Train leaves. Weather rages. Many have frostbite and dysentery.

INT. GERMAN FREIGHT CAR - NIGHT

Stevens and other men sit or lie on the floor, guarded by two ARMED GERMANS. POWs open their luggage and eat.

INT. GERMAN FREIGHT CAR - DAY

Train stops. Doors open. Guards motion Prisoners to exit.

EXT. GERMAN TRAIN STATION LUCKENWALDE - AFTERNOON

Stevens and other Prisoners climb down from the freight car into heavy snow.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
(in German, subtitled)
Hey! Where is Luckenwalde?

GERMAN GUARD
(in German, subtitled)
About thirty kilometres south of
Berlin. We should be safe from the
filthy Russians here!

Prisoners form a column and march to the POW camp. Stevens spots Mike Lewis.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Hey, Mike! It sure will be nice to
get inside a heated building, even
if it is at a bloody POW camp!

MIKE LEWIS
You got that right, Steve!

Prisoners arrive at Stalag III-A. The gate opens and the column files in. Canvas tents are spread around in a sea of mud and snow.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
Settle down, men. The barracks are
already full, so all we have is
tents. Save your strength and
ration your food as best you can.

Men grumble and head for the tents.

INT. TENT, STALAG III-A, LUCKENWALDE - DUSK

Stevens, Lewis and fifteen others enter a tent. They put blankets on the floor and sleep on cold ground.

MIKE LEWIS
How much longer can the Germans
last? It's the beginning of
February, and they cannot win.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 I know the Nazis. They'll fight to
 the bitter end. The only way
 Germany will give up is if Hitler
 is dead. In the meantime, we'll
 starve to death!

EXT. TENT AREA, STALAG III-A, LUCKENWALDE - DAY

SUPER: April 28, 1945

Artillery booms. POWs exit tents. ONE MAN starts yelling and jogging around the compound.

BRITISH POW
 The goons have gone! They've gone!

Stevens, Lewis and others look around. The Guard Towers are unmanned and the gate guards are missing. Men are gaunt and malnourished.

WING COMMANDER HYDE
 Men? It looks like the end is in sight. The only question is, who will liberate us first? The Allies, or the Soviet troops? We'll send work parties to search the area for food. That includes all farms. Take whatever you can carry. Do not argue with the farmers or the store owners. Take it all. And bring it back here immediately. The rest should stay inside the wire, because it will be the safest place. Anyone caught outside on their own might be shot.

Stevens, Lewis and others huddle.

MIKE LEWIS
 Makes good sense.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 The Soviets will get here first. And I'm not keen on becoming just another prisoner.

Stevens pulls Lewis away from the group.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 Mike, you know how the Soviets feel about the Germans. If they ever discovered my true heritage, they'd blow my brains out.
 (MORE)

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

I can't take that chance. I'm going to head west. As long as I can stay ahead of the Soviet troops, I'm bound to run into the British or Americans quickly. Want to come?

MIKE LEWIS

Steve, I can't take that chance. Good luck! Oh, and avoid the temptation to wear any piece of German military kit you might find. You could get shot as a deserter by any Gestapo lurking about.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

'Bye Mike. I hope it ends well for you.

They shake hands. Stevens goes to his tent, puts a raw turnip and clothing into a backpack and walks out the front gate.

EXT. GERMAN ROAD - DAY

SUPER: April 30, 1945

Stevens walks among a large disorganized group of German REFUGEES heading away from the advancing Soviets. They carry suitcases, or push carts and wheelbarrows full of possessions. Mostly WOMEN and CHILDREN, along with ELDERLY MEN. Stevens approaches an OLD MAN in a German army uniform.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(in German, subtitled)

Hey, friend, need a cigarette?

OLD GERMAN ARMY MAN

(in German, subtitled)

Sure, but I haven't got anything to give you for it.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(in German; subtitled)

I see you've still got your bayonet. Trade a pack of British cigarettes for it?

OLD GERMAN ARMY MAN

(in German, subtitled)

Yes... but where did you get British cigarettes?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(in German; subtitled)

Not important. Here.

Stevens hands him the pack. The German opens it and smells the tobacco. Satisfied, he hands over his bayonet. Stevens takes it and shoves it down the back of his trousers, which are held up with a rope belt.

