

...THEY PLAYED

Inspired by true events

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BLACK SCREEN

SUPERIMPOSE: "WHERE THERE IS A NEED, THERE IS A DESIRE. WHERE THERE IS A DESIRE, THERE IS A NEED TO WIN."

FADE IN:

EXT. PRISON CAMP - DAY

The Autumn wind swirls, sweeps through an already cold, banal and open prison area. Leaves, caught in a sudden surge, sweep over a beat up, not so round, football (soccer ball).

Two PRISONERS compete for control of the ball.

PRISONER ONE

Out of my way.

Prisoner One pushes the player to the ground; shoots at the goal. The ball looks like it will sail just under the bar.

A small group of German SOLDIERS and one NAZI OFFICER: CAPTAIN HAhLER, (30s), who's calm demeanor hides a fierce temper, turn to watch the imminent goal.

Out of nowhere, the GOALKEEPER springs up, swats the ball away.

Even the German guards nod their heads in awe.

Other players rush to the ball, but the Goalkeeper pounces and smothers it. He then springs up to his feet.

PRISONER ONE

Trusevich! Come on. I've no dignity here in this prison camp. Allow a fellow brother a small victory. Ease up, brother.

NIKOLAI TRUSEVICH (30s) holds the ball tight, with his other hand pushes back his mop of black hair, to reveal a charismatic, chiseled face. A fresh scar is on his left cheek.

TRUSEVICH

Roman! You couldn't score in a brothel.

He then belts the ball forward.

It bounces over many players, lands at the feet of a skinny PRISONER. He is all alone against the other goalkeeper.

The second GOALKEEPER isn't paying much attention.

He is ZAL (20s), confident and cocky, but at this moment in time, paying no attention to his game. Zal stares at the group of German soldiers.

Hahler has his back to the game, but looks at a pocket watch with intent.

The ball whizzes past Zal.

GOAL.

A DEFENDING PRISONER runs past Zal, nudges him with his elbow, collects the ball.

DEFENDING PRISONER
Hey, idiot. Watch the game.

ZAL
What the...

Zal doesn't even watch the game re-start. He steps out the penalty-box and again looks at Hahler; who blows his whistle.

HAHLER
(in German)
Stop! Stop where you are.

Zal swivels his head to the field.

The ball is trapped by Roman (Prisoner #1). He stands there, proud as punch. His foot firmly on the ball.

The rest of the players take a few steps towards Roman.

Trusevich also leaves his goal area.

A SOLDIER accompanies Hahler onto the field.

The Soldier approaches Roman, gently takes the ball from under his foot. Hahler is right behind the two of them.

Roman laughs.

ROMAN
Maybe our hosts would like to join
us and see if they can match up
with our Ukrainian set of skills--

With one swift motion, Hahler shoots Roman in the left foot!

The echo of the faded gunshot morphs into Roman's manic scream.

The other Players freeze; too stunned to move.

The Soldier kicks the ball high into the air.

HAHLER
(in Russian)
Play! Keep playing you bunch of
rats.

As the ball lands, the Ukrainian Players avoid the ball.

Three other SOLDIERS run on to the field, spank the Players with their rifles.

A mad panic breaks out among the Players, they just whack the ball at each other.

At one point, the ball even hits Roman as he writhes around in agony...

PLAYER TWO dribbles the ball, shoots from the half way line towards Zal.

Zal sees that Hahler is back at the half way line with his back to the field, and again, with the stop watch in his hand.

Zal sees the oncoming ball and kicks it back in to the melee.

PLAYER THREE controls the ball and dribbles past two other Players; shoots towards Trusevich's goal.

It looks like a goal is about to occur, when Trusevich dives to his left and somehow not only parries the ball away from goal, but smothers it into his chest.

As he lies there Hahler again blows his whistle.

Zal sees the Soldier and Hahler take the field, so he runs towards the pack of Players.

The Ukrainian Prisoners part and form two natural columns for the Soldier and Hahler to march through.

Trusevich finally gets to his feet.

His big, proud smile dissipates as he sees the Germans approach him.

He hugs the ball closer; stands to attention.

Zal runs up, close behind the two Germans.

He sees Hahler's right hand cradle the gun holder.

Trusevich breathes deep and slow; puffs out his chest.

The Soldier reaches to take the ball from Trusevich's grasp, but the proud goalie drops it to his foot and skillfully props it up to the opposite knee.

He rests it up to his forehead and lets the ball gently fall back to his chest. He then places the ball behind his back.

Turns to Hahler, who shakes his head and reaches for his pistol...

Suddenly- there is a DEAFENING sound of a loud horn.

A motorcade screeches in.

Another Nazi OFFICER bellows out orders through a megaphone.

OFFICER

(in broken Russian)

All prisoners will be released.
Effective immediately. The Red Army
has abandoned you. You will
register at the desks before you
leave. Follow my men's orders.

The Soldier runs off the field.

Hahler puts out his hand, Trusevich slowly gives him the ball.

Hahler allows the ball to drop to his feet, shakes Trusevich's hand instead.

HAHLER

(in Russian)

Nice save, goalie. Tell your fallen
comrade that if I catch him raping
any other small boys, I'll shoot
him in the balls next time.

He swivels around; whacks the ball into Trusevich's goal.

Hahler leaves the field to join the motorcade of SOLDIERS.

Zal steps over Roman, runs up to Trusevich.

ZAL

Damn, Stalin. He'll never be back.
We are doomed under Hitler.

Trusevich doesn't acknowledge Zal; with a sad grimace, his head drops.

EXT. PRISON CAMP- DAY

Outside rudimentary barracks, GUARDS push and jostle PRISONERS into lines of twenty.

As a line of twenty is formed, three armed Soldiers march these men towards the big open gates.

Hundreds of other Prisoners, including Trusevich, stand in a rudimentary pen.

He watches as Zal gets dragged into one of the lines.

ZAL

Hey. I'm not supposed to be in this line. This is for the Jews.

Trusevich gets a gentle whack on the back by MISCHA "COACH" SIVIRIDOVSKY (Early 40s), a refined older man.

COACH

Nikolai? Once they take the Jews off to slaughter, we get processed and finally leave here.

EXT. BABI YAR RAVINE - LATER

Thousands of JEWISH PRISONERS, flanked by Soldiers, march down a path towards a large ravine.

A PRISONER runs to a small group of trees.

Not even five feet away, SOLDIER FOUR shoots him dead.

Zal looks petrified.

With the Soldiers' attention diverted to the dead Prisoner, Zal runs up; darts back into line.

A YOUNG JEW, stood behind Zal, laughs.

YOUNG JEW

In a rush to meet your Lord and Savior? Well, at least a Lord. No one is getting saved today, my friend.

ZAL

I don't belong here!

A few PRISONERS ahead of Zal is a RABBI.

Zal watches and sees a gap in the Soldier's attention to run forward and get in the line just ahead of the Rabbi.

RABBI
Going somewhere important?

Zal ignores him.

ZAL
(In German)
Captain Hahler? Captain.

Hahler gets a cigarette from SOLDIER FIVE.

Doesn't acknowledge Zal.

Zal steps out of the line, approaches Hahler. Soldier Five whacks Zal in the face, aims his rifle. Hahler lowers the rifle, stands in front of Zal.

HAHLER
(in Russian)
Aha. My mechanic. How did I not see you are a filthy Jew--

ZAL
(in broken German)
No. Not Jewish.

Hahler turns away; cocks his head.

Soldier Five whacks Zal with the rifle to get into the line.

SOLDIER FIVE
(in German)
Rats do not speak to us.

ZAL
(In broken German)
No. Not Jewish.

Soldier Five raises his rifle.

Zal drops his pants, grabs at his manhood.

Soldier Five laughs.

Hahler turns back; stares down at Zal.

HAHLER
Oh, apparently not. Get this man a shovel. He can make himself useful. Can clean up after our cleansing.

EXT. KIEV STREET - DAY

A hefty van, with a swastika painted on the side, turns the corner and comes to an abrupt stop.

A TRAFFIC-SOLDIER holds a HALT sign up.

When he notices the van, he blows his whistle, swivels the sign to the other cars, and raises his hand.

Captain Hahler salutes the Traffic-Soldier.

The van speeds past a small cafe.

EXT. CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Seated at a table near the side of the road, is GEORGI SHVETSOV (40s), a burly man with a larger sense of grandeur.

He holds his newspaper tight as the van whizzes past.

As he reaches out for his coffee cup, he sees a man approach the cafe, who, upon noticing Shvetsov, turns to head in the other direction.

SHVETSOV

Kordik, you silly bastard. I see you. Come. Join me.

IOSIF KORDIK (50s) halts and does a one-eighty turn.

His shoulders on his huge, muscular frame sink and he lets out a soft groan.

KORDIK

Comrade Shvetsov. I'm surprised to see you away from your many duties--

SHVETSOV

Indeed. I could ask the same. We wouldn't want the Germans thinking we are two lazy vagabonds. I can only think an arrest would keep you from your beloved bakery.

Kordik plops himself in the seat next to Shvetsov.

KORDIK

I do my duty...

SHVETSOV

I always enjoy speaking in our mother tongue, but the current time calls for our diligence among our new hosts. I enjoy my lessons.

He snaps his fingers. A YOUNG WAITER comes.

SHVETSOV

Bring this man a coffee.

KORDIK

(in German)

You are too kind, but I must return to work.

SHVETSOV

(in German)

Bakery number three is a well run unit. With Ana managing your affairs, you can relax for ten minutes and join me for coffee.

Kordik shifts his body away, stares back into the kitchen.

He relaxes as the Waiter returns.

The waiter places a cup in front of Kordik, but pours a refill into Shvetsov's cup first.

The Waiter leaves.

Kordik takes a big gulp; winces at the hot brew.

SHVETSOV

So, how is Ana? I do miss her at my office, but if Koch assigns her to a duty he feels needs the assistance, then who am I to argue.

Kordik gulps down the rest of the pipping hot coffee.

KORDIK

Reichskommissar Koch knows best, and rumor has it you have his ear at this moment in time.

Shvetsov sips at his coffee.

SHVETSOV

Oh, the rumor that as acing Sport Minister of Kiev, he has bestowed on me the privilege of forming a summer football league?

KORDIK
Something like that.

SHVETSOV
Now that rumor may be more than a
rumor, my friend.

The Waiter returns with a pot of coffee.

Shvetsov picks up Kordik's coffee cup and raises it to the
Waiter.

The Waiter pours the cup to the brim.

Shvetsov plonks it down in front of Kordik.

A splash just misses Kordik.

SHVETSOV
Would you like to see a football
match some time soon, young man?

The Waiter hesitates.

WAITER
...Yes.

SHVETSOV
Iosif. Why don't you ask your staff
if any of the workers may have once
played for Lokomotiv or Dynamo?
Maybe the Bakery could register a
team. It would be good for Kiev to
field two teams.

Kordik stands.

Offers the Waiter some money.

SHVETSOV
How nice of you. I appreciate the
treat. Maybe we can do this again.

Kordik leaves and almost bumps into a small group of young
MEN chasing something into the street.

Five YOUNG MEN scamper after a cat.

One gets close to it, but the cat bolts up a derelict wall
and races into a bush.

As the cat escapes it runs over a body lying in the bush.

The Young Men slowly approach.

MAN ONE

Is he dead?

MAN TWO

Go look.

All five peer into the bush --

The body rolls out, the Men run off.

Trusevich gathers his wits, tries to fathom where he is.

A young GIRL wheels past on her bicycle.

Trusevich wanders across the street.

A MAN on a scooter swerves, narrowly missing Trusevich.

Kordik hears the Man on the scooter curse the weak looking man.

He runs into the street, grabs Trusevich's arm.

KORDIK

You have to be careful out here.

