

**TILLINGHAUST 1944**

Written by William Dyer

FADE IN

EXT. PLAINS - DAY

A patrol of GRIZZLED SOLDIERS ramble forward among hazes of smoke and heat. To an average person watching them from this distance, they appear ALMOST LIKE MIRAGES.

As they come more into focus, there's five of them, not six as the hallucination first implied. One of them has a LEG INJURY, bandaged up. His limp isn't holding anyone back.

Americans. Army Infantry.

**SUPER : TILLINGHAUST - 1944**

Patches on the men's shoulders have been torn off. It is not easy to tell who outranks who. With the exception of

LUTHER, all of them are average height. Luther's 6'4. The others are

EDGAR A.K.A. "EDDIE"

VINCENT

CLYDE

ALAN (wounded, slight limp)

All between the ages of 19 to 25. The men's faces become more visually distressed upon what they see ahead.

ONE AMERICAN TANK. A SHERMAN. Fire damage decorates all sides. ABANDONED.

A SMALL VILLAGE with most of the small buildings reduced to rubble. Only a smoke damaged church with a CRACKED BELL and a stone citadel still stand.

All that - but no bodies on the ground.

The team approach with more unease each moment. Not only are there no bodies, *there are no body parts*. No burning flesh, just a ton of random shell casings.

Vincent climbs on top of the tank. Clyde follows him.

Clyde readies his pistol. Aims it at the hatch. Vincent carefully opens it. Attached to the inside of the hatch is a broken wire. It dangles. Vincent stumbles back, loses his balance and lands in the mud. Clyde jumps.

Everyone else drops to the ground.

A billow of smoke rises from within the tank.

Vincent, confused, gets to his feet. Looks to his team.  
Luther motions for him to check the tank again.

VINCENT  
Wonderful.

Vincent gets back up there. Checks the wire. Looks inside.

VINCENT (CONT'D)  
No body in here.

EDDIE  
Poor guy's in parts.

VINCENT  
There's no body. Somebody jerry-  
rigged this up, grenade must have  
went off.

ALAN  
Doesn't make any sense.

VINCENT  
I know it doesn't make any sense.  
(looks around)  
None of this does.

INT. TANK - DAY

Vincent climbs in. Coughs a little as he waves away some  
smoke from his face, His only light source comes from the  
open hatch.

VINCENT  
Good Lord.

He checks around the commander's turret seat. Frustration is  
his reward.

LUTHER  
(outside)  
Well, anything there?

VINCENT  
Hold on.

Vincent fumbles further on.

VINCENT (CONT'D)  
There's something.

Meaning a few canteens strapped to the inside corner. He snatches the top one, shakes it. Half-full.

EXT. TANK - DAY

Vincent tosses down one of the canteens to Luther. The other to Eddie.

ALAN  
What about a medkit?

VINCENT  
Nothing else.

ALAN  
"Nothing else?" Gotta be kidding me. Shit.

VINCENT  
Nothing.

EDDIE  
Radio working?

VINCENT  
With a little work, might be able to fix it. But I can tell you what should be working. This lady's got some fuel in her, half ammo on the M2, pretty much full ammo on the M4.

LUTHER  
Think you can drive it?

VINCENT  
Assuming the engine isn't toast, yeah. Yeah, I can.

LUTHER  
Alan, stay here with Vinnie. Take a break. Rest of us are going to have a look around, hopefully we can find some more supplies. Maybe a map, find out where the hell we are.

Luther, Eddie and Clyde move ahead. AS they enter the village, they watch for any signs of life, no matter how small. There's nothing but silence.

Clyde glances back, sees Vincent inspecting the tank, possibly starting repairs, and Alan sitting on top of it.

LUTHER (CONT'D)  
Eyes up here.

CLYDE  
I got a bad feelin' Lew. Let's just  
find some med supplies, fix up Al,  
get out of here.

The three soldiers pass by the Citadel, which is more imposing and Gothic up close. Lots of archways, corners.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Empty of life. Windows smashed out. Luther and Eddie enter.

Clyde waits outside, seen through the open door.

A massive hole in the right wall, due to some past explosion and rounds of gunfire. Like what they seen before, there is no evidence of anyone, living or dead.

Someone was here...

EXT. CHURCH - SAME

Clyde keeps watch. It's all quiet out here.

From a distance, he can see the tank.

Vincent isn't fixing the engine anymore. Alan 's not there either. Well, Vincent does show up, having been on the other side of the tank. Clyde breathes a sigh of relief.

That Citadel. Towers over everything. Makes you think you're the one being watched. It's a scary son of a bitch from this view. It isn't Dracula's castle, but it gives you a damned chill.

INT. CITADEL- SAME

And we are watching him alright. From high in a room overlooking the street below, Clyde looks mouse size, a pest about to be stepped on and squeal. He's looking right at whatever or whoever is looking at him. As of right now, it's nobody or nothing we can see or comprehend.

## INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

In the front three row pews, ripped out hymnal books flaked around everywhere. In one pew, the KNEELER is down. Attention is given to the kneeler due to the two BLOOD STAINS on it, as if someone knelt on the pads with bleeding legs.

As they get closer to the altar, they are TRANSFIXED on the sight above them. Nervously, Eddie lowers his gun, makes the sign of -

**THE CROSS BEFORE THEM**, blood streaked over Jesus and down to the floor.

On the altar, a SILVER CHALICE placed upside down. Stains Of wine surround it.

Still in awe, Luther takes a step forward.

The CHURCH BELL RINGS. Loud echo. Sounds more like a crack of thunder. If it wasn't for the aftermath of the ringing, it might as well have been.

## EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Clyde reacts. He walks back a little to get a better view of the church bell. Nobody's up there. The bell rocks back as if someone were swinging it, and it's deafening tone shouts out a second time. At then it stops, as if nothing had happened. But that AFTER RING seems to last for a good minute.

## INT. CITADEL - CONTINUOUS

It's a different room. We know that because we are looking out of the arched window DOWN AT THE TANK. About the same height.

On the window sill to our right, a seemingly insignificant, if not understated appearance by a snake. It crawls and curls forward.

The snake halts, raises its head. Spies on Vincent and the tank below.

## INT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Never minding the CHALICE

Luther peers around the altar.

No body.

Sweat beads on his face.

He looks up at the blasphemy of the mess on the cross, disturbed by the sight of it. As Eddie looks away, focusing on some of the loose paper littered around, they don't notice the slight MOVEMENT of THE CHALICE. Subtle. Just a fraction of an inch to the left. *That's right*. Something must be under it, otherwise it would have moved by itself.

When both men glance at the chalice, which doesn't move now, they look away, paying it no mind. They had a case of bad timing and never witnessed the occurrence.

INT. TANK - CONTINUOUS

Vincent climbs in. Sits in the commander seat. Alan's in the gunner position.

ALAN

Who are you again?

VINCENT

Big cheese.

ALAN

Closest you'll get. They'll put you in a tank unit one day.

VINCENT

Better. When the high-ups see me driving this heap into base.

ALAN

Are you sayin' you fixed it already?

VINCENT

Not much to fix. I don't get it. Engine isn't shot, just basic stuff, nothing too big. Only took me a few minutes.

ALAN

Maybe there's something you missed.

VINCENT

Aside from the outside, this lady's ship-shape. They just left it.

ALAN

Taken prisoner?

VINCENT  
No. Not with all this ammo.

ALAN  
Another tank, then. Long gone.

VINCENT  
Maybe. But if there was a fight,  
they'd be bodies, maybe a survivor.  
Somebody. Alive or dead.

ALAN  
Hear that bell?

VINCENT  
I heard it.

ALAN  
Well, there you go. Somebody's  
ringing it, and it isn't our guys.

A light TAP-TAP-TAP on the bottom of the tank.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
What's that? Where's that coming  
from?

VINCENT  
Can't be back already. I would have  
seen -

TAP! TAP! TAP!

ALAN  
There it is again.

VINCENT  
Escape door.

Vincent gets out. Alan wants to follow him.

VINCENT (CONT'D)  
Relax. I Got this.

ALAN  
Yeah.

EXT. CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

Eddie and Luther rejoin Clyde. Clyde, more nervous than a minute ago, reads the expressions of his friends.

CLYDE  
Anything in there?

EDDIE  
You don't want to know.

LUTHER  
Come on, let's check out the  
Citadel.

CLYDE  
Is that a good idea?

LUTHER  
Sure ain't going to find any  
answers in there.

Jerks his thumb back behind him.

From a distance, the men see Vincent around the tank, in  
front of it.

LUTHER (CONT'D)  
Vinnie's working on our ticket out  
of here.

EXT. TANK - (UNDER) CONTINUOUS

Vincent squats, scans underneath. Focuses on something he  
can't fully see. Whatever it is, there's a small reflection.  
Vincent moves to the right, reflection disappears. Back to  
the left, it appears again.

Sprawls on all fours, crawls ahead, slow as a worm.

Tight space. Sweat beads over his face.

He reaches a DAGGER, blade jammed through a large piece of  
torn paper and into the earth. There's nobody but him under  
here.

Pulls the dagger, catches the paper. Looks at it. A  
revelation. With the dagger, he TAPS rapidly on the tank  
belly.

VINCENT  
(loud)  
Got a map! We are... somewhere  
here.

Studies it, can't make heads or tails out of it.

He sees a scribbled word next to a circled location.

VINCENT (CONT'D)  
Tillgaust something. Tillgaust?  
Never heard of it.  
(beat)  
Coming up!