He approaches a German car that has broken down. A MIDDLE-AGED MAN in a suit leans against it. As Stevens nears, the German notices that Stevens wears a British uniform. He pulls out a pistol, points it at Stevens. Stevens recognizes him.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR

(in English)

You! Hands up! I know you!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(in German, subtitled)

What do you want, sir? I think you've mistaken me for someone else.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR

No, I know you. You are the British spy from Hanover! You were captured on a train, and claimed to have escaped from a prison camp in Poland. But I knew you were a spy.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(in German, subtitled)

I don't understand English.

GESTAPO INTERROGATOR

The war is over, you are trying to rejoin your Allied brothers. Now you will pay for your treachery against the Third Reich!

The Gestapo Man raises his pistol and gestures Stevens to walk over to the other side of the road. Stevens slowly backs up. Turning sideways to hide his right hand from the German, he removes the bayonet from inside his waistband. Quickly raising his arm, he flings the blade at the German. Gestapo Man is surprised. The blade embeds itself in his abdomen. He falls, dropping the gun. Stevens rushes over, picks up the pistol, bends over the German. He leans over until his face is inches away from that of the German.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

(in English)

You will bleed to death in minutes. And I'm not a spy, you bastard, but your greatest enemy. While I am indeed a pilot in the Royal Air Force, but I am not British. I am a German Jew!

The German struggles to comprehend. Stevens turns the blade.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)
 (in English)
 Die, you fucking bastard!

Stevens rises. He hears a mechanical noise. He sees an American tank in the distance. As the tank gets close, he raises his hands in surrender. Tank stops just in front of him.

AMERICAN TANK COMMANDER
 Outta my way, kraut! We're not taking any German prisoners.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 I'm an escaped British pilot. I've been a POW for almost 4 years. Could you give me a lift back to Allied lines?

AMERICAN TANK COMMANDER
 Hell, yeah! Hey guys, he's one of ours! Climb aboard!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
 Cheers! I need a bit of help. Not much to eat for three months.

The American tank commander climbs down to the front edge of the tank and offers Stevens a hand.

AMERICAN TANK COMMANDER
 I guess, for you, the war really is over now, buddy.

Stevens climbs onto the tank with difficulty and hugs the American.

EXT. RAF AIR BASE, GERMANY - DAY

SUPER: May 2, 1945 - West of Berlin

Stevens, with OTHER LIBERATED POWs, sits on grass, smoking and feasting. A line of Lancaster bombers and C-47 transport planes sits nearby.

RAF OFFICER
 Stead, Steele, Steeves, Steggles,
 Stenning, Stevens, Stevenson,
 Stewart, Stiff, Stocking, Stockwell,
 Stodart and Stone. The C-47 over my left shoulder.

He points to a plane.

Stevens and group get up, pick up their gear, climb the steps of a ladder at the rear door and enter the plane.

INT. RAF C-47, GERMANY - DAY

The plane is spartan with basic seats. The PILOT comes out of the cockpit.

DAKOTA PILOT

Gentlemen, it will be my privilege to fly you heroes back to RAF Croydon. From there, you will be taken to a facility where you can rest and recover. When you are fit, you will be given two weeks' leave. I hope to have you back on English soil in about five hours.

Weak cheers.

EXT. RAF AIR BASE, GERMANY - DAY

The Dakota starts, taxis to the end of the runway and takes off.

EXT. RAF BASE HOSPITAL, ENGLAND - DAY

SUPER: May 8, 1945 - Victory in Europe (VE) Day

Stevens sits up in a hospital ward bed, snacking. A NURSE helps him out of bed in his pyjamas and has him step on a scale.

NURSE

Your weight is 121 pounds, Flight Lieutenant. What did you weigh before you were shot down?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

About 165 pounds? We've had virtually no food since February.

A commotion outside. NURSES rush to the window and open it. POWs sit up in bed, or get up and put on dressing gowns to join them at window - including Stevens.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

What's all the fuss about, nurse?

HEAD NURSE

It's over! The war is over! Germany has surrendered!

Tears roll down Stevens' cheeks. He turns away so NURSES won't see.