Trusevich stares at Kordik, but remains silent.

Kordik lets his arm go, but stares back at Trusevich.

TRUSEVICH

Just because I haven't eaten in
four days my friend, I am not
stooping to prostitution, no matter
what you can offer--

KORDIK

I'm staring at you because I am
trying to convince myself you are
not who I think you are.

Trusevich stands back.

TRUSEVICH

I am just another undocumented
citizen. A nobody.

He holds his arms out wide.

TRUSEVICH

One of half a million nobodies--

KORDIK

Trusevich. It is you! Come.

He takes Trusevich by the arm, leads him back to the cafe.

Trusevich resists.

TRUSEVICH
Lokomotiv or Dynamo?

Kordik lays off, beckons Trusevich to take a seat.

KORDIK
Dynamo of course. But right now in
this barren time I'd be happy to
see a match between a bunch of
school girls.

Trusevich smiles.

TRUSEVICH
As long as they are not from
Moscow. So, tell me. Who are you
and what do you want?

KORDIK
For now, company for lunch. Later,
maybe you can come work for me. I
believe you used to be a baker.

As the two men take their seats at the cafe...

A group of JEWS are marched down the street.

The line of desperate families trudge away from their homes.

Behind them, an armored car tots along.

The line of families walk with heads bowed.

Trusevich stares; his leg shake...

At the back is a YOUNG BOY.

He walks with pride and his head held high.

The proud Boy tips his hat to the cafe patrons.

The armored car then pulls alongside the group.

The large, commanding, Nazi flag acts like a barrier...

Between the Jews and the Kievans as they sip their coffee.

EXT. BAKERY OFFICE - DAY

Outside a small cramped office, Kordik leans over the railing bars; views the factory below.

Workers, mainly WOMEN, bustle about.

They knead dough, line large pans, keep the assemble lines going. At the:

FAR END

Two large MEN place the large trays into two fire ovens.

At the left oven is IVAN "CASTLE" KUZMENKO (30s), his hulk of a frame hides the artistry he has once he steps on a football field.

The man at the right oven is RUSLAN "RUSS" MALINSKI (20s), his good looks fading as each shift takes its toll, but his infectious smile reflects his sense of hope to all who meet him.

As Russ places in the last tray, he looks to the closest GUARD.

Not a murmur.

He smiles at the LADY who drags a bucket of flour.

RUSS
Think she's new.

CASTLE
Calm down, lad.

RUSS
You know who else is new? That janitor.

Trusevich enters the area with his broom. Sweeps behind the Lady and her small, spilt trail of flour.

CASTLE
Keep an eye on the time. You burn that batch of bread and you may be the next thing in that oven.

Trusevich finishes his duty but as he turns to leave the area, he sees Castle.

TRUSEVICH
Ivan? Ivan "Castle" Kuzmenko? Woa- is that you?

Castle puts on his oven mitts. Just stares at Trusevich.

TRUSEVICH

Do it nice or do it twice...Your favorite saying--

CASTLE

I prayed for a sign to keep my spirits up. The Lord has brought you here. Maybe later I'll get to hug you and give you a proper welcome. But for now, keep moving, don't let the guards see you idle.

Trusevich nods.

Russ shakes his head, grabs at his oven mitts.

RUSS

Go, the real boss is coming.

A WOMAN, the only one not in a worker's uniform walks past the three men.

This is ANA V, Kordik's second in command. Her arrogant stance is one of protection. She cares for her staff, but also realizes she is one mistake from being replaced.

She glances at the three men, then sees Kordik wave to her.

She looks up and raises her hand.

Kordik points to Trusevich.

She points to Trusevich, too.

ANA

Come.

Trusevich places his broom in a corner, away from the ovens.

Castle and Russ go back to their duties.

As Ana steps back to the stairs that lead to the office, Trusevich follows.

But as he does, each member of STAFF recognizes him.

One WOMAN claps. Another curtsies. A DELIVERY MAN, removes his hat.

Even Ana stops to let Trusevich go up the stairs first.

INT. BAKERY OFFICE- MOMENTS LATER

KORDIK

The guards will change their shifts now. The Ukrainian police work the dinner shift. We have a few minutes.

Ana pushes Trusevich into a seat; places a ledger in front of him.

ANA

With all our staff noticing they have one of Ukraine's most famous footballers among them, we need to keep you under a low profile.

KORDIK

But first. Please review the names in this ledger.

ANA

Make a small circle next to their names.

Ana places a pencil next to the ledger.

KORDIK

But keep it faint, so that Ana can erase it.

Trusevich slowly opens the ledger, glances at the list.

TRUSEVICH

Who are these people? If they committed any crime--

KORDIK

No, sir. All my staff are here. I want you to tell me who can play football. Who are your old teammates?

Trusevich runs his fingers along the list.

TRUSEVICH

Why?

KORDIK

Because we are forming a new football team. An F.C. Start.

EXT. BAKERY GROUNDS - DAY

Dawn overtakes darkness...

A group of WORKERS have just finished loading up Hahler's van.

Hahler dismisses two SOLDIERS.

All but one of the workers leave, too.

She is INESSA Z (late teens), slight of frame, but powerful hands and eyes of steel. Her pale skin illuminates the darkness.

...and something within Hahler.

Inessa removes a folded piece of paper from her apron, hands it to Hahler. He touches her hands; she drops her eyes.

HAHLER
(In broken Russian)
See you soon.

He reaches into the back of the van and removes three loaves of bread, using the paper to grab at them.

Inessa opens up her apron; cradles the three loaves.

She then closes her apron up.

She gently brushes Hahler's arm, turns to leave.

At that same moment, Zal appears.

ZAL
(In German)
Ready, Captain?

Hahler slams the doors shut.

HAHLER
Let's go. We have a new stop before
the barracks. Not a word to anyone.
Understand?

Zal opens the passenger door for Hahler.

Nods his head and clasps his hand over his mouth.

Hahler sits in and Zal gently close the door.

EXT. KIEV STREET- MINUTES LATER

Hahler's van pulls into a dead end.

Zal opens the door to exit, but Hahler pulls him back.

Zal slumps to his seat.

Hahler gets out, leans back in to the van, removes the car keys.

He points to Zal. Then clasps his hands, leans his head onto this hands. As Hahler closes his hands, pretends to snore--

ZAL
(In German)
Sleep? Yea, sleep.

Zal leans back, rests his hands behind his head.

Hahler goes to the back of the van, moves bread around.

He walks past the van.

Zal can see a loaf of bread in each of Hahler's hands.

As Hahler approaches the building, a DOG runs up.

Zal reaches for the van's handle, but relaxes as he sees the dog nuzzle up to the Captain.

ZAL
Interesting.

Hahler puts one loaf of bread under his arm pit, fumbles to retrieve a key.

He opens up the front door.

The dog's tail whips away in delight. Hahler allows the dog to enter first.

Hahler then looks around, pauses, enters the home.

He pushes the door back but doesn't shut the door.

Zal leans up against the van's window.

ZAL
Who the hell lives here?

EXT. BAKERY YARD - DAY

Coach leads a blind folded Trusevich into a large U-shaped yard area.

COACH

First clue.

Trusevich stops, snorts his nose.

TRUSEVICH

Always got that crap in your hair...Vladimir Balakin.

VLADIMIR "VLAD" BALAKIN (30s), a muscular man, steps forward.

VLAD

You never miss a thing.

Vlad embraces Trusevich.

A cleat is placed on Trusevich left shoulder, he gently reaches for it with his right hand.

TRUSEVICH

This boot could've been worn by Goliath! Or the great Makar Goncharenko.

MAKAR "GOLIATH" GONCHARENKO (20s), a strapping man, embraces Trusevich, sobs tears of overwhelming joy.

GOLIATH

You see. I told you, Nikolai. One day we'll play again.

Trusevich removes his blindfold.

TRUSEVICH

Games up, Coach.

More MEN join the small group.

On the far wall, FEODOR " TY" TYUTCHEV (20s), a skinny and serious man outlines a goal with a piece of chalk.

TRUSEVICH

Feodor! You could never hold an offside line, so why did you get this job.

All the PLAYERS gently mob Trusevich.

PAVEL "ROV" KOMOROV (20s), a hardened soul, places a football into Trusevich's hands.

ROV

Today we train. Maybe tomorrow we
kick the Nazi's back over the
Rhine.

AT THE YARD'S ENTRANCE

Zal enters, but stops short before he is noticed.

He steps back, slinks to a wall, allows the shadows to engulf him...

BACK AT THE MAIN YARD

The men form a large circle. Trusevich places the ball down and kicks it to ALEXEI "AL" KLIMENKO (20s), a brash, young man, who's baby face masquerades his tough attitude.

AL

Word on the streets say a league
will start soon. Two Kiev teams.
And a few from the army garrisons --

TY

It is our duty to play and beat
these invaders. Give hope to our
people.

Al passes the ball to Ty, who passes to Castle.

CASTLE

Team Rukh do not represent Kiev!
They are led by a traitor. Shvetsov
wants to appease the Nazi Koch,
nothing else.

Coach whistles.

COACH

Let's keep fit. Let's keep our
minds sharp. Let's stay strong and
together!

Zal slides forward, stands before the group.

He can see a group of men, knocked back by the war, but all doing push ups in unison.

As a team.

INT. KORDIK'S OFFICE - DAY

A large loaf of bread drops onto a table with a THUD.

SHVETSOV
Not good, dear Comrade.

Kordik scans the bread with his eyes. Notices the little gleams.

KORDIK
Ana? Please leave us.

Ana stops to stare down Shvetsov.

SHVETSOV
And how I miss you, too...

As Ana closes the door behind her, Kordik picks up the loaf, tosses it back to Shvetsov.

KORDIK
How do we know it's even one of mine--

SHVETSOV
That's the point dear, Comrade. No one does.

Neither of the men stir.

Kordik flinches first.

KORDIK
What...Do...You...Want?

Shvetsov plonks his large frame onto Kordik's desk.

Things spill to the floor.

SHVETSOV
At least four players. You pick the other three, I leave with Trusevich.

Kordik gets up from his chair; puts his face near Shvetsov's.

KORDIK
Scared of losing? I hear the schedule is set. The two Kiev teams kick things off on June seventh.

Shvetsov scoots off the desk, throws the loaf in the air.

SHVETSOV

Three players including Trusevich.

Kordik sits back down.

Grabs a pen, writes.

Shvetsov taps his feet... Waits.

Kordik looks up.

KORDIK

I thought you were a busy man?

Shvetsov calmly walks to the small dirty window.

He opens it, looks back at Kordik.

SHVETSOV

I'll return in a few days.

He leans out the window.

SHVETSOV

(In German)

Check this batch. Some bread has
glass shards. Arrest all the floor
staff.

Kordik shoots out of his chair.

Shvetsov throws the damaged bread out of the window.

Ana flings open the door, Kordik joins her at the door frame.

They look

BELOW

They watch as German SOLDIERS storm in, forcefully arrest all
the WOMEN working the bread machines.

Shvetsov brushes past them.

SHVETSOV

I shall return in a few days, then.
Three players dear, Comrade. Ana-
always so nice to see you. Enjoy
the rest of your day.

He steps down to the factory floor.

Unperturbed by the Woman dragged out by the Soldiers.

INT. FACTORY FLOOR - NIGHT

The night shift is a bustle with more WORKERS than usual. New people shadow experienced workers.

Bread trays get inspected by a FOREMAN. Three Soldiers carry them out to the loading dock.

Zal munches on half an apple.

As Inessa passes, he steps up to her.

ZAL

Inessa. I haven't seen you in a while.

She continues towards the dock...Zal grabs her arm.

ZAL

Why are you in a rush? Didn't you just start your shift?

She stands there.

Looks at Zal, but shifts her eyes around the room.

