

BLACK SCREEN

The sound of HEAVY BREATHING, and an occasional SHOUT, FAR OFF.

FADE IN:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

An ECU of the eyes of PVT. DANIELS, 20, which open wide. He is dirty and sweaty, and his eyes dart about. It is his BREATHING we hear.

DANIELS
Oh, Jesus. Oh, Jesus. Jesus Christ.

A PULL BACK to reveal that he is an American soldier, WWII gear. His back is flat against a tree, his gun held in front of him, the barrel touching his nose.

He looks over to a tree about three feet to his left. Behind that tree, in a similar position, is PVT. KAPLAN, 20. Kaplan's eyes are closed.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Kaplan. Kaplan!

KAPLAN
What?

DANIELS
What do we do?

KAPLAN
What?

DANIELS
What do we do?

Kaplan opens his eyes and looks over at Daniels. He opens his mouth to speak when a GUNSHOT rings out, and a bullet hits the ground between the two trees.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Oh, Christ!

KAPLAN
Shhhhh.

DANIELS
Christ, oh Jesus Christ.

KAPLAN
Daniels, shut up!

DANIELS
Okay.

KAPLAN
Shut up! Okay?

DANIELS
Yeah.

KAPLAN
Okay?

Another GUNSHOT, this bullet hits the tree Daniels is hiding behind. He SCREAMS.

DANIELS
Oh, please don't. Stop! Stop! I don't want to die!

KAPLAN
Daniels, okay?

DANIELS
I don't know what to do! I don't know.

KAPLAN
Okay, okay.

DANIELS
(yelling)
Stop saying that!

KAPLAN
Okay. Sorry, sorry.

Beat.

DANIELS
What to do?

Kaplan takes in a deep breath, then turns quickly from behind the tree and SHOOTS in the direction of the enemy, then comes back behind the tree.

Beat.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Did you get one?

KAPLAN
How do I know?

DANIELS
Did you see any...

KAPLAN
I just fired into the, I just shot the gun.

DANIELS
You didn't see anyone?

KAPLAN
No.

DANIELS
Then how do you know?

KAPLAN
I don't.

Kaplan turns and fires another SHOT into the trees, then back. It is immediately returned by a SHOT, which whizzes between the two and hits a tree a few yards away.

DANIELS
Whoa. Whoa, did you see that?

KAPLAN
Shit.

DANIELS
Look at the splinters.

KAPLAN
Yeah. Shit.

DANIELS
It sounded like... Kap, it sounded like a bee.

KAPLAN
I know.

DANIELS
It whizzed right past us, right here...

Another SHOT hits Kaplan's tree. Daniels flinches back behind his tree.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Whoa, sorry sorry sorry sorry.

KAPLAN
No.

DANIELS
Can they see us?

KAPLAN
No, I don't think so.

DANIELS
They're so close.

KAPLAN
Yeah.

DANIELS

They're getting so close.

KAPLAN
Then stop talking.

DANIELS
And what?

A SHOT muffles his last words.

KAPLAN
What?

DANIELS
Yes.

KAPLAN
What?

DANIELS
Then what?

KAPLAN
What did you say?

DANIELS
Stop talking and what?

KAPLAN
Shoot, for Christ's sake.

A long pause as Daniels prepares himself. His BREATHING IS HEAVY. Kaplan FIRES ANOTHER SHOT.

KAPLAN (CONT'D)
See? Shoot.

DANIELS
Okay, okay, wait.

Another long silence.

Daniels peeks around his tree to look, then quickly back.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Where is he?

KAPLAN
Who?

DANIELS
Jeffries.

KAPLAN

I don't...

He is interrupted by the sound of VOICES, FAR OFF. GERMAN VOICES, that seem to be CALLING for someone.

Daniel's eyes widen.

DANIELS
Oh, God. What are they saying?

KAPLAN
I don't know.

DANIELS
What, are they... Are they coming?

KAPLAN
I...

DANIELS
Are they coming for us?

KAPLAN
Let me look.

DANIELS
No!

KAPLAN
Let me look, be quiet.

DANIELS
No, if they're coming...

KAPLAN
Shhhhhhh.

DANIELS
Kap.

KAPLAN
Shhhhhhh.

Kaplan looks around his tree. Nothing. Then the GERMAN VOICES again, calling. Kaplan FIRES in the direction of the voices, then comes back around his tree.

DANIELS
Yeah?