INT. RAF CROYDON HQ BUILDING - DAY

SUPER: August, 1945

WING COMMANDER JONES sits behind a desk, with AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON seated opposite. A door opens and Stevens enters. He stands to attention and salutes.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Acting Squadron Leader Stevens
reporting as ordered, sir.

Air Vice Marshall Davidson waves at Stevens to sit.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
Stevens, I'm Air Vice Marshall
Davidson. Wing Commander Jones
tells me you're keen to remain in
the RAF and you speak good German.
Is that correct?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Yes, sir. And I'm single. No
dependants.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
Good. I will be transferring to the
Intelligence Division office with
the occupation troops in Berlin and
I need an assistant.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Sounds interesting, sir. My German
is perfect. I know the country very
well, including Berlin.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
I'm told you were involved in
several escapes?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Nine attempts in total, sir, with
three forays outside the wire.
Recaptured twice.
(winks)
And returned voluntarily once.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
Back in fighting trim?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Well on my way, sir. Just need
another ten pounds. Some good German
beer should help.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
Very good, Stevens. The job comes
with the rank of Squadron Leader.
I'm flying to Berlin in five days'
time. Can you be ready?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Yes, sir. Thank you, sir.

INT. RAF ANSON, EXECUTIVE PLANE - DAY

SUPER: August 16, 1945

En route to Berlin, Davidson and Stevens sit just behind a single PILOT. They review papers and chat. Suddenly, the pilot slumps over the control wheel. The aircraft dives. Stevens sees the pilot is unconscious, jumps forward, climbs into the empty co-pilot's seat and takes control. He pushes the pilot away from the controls. At the same time, he pulls back on the control wheel to return the plane to level flight.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Sir, would you please remove him from
his seat and see what's wrong? We're
about 15 minutes from Berlin, and I
can get us the rest of the way.

Davidson undoes the pilot's seat belt and pulls him back into an empty passenger seat.

EXT. TEMPLEHOF AIRPORT, BERLIN - DAY

The Anson lands with a bounce and taxis to the RAF section of the terminal. GROUND CREW approach the Anson with a stair step.

As the engines are shut down, Davidson opens the rear door, waves and shouts for someone to come urgently.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
Help! Quickly! We need an ambulance!

One of the Ground Crew runs to a telephone mounted on the outside of the terminal building. He makes a call. A siren is heard. An ambulance comes speeding toward the Anson. Two Ground Crew enter and bring the unconscious pilot to the door. They hand the pilot to the AMBULANCE CREW.

The pilot is placed on stretcher and taken to the ambulance, which rushes off, siren blaring.

Stevens joins Davidson on the tarmac.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON (CONT'D)
You saved my life, Stevens!

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Sorry if the landing was bumpy, sir.
I haven't flown much since 1941.

INT. RAF HQ OFFICE, BERLIN - DAY

SUPER: January 15, 1946

Davidson sits at a desk, working. Stevens arrives, stands to attention and salutes.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Excuse me, sir. I wonder whether
you might have a few minutes for me
on a personal matter?

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
Of course, Stevens.

Stevens sits.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
Thank you, sir. I have a delicate
matter to report, and I need your
help with it.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
That sounds ominous, Stevens. What's
up?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
My name isn't really Stevens. And
I'm not British.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON
Then who the devil are you?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS
My real name is Georg Hein, and I
was born in Hanover. At the outbreak
of hostilities, I was a German-
Jewish refugee living in London.
And, because I knew first-hand the
evils of Nazism, I wanted to fight
the bastards.

(MORE)

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

But the RAF would never have accepted me. So, I committed identity theft to enlist.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON

That's quite some bombshell, Stevens. What is it you need?

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I'd like to make it all legal, sir. Which would mean being naturalized as a British citizen. And to do that, I need your help.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON

Here's what we'll do. Give me a list of all the senior RAF officers you knew during the war who would be willing to vouch for you. I will ask each one for a letter of reference. When we receive four or five, I will send those up the chain of command.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

Marvellous, sir! Thank-you, sir.

INT. RAF HQ OFFICE, BERLIN - DAY

SUPER: May 18, 1946

Davidson stands at the office doorway and leans out.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON

Stevens, come in for a moment?

Stevens rises and follows Davidson into his office. Davidson sits, and offers Stevens a seat opposite him.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON (CONT'D)

Since you read my incoming mail, you know that I've now received four good reference letters supporting your Naturalization. I will recommend your application. This should be an open-and-shut case.