She bites down on her lip.

ZAL

Okay. Go. What's the rush? Not like I can invite your for coffee or dinner these days.

She stares at him for a moment.

INESSA

Sssh.

She grabs her arm from his grasp; walks outside.

Zal throws his hands into the air.

Steps towards the ovens.

While watching the flames before the oven doors shut, Inessa returns and walks quickly to the opposite exit.

Zal just notices her leave.

He looks to the dock, decides to follow.

EXT. BAKERY YARD- MOMENTS LATER

The F. C. Start players line up to take shots at Trusevich.

A few players miss, but the ball bounces off the wall.

Coach rolls the ball to MIKHAIL "MEL" MELNICK (30s), a quiet, wiser player.

Mel cracks at it with his left foot.

It just beats Trusevich for a goal.

MEL

And that was my weaker foot!

COACH

Finally; you lot score one goal.

Inessa approaches, the Players stop in their tracks.

She looks at the open windows from the latrines and showers that offer a little light to illuminate the yard.

Trusevich walks up to Inessa.

She hands him two loaves of bread.

TRUSEVICH

Bless you for coming each night.
But you must stop. This is too dangerous.

She steps back away from the Players; runs back to the factory area.

Where she runs into Zal .

ZAL

You run around more than a mouse
near my traps.

She tries to side step him.

He leans his face to the side and pats his cheek.

ZAL

How about a little kiss --

SLAP

She slaps him so hard, his head spins.

INESSA
 Keep away from me!

She runs back into the factory.

Zal rubs his cheek and steps into the illuminated yard.

Rov places a large piece of bread into his pocket and steps up to Zal.

 ROV
 Zal? Don't you work the night
 shift?

 ZAL
 Hahler makes me work the twenty-
 four hour shift. I get a small
 break to piss. Not a big enough
 break to play football.

 AL
 You can't play anyway.

Most of the Players laugh.

Zal shakes his head.

 ZAL
 Ha. Ha. What happens when you are
 on a B shift and the game kicks off
 at that time? You should have
 substitutes just in case.

Trusevich puts his arm around Zal.

 TRUSEVICH
 Come when you can. You can play the
 other goalie when we practice on
 the full field.

Zal goes to shake Trusevich's hand...

 HAHLER
 (O.S)
 Zal? Where are you? Let's go.

The Players freeze as footsteps approach.

Zal places his finger to his lips.

Turns slowly around, and runs towards the shouting Captain.

EXT. BAKERY YARD- DAY

Some of the Players play cards.

Castle attempts to roll a cigarette, but has no luck with the wind.

Russ leans on the wall next to him.

RUSS

That stuff isn't good for you
anyway --

CASTLE

Neither are women and vodka, but
I'd trade my left nut for either
one of them right now.

Rov assists NICKOLAI "NICK" KOROTKYKH (20s), an intense man with a dark past, to a stool.

All the Players rush over as they can see he has taken some beating.

RUSS

Who tried to make your face
prettier?

Nick tries to smile.

ROV

We went to register and the Nazi's
kicked his face in because he
forgot to remove his hat to the
officer.

Vlad brings over a bucket of water.

Nick ducks his head into the water.

The players don't notice him as they turn their attention to Trusevich and Coach approaching with a large sack.

They empty out its contents just as Nick gasps for air.

Eight deflated soccer balls limp onto the floor.

TRUSEVICH

Only fitness training today
gentlemen.

The Players form a solemn circle around the balls.

INT. BAKERY-LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY

Five WOMEN sit on short stools, scrub down overalls in a very large sink.

A younger girl, ELIZE (Early teens), the kind who has learned to work and walk with her eyes closer to the ground for fear of being noticed, struggles to pour hot water out of a bucket and into the sink.

Steam rises.

WOMAN ONE lashes at the steam; pretends to bring it into her body.

WOMAN TWO

Look at her highness taking in a steam bath in Odessa?

Woman One laughs, but stops quickly as three Soldiers enter.

They flank CAPTAIN PAUL RADOMSKY (50s), an obtuse man, who seems to sniff hard twice per minute. His red hair seems to have been colored on by a child.

WOMAN ONE

Dear Lord. That snake is back.

Radomsky scans the room.

He sniffs even louder once his eyes fall on Elize.

Radomsky barks out an order; two Soldiers rush at Elize.

She cowers and allows them to drag her to a closet.

The third Soldier opens the door, places a stool inside.

Radomsky sits on it, struggles to pull down his baggy trousers.

Elize is pushed to the floor; knelt before Radomsky.

He removes a whip from his jacket; lashes it onto the door knob.

The other Women see it close with a bang.

RADOMSKY

(O.C.)

I don't have all day you filthy girl. Go on. Pleasure me!

INT. NAZI HQ - DAY

An immaculate office. The center piece Nazi flag on the wall is almost dwarfed from all the worldly artifacts.

Seated at a shiny desk is REICHSKOMMISSAR ERIC KOCH (40s), a larger than life man, who's manners and professionalism mask an insatiable appetite for the 3rd Reich's objectives.

A SOLDIER opens the door; stands to attention.

Shvetsov rushes in.

Without looking up from a file he's reading --

KOCH
Please remove your hat.

Shvetsov obliges. Takes a step back; bows his head.

Koch snaps the file shut.

KOCH
Leave us.

The Soldier does so.

As the door quietly closes, Koch leans back in his chair.

KOCH
Two meetings in one month may seem to my many ...Admirers, that I am playing favoritism with you.

SHVETSOV
I do not mean to impose upon your busy schedule --

KOCH
Yet here you are...

A long pause.

KOCH
Although I am busy, I will allow you three minutes.

SHVETSOV
Yes Reichskommissar. I wanted to follow up on our last conversation. Have you signed the necessary paper work for the football league?

Koch rubs his chin; leans forward.

KOCH

When I was a young lad in Saint Gorhausen, our family went to visit my uncle's farm one day. It was a glorious day... He let me assist in the slaughter of a pig...An intelligent creature; who knew the fate that befell him as we approached with knives. After that, we cleaned up and then had a marvelous football game. Wonderful memories...Even to this day, I am torn which was the more satisfying event.

Shvetsov gulps hard.

KOCH

The Motherland has a new policy of appeasement. I'm to try it out for ninety days. Go ahead. For the summer only. The documents will be ready tomorrow.

SHVETSOV

Excellent.

Koch suddenly focuses his attention to a bird that lands on the sill outside his window.

Shvetsov waits but does notice how Koch is now just affixed on the bird.

SHVETSOV

Will you be attending the opening match? Minister Islyak would like to honor your leadership before the first match.

Koch pays him no attention.

As the bird leaves, Koch turns to face Shvetsov.

KOCH

I'd prefer no German team participate for now. I will inform you of my decision once I see your list of referees and game schedule.

Shvetsov nods.

KOCH

But I doubt I will attend.

EXT. BAKERY YARD- DAY

Castle approaches the group of Players mulling about.

CASTLE

What's with the long faces? Did someone die?

TY

Worse than that. Someone stole our football boots.

Goliath pushes Ty.

GOLIATH

As if you would need them; doubt you'll play much you brick --

TRUSEVICH

Gentlemen, please. We are brothers here. We will find them.

RUSS

There's only thirteen of us, who is missing?

They part and open up space among themselves.

AL

The other Nikolai. Nick.

Castle opens his shirt, reveals a pair of boots around his neck.

CASTLE

Told you to watch your own.

Goliath charges at Castle, attempts to body slam him to the ground.

Castle just absorbs the blow.

Four Players grapple with Goliath.

TRUSEVICH

Gentlemen. Let's stay calm. Our first game is next week. I hate to say this, but if you all played barefoot I would still put money on you to score at least four goals.

The Players gather closer around Trusevich.

TRUSEVICH

Train hard with Coach today. I will go and talk to Mister Kordik. I will ask for boots and our work schedule. Let's pray we are all available for the momentous match.

Coach whistles loud through his teeth.

The Players form a circle around him.

Inessa and another factory GIRL approach.

Trusevich stops them from coming closer.

INESSA

Is it true the first game will be against Rukh? We heard the movement-players were given the week off.

TRUSEVICH

Good for them. They will need two weeks off after we beat up on them.

Rov laughs. He then sees Inessa hand Trusevich four bars of chocolate.

Trusevich smiles, thanks her.

The two Girls leave.

Trusevich hands all the bars to Coach.

Follows the Girls into the factory floor.

The players pause from the round of squats.

Rov nudges Russ.

ROV

Not sure about that Inessa. I know she's quite stunning, but in bed with the Germans?

RUSS

Oh, shut it you jealous substitute of a player --

ROV

Look at the chocolate wrapper. It is from Germany.

EXT. BAKERY 3 ENTRANCE - DAY

Two German jeeps are parked near the factory entrance.

Six SOLDIERS stand to attention.

Kordik gently hands Hahler a clipboard.

HAHLER

Where do you find these men?

KORDIK

We need to build a new latrine,
these two are very good with bricks
and mortar.

Hahler signs the document.

HAHLER

Let me guess; they can also play
football.

Kordik smiles.

KORDIK

Almost as good as they lay bricks,
sir.

Kordik waves to Ana. She opens up the large doors, waves the
players out.

Two fit-MEN trudge out.

Nod to Kordik and sit into the first truck.

They sit quietly in the truck; shielding from the beaming
sun.

Trusevich, Al and Castle are the next to come out.

They all rush to the truck.

One of the Soldiers beckons them to calm down.

Trusevich jumps on the truck; slaps Vlad's arm.

VLAD

We're the new brick layers. Got a
latrine to build. In between
football practice. Priorities...

EXT. KIEV STADIUM FIELD - DAY

SOLDIERS march the F. C. Start players to the football pitch.

Captain Hahler follows behind.

Zal trudges further back, struggles to carry a large basket.

As the team goes through its stretches, Hahler and the five Soldiers settle into the small grandstand at the near side of the field.

Hahler looks around at the picturesque day.

Zal finally arrives.

HAHLER
Come my little rat. My boys are
hungry.

Hahler stares at Zal.

Zal realizes he must open the basket and lay out their lunch.

He lines up sandwiches.

Then passes each Soldier a flask.

HAHLER
Drink up boys.

He then turns to Zal.

HAHLER
Go. Join that rabble.

Zal rolls up his sleeves; runs to the players at the

FIELD

Russ is closest to the touch-line and blocks Zal.

RUSS
Hey, we do not need a ball boy
today. Go back to your master,
little puppy.

Zal pushes him and struts to the remaining Players.

COACH
Zal, what are you doing here?

ZAL

Al has extra work duty, you only have thirteen players. I can help.

Players grumble.

Ty, with a hardened look, steps to Zal.

TY

Dynamo or Lokomotiv?

Vlad puts his arms around Zal; looks at Ty.

VLAD

Does it matter?

Ty pushes up close to Vlad.

Zal tries to break lose.

TY

Of course. You Locomotiv men bring down the quality of this new team--

Before another word is said, Vlad socks Ty.

Ty grabs his jaw.

Plants his feet into the ground; takes a fighters stance.

ZAL

Calm down!

Other Players rush over and pounce on Ty.

BACK AT THE BLEACHERS

The Germans see the scuffle; grab their weapons.

HAHLER

Wait! This may get quite entertaining.

All the Soldiers settle down and watch the scuffle...

BACK ON THE FIELD

Vlad gets dragged off the pile of men.

Russ and Trusevich pull off Ty.

Vlad takes a few punches from Ty, before Castle steps in and pushes them both aside.

He is too big of a man for either one to continue the fight.

RUSS

We are all brothers. Lokomotiv.
Dynamo. Forget all that. We are now
F.C. Start.

TRUSEVICH

Calm down, gentlemen. If we fight
today, who will let us take the
field next week. It's been a while
since any of us has been on a
field... Let's enjoy the
opportunity afforded us. Let's show
Hahler and his bosses how we can
play football.