KAPLAN
Hmmm.

DANIELS
Yes, no?

KAPLAN
Whew.

DANIELS
Are they coming?

KAPLAN
(yelling)
I don't know, Daniels, I can't see anything!

DANIELS
(yelling)
Don't yell at me!

A SHOT hits the ground between them. Daniels SCREAMS, then turns and fires TWO SHOTS into the brush.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
(while firing)
Stop it! Stop it! Stop shooting at me, you fucking bastards!

KAPLAN
Daniels!

DANIELS
(coming back around)
Christ!

KAPLAN
Hey...

DANIELS
Stop it, tell them to stop.

KAPLAN
Hey, Daniels, I can't.

DANIELS
Tell them...

KAPLAN
I can't, we can't, we have to get by.

DANIELS
We don't, we don't have to get by. We can go.

KAPLAN
No.

DANIELS
We can go, right now, we can walk that away.

KAPLAN

No, we cannot.

DANIELS

Yes.

KAPLAN

We cannot!

Daniels shudders, WHIMPERING.

KAPLAN (CONT'D)

Even if, listen. Even if we could, we did, what about Jeffries?

DANIELS

I...

KAPLAN

What about Jeffries, we wait for him.

Daniels SOFTLY WEEPS.

KAPLAN (CONT'D)

Get hold of you, man. Come on, we need this here, we need this calm here.

DANIELS

Please, where's Jeffries?

KAPLAN

Calm, yes?

DANIELS

Where is he?

KAPLAN

Calm.

Daniels INHALES, EXHALES, and relaxes a bit.

DANIELS

Okay.

KAPLAN

Good.

DANIELS

Where is...

KAPLAN

I'm not sure. He's probably, he might be pinned down in there.

DANIELS

Yeah.

KAPLAN
So we wait.

DANIELS
What if he's...

KAPLAN
He's not, he's good. He's not going to just pop up, just let them see him, shoot him.

DANIELS
Yeah.

KAPLAN
Okay?

DANIELS
Yeah. You're right, he's not.

KAPLAN
Okay.

A long, long silence. They both stand there, waiting. Nothing.

DANIELS
(whispering)
That was brave.

KAPLAN
What?

DANIELS
That was, what Jeffries did, that was pretty fucking brave...

KAPLAN
Yeah.

DANIELS
Going into the thick like that. Just running right toward it.

KAPLAN
Yeah.

DANIELS
No way I would.

KAPLAN
No way you would what?

DANIELS
Run around like that. Run *to* them.

Daniels. KAPLAN

No way. DANIELS

We're gonna have to here, at some point. KAPLAN

No way. DANIELS

We're gonna have to. We can't let ourselves get pinned up here, we're gonna have to move on. Get closer, get a shot at least. KAPLAN

Daniels shakes his head furiously.

Yes. KAPLAN (CONT'D)

No. DANIELS

Yes, we're gonna have to. KAPLAN

No, we... I won't. I can't. DANIELS

Daniels, please. KAPLAN

No. DANIELS

Listen, we... KAPLAN

We wait. DANIELS

What? KAPLAN

We wait. We wait for Jeffries to come back. We wait for him, when he comes back. DANIELS

Why? KAPLAN

DANIELS

When he does, he either gives up, or they're dead.

KAPLAN

No.

DANIELS

Either way, we're okay. He gives up, we go that way, away from it. Or, they're dead.

KAPLAN

No.

DANIELS

Or they're dead, and we can move on, good, mission accomplished, but so what if it's not. I don't know these guys, I don't know them.

KAPLAN

Okay.

DANIELS

When he comes back. Okay then.

KAPLAN

Alright.

DANIELS

Okay?

KAPLAN

When he comes back.

DANIELS

Cause I don't know these guys.

KAPLAN

Yeah.

Long silence. Daniels looks off in the direction of retreat. Kaplan cautiously peeks around his tree.

DANIELS

Anything?

KAPLAN

No.

DANIELS

It's quiet.

KAPLAN

Yeah.

DANIELS

That's maybe a good... I mean, perhaps it's Jeffries, he's got them.

KAPLAN
Maybe.

Beat.

DANIELS
How do we tell?

KAPLAN
We go over there.

DANIELS
But we're not sure, we can't go if we're not sure!

KAPLAN
I...

Kaplan looks around his tree again. Nothing. He comes out from behind it, scanning the forest.

DANIELS
Anything?