Davidson picks up a letter and reads.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON (CONT'D)

To quote Group Captain Willetts, "If enthusiasm for the British cause during the war is a sufficient qualification for naturalization, then Squadron Leader Stevens is supremely suitable. His risk of falling foul with the Germans was greater than the other prisoners, and the consequences to him, had his true identity been discovered, must have been unpleasantly fatal."

Davidson looks up at Stevens and nods.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I don't know what to say, sir.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON

Well, I do, Stevens. Grab your hat and follow me.

EXT. TEMPLEHOF AIRPORT, BERLIN - DAY

Davidson leads Stevens onto a side ramp.

The entire staff assembled in ranks, stands to attention in lines behind the flagpole. Davidson points at Stevens, indicating where he should stand in front of the flagpole. Davidson stands facing Stevens, the assembled AIRMEN and the flagpole flying the Union Jack.

Davidson reaches into his pocket and pulls out a purple leather case, embossed with the Royal coat of arms.

AIR VICE MARSHALL DAVIDSON

Squadron Leader Stevens. In the name of His Majesty the King, I take great pleasure in awarding you the Military Cross. Never before have I met a more deserving recipient. Your incessant gallantry and unflinching valour in the face of the enemy went far above and beyond the call of duty, at exceptional personal risk. Few men could live up to your example, Stevens. Congratulations.

Davidson pins the medal on Stevens. Officers and enlisted MEN and WOMEN cheer.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

With all due respect, sir, the real hero in this story was my mother.

(MORE)

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS (CONT'D)

Sadly, she took her own life rather than submit to the Nazis' butchery. I only wish she were alive to see this day.

EXT. HANOVER JEWISH CEMETERY - DAY

Stevens enters the cemetery wearing his RAF uniform & medals. He replaces his uniform cap with a yarmulka, and stands to attention in front of the grave of his parents. Saluting, he begins to sob and crumples to the ground.

GEORG HEIN/PETER STEVENS

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry!

CARD:

During the summer of 1941, Stevens completed 22 combat operations against occupied Europe and Germany. All the while, the Metropolitan Police had been running a manhunt looking for Georg Hein, a possible German spy. From several tips, they learned that he had joined the Royal Air Force.

In 1947, the wartime exploits of Peter Stevens came to the attention of Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, MI6, who offered him a job. Stevens worked as an MI6 field operative in Germany, spying against the Soviets from 1947-52. But Stevens was ambitious, and not having a degree from Oxford or Cambridge made it impossible for him to climb to a senior level in the Service.

He resigned, emigrated to Canada in 1952, and married a loving and devoted French-Canadian, Claire Lalonde. They had two sons.

Stevens died in 1979, never having told his wife or children that he'd been born a Jew. Subsequent investigations by a son discovered that some 35 members of the German Hein-Seckel family had been murdered in the Holocaust, including Stevens' aunt and uncle, Toni and Max Flatow.

In 1967, Stevens took his family to Berlin, and they visited the Allied Forces Cemetery, searching for the grave of Sergeant Ivor Fraser. It was determined that his parachute had not opened and that Fraser's body was never identified. He has no known grave, but his name is commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial near Windsor Castle. Peter Stevens felt forever guilty about giving Fraser the order to bale out over Berlin.

Peter Stevens' eldest son, Peter Jnr, married a Jewish woman in 1983, converted to that religion, and had two children of his own.

In 2019, the first great-grandchild of Squadron Leader Peter Stevens was born in Israel.

This film is dedicated to the memories of:

Squadron Leader Roger Bushell, Flight Lieutenant Tim Walenn, and the 48 other officers murdered by the Gestapo after The Great Escape.

Sgt Ivor Roderick Fraser (Killed In Action, Berlin - age 19).

Flying Officer Reginald John Roake (Killed In Action, North Luffenham - age 23) and his crew.

All those volunteers in Royal Air Force Bomber Command who made the supreme sacrifice in World War 2.

Some 57,205 (45%) were killed, while another 9,838 (8%) were captured and spent time as POWs. The injured count was 8,403 (7%).

RAF Bomber Command suffered the highest casualty rate of any Allied unit in World War 2.

THE END