He steps down; grabs some grass.

TRUSEVICH

It is quite beautiful. Look, the
invaders have even marked the
field. We are here to play, not to
fight.

He does a back flip...It eases the tension. Players relax,
nudge one another.

TRUSEVICH

Who's here to play?

He places his one hand out forward.

Ty puts his on top.

All, including Zal, place their hands on top of each others.

Ty smiles at Vlad.

TY

Next time you take a shot like
that, aim at the opponent's goal,
okay?

Vlad laughs.

TRUSEVICH

We stand as one. One new team. Our
past is our past. Who the hell
knows what tomorrow will bring; now
is all that matters. We stand as
one. We are F.C. Start. They are
the enemy. We are brothers bound by
one round, leather ball.

INT. BAKERY FLOOR - NIGHT

The clock on the wall indicates 5 minutes past 3am.

Many WORKERS, mostly men, clean machines.

Trusevich is near the door way; scrubs down bread pans.

Nick waltzes in; a spring in his step.

TRUSEVICH

So, what's your secret?

NICK

Brother we share the same name, but
not the same feel for life...

He leans in closer to Trusevich.

NICK

Word is from Moscow, the Red Army
is re-arming. Stalin is planning a
push back. All the way to Kiev.

TRUSEVICH

Which little birdy told you that?

NICK

The same one that flew near Odessa
in November. Confirming all those
families were safe--

TRUSEVICH

Including mine...Hmm. Let's hope
that is good news. But count on
seeing snow in Kiev before you see
the Red Army return.

Trusevich goes back to his duties.

Nick walks to the far corner to grab an apron, when Radomsky,
three German Soldiers, and five Ukrainian police OFFICERS
enter.

The largest POLICEMAN- XANDER (20s) bellows out:

XANDER

The following people must report to
the loading dock for your change in
work assignments.

The Workers cease what they are doing.

The factory goes eerily silent.

He rallies of six names; the Men slump out.

A younger policemen, ASMINOV (late teens), watches Radomsky and the German Soldiers leave for another room.

As he steps to follow them, Nick approaches him.

NICK

Hey, brother, if I was you I would stay put. Radomsky doesn't like an audience, he is too --

ASMINOV

Stand back!

Asminov whips out his pistol; points at the stunned Nick.

NICK

I was just going to say that --

ASMINOV

Quiet. On your knees.

Nick does...Slowly.

The large policeman and the other three gather around.

XANDER

Nikolai Korotkykh? It is you, you little red worm.

He too takes out his pistol.

NICK

Xander. It has been a long time--

XANDER

You red bastard! Why didn't you leave with the rest? Stalin needs someone to clean his arse every morning.

He grabs at Nick's hair.

XANDER

This mop would do a fine job.

The five Policemen laugh.

Xander scans the room.

XANDER

Curtesy of this NKVD scum, you may all take a ten minute break.

The Staff, including Trusevich, swiftly leave.

A WOMAN'S scream is heard nearby.

XANDER

Oh. Radomsky has already started.
Maybe we only have six minutes.

The other three Officers laugh...Asminov looks confused.

ASMINOV

Damn Communist!

He spits on Nick.

XANDER

That's not going to hurt him much.

Nick braces himself, puffs out his chest...

SLAM

Asminov strikes him over the head with his pistol.

Nick winces.

Still on his knees, he snorts and inches closer to Asminov.

XANDER

Real tough guy, huh? Where's little
Joseph now?

Xander whacks his gun across Nick's nose.

Blood splatters across the wall.

Still, Nick remains on his knees.

Xander shakes his head.

The other three Policemen all hit the unarmed player in the
back with their guns.

Nick reels, but stays on his knees.

XANDER

When you decide to fall down, then
I will know you have had enough.

Asminov whacks him on top of the head.

Nick wobbles.

Just as it looks he is about to fall--

He springs up to his feet.

NICK

Xander. Xander. Always the soft
cheese. All the more for fellow
rats to take a nibble. You Comrade,
are a traitor to this country--

Xander whacks him again- smack in the mouth.

A tooth falls.

Blood then pours out.

NICK

That's all you got, you damn rat.
You see. The red of the Motherland
will dirty your boots--

Asminov unloads a barrage of hits.

Nick sways, desperate to hold himself up...

After a few seconds, he hits the hard floor.

Out cold.

As another Policemen kicks him, Radomsky and his entourage
return.

RADOMSKY

What is this insolence? Where are
all the damn staff?

He steps over Nick.

RADOMSKY

Get them back now!

He walks over to the sink area.

Asminov leaves; calls the staff in.

Radomsky leans under the sink.

Pulls out a bucket.

RADOMSKY

And clean this red mess up! It is
very unsanitary. I like bread. I
especially like clean, fresh bread.

EXT. BAKERY GROUNDS - DAY

Excitement fills the air.

The Players parade out from the factory into the waiting jeeps.

Even Hahler tips his hat to Trusevich.

HAHLER

Kick Shvetsov's team off the park
will you? I hate that guy.

Behind them, Inessa comes through the doors.

Rov snuggles up next to her.

ROV

Hey; do you have any more of that
German chocolate?

Inessa steps away from him.

ROV

Forget it...Traitor.

He is the last to get into the jeeps.

Zal comes through the door, stops to view the team.

A raggedy bunch of bakery workers, but their laughter and easiness they have with each other, shows to all that they are a team.

Zal get into Hahler's van and starts up the engine.

Ana and Kordik run out.

Kordik waves a long piece of paper.

KORDIK

Captain! Please; a moment of your
time.

Hahler's hands are already on the passenger door.

HAHLER

Can it wait? My superiors are
expecting this "parade" at the Kiev
Stadium at sixteen-hundred hours.

KORDIK

Please, sir. To my office.

Ana shoots a glance in Inessa's direction.

Inessa is busy looking at the oncoming motorcade...

Hahler grabs the paper.

HAHLER

What is it?

Kordik turns the paper over.

KORDIK

Sir, this way to my --

HAHLER

Speak! Speak now!

Kordik puts the paper up to Hahler's eyes.

KORDIK

Look at the list. All eligible,
young woman to be shipped...

The motorcade arrives.

The three cars block the two jeeps that hold all the Players.

Hahler's car is juxtaposed to all five vehicles.

Zal springs out, approaches.

Ana moves towards Inessa.

Kordik steps back.

Lets the paper fall at the feet of...

Captain Radomsky.

RADOMSKY

Why haven't you left Captain
Hahler?

Hahler looks over to Inessa.

Ana leads her away.

RADOMSKY

Hahler? Leave. I need to round up
twenty women. Trains leave in two
hours.

Hahler steps past Radomsky.

HAHLER

Be right back--

RADOMSKY

No! Koch's assistant is at the Stadium. This is Koch's new project. Get this team of...Prisoners to the stadium now.

Hahler keeps going, in the direction of where Ana has led Inessa: an outdoor latrine.

Radomsky grabs Hahler's arm.

RADOMSKY

Now; before I radio HQ that you are not only late, but have impeded my assignment.

Kordik slinks past the two officers.

RADOMSKY

Kordik. Get these girls. And that one in the lavatory.

Ana slides away as Asminov approaches.

Russ tries to get out the jeep but Trusevich pulls him down.

TRUSEVICH

It's not your battle.

Hahler pulls down on his jacket, adjusts his hat.

He salutes Radomsky.

Waits for Zal to open the door of the van.

Zal obliges, then looks back.

A Soldier grabs and drags at Inessa.

Inessa's screams ring around the vehicles.

She catches Hahler get into the vehicle.

Zal turns the van around and maneuvers past the cars of the motorcade and away from the loading dock.

Radomsky picks up the paper.

Folds it neatly and places it into his jacket...

INT. FOOTBALL LOCKER ROOM - LATER

The Twelve players pile into the small locker room.

A U-shaped bench on the left.

A sink on the right. A latrine in the far corner.

All but Trusevich take a seat.

RUSS

What's the point? We put out a team today, maybe next week we get shipped out to a work camp.

Vlad rushes to a sink...

Vomits.

COACH

You need a few minutes?

Vlad smiles.

Then goes back to the sink, heaves up.

COACH

Slight change in the team. Rov. You start the first half.

Nick stands up.

NICK

Comrades. If we play this match, our City will see us as collaborators. We can make a stand now. Let's refuse to go out --

GOLIATH

Are you mad? Mister Kordik brought us together so we can give our City something to cheer for.

Vlad pushes past Nick.

Sits down; holds his stomach. Nick slaps Vlad on the back.

RUSS

But what happens if we win? We are playing Shvetsov's Rukh team. This maybe Koch's league but we all know Shvetsov championed for this league. His friend is even refereeing today.

ROV

I heard that "big fatty" gave his players the week off. I don't care. I want to play. I'm a footballer, not a factory worker. For ninety minutes I want that feeling of self worth back.

Trusevich rummages through a small garden shed, at the back of the locker room.

NICK

These fascist Germans just want to use us. To give their soldiers a respite.

ROV

All the garrisons came today. It's a free event. I saw Hungarian and Romanian units coming in--

COACH

We are here. To represent Kiev--

RUSS

But for how long? Will we be shot if we lose. Shipped off if we win? I'm not sure about this.

Russ stands next to Nick.

NICK

The game will be a joke. Rukh have no decent players. It will be nothing but a propaganda campaign for the Germans... Trusevich! What are you doing?

Trusevich pulls out a box.

TRUSEVICH

Gentlemen. I hear all your concerns.

Trusevich drags the box, sets it in front of the opening before the U- bench.

TRUSEVICH

Rov is right- we are footballers. Nick is correct, too. The Germans probably set up this exhibition season to benefit themselves more than us...

NICK

Exactly...

Trusevich looks at him. Then squats behind the box.

RUSS

Is this really a fight we are equipped for? Is this a fight we even want to participate in?

All the other players stand...Stand in unison.

TRUSEVICH

Gentlemen. We do not have weapons. But we can fight with our victories on the football pitch.

He hands Vlad a red football jersey.

Vlad accepts it.

Trusevich digs inside the box.

Pulls out all the other jerseys.

Goes around the room; places them across each players shoulder.

TRUSEVICH

Vlad and I will wear these shirts.

Vlad digs into the box and gives Trusevich the last shirt. It's a black long sleeve one, with a red-stripe running down the arms.

Trusevich accepts it and puts it on.

Vlad puts his shirt on, too.

VLAD

For the Motherland.

TRUSEVICH

Listen my brothers. For a while members of Dynamo and Lokomotiv will be playing in this color; the color of our flag. The Fascists should know that this color cannot be defeated.

INT. BAKERY DORMS - DAY

Trusevich screws a shower head onto the pipe.

Kordik enters.

KORDIK

Was it really seven to two?

Trusevich looks up.

TRUSEVICH

Sorry to inform that yes, they scored two late goals against me.

KORDIK

And without Castle?

Trusevich nods.

TRUSEVICH

Can we get him back on our shift? Our next games will be harder. We will need him.

KORDIK

Did you see Shvetsov?

TRUSEVICH

At four nil, I did see him warm up. Maybe he thought he'd come on--

Kordik laughs.

Two LADIES enter.

KORDIK

Not yet. Go back to work.

Trusevich puts his spanner away.

TRUSEVICH

Actually, I am all done.

Kordik looks at the shower.

KORDIK

Hmm. Still looks a little loose to me. I think you should stay here at least another hour and get it proper tight. I can't have my ladies complaining.

Kordik winks at Trusevich.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The room is a bustle with sweaty, dirty but excited Players.

RUSS
Five out of five wins- yeah!

Players joyfully slap Russ on the back.

They get more boisterous, until they push him into a corner.

RUSS
Too much love, my brothers.

