

GUY'S REQUIEM

by

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BASED ON A TRUE STORY

SCRIPT EXTRACT

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INT. MAIN BUILDING - STORAGE ROOMS - DAY

Prisoners crowd around a table filled with maps, diagrams, plans, documents and theories. Sherwell and Mortimer sit at the front of the room, conspiratorial.

SHERWELL

Right, I want ideas, any ideas. Nothing is too ridiculous.

The lads look around at each other, thoughtful.

SHORTY

We could pole vault the main wall.

Silence. Everyone stares at SHORTY. Shorty, 27, amiable, jovial, smiley and contented. Longer silence.

SHERWELL

So, ideas, any ideas, nothing discounted.

Sherwell looks around at everyone else, intense.

INT. GUY'S CELL - DAY

Tentative singing as Men crowd around, stand on beds and tables in the very limited space. They sing in parts. To keep the notes and rhythm, Guy plays a mouth-organ. As he plays he walks around, goes up to different men.

GUY

Higher!

They sing higher, higher, matching the mouth organ.

GUY

HIGHER! HIGHER!!!

They sing so high they go off the radar.

GUY

Well, well - enough talent here for a whole opera.

Their voice breaks - they fall around laughing.

INT. MAIN BUILDING - STORAGE ROOMS - DAY

Sherwell stares. Mortimer sits beside him, stoic.

SHERWELL

Right, so the choices we have so far. We dig under, we go through, or we go over. And if all else fails we pole-vault.

Mortimer sighs, shakes his head.

SHORTY

We could hang-glide or parachute from the top of the tower.

SHERWELL

Or we could just shoot ourselves now and save them the trouble... We recce. Report back here in one hour.

Lads nod, go into action.

INT. GUY'S CELL - DAY

Choir progresses, sing in two's, threes. The sound develops, changes.

Guy plays his mouth-organ, improvises, energised.

EXT. EXERCISE AREA - DAY

Prisoners spread around the camp on a recce.

Sherwell looks around, slides his foot against the ground. Taps it. Sounds out for flaws.

KLAXON SOUNDS: FRONT GATES OPEN.

Sherwell turns, stares. Through the Hadamar gates, a rubbish truck rolls. Sherwell watches.

MORTIMER

Watches Guards routines as he smokes. Guards turn to him, Mortimer looks away, concentrates on smoking.

JARVIS

Surreptitiously feels the wall, checks for cracks.

SHERWELL

Watches the rubbish truck park by the mess hall. Rubbish is tossed into it.

Guards prod the rubbish with their guns. Then give the thumbs up to the Driver.

Sherwell stares.

INT. GUY'S CELL - DAY

Choir reaches an instant of beauty.

Guy moves the mouth organ from his mouth, watches, pleased, a moment of epiphany.

EXT. EXERCISE AREA - DAY

The truck reverses, turns, drives back to the main gates.

KLAXON SOUNDS: gates open - the truck leaves without further inspection.

Sherwell observes, thoughtful.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD - NIGHT

Kurtz roams the camp alone, freely and does as he pleases.

He fires his gun at a rabbit as it runs, laughs, swigs from a bottle of alcohol.

KURTZ
GUARDS!!! HERE!!! NOW!

Lights go on, Guards speed out from their quarters.

INT. GUY'S CELL - NIGHT

Guy and Sherwell listen as they lie in their beds.

GUY
When little men are given great power...
everything falls inwards.

GUN SHOT OUTSIDE. Guy and Sherwell stare at each other.

SHERWELL
Escape or die, Guy... We do this now. Our
chance might not come again.

GUY
You escape with your body - I escape in
my mind.

EXT. EXERCISE YARD - NIGHT

Kurtz paces in front of Guards, drunk.

KURTZ

Kill prisoners that step out of line. They try to escape, kill them, They are not people, they are animals. One prisoner dead means one less we feed, shelter. Don't hesitate to shoot. And if you don't, I'll send you to the Russian front. DUTY IS EVERYTHING. We win the war on duty, or we are nothing. Germany will be NOTHING without duty. Understand?

INT. GUY'S CELL - NIGHT

Guy stares at Sherwell in the darkness.

GUY

So what's your plan?

SHERWELL

They check the rubbish when they fill the truck near the mess hall - not the gateway. All we have to do is create a distraction, get in the garbage truck and we're out of here, and free.

GUY

As simple as that?

Sherwell nods, grins --- the challenge is afoot.

SHERWELL

Are you with us?

Guy hesitates, looks away. Sherwell stares, intense.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. GUY'S CELL - NIGHT

Guy tries to sleep. Can't. He turns over, over.

Brahms Requiem plays in his head.

EXT. CAMP - DAY (DREAM)

The camp becomes black and white squares, a giant chess board, with people moving around like chess pieces.

The music swells and changes. The camp, movements staccato, strange, goes about its daily routine.

The rubbish truck moves in, rubbish thrown inside. Guards watch as its driven away -- Prisoners jump in to freedom.

The Guards look one way but move the other, moved by unseen hands. Everything is wrong.

INT. GUY'S CELL - DAY

Music cuts off abruptly, sudden, unexpected.

Guy wakes suddenly, looks around - concerned.

EXT. EXERCISE AREA - DAY

ROLL CALL: Guy looks around the camp, sees the chessboard superimposed on everything.

Guy goes up Sherwell, surreptitiously talks.

GUY

Your plan is flawed.

Sherwell sneers.

GUY

Listen to me through your ears not your ego.

SHERWELL

Your playing is flawed - you never hit B sharp.

GUY

I'll look into it.

A flicker of a smile on Sherwell's lips. Guy and Sherwell turn back, eyes front as the roll goes on.

GUY

Your plan plays into theirs... Diversion.

Guard goes past.

GUY

Have you heard of the Ruy Lopez?

Sherwell frowns, looks at him. Eye contact.