Kaplan shakes his head, holding up his finger to silence Daniels.

A SHOT hits Kaplan in the leg, bringing him to the ground SCREAMING in pain. Daniels SCREAMS as well, watching Kaplan pull himself back behind the tree, another SHOT hitting the ground where he stood seconds before.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
Oh Jesus Christ!

KAPLAN
Fuck.

DANIELS
Oh Jesus Jesus Jesus. No.

KAPLAN
Fuck.

DANIELS
(screaming)
Jeffries! Jeffries!

KAPLAN
I'm okay... Fuck!

DANIELS
(ignoring, still screaming)
Jeffries, come back!

Silence. Kaplan is now sitting behind the tree, holding his leg. Daniels is SOBBING.

DANIELS (CONT'D)
(screaming)
Jeffries! Please, come back! Please!

KAPLAN
I'm okay. I'm okay.

DANIELS
I don't want to go around, I don't want to go around this tree.

KAPLAN
Okay.

DANIELS
Not yet, not yet...

KAPLAN
Okay.

DANIELS
We'll wait, we wait, okay?

KAPLAN
Yes.

Kaplan applies a tourniquet to his leg.

DANIELS
We'll wait for Jeffries, then we'll go.

KAPLAN
Okay. . . Fuck!

DANIELS
What?

KAPLAN
It's okay, it's my leg. It's okay.

DANIELS
Jeffries, and then we'll go.

KAPLAN
Which way?

A SHOT hits Daniels' tree, and he YELPS, closing his eyes and shuddering.

Beat.

KAPLAN (CONT'D)
Which way?

Daniels shakes his head, his eyes still closed, still SOFTLY SOBBING.

KAPLAN (CONT'D)

Away, then. Away? Daniels? Away.

DANIELS

They're just trees...

KAPLAN

Hey, we'll go away. (points) That way.

DANIELS

Okay. They're just trees, here. What are we, why do we need to, here...

KAPLAN

When Jeffries comes back...

DANIELS

Okay.

KAPLAN

That way.

Kaplan looks for a response. Daniels just stands there, clutching his rifle, shivering and SOBBING QUIETLY. Kaplan looks at his leg, bleeding.

DANIELS

(softly)

Oh Jesus. Oh Jesus. Come on, Jeffries. Come on.
Jeffries, come on. Come on.

He continues this quiet CHANTING as the camera PULLS BACK and AROUND his tree. His CHANTS FADE OUT the camera PANS SIDEWAYS across the area between the two soldiers and the Germans.

A long time of just leaves, trees, stumps. The camera continues PANNING OVER the land.

Then, it passes over the body of a dead American soldier, but does not stop. It continues.

More time: trees, leaves pass by.

Then, the body of a German soldier, lying dead, his body sprawled over a fallen tree. But the CAMERA CONTINUES.

The FAINT SOUND of a whispered CHANT, similar to Daniels', but in a different language: GERMAN. It is the voice of a GERMAN SOLDIER.

GERMAN SOLDIER I

Jesus. Jesus. Jesus. Oh, Jesus.

The CAMERA comes to a pair of trees, splintered from bullets, and SWINGS AROUND the other side of them. Hiding behind them are the first German soldier and a SECOND

ONE. The first one stands rigid, his rifle held against his body, eyes focused towards the direction of their retreat. The second one is peeking around his tree.

Their dialogue is subtitled. The camera still does not cut, but continues its motion around the trees, and slowly, slowly begins to CLOSE IN on German Soldier I.

GERMAN SOLDIER I (CONT'D)

Oh Jesus, Jesus.

GERMAN SOLDIER II

Stop it.

GERMAN SOLDIER I

I can't. Please, let us go.

GERMAN SOLDIER II

When Grieg gets back.

GERMAN SOLDIER I

Please.

GERMAN SOLDIER II

We wait for him.

A SHOT hits a tree near the first soldier. He YELPS.

GERMAN SOLDIER I

Oh, God. Oh, please no. We go now.

GERMAN SOLDIER II

We wait for him!

The camera is still moving CLOSER, CLOSER to the first soldier's face. It fills the screen, much like the opening, only in reverse.

GERMAN SOLDIER II (O.S.)

(yelling)
Grieg!

Now an ECU of the first soldier's eyes. He BREATHES HEAVILY, and closes his eyes.

FADE TO:

BLACK SCREEN

Only BREATHING is heard. BREATHING only. Then silence.

THE END