Coach collects all the dirty shirts from the players.

As he places them into an empty potato sack, the locker room doors open.

The place falls silent.

ZAL
Wow. I've seem more life in the cemetery.

He enters with a small box.

TY
What do you want?

ZAL
What do you want? Here. Curtesy of Captain Hahler.

He pulls out an orange from the box, throws it at Ty.

The Players converge.

An orange for everyone, including Zal.

Trusevich takes his; scoots up to allow Zal a seat.

TRUSEVICH
Please thank the captain.

ZAL
I will, but he don't care about us.
I think he won a bet on today's game. So...

He peels his orange, then looks up at Trusevich.

ZAL

I get a short break per day now.
I'd like to come practice this week
with you all. Maybe even play in
the next game. You had no subs
today.

GOLIATH

But we need players who can really
play. We are playing the Hungarians
next. They have won all their games
to date.

He nudges Trusevich.

RUSS

Afraid I will hurt you again in a
tackle, like three weeks ago?

Zal bites into his orange.

ZAL

You never know. I could be of use.

He stands and eats his orange in front of Goliath.

GOLIATH

Thank the Captain.

ZAL

Enjoy.

Zal nods to Trusevich and leaves.

VLAD

At least he is eager. Hey, can it
hurt to have a substitute? He
doesn't actually have to play.
Unless we lose a man to injury.

MEL

I don't like that boy.

COACH

We can use substitutes at the half
time break.

Trusevich scans the room.

TRUSEVICH

I'm only one player. We should call
a vote.

Then bites into his orange.

EXT. STORAGE AREA - NIGHT

Russ loads boxes into a large storage container.

A GUARD stands near by.

Two other GUARDS walk past and call him to join them.

He sees that Russ has almost finished the task.

The Guard loosely places the padlock on the chain.

Rattles it loudly.

Russ nods.

RUSS

Got it.

The Guard hurries to join the other two.

Russ wipes his brow, then goes back to the task of moving the boxes.

He takes his time.

As he places in the last box, he stands in the doorway to admire his work.

Suddenly, a right hand grabs his neck.

A left hand shoves a wet rag into his mouth.

The Assailant grapples Russ to his knees.

Russ bites down on the hand with the rag, but the Assailant digs the rag deeper into Russ' mouth.

Russ' knees buckle.

He makes one last attempt to grab at either of the Assailant's hands.

His hands go limp; his body falls to the ground.

The Assailant drags his body and props up Russ against the boxes.

Through a small sliver of light, Russ sits there- at peace.

The Assailant locks the big door.

Slams on the padlock.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Kordik looks down on the factory floor.

Trusevich stands near the window.

KORDIK

If I've one worker missing, I cannot just release another one to go play football.

TRUSEVICH

We have three players sick, Hahler is sick, he won't need Zal. Hey, we won't need Zal I don't think. It's just as a precaution.

Kordik turns back to face Trusevich.

KORDIK

Big game today. The German team seem very good.

Trusevich steps closer.

TRUSEVICH

I'm slightly worried about the officiating today. But I'm concerned about Russ. He is a good patriot, there is no way he'd escape. Escape to where?

Kordik grabs at a book on his desk.

KORDIK

Koch has ordered an extension to be built. We start tomorrow. Today, go beat these Germans. Show them Ukraine rules this football season.

TRUSEVICH

So?

Kordik taps his fingers onto the book.

KORDIK

Okay. Take him. Just for today.

Trusevich shakes Kordik's hand.

TRUSEVICH

Today, F.C. Start will make our country proud. We will not be defeated.

EXT. BAKERY GROUNDS- DAY

No fanfare this time.

The Players each enter the two trucks.

Trusevich comes out with Zal.

ZAL

But it's the German Flakelf team.
All the troops will be there.

He stops in his tracks.

ZAL

What happens if we beat them?

TRUSEVICH

When we beat them!

Castle brushes past Zal.

Playfully pats Trusevich on the arm.

Trusevich notices his right hand has a small bandage wrap.

TRUSEVICH

What happened to you?

Castle makes a masturbation motion.

CASTLE

Got too excited.

The two men laugh.

Zal goes into a truck.

Trusevich sees Ana beckon him over, notices her eyes are red.

He looks back to the truck and sees the Players relaxed and a few quietly lapping up the sunshine.

He approaches Ana.

Through new tears, Ana blurts out.

ANA

They found Russ in the storage
room. I'm sorry Nikolai...But he is
dead.

EXT. STREET- DAY

Goliath, Castle and Trusevich stare up at a lamppost.

There are three signs posted; one above the other.

Goliath peels down the lower one.

GOLIATH
Revenge? Absurd.

CASTLE
Look. Written in German, too. Are
they kidding?

Trusevich runs his fingers along the big flyer.

TRUSEVICH
Look; they've listed fourteen
players from the Flakelf victory.
Vlad didn't even play.

GOLIATH
It's got to be a joke.

A truck backs up; close to the three Players.

A German GUARD shouts out an order.

Trusevich folds the second flyer; put it into his trousers.

TRUSEVICH
Let's all meet tonight. Let's
review this mess.

Zal turns the corner.

ZAL
What mess?

He catches Castle glance up at the highest poster.

Zal reads it; but in German.

GOLIATH
Why you so versed in their tongue?

ZAL
I do what I got to do to survive
this damn mess. This is serious.
You can't play in this next match.
Tell Kordik we'll forfeit.

Goliath punches Zal.

GOLIATH

Never.

Zal stays back.

Trusevich steps in.

Three GUARDS mock the teammates with gestures of a boxing match.

TRUSEVICH

We will play. We now have the Germans attention by beating Flakelf. Maybe one more match, one more victory, will get us their respect.

GOLIATH

Here.

He jumps up, grabs the flyer.

Slams it into Zal's chest.

Zal doesn't resist.

GOLIATH

Keep it as a memento. You're not even listed as a player; because you can't kick a --

TRUSEVICH

Enough! Let's see what Kordik says.

One of the Officers barks out an order.

Zal lets down the back of the truck.

He gets into the back and re appears with a roll of barbed wire.

One of the Guards hands the three Players a pair of thick gloves.

ZAL

You two ready?

Goliath stares at Zal, but helps ease down the large mass of wire.

Captain Hahler struts up to his Officers.

Two cock their guns; the third beckons Zal.

The three Soldiers and three Players move into a large square, off the street, that surrounds some small apartment buildings.

As the CREW gets closer, Hahler marches past them to greet another Officer and five other Soldiers.

Once the Crew arrive at the opening, they see at the far wall, thirty or so MEN.

They barely move in the heat of day.

A few peer closer as the Crew arrives and cheer the Players.

HAHLER

I want it at least ten feet tall.

One of the new Officers props up a ladder on one side of the opening.

One of Hahler's men motions Zal to go up the ladder.

Slowly, Goliath and Trusevich separate so the wire has some slack.

Zal feels it.

He goes up the ladder.

About eight feet up there is a large nail.

He begins to wrap wire around the nail.

Seeing that it is too loose, he bends some around the nail.

Although he cuts himself, he ignores it, not missing a beat to get the wire around.

Hahler looks up.

HAHLER

Not tall enough.

Zal unscrews the nail.

Then goes up to the last step.

HAHLER

See, if you were a Jew, you would have planned this out and done a decent job. Get it in anywhere there.

Zal does his best to screw in the nail.

One of the other Soldiers approaches; hands Hahler a mallet.

HAHLER

I should use this to knock some
sense into you, Zal.

He goes to the ladder, but waits at the bottom.

Zal slowly steps down, cut himself on wire again.

He takes the mallet.

ZAL

(In German)

Thank you, sir.

Hahler turns to face the small but boisterous mob.

HAHLER

You know who these men are?

Zal shakes his head.

Trusevich and Goliath step closer to Zal as he now needs more
wire to place around the nail.

HAHLER

These men were arrested after
yesterday's game. Desecrating
German property. Disrespecting
authority. Do you think your team
incensed them?

Zal shakes his head slowly.

Looks over to the other two Players.

HAHLER

I'm all for a good sporting
occasion, but you've had a nice
run. Time to stop this nonsense.
I'm sure your uncle would agree.

Zal comes down the ladder.

Mindful of the wire near the Captain.

HAHLER

I don't understand why you don't
play for his Rukh team?

EXT. KIEV STADIUM FIELD - AFTERNOON

Heat waves hang heavy over the grass.

A GROUNDSMAN, and a BOY, mark the lines of the penalty box.

The F.C. Start Players enter the locker room area; all except Trusevich.

He strides across the field to the center circle.

He stops; bows his head.

After a few moments he takes out a small wooden cross and places it inside the ground.

TRUSEVICH

For you, Russ.

He looks up to the sky, closes his eyes.

He opens them to find the Groundsman and his Boy tugging at his long sleeved black shirt.

The Groundsman puts out his hand. Trusevich shakes it with vigor. Then pats the Boy on the head.

TRUSEVICH

I've a daughter about your age--

BOY

Will she be here for the game?

Trusevich looks at the empty grandstand and the adjoining seats.

TRUSEVICH

No, not today. She is quite far away, and hopefully safe. Anyway, I hope you will attend this match. Maybe you can be the ball boy on this side?

The Groundsman smiles.

BOY

For sure. I want to help. Want to help you beat the Germans again.

TRUSEVICH

We will do our best, for you. For Kiev. For Ukraine.

EXT. KIEV STADIUM FIELD - LATER

The grandstand side of the stadium is jam packed. On both sides of the grandstand, LOCALS squeeze in for a better view of the pitch.

Small CHILDREN are passed down; they take their seats on the floor near the sideline.

More SOLDIERS, brandishing batons, line the left and right side of the grandstand.

A support troop of SOLDIERS enter that area with snarling DOGS.

At the end of that line is an entourage of DIGNITARIES.

Koch is joined by his boss, the dapper but serious Commander EICHSTADT (60s).

Two other high ranking officers, KLOSE (30s) and BERGMANN (30s) follow behind.

The last to sit is a tall Officer, with a bald head: UGENTAHLER (40s).

A few OFFICERS assist the Dignitaries to their seats.

On the opposite side, the embankment slightly rises a few feet.

As a LOCAL-LADY opens the gates, hundreds of PEOPLE swarm in to that area.

The sloping grass quickly fills up.

As young MEN try to fill up the front, Soldiers push them back.

The crowd is one of excitement and anticipation.

On the right side of the grandstand, Men begin to chant:

CROWD
F.C. F.C.

Ugentahler shakes the Dignitaries hands, then with two Guards flanking him, steps down and out of the seating area.

A group of Soldiers muscle the crowd further from the grandstand as another whole regiment arrives.

The Soldiers' faces reflect joy to see a football match: Aryan superiors versus Ukrainian captives.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME TIME

The Players change into their uniforms. The place packed with Romanian guards and a few Locals.

All these guests offer the Players some fruit or chocolate.

As a few leave, more WELL-WISHERS arrive.

Coach stands on the bench and yells.

COACH

Enough. Thank you all for your
kindness...But, please leave now.

Begrudgingly, the Well-Wishers leave.

One WOMAN (70s) lingers; takes Goliath by the hand.

WOMAN

Beat them today. Show them Kiev
still has a heart beat.

Most of the Players hear what she says.

The locker room falls silent.

Until a rustle comes from inside the latrine.

Trusevich approaches.

Castle stands to back him up.

He takes off a boot; looks at Trusevich.

Slowly, Trusevich opens the door.

Out stumbles a little boy, PAVEL (10 years old).

TRUSEVICH

And who is this little runt?

PAVEL

Names Pavel and I'm your number one
fan.

Trusevich offers his hand; helps the lad up.

TRUSEVICH

Would you like to meet the team?

Pavel nods.

Trusevich leads the boy towards the Players.