INT. CITADEL - LOWER FLOOR - DAY

Luther, Eddie and Clyde scout the narrow curved halls. Shafts of light penetrate darkness. Like everywhere else, no bodies found, living or dead. Nothing human anyway. Eddie spots a snake slither across from them.

INT. TANK - CONTINUOUS

Alan rummages about, finds a roll of bandages. Can't believe his luck. Unravels it. His thrill turns for the worse. The bandages aren't clean. Stained with a yellow-green mucus, like snot or vomit. It's gross whatever the substance is.

Alan shakes off his hands as if his hands got contaminated.

The hatch SLAMS down. Pitch black.

ALAN  
Hey, what in the hell-

The TAP-TAP-TAP returns. Not just from the bottom. A chorus of TAPS join in from above, and both sides of the tank.

INT. CITADEL - LOWER FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The three men discover a flight of cobblestone stairs. They make their way up. With dread.

EXT. TANK - CONTINUOUS

Alan grimaces in pain as he opens the hatch. The TAPPING abruptly halts. He hears something, and whoever it was drops to the ground, although he (and we) didn't get so much as a glimpse. Curious, he peers over the side.

Spots the prankster. A CLOAKED FIGURE, no taller than three feet tall. Hunched over. Not looking up at Alan. Not yet.

ALAN  
Hey, kid...

The Cloaked Figure freezes.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
I'm not going to hurt you, kid.  
(beat)  
You got a name? Do you speak  
English? French?

Alan lights a cigarette with a lighter. A SHADOW creeps up behind ALAN. We only see part of a scaly, bony hand with pointed dirty nails.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
German? Oh, kid. Please don't be  
German.

The KID looks up. It's not a kid. It's HIDEOUS. Snotty green filth bleeds from a reptilian nose. Snake eyes. Crooked fanged teeth. Stands, as we already guessed two to three feet tall. Talon like fingers. Just like -

The SHADOW behind Alan. The sight of the thing below is enough to repel Alan back. Bumping into the Goblin-thing next to him is enough to send him scrambling out of the tank.

He falls into the dirt

RIGHT NEXT TO VINCENT who has that dagger jammed in his neck. In his dead hand is the map, now covered him speckles of blood.

Two more of those monster goblins appear, charge towards Alan. With a scream, he rolls to his feet. The goblins swing hammers at him.

Trap doors in the ground pry open randomly in varied locations around the tank. More of those creatures, some even smaller than the ones attacking Alan.

Alan sprints in a hobble, only looking back long enough to see The little goblins swarm over the tank and fall into it, clumsily and comical.

The ENGINE for the tank KICKS INTO GEAR. Smoke erupts all around. Turrets WHIRR and come to life. The hatch slams down. The things that attacked Alan jump into the trap doors, and disappear. The doors rudely close.

The tank creeps forward, running over Vincent's remains.

The tank's guns whisk about wildly. They BURST OUT HAILS OF BULLETS and it's a small miracle that they miss Alan. Alan struggles to move ahead, but the tank is now on his ass.

He ducks as the guns blaze over him. Loud and jarring.

Explosions left, explosions right. It's like he's caught in a human pinball machine.

He beelines to the Citadel, having a quick hurried glimpse of the figure in the upper window. It's Luther.

More gunfire. And that CHURCH BELL chimes again on top of that.

INT. CITADEL - LOWER FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Alan stumbles, grits his teeth as he hustles. Outside, gunfire. A few bullets whiz by, having found their way through windows and other open places.

Those small creatures, pop in and out of the shadows, a few jump out on either side of him. Some have daggers, hammers and wrenches. The most successful uses only claws, knicking a good gash in his lower leg, re-opening his previous wound.

STAIRS

He wastes no time. He brushes through the gauntlet, until he gets to

SECOND FLOOR

Where a ton of hacked up bodies - young, old, men, women, partisans, soldiers-- no, he keeps going up to the

THIRD FLOOR

Where he sees Luther facing the window. The Gremlin-like things crawl off Luther's back and legs. Luther slumps to the floor.

Alan turns, sees one of those creatures take a hammer to Eddie's already bashed in skull. It stops, gives him an evil condemning gaze

Alan backs up, and with nowhere to go, rushes toward the opposite end to a

ROOM FACING THE CHURCH

Slams the door, He's trailed a bit of blood in here. Walks right into the bloody uniform of Clyde, his DOGTAGS smeared with his blood. He's riddled with bullets.

An uncloaked Goblin- thing with a SUBMACHINE GUN is revealed to be in the room with them. With a twisted cry, the monster blasts lead into Alan's body. Once finished, the creature spits out a greyish goo from its deformed, fanged mouth.

Followed by a demonic laugh of satisfaction.

EXT. FIELDS - DAY

Several of the cloaked critters drag the crushed body of Vincent towards the Citadel. As they pull him away, his hands still hold the map which scribbled on it :

**TILLGAUST 1944**

**GREMLIN INFESTATION**

FADE OUT.