AL

Hello. Nice to meet you.

Pavel stares in awe.

Then opens his hand to Al.

PAVEL

This is for you.

The Players gather round and all stare down at the little boy's open palm.

There, in the middle, is a small rotten tooth.

He lifts his hands to Al.

PAVEL

You are my favorite player, sir. I want you to have my best good-luck charm.

Al gently takes it.

AL

I will put it in my boot--

TRUSEVICH

Maybe it will help him score a goal today.

The room erupts in laughter.

Pavel beams a broad smile and wails in delight as Al picks him up and spins him around.

But Al stops as the main doors swing open.

In comes Ugentahler.

The Woman squeezes out.

Pavel's feet hit the ground, and he runs out, too.

Like naughty school boys, the Players cower into their seats and stare up at the tall, bald SS Officer.

His impeccable suit matches his demeanor.

UGENTAHLER

Gentlemen. On behalf of Reichskommissar Koch, I wish to congratulate you on a fine season.

He stares at each player, one by one.

Methodical in his timing, he steps closer to the players.

UGENTAHLER

That is quite a crowd outside. It seems you have...Stirred the city. You have put on quite the show. Today, we expect you to play by the governing rules and greet the German team and our dignitaries with the customary salute of respect to the Fuhrer.

He smiles; raises his eyebrows.

Snaps his feet together.

UGENTAHLER

Hiel Hitler.

He spins around; marches out.

The perplexed Players freeze like statues.

Outside the sound of the crowd grow boisterous, and a few guard dogs' barks attempt to control them.

Trusevich grabs his shirt above his heart and kisses it.

TRUSEVICH

Not going to happen.

COACH

What happens if we don't salute them?

ZAL

It's just for two seconds--

GOLIATH

Never. We will not cower to this request.

TRUSEVICH

His demand is a test. To see if we divide over it, or we remain as one. As one team.

VLAD

Exactly.

Trusevich smiles and gently goes to each player; beckons them to sit.

TRUSEVICH

Sit my friends. Prepare for a game like no other. We will make our mark today by --

ZAL

We have to salute them. They've armed guards. They are looking for an excuse to kick us out the game. We should comply.

COACH

Zal has a point. Maybe it is a trick...No, we must play this game. All of the City is counting on us.

AL

And Pavel.

ZAL

We salute. Take the field and play our best--

CASTLE

To win.

NICK

For the Motherland.

ZAL

It's suicide to ignore his request. They don't need an excuse to arrest us, or shoot us...We need to make a decision before we go out there.

Trusevich stands in the middle of everyone.

Looks at all his teammates smack between the eyes of each player.

Clasps his fist into his hand.

TRUSEVICH

Is this team of Aryan superstars fitter than us? Probably. Is this team better fed? Sure they are. Did they get lots of rest since Thursday's game? Bet they did. But are they a skilled, experienced team like we are? Like hell they are!

EXT. STADIUM - MINUTES LATER

In the small stadium: BEDLAM

Besides the few small BOYS, including Pavel, every Kievan stands in awe as the German FOOTBALLERS take the field.

They march to the half way line and methodically form a new line- almost shoulder to shoulder; a slight gap in between each player. Neither one smiles.

They are here to get a job done; restore a sense of order; a sense of pride.

The thirteen F.C. Start Players nervously exit the locker room, make their way towards the German team.

Coach and Zal are at the back of the line, but even from there Zal can sense the barometer of the atmosphere!

He can also see how each German player is a physical specimen. Only Castle matches their height.

ZAL

Damn!

As captain, Trusevich leads the team to their opposition.

Once in his place, he purposely stretches his arms wide-exaggeratedly so; just missing the German CAPTAIN (Late 20s) with his left arm.

The German Captain does not flinch.

The policeman, Xander, bellows through a megaphone.

XANDER

Today's grand final is courtesy of our leader Reichskomissar Koch and his distinguished guest Commander Eichstadt. Unruly behavior, including excessive cheering, will result in your expulsion from the game.

The CROWD hiss.

A few of the F.C. Start Players nervously look around.

Ugentahler and two LINESMAN approach the two sets of Players.

They stand in front of the two captains.

In one hand, Ugentahler holds a ball.

In the other, a large whistle.

He lets out a long, loud blow of the whistle.

For a brief moment the crowd calm down.

As the whistle ends all the German Players and the three officials shout: "Hiel Hitler."

All the Soldiers and German Officers salute back: "Heil Hitler."

In the eerie silence that befalls the stadium, the word Hitler seems to echo on.

The F.C. Start Players can see all the German Players have held their salute.

The German Captain looks down the line of F.C. Start Players with disdain.

All stand tall and proud; taking in the brief moment of defiance.

Zal's legs seems to wobble.

He looks back down the line at these hungry, hard working bakery workers.

Now they stand in unison, first as a professional football team, but second, and more importantly, they stand as a band of brothers and a symbol of good against their captors.

Trusevich makes a fist with his right hand and slams the side by his thumb into his chest.

All the other players, but Zal, do the same, and the twelve of them shout.

F.C. START TEAM
Long live sport. Long live Kiev.

The Crowd erupts, loud cheers ring out.

WOMEN scream and BOYS shriek.

The German Players release their salute.

The two captains follow the three Officials to the center spot.

Coach and Zal leave the eleven starters and trot to the opposite sideline.

They sit on two of the three buckets.

Eight German SUBSTITUTES take their place in eight of the eleven chairs on the near sideline.

A LADY stands there with a tray of half cut oranges.

Two armed SOLDIERS flank each side of the chairs.

At the center circle, the German Captain shakes Trusevich's hand.

He holds on for a few more moments, looks the goalkeeper square in the eyes.

Both stare at each other; neither one hears the referee state.

UGENTAHLER

Gentlemen. On my whistle.

Trusevich releases his grip, trots back to the penalty box.

He slaps the hand of each of his team mates.

The whistle blows.

Three German players, NUMBERS 9, 10 and 11 stay close to each other as they dribble down the field.

VLAD

Keep your eye on the ball, lads.

Vlad slides in, nips the ball away.

Number 9 stomps on his left ankle.

Goliath controls the ball, spins, but as he goes to pass to Castle, number 11 elbows him in the ribs.

The ball rolls loose and number 10 passes it around Vlad, who is still on the floor, writhing in agony.

Mel tries to tackle number 10, but he manages to squirm the ball past the Ukrainian player and pass it out wide to a charging number 7.

Number 7 crosses the ball immediately into the penalty box.

Al and number 8 both jump, but the ball is too far for them both.

Trusevich leaps and grabs the ball.

He rolls the ball along the ground to Nick, but he fails to trap it and number 9 swoops in.

Nick moves across but misjudges number 9 as he flips the ball out to the right.

Nick catches up and as he is just about to take the ball away, number 4 clatters into him and knocks him down.

VLAD
Stop the cross.

But Al isn't close enough and number 9 knocks the ball in.

Clearly offside, both number 10 and number 11 rise to challenge Trusevich for the ball.

Just as Trusevich places both hands on the ball, number 11 whacks his elbow into Trusevich's face.

Trusevich's head spins awkwardly, but as all three players smash into the ground, it seems the goalkeeper still has the ball in his grasp.

But number 10 stamps on Trusevich's hand and the ball spills out of his grasp.

Before Al can reach and kick the ball clear, number 11 pokes at the ball and it crosses the goal line.

As it hits the net, one third of the stadium cheers; the other two thirds gasp.

The Dignitaries and high ranking Officers stand to clap.

As Al retrieves the ball, the rest of the F.C. Start team surround Trusevich.

Coach and Zal run onto the field.

UGENTAHLER
Restart the game.

He takes the ball from Al and glances down at Trusevich.

The keeper is out cold.

Goliath kneels behind Trusevich, lifts him up.

Castle kneels in front, gently slaps at the keeper.

CASTLE
Nikolai, please.

UGENTAHLER

Remove him. You may make a substitution till half time. He can return then.

Trusevich stirs.

Coach arrives.

NUMBER 10

Going to be a long game.

Vlad pushes at number 10.

Coach pulls Vlad back.

More players join in, more pushing ensues.

BACK AT THE GRANDSTAND

The German Officers shake their fists in the air.

Klose turns to Bergmann.

KLOSE

Excellent entertainment. Maybe we will see a boxing match, too.

BACK IN THE GAME

Trusevich opens his eyes.

TRUSEVICH

What the...

He rubs his head.

Al joins Castle opposite Trusevich.

AL

Let's get you up.

The referee grabs Coach.

UGENTAHLER

Take him off or put him back in the goal.

Zal steps forward, looks at Ugentahler.

ZAL

I'm his substitute. He's done. Don't worry, sir. I won't be much of a match for your team--

Vlad drags Zal away.

Ty also hears Zal, kicks him in the backside.

TY

Get off this field you damn
traitor.

As Vlad removes Zal from the field, he looks back upon
hearing a loud roar.

The Ukrainian Crowd erupt in a mass round of clapping as
Trusevich wobbles back into his goal mouth.

Zal stands next to one of the buckets.

Watches the game restart.

The right and left backs, Al and Ty, push up from the back
adding more players in the attacking third.

AL

We attack to defend. Defend
Nikolai.

Rov and Castle stand over the ball.

ROV

Our goal is your mother. Their goal
is a beautiful woman; how many
times you going to score in her
today, you big castle?

Castle knocks Rov's shoulder.

CASTLE

Lob it into space; a few feet in
front of me.

He taps the ball to Rov, then races to the right; just behind
Goliath and Al.

Rov dribbles forward and as number 4 and number 6 approach
him, he scoops the ball up and lobs it into a space in
between the left back and the three F.C. Start players.

Castle pushes past his two teammates and lashes onto the
ball.

It soars into the goal.

The German KEEPER (30s) doesn't even flinch, let alone try
and dive for it.

Two thirds of the stadium erupts; a collective orgasm of joy after almost a whole year of living in captivity.

Many of the German Soldiers nod in admiration.

Vlad checks in with Trusevich.

VLAD

Nikolai, did you see our goal? Will you be okay?

Trusevich attempts to scan the stadium.

A blur of elated, cheering people.

Many of the details of each person may escape Trusevich in his haze, but he revels in the sound of his people... Rejoicing in the goal and the brief moment of triumph.

Most of the F.C. Start Players huddle around Castle.

Al nuzzles up to the German Captain, number 2.

Follows his every move.

Number 2 looks at Al with bewilderment.

Each time number 2 moves.

Al follows him.

Vlad waves Al back into position as the teams are set to commence the game.

Al blows an imaginary kiss to number 2.

AL

Kiss it goodbye.

NUMBER 2

(In German)

What are you saying?

Al walks backwards.

Even as Goliath gently pushes him back, Al never lets his stare drop from the German captain.

AL

Kiss it ALL goodbye. We are going to embarrass you all today.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Zal sits alone in the locker room, bites away at his nails.

Castle bursts in carrying Ty.

The men's laughter subsides as they see Zal.

Coach is next in.

He looks at Ty; who shakes his head.

TY

You're in old man.

The rest of the team arrive, and the noise and laughter level rises.

Goliath goes to a sink and runs cold water on to a sock.

Nick slips in next to Zal.

Zal turns away.

AL

Now we are leading three to one,
let's go out and pummel these
bastards!

Most of the Players cheer--

But suddenly, the doors burst open and in march twenty two
ARMED SOLDIERS.

One Soldier butt rifles Al.

All the Players sit very quickly.

Goliath squeezes in, hands the wet sock to Trusevich.

Each Soldier faces the players; hands to the ready on their
rifles.

Koch saunters in with Klose and Bergmann.

His big boots are the only sound to be heard...

Koch claps a quick round of applause.

KOCH

Splendid show, gentlemen. Splendid
show.

He steps in closer to the Players; snaps his fingers.

All the Soldiers disperse near the doorway.

KOCH

You've had quite the run... BUT IT
ENDS NOW!

All the Soldiers raise their rifles.

KOCH

You are not allowed to win this
game. My...My Commander is here to
witness Aryan superiority and a
good win. I can see you all are
excellent football players, but
think of the consequences if you do
not succumb to my wishes. I am
master of Kiev. I forbid you to
win. I do hope I have made myself
very clear.

He swivels on his feet; marches out.

All the Soldiers wheel away, follow him out.

Klose whispers something to Bergmann.

Bergmann nods, then tips his hat to the F.C. Start Players.

He, then Klose, march out.

The Players erupt in panic.

Most begin to pace the floor.

Trusevich soaks his head.

Zal moves towards the door, but Nick spots him and grabs at
his shoulders.

NICK

Off to the river, you little
weasel?

Zal squirms away.

ZAL

I'm going to find Hahler. Get the
trucks ready. This is it, we
forfeit--

AL

You don't speak for me. For us.

Castle blocks Zal's path; shoves him back.

Zal staggers, but regains himself in order to sit down again.

ZAL

You all live in a bubble at the bakery. You don't know what these Germans are capable of.

AL

And you do? You are always on Hahler's leash--

ZAL

About a year ago, I was at Babi Yar for the first massacre. I still have nightmares.

Nick stands up; faces Zal.

NICK

What do you mean you were there? My neighbor's family was sent there...Never returned. No one did.

Zal sweats profusely.

He wipes his face, incessantly.

ZAL

Hahler made me dig the grave. One big, ugly pit. They just piled the bodies in there. On the far side, I saw a soldier toss in two infants. They...

He gulps hard; fights back tears.

ZAL

They were still alive.

Al smashes his fist into the wall.

VLAD

In the camp, I saw them skin a man because they said he was NKVD.

He looks straight at Nick.

ROV

I remember Koch ordering twenty of our brothers to be whipped to death.

AL

These pigs will revel in destroying us...Slowly. They enjoy giving pain. I feel like a trapped rat right about now--

NICK

Radomsky has violated half of the women at the bakery.

COACH

So, what will he do if we embarrass Koch and his guests today?

Trusevich slowly gets to his feet; beckons Nick to sit down.

TRUSEVICH

Comrades. There are so many reasons why we should bow down to Koch. To walk away now and not take the field for the second half. So many damn reasons.

Outside, deafening boos give way to a chant of F.C. F.C.

TRUSEVICH

But do you hear that? The sound of our fans.

AL

Of our people.

Trusevich kisses the crest sown on the chest of his shirt.

TRUSEVICH

Exactly. We are them and they are us. We've been blessed as footballers. Today on Sunday the Ninth of August, Nineteen-Forty-Two we play for them. We cannot sneak away now. We are footballers. We cannot be remembered as cowards who snuck off like rats or ran like cockroaches. For when future generations ask about today's game, I want fans... like Pavel and everyone standing out there in that heat, to say F.C. Start were threatened at gunpoint and faced with Nazi terror, but still, as footballers they did not give in. Despite it all, still...they played.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - MINUTES LATER

Ugentahler blows his whistle.

As Castle plays a one-two with Rov, three German Players descend on the big fella, but he powers through them.

MONTAGE:

F.C. Start use the ball among each other to evade the German tackles.

The Germans resort to dirty tactics.

F.C. Start players move off the ball to good effect.

The referee gives "soft" free kicks anytime he can to help the German team.

The German Captain, playing on the left of their formation, gets shadowed by Al and keeps losing control of the ball.

F.C. Start score two more goals.

Trusevich makes a good save.

The Crowd erupts in ecstatic cheer.

The German squad makes eight substitutions.

The Referee looks at his watch.

The Germans eek out two consolation goals.

END MONTAGE

Al pounces on a loose ball from number 3, drives to the goal and side steps the German goalie.

Just as he is about to smash the ball for F.C. Start's sixth goal, he loops up the ball, spins a one-eighty and juggles the ball AWAY from the goal.

The German Keeper stands perplexed as Al runs past him towards the half way line.

The Referee has seen enough show-boating; blows the full time whistle.

Al scoops the ball up to the German Captain.

He blows him a kiss; runs to join his teammates in celebration.

INT. LOCKER ROOM- MINUTES LATER

The small room is packed with Players, random CITIZENS and Pavel.

The noise gives way to loud footsteps.

People bolt out as fourteen German SOLDIERS march in.

Al hands Pavel his tooth, but he drops it as a Soldier whisks him up.

Klose, Bergmann and Xander enter.

Bergmann speaks; Xander translates.

XANDER

General Klose and I want to thank you for a thoroughly entertaining game. Our host, Reichskomissar Koch, does not appreciate good sport like we do. So, in honor of his absence we propose a toast...

The doors fling open, and in steps...

The German Flakelf team- all nineteen of them.

A few players hand small glasses to the very confused F.C. Start players.

The German Captain brings out a bottle of vodka and pours it into the Players' glass.

Another Player pours a bottle into the German Player's glasses.

A CAMERAMAN schleps in his equipment.

Once Klose and Bergmann have drinks, Klose speaks; Xander again interprets.

XANDER

You will play a game for us on Thursday against Rukh. For now we raise a toast. A toast to sport.

Both sets of Players raise their glasses in the air.

The Camera FLASHES- it captures two sets of football players sharing a toast; for a brief moment-just two teams enjoying a post match drink.

INT. OFFICE- DAY

Shvetsov slumps over a desk.

A faint knock at the door.

Shvetsov slowly rears his head; he has seen better days.

A slightly louder knock.

HELENA (O.C.)

Sir? It is me, Helena. Your nephew
is here. Shall I let him in?

Shvetsov grabs at a glass; swigs down the last of the vodka.

He glances to his left; a bottle.

Whispers at the door; it creaks open a little.

Shvetsov notices the bottle is empty; he knocks it to the
table.

Just as the door opens, Shvetsov throws the glass.

It just misses ...

Zal.

Shvetsov grapples with the bottle; just as he gets a good
grip...

Zal is on him; wrestles the bottle away.

SHVETSOV

I gave you a chance to play against
F.C. Start, but eight bloody goals!
Did you make any saves?

ZAL

Yes, a few--

SHVETSOV

Three! You managed three; I've seen
Count Dracula handle crosses better
than you... You disgraced us all.

Shvetsov slumps back in his chair.

Wipes the drool from his mouth.

SHVETSOV

Get out of my sight. Leave!

ZAL

I know I've failed you, so I brought you something. Something to make amends.

Shvetsov laughs.

ZAL

Something that Hahler or Reichskommissar Koch probably haven't seen either.

Shvetsov ceases laughing. He attempts to sit up straight.

SHVETSOV

Really? How could you let Start beat us again, nothing you can do can take away that pain...

From behind his back, Zal whips out a large, rolled piece of paper.

ZAL

After the second Flakelf game--

SHVETSOV

Which I wasn't invited to.

ZAL

Two German Generals brought in the entire Flakelf team. Said Reichskommissar Koch doesn't fully appreciate sport--

SHVETSOV

He does not.

ZAL

We drank a toast as they brought in vodka.

SHVETSOV

Phht. Absurd. Start players are captors. No vodka allowed.

ZAL

It wasn't the only thing they brought in to the locker room.

Zal unrolls the paper.

Reveals the photograph of the two sets of players- both teams with glasses raised.

INT. NAZI HQ - DAY

Koch studies the photo with intent.

Shvetsov, sporting a new suit and fresh shave, takes one step closer to Koch.

Koch peers over his left shoulder; so Shvetsov steps back a few paces.

SHVETSOV

These upstarts must have connections to the black market to smuggle in alcohol.

KOCH

Or high ranking officials...

Shvetsov clears his throat.

SHVETSOV

Nevertheless, if this photograph is circulated, more people will be inflamed by last week's results against Flakelf.

Koch spins to face Shvetsov; but still holds the photo out in front of his face.

KOCH

Explain.

SHVETSOV

People are taking advantage of the appeasement strategy. F.C. Start players are now the new symbol of resistance. On the streets all the talk is about how the Ukrainians beat the Nazis in the football game, not once, but twice. Everyone mockingly asks "What Aryan supremacy?".

Koch spins back; places the photo on his desk.

He takes a seat; grabs at his ink pen.

KOCH

Let's give the citizens something new to discuss tomorrow. Tell me all the names of the F.C. Start players.

EXT. BAKERY GROUNDS- NIGHT

Every MEMBER, woman and man, are shoved out the door and made to stand in short rows.

Kordik, flanked by Xander and Asminov, just stands at the entrance.

Three jeeps pull up close.

Hahler and twelve armed SOLDIERS surround the entire factory staff.

Hahler beckons Xander over; hands him a long piece of paper.

XANDER

The following are under arrest for
improprieties against the Third-
Reich. Nikolai Trusevich.

Trusevich smiles to Elize, who is next to him, and steps to the closest guard.

XANDER

Al Klimenko. Ivan Kuzmenko. Feodor
Tyutchev. Coach Sviridovsky. Makar
Goncharenko. Pavel Komarov. Mikhail
Putistin.

Xander pauses to smile.

XANDER

Nikolai Korotkykh.

All the other Players step forward peacefully.

Nick invites the soldiers to steam in and grapple him towards the jeeps.

XANDER

Mikhail Melnik. Vasily Sukharev.
Nikolai Makhinya. Vladimir Balakin.

Captain Hahler steps to Xander and whispers in his ear.

XANDER

...and Zal Shyvsvya.

As Zal gets taken away, Hahler steps to him.

HAHLER

I found out it was you who reported
Inessa. Enjoy your new home.

EXT. SIRETZ PRISON CAMP - DAY

Even the Devil is too scared to set foot in this place...

BEINGS; some resembling men, roam the yard.

Their souls sucked from their feeble bodies.

A work party- some thirty new PRISONERS - get marched in by OBERKAPOS; prisoners assigned to guard duty.

Goliath is one of them, ashamed but happy to have on a coat.

He glances at the feeble weak men, the other prisoners call the Houdinis.

GOLIATH

One moment they are here; the next
they are gone.

As he stands in line for the evening 'slop' of a meal, he doesn't even turn back as a snarling dog barks away.

On the other end of the leash stands commander Radomsky.

He is so fat he actually struggles to walk.

Yet his cartoon features do not mask his loathing of the prisoners.

He teases his dog with a chicken wing. Playfully whacks the dog's nose.

RADOMSKY

You hungry big boy?

He lets the dog lick the wing...

Then whisks it up into his own mouth.

As he chomps on the small piece of fowl, he leans over and unleashes the dog.

RADOMSKY

Eat, big boy. Eat.

The dog runs; pounces on one of the Houdinis.

Three others manage to scamper away as the dog sets about his victim- a chance to enjoy a fresh dinner.

Radomsky turns to face his five SOLDIER entourage.

He belches, then laughs.

The five Soldiers now laugh, too.

Radomsky snaps his fingers and one Soldier sets down a chair.

As he sits, another Soldier hands him a flask.

Another- a pistol.

Three Prisoners move by carrying parts of a car engine.

They seem fitter than most; and they are - because they still sneak in fitness training when they can.

Trusevich, Al and Castle move a little faster when they notice Radomsky is close by.

AL

Don't stop; the red madman is too close for comfort.

The three of them jog up to a big truck.

Another Oberkapo fidgets with a light bulb; it is Zal.

ZAL

Put those two there...Big man; that one up here.

CASTLE

I hate taking orders from you.

He places the fan next to a small tool box.

ZAL

I know you three know this is better than work duty...On the tracks.

AL

Forgive me for not bending down and kissing your grubby feet!

CASTLE

So, we should be grateful to you for pulling strings? Where was your puppet master uncle when Nick needed him? Or when Rov just disappeared?

Trusevich leans against the truck; shivering.

His hair is blotchy with alopecia skin patches; his eyes distant.

ZAL

I've no idea why Rov was set free.
But we all knew Nick was NKVD. My
uncle told me it was his own sister
that turned him in--

AL

That pig of a traitor let's you rot
like you deserve--

Suddenly, a shot is fired.

Radomsky just took aim at a group of Prisoners.

Two duck for cover by the truck.

It's Ty and Coach.

CASTLE

If you go grab Goliath, we can have
a kick about.

Ty smirks back at the big man.

All five Players slide behind the truck as they hear Radomsky
bark out orders.

Zal meddles away.

AL

Maybe the red-madman will take aim
at you. I hear he has a new pistol.

Trusevich hoists himself up next to Zal.

TRUSEVICH

Let's hope not. I know we all hate
Zal for trying to disrupt our team
at the bakery...Deflating balls,
missing boots, even Russ. But we
need this guy. I've been watching
him.

Zal drops his spanner.

TRUSEVICH

This clever sausage has a plan to
escape. He may not have known till
today, but he is going to take us
all with him.

INT. PRISON BARRACKS- MORNING

Rows of small bunk beds crowd the entire dwelling.

The beds are only four feet long, with barely enough room for a man to squeeze past them to exit to the outside latrine or the small exit/entrance.

On one bed lies Castle curled up in a ball.

His knees lag off his bed and almost touch up to another PRISONER.

Trusevich snakes up to Castle, shakes his leg.

Castle's right leg jerks out and kicks his neighbor.

Nothing.

As Castle awakes, Trusevich leans in to the other Prisoner.

Sees he is dead: a tortured, frozen face.

TRUSEVICH
(Whispering)
It's time.

Castle beckons Trusevich away so that he can struggle out of the bunk.

Trusevich moves to Ty.

A few men stir as the three of them tip toe to the latrine door.

A search light scans by.

TRUSEVICH
Zal dropped off Coach and Goliath at the barracks last night. Three hundred shoes to be repaired needed an overnight job. We go to the latrine one at a time and wait for the first siren in twenty minutes. Zal says he loosened the gate barricades. On the second siren; he drives up, we jump in and bust out of here to the barracks. To freedom.

Castle gives a thumbs up.

INT. LATRINE - MINUTES LATER

Ty and Trusevich stand on the toilet seat.

They hold their breath as the door creaks open...

Castle struggles to squeeze in.

CASTLE

Will I have time to take a piss?

TRUSEVICH

Plenty, but try and hur--

A deafening horn sounds, followed by a wailing siren.

A Prisoner knocks on the latrine wall.

PRISONER (O.C.)

Quick; it's an emergency roll-call.

Castle shakes his head; opens the small door.

EXT. SIRETZ PRISON CAMP - MOMENTS LATER

Armed soldiers push Oberkapos, Prisoners and Houdinis towards the camp's open square.

Trusevich side steps two HOUDINIS to get to Zal.

TRUSEVICH

What's happening?

ZAL

Scouts from The Red Army advancing to Kiev took out a communications post. Killed three Germans then retreated back to the woods. Kiev will be under siege soon.

TRUSEVICH

Can you get us to them?

Zal flashes a car key.

ZAL

I think so.

He hides the key, just as a GUARD grabs him, forces him to stand in the massive line.

All the camp now faces the large barbed wire fence in seven rows of twenty-one men.

Only a few feet away lies freedom...

RADOMSKY

The last thing I needed to hear
before having my breakfast is news
of an act of sabotage.

His five Soldiers follow him to the front line, closest to
the fence.

In that first row is Castle; the sixth man in line.

One row back is Al..

Two rows back, but not directly behind, stands Ty.

Four rows back stand Trusevich and Zal; next to each other.

A Soldier runs up to Radomsky with a cup of coffee.

He sips it slowly.

For a brief moment he gazes at all the Prisoners shivering in
the moonlight.

RADOMSKY

As I lost three good men to this
act of sabotage. Justice must be
served.

He paces behind the first line of prisoners and stops at the
third man, a skeleton of a HOUDINI.

He beckons one of his henchman closer; the Soldier grabs the
Houdini; shoves him to his knees.

Radomsky pulls back the trigger on his pistol.

Just as the guns goes off, the Houdini flops to the side; too
weak to move or face his death with any sense of dignity.

The bullet misses.

Another Soldier steps in, pulls the Houdini up.

Radomsky fires a single bullet to the back of the head.

The corpse quickly hits the ground.

Radomsky moves along the line, passing a WHIMPERING MAN.

He whacks him over the head.

RADOMSKY

Shut it.

Radomsky beckons for his coffee, takes a few sips.

He walks down the line and finds himself behind Castle.

He is taken aback by his hulk of a frame.

He waves his gun to the first Prisoner, then counts to the dead Houdini, then counts to Castle.

RADOMSKY

One, two, three. Bam. Ha Ha Ha.

One. Two...Three.

Radomsky waves his pistol to one of his taller Soldiers.

The Soldier attempts to shove Castle to his knees; to no avail.

A second Soldier steps in, butt rifles Castle in the back.

Castle doesn't flinch.

Radomsky steps back to allow a third Soldier in.

He swings his rifle; cracking the back of Castle's knees.

The big brute buckles.

CASTLE

See you in hell you fat pig--

The shot rings loud.

Castle's body hits the ground with a loud thud.

As Radomsky moves along, panic sets in as most of the Prisoners have begun to count by threes from Castle.

After five more shootings, Radomsky changes his pistol.

The third in line of row two is Al.

He begins to jog on the spot.

As Radomsky and his henchmen move behind Al, he suddenly turns to face them.

As he stands still and attempts to brace himself, two henchmen spin him around.

As Radomsky takes aim, Al shouts out.

AL

Only a coward shoots the back of...

As the bullet pierces the back of Al's head; blood and matter spill across Radomsky and the three PRISONERS in the next row; one of whom is Ty.

Another Soldier removes his coat, wipes the human debris from Radomsky's face.

RADOMSKY

Bad angle.

As Radomsky continues his killing spree, Trusevich looks at Zal who is shaking uncontrollably.

He looks at the last dead PRISONER and counts.

The third person in his line is... Zal.

TRUSEVICH

You are some survivor, Zal.

Zal looks at Trusevich.

ZAL

Guess I had a good run. Here.

He reaches out his hand, nudges Trusevich.

Trusevich looks down.

Zal holds out the car keys.

ZAL

I think Ty can drive.

TRUSEVICH

The only thing he can drive, is his mother crazy.

Trusevich grasps Zal's hand.

Then looks up as Radomsky and his crew step into his row.

TRUSEVICH

Promise me one thing. You get the lads out of here.

Zal looks down at his left hand.

Trusevich uses both hands...

And wrestles Zal to the ground.

Two henchmen step over the first dead body in that row and run to the spot where Zal has been wrestled to the ground.

Trusevich leaps up; but into the spot where Zal had stood.

He extends his hand to Zal, pulls him up.

ZAL

But...Why?

TRUSEVICH

Because I am an old man, who is done with this shit-hole. And I cannot drive.

Zal looks at him perplexed.

TRUSEVICH

This is your spot now. Do what you do best. Survive. And get the lads to the Red Army.

ZAL

One mad goalkeeper.

Radomsky steps forward.

Zal looks up to the sky; with tears in his eyes.

TRUSEVICH

Good morning, Commander.

RADOMSKY

On your knees.

Trusevich hesitates but drops one knee at a time.

He winces at the frozen ground.

TRUSEVICH

Wooo. Such a cold day for February. Best hurry sir, or you'll catch your death out here in this frozen tundra.

As Radomsky lines up to pull the trigger...

Trusevich slams his right fist into his football jersey-hard against his chest.

TRUSEVICH

Fizculthura!

EXT. SIRETZ PRISON CAMP - DAY

The stench of dead bodies hovers above the cold ground.

Oberkapos organize Prisoners to remove the dead from Radomsky's shooting spree.

One TALL SOLDIER grabs at Zal.

TALL SOLDIER
Fill the jeeps with petrol. Clean
the tires. In one hour I'm taking a
convoy out.

ZAL
He just killed my assistants--

TALL SOLDIER
Grab another.

Zal runs and grabs at Ty.

He is too shocked to argue or even bother to ask what Zal wants.

The Tall Soldier leads them to a small barrel.

He then gets turned away by another SOLDIER to help him restrain three PRISONERS.

ZAL
Come. Help me. We are getting out
of here.

Ty looks back as the graveyard party brings in a wheelbarrow to pick up the forty nine dead prisoners.

TY
What do you need me to do?

The two of them wheel the oil drum towards a group of jeeps.

ZAL
Near the jeeps is one I'm fixing
up. It's pretty stripped down, but
I think it will run.

TY
And how do we get past the guards?

Zal halts the drum and looks around.

ZAL

For the next half hour the soldiers eat and ready their guns. This is the time we are usually woken up and given something to eat--

TY

I'll skip the slop today.

Zal begins to roll the drum.

They pass one GUARD; half dressed.

They reach the two big jeeps.

Ty spots the third one.

It is smaller; fits four in a tight squeeze.

There is no door on the driver side.

ZAL

For weeks now they allow me to take a piss by the side gate over there. I've managed to loosen the gates on both sides.

Ty looks up at the guard tower.

TY

So, no guard?

ZAL

He is always late. Sneaks off to get eggs from Radomsky's chef. Costs him at least a hand job.

He beckons Ty to help him with the drum.

They roll it to the get-away-jeep and slide it into the passenger seat.

Zal covers it with a blanket.

TY

I want that when you are done with it.

He blows into his hands.

TY

Is this thing going to start up?

ZAL

If it doesn't we'll be seeing
Radomsky's gun in a few minutes.

Zal runs and lifts up the hood on all three jeeps.

He goes back to the get-away-jeep and beckons Ty to get in
the back.

ZAL

Lie down. If you hear and feel one
massive bang and we are still
driving; then we are out of here.

TY

Won't they hunt us down.

ZAL

Not today.

He reveals four spark plugs in his hands.

Ty gets in the back.

As Zal closes the lid on his hood, a YOUNG SOLDIER
approaches.

Zal gets in and starts up the engine.

It doesn't quite turn.

The Young Soldier whips his rifle off his shoulder and runs
to Zal.

Zal turns the engine one more time...

But as it starts, the Young Soldier rams his rifle into Zal's
side.

But Ty pounces up and jumps on the Young Soldier.

As they struggle, Zal puts the car into gear.

TY

Go. You need to still get to
Goliath and Coach.

Zal speeds off but does a quick turn and accelerates.

ZAL

Get back.

Ty sees the oncoming jeep, hurls himself out of the way.

Zal crashes into the Young Soldier, mows him down dead.

He breaks to allow Ty to get in.

ZAL

Hold on and hold on to that drum!

He slams the pedal and speeds towards the gate.

Up in the tower, the TOWER GUARD sees the jeep and sounds the siren.

As he goes to pick up his rifle...

Zal accelerates even more; SMASHES through the gates.

That fly off their hinges.

Zal swerves onto the road and guns it as fast as the car will allow him to.

The guard takes aim, but even he can see the car is out of range.

As the car nears a fork in the road, Zal slows down.

As he comes to a stop; he looks both ways and whistles.

Out from the trees run Goliath and Coach.

They squeeze into the jeep.

COACH

Where are the others?

Zal doesn't answer, but speeds off.

EXT. LOBANOVSKY DYNAMO STADIUM - PRESENT DAY

Two SERVICE WORKERS approach the entrance to the stadium.

Just off the street is a high relief steel frame.

It shows four strong and proud football players.

The two Workers pause; tip their hats to the monument, then continue up the path to the service entrance of the stadium.

FADE OUT: