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## La Résistance: An Original Screenplay

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# LA RÉSISTANCE

[Working Title]

Written by

Luke Griffin

Note: This first draft was produced for Western Washington University's Honors Program Capstone Project. As such it includes this note and a page after the end of the screenplay, briefly reflecting on the goals for further revision. Neither of these would be included on a professional, finished copy.

EXT. TRAIN PLATFORM - DAY

A woman in her later twenties, ÉLISE VAILLARD, disembarks a train, a travel bag slung over her shoulder. The crowd bustles around purposefully, a voice on a loudspeaker announcing that the train to Limoges on Platform 2 will be delayed.

TITLE OVER large across the screen, set against the movement of the platform:

LARAN-SAINTE-MARIE, FRANCE  
AVRIL 1944

Toward the end of the platform is a line of MILICE (Vichy France's extrajudicial police). Élise glances around.

A bespectacled TALL MAN in a long coat with a briefcase looks nervously about as she walks past him. They briefly make eye contact and he strolls up next to her and links his arm in hers.

ÉLISE

Excuse me, what are you -

TALL MAN

(eyes fixed ahead)

Please, just act normal.

(CONT'D)

Élise eyes the Milice as they get closer. They are searching men's briefcases. One man seems to have aroused suspicion and is grabbed by the several Miliciens. He struggles against them but they forcefully march him away.

TALL MAN (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Damn.

Élise glances up at the man. He keeps his eyes focused dead ahead, controlling his expression. Will the Milice drag him off too? And Élise with him?

But they have reached the checkpoint. Another single man is stopped to be searched next to them, but Élise and the tall man pass through the checkpoint, between the uniformed Miliciens.

The man nods at Élise and splits off from her without another word. She pauses for a moment, watching him stroll off through the station. From another archway, several more Miliciens do a double-take and point at the tall man.

They fan out, through the station, then come up behind him and grab his arms, quickly leading him back, and out of view.

Élise, shocked by watching the man who was just walking beside her get apprehended, puts her head down and walks quickly the other way. A Milicien glances at her as she passes quickly, but lets her go, seemingly uninterested.

TITLE OVER in a large font, across the screen as Élise keeps walking down the street of Occupied France:

## LA RÉSISTANCE

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

A key turns in a lock leading to a small apartment's living room. It's small, with a chair, couch and cluttered side table.

At a small breakfast table around the table in the kitchen, her fiancé, LÉON BOROWCZYK, sets down his copy of *Das Kapital* and the pen he's using to mark up the margins. He's got thick glasses and dresses like a professor. A coat is draped over the back of the chair he's in.

As the lock jiggles, he sets down the pen and reaches into the coat's pocket. In his hand, halfway out of the pocket, a small handgun.

The door swings open and it's just Élise, returning home. Léon quickly drops the gun and pulls his hand from the pocket, using the pen as a bookmark and setting his copy of Marx down.

He greets her with a kiss as she sets her bag on the floor near the entrance.

LÉON

How was Lyon? Is your father doing any better?

ÉLISE

Well enough to insist on getting up and walking about.

(CONT'D)

Élise takes her coat off and hangs it up.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

Saw the Milice drag a couple men away at the station. One of them walked with me through the checkpoint but they took him as he was walking away. I was worried they would see me with him...

Léon's eyes narrow and he cocks his head.

LÉON

They took two men? From the Lyon train?

ÉLISE

I would assume so? It was the only train at the platform.

LÉON

What did they look like?

ÉLISE

(hesitantly)

The one who walked with me was tall, with short hair, sort of a long face.

LÉON

Élise, did this man happen to have a  
briefcase with him?

Élise's brow furrows.

ÉLISE

Yes, but... why are you asking me this?  
Léon, please tell me you're not mixed up  
in this.

Léon sits down on the couch, rubbing his temples. Élise  
sits beside him and places a comforting hand on his back.

After a moment, Léon seems to have collected himself.

LÉON

Nothing. It's nothing. Just worried that  
you could have gotten into trouble.

ÉLISE

Are you sure? Léon, -

LÉON

Élise, please. I was just worried about  
you. That's all.

ÉLISE

Promise?

(CONT'D)

Élise looks at him for a moment. He sighs and looks back at  
her, giving a weak smile. It's unconvincing, but Élise  
nods. She knows that there's something going on, but  
doesn't want to push him.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

I'll get unpacked. Can you put  
some water on?

Léon nods and stands. She turns to pick up her bag, but -

LÉON

Wait...

(CONT'D)

Élise turns. He pauses for a moment. Is he going to say more? Then he smiles and pulls her in for a hug.

LÉON (CONT'D)

I'm glad you're home.

ÉLISE

Me too.

EXT. BOULANGERIE - DAY

Élise goes about her business, stepping into a boulangerie with a sign on the window reading "plus du pain" (no more bread).

INT. BOULANGERIE - DAY

Inside, the BAKER walks out from a backroom. She glances around and then out the window behind Élise.

ÉLISE

Anything left?

BAKER

(winking)

for the right price I might.

ÉLISE

Two baguettes?

BAKER

Forty francs.

ÉLISE

That's fifteen more than last week.

BAKER

(shrugging)

Shortages. They've been cracking down on the black market and proper rationing.

ÉLISE

Thirty.

BAKER

Thirty-five.

ÉLISE

Thirty-two or I go to Marcel's store.

BAKER

Thirty-two, done.

Élise quickly counts out the francs and the baker hands over two baguettes. She puts them under her arm as she walks out of the boulangerie.

EXT. LARAN STREET - DAY

Élise waits at a checkpoint, passing through easily, baguettes still under her arm.

A classic car drives past as she walks down the sidewalk.

EXT. LARAN MAIN SQUARE - DAY

Élise crosses the main square of town, in front of the medium-sized Gothic church. The weather is pleasant but it seems overshadowed by the presence of Nazi and a few Milice flags fluttering on building façades. She crosses the square, a few other people walking past.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Élise walks into the apartment, closing the door behind her. She turns and is surprised to see Léon sitting on the couch, facing the center of the room, smoking.

Another man, GUILLEM, is leaning against the wall by the window. The sheer curtains are drawn, but he looks sidelong, suspiciously, out the window onto the street. He's about fifty and a grizzled, soldier-type.



Guillem glances at Élise, then Léon, still sitting on the chair, brow furrowed.

ÉLISE

(setting down the baguettes  
on the breakfast table)

I don't believe we've been introduced.

LÉON

This is Guillem, he was a colleague from  
the university. He was just on his  
way out.

Guillem speaks with a slight Spanish accent.

GUILLEM

(ignoring Léon)

I hear you watched François get picked  
up by those Milice fuckers.

ÉLISE

I don't know anyone by that name.

GUILLEM

Really? Tall man, glasses? Carrying a  
briefcase? you really don't remember  
anyone by that description? Léon here  
made it sound like you might.

ÉLISE

What's this all about? Who are you?

GUILLEM

You really haven't told her, Léon?  
I must say I'm surprised.

Élise looks at Léon. He takes a long drag on the cigarette  
and doesn't meet her eyes.

ÉLISE

Léon, what is this?

LÉON

(eyes on the floor)

Stay out of it, Élise.

GUILLEM

Let her make her own decision.

Élise, that man you saw in the train station, who you walked through the

(CONT'D)

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

checkpoint... He's dead, shot by the Milice yesterday. He was a friend of mine. He helped me get settled in this town after the war in Spain. And I, personally, would very much like to get back at the people who killed him. I'm here because you, Élise, can help me, us, do that. Fight back.

ÉLISE

I don't know...

GUILLEM

Just think it over. And while you do, think about what your home used to be like. When you could get any food you wanted, when when your boyfriend here could teach classes. When you could go to the park with your friends, or not have to worry about your safety every time you go outside or -

LÉON

Enough! She gets it! Can't you see you're overwhelming her.

Élise looks squarely at Guillem, clearly thinking it over and not, as her boyfriend Léon said, overwhelmed. In fact, he's the one who looks frazzled.

ÉLISE

I'll think it over.

Guillem nods.

GUILLEM

Good. If you decide you want to join us,  
I'll find you. I'll see myself out.

The veteran walks briskly to the door, past Élise, holding eye contact before quietly exiting.

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT

Élise and Léon lie in bed. Léon, as per usual, is smoking a cigarette with a book open. There are little tables on both of their sides of the bed. Léon's has a stack of yet more books (of Communist flavor) with papers sticking out of them and an ashtray, and Élise's has a little flower in a glass jar, next to a picture of a young Élise and an older man, presumably her father.

ÉLISE

How did you join them?

Léon glances at her, then marks the place in his book and sets it on the end table.

LÉON

Do you remember my colleague  
Vassiliev? In the physics department?

ÉLISE

The one with the beard larger than  
a small child?

Léon smiles and nods, taking a long pull on his cigarette.

LÉON

He reached out after the Obligatory Work Service last year. The few other ethnic Poles in town had joined up with a maquis resistance cell and... We mostly set charges on railroad tracks or cut telegraph wires. My boys, at least. Guillem though... he and his men...

He trails off, clearly not sure if he should talk about the dirty work Guillem and his men do. Élise is quiet for a moment, taking the cigarette from Léon for a pull.

ÉLISE

(quietly)

I want to join too.

LÉON

Out of the question.

ÉLISE

So I should just sit around here, not knowing if every time you go out that door it'll be the last?

LÉON

Élise, please. I'm sorry I didn't tell you earlier, I just... I wanted to keep you safe. I need you. Your father needs you.

ÉLISE

And I don't need you? What the hell would I do if you were killed?

LÉON

(not meeting her eyes)

Then at least you'll know I died for the cause.

ÉLISE

Becoming a martyr won't help anyone, Léon!

(CONT'D)

He sighs and shakes his head, taking the cigarette back.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

(softer, hand on his shoulder)

I want to help. I want to see my country free. I just want to do something that's not just sitting around waiting for heaven's sake! To fight -

LÉON

To fight, to fight, to fight! You sound like Guillem! He doesn't know how to do anything but fight! Just stay out of it!

ÉLISE

How can I? How can I stay out of it when I see men get hauled off by the Milice in the train station? When my boyfriend...

(CONT'D)

She trails off, shaking her head.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

It's because I'm a woman.

LÉON

No, it's not like that! Like I said -

ÉLISE

It absolutely is like that!

Élise breathes heavily, frustrated. Léon rubs face with his hands and puts out the cigarette in his ashtray.

LÉON

There's nothing I can say to stop you?

Silence. Léon doesn't say anything or look at her. He rolls over and faces away from her.

Élise looks at his back. Should she apologize? No, she lays her head on the pillow, her face resolute. She's going to join the Resistance.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE OF MILICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Élise walks down the street, escorted by THREE MEN in Milice uniforms. She wears a Basque beret, a symbol of the Resistance.

The Milice headquarters is an average-looking French building with a low wall and courtyard. A bored MILICIEEN WITH A noticeable SCAR across his face stands at the entrance. A large Milice emblem is painted on the wall. Two men are painting over graffiti that reads "COLLABORATEURS" across the Milice emblem.

The leader of the men around Élise, GUILLEM, in Milice disguise, makes eye contact with one of these PAINTERS and tips his blue Milice beret. The painter kicks over his paint can and starts to cause a fuss.

The bored guard walks over to the painters, leaving his post and barely glancing as the group with Élise walks past him.

INT. MILICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

TWO GUARDS stand outside of a large door.

GUILLEM

We're here to see Commander Bernier.

GUARD 1

He's busy. Come back later.

GUILLEM

(nodding toward Élise)

We brought him a woman. You don't want to be responsible for keeping him waiting, do you?

The guards glance at each other, then shrug. The Miliciens seem complacent.

GUARD 2

(knocking on door)

New toy for you, Commander!

The guard opens the door, letting Élise and Guillem into the office. The other two men with them stay outside the door and strike up cigarettes and a conversation with the guards.

INT. MILICE COMMANDER OFFICE - DAY

The room has a large window to the left of the desk with a view over the grey roofs and chimneys of town. Company Commander PHILIPPE BERNIER, a greasy, piglike man, reclines at his desk, framed by a Milice flag behind him. His uniform is half-unbuttoned.

A pretty, brunette woman whispering in Bernier's ear, MARIANNE, straightens up and moves to the side as Élise and Guillem enter.

BERNIER

Who the hell are you? Can't you see I'm busy here? Fuck off.

GUILLEM

Guillem Vilajosa Castelna i Fabregà, sir. Team leader Emile ordered me to bring you a woman.

BERNIER

Who? Ah, never mind, let's see her.  
(CONT'D)

Bernier looks over Élise. She smiles at the Commander.

BERNIER (CONT'D)

She's a bit old, but... She'll do.  
Go stand over there with the other doll. Good girl.  
(CONT'D)

Élise stands by Marianne, across the room from the window. The women lock eyes, and Élise's look very nervous. Bernier leans back and begins to untuck his shirt.

BERNIER (CONT'D)

(glancing at Guillem)  
You can fuck off now, whatever your name was.  
(CONT'D)

Guillem doesn't move. Instead, he steps closer to the window, brow furrowed, one hand, reaching into his jacket.

BERNIER (CONT'D)

Did you hear me? Get out! Or I'll -

Bernier is cut off as a small EXPLOSION goes off several streets over. A cloud of dark smoke billows into the sky. Bernier jumps up to the window and -

The room bursts into motion. Guillem grabs Bernier from behind, garroting him, dragging him to the floor, knocking papers off the desk.

As the men struggle, Élise pushes the other woman against the wall, hand over Marianne's mouth and a small knife to her throat.

ÉLISE

(trembling)

Not a sound.

Guillem and Bernier struggle on, Bernier flopping like a fish, weaker and weaker, trying to get the garrote off.

The two men who came with Guillem and Élise (Resistance MAQUIS in DISGUISE) pull the bodies of the door guards into the office then close the door.

Bernier stops flopping. Guillem pushes the Milicien's body off himself. Guillem spits on Bernier.

GUILLEM

(in Catalan, panting)

Fucking collaborator.

MAQUISARD 1

Let's go, not long until someone comes in here looking for the Commander.

ÉLISE

What should we do with her?



GUILLEM

Cut her throat and let's go.

Élise looks at Marianne, who is now crying quietly. Élise takes her hand off the woman's mouth.

MARIANNE

Please, I was just trying to feed my daughter! I -

GUILLEM

She's a collaborator, cut her throat and be done with it. We can't risk letting her live.

ÉLISE

No! She's doing what she has to to survive! Just like any of the rest of us.

GUILLEM

The rest of us are surviving without fucking the enemy!

MAQUISARD 2

C'mon! Hurry up!

GUILLEM

If you can't do it, I will.

Guillem, frustrated, grabs the knife from Élise, but -

Élise grabs his arm, holding him back.

ÉLISE

I said she lives! We're no better than them if we go around killing everyone! We just came for Bernier.

Guillem growls then roughly cuts several clumps of Marianne's dark hair off, close to her scalp, the sign of a "horizontal collaborator."

Guillem shoves the knife into his belt, shaking his head. Marianne sinks to the floor and curls up.

GUILLEM  
Let's go!

Élise glances back for a moment at Marianne, then reluctantly follows Guillem and his men.

The group slips out the door and away into the chaos caused by the explosion, leaving Marianne.

In the office, the collaborator Bernier lies sprawled on the floor, papers from the desk scattered around the room. Out the window, smoke billows into the blue sky over town.

TITLE OVER:

LA RÉSISTANCE

INT. UNDERGROUND NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

There are desks with papers, a few men smoking, and a radio operator, JACQUES DURAND, using a headset in the corner. A small, glazed-glass window lets in light at ground-level and a bare bulb hangs from the ceiling. The *maquisards* who killed Bernier enter, still in their disguises.

Guillem and the men get out of their Milice disguises and don civilian clothing topped with their Basque berets. They discreetly tuck small weapons into their pants or coats.

Élise stands to the side, a bit unsure of what to do with herself. Her hands are still shaking.

GUILLEM  
(addressing the men)  
We'll meet tonight at the rendezvous point. Split up, don't get caught. If you do, don't talk for 24 hours. Good work today, men.

The men nod and filter out of the room, leaving Élise, Guillem, Jacques, and the couple men who were already there.

Guillem takes Élise aside. He's still got some blood on his hands and cuffs. He looks at her for a moment. His eyes are unemotional and intense.

GUILLEM

Don't hesitate next time I give you an order. Do you understand?

ÉLISE

That woman was innocent!

GUILLEM

No one is innocent. You can't protect everyone.

ÉLISE

But we still have to try!

GUILLEM

Saving others is only good for getting yourself killed. Now, wait here until Simone arrives. Jacques will give you new papers, then meet us at the safehouse.

With that, Guillem turns, gives Jacques a nod and then walks out.

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

Jacques and Élise are having a friendly conversation when SIMONE DE LA RUE, a precise, guarded-looking woman in her mid-30s enters the office. Jacques stands, blushing. The two faire la bise (French cheek kiss).

JACQUES

Good to see you, Simone!

SIMONE

You too, Jacques.  
 (looking over at Élise)  
 You must be Élise?

ÉLISE

I am, yes.

Jacques sorts through some papers on a desk before finding what he's looking for.

JACQUES

Right, ladies! Here are your papers,  
 they should be fine as long as you're  
 just going through street checkpoints.

SIMONE

Wonderful, thank you Jacques.

She smiles at him and their hands linger as he passes her the papers.

JACQUES

Be careful. The Milice are bound to  
 be everywhere after this morning.

SIMONE

We will be. They rarely give women any  
 trouble.

JACQUES

Oh, before you go! Élise, can you  
 meet a contact at the church next Tuesday  
 at noon? They're part of the maquis in  
 Limoges.

(CONT'D)

Élise nods.

JACQUES (CONT'D)

Wear something red and your beret  
 so they know it's you.

SIMONE

(to Élise)  
 Let's be off then.

Jacques and Simone exchange a long look as the women leave.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - DAY

Élise and Simone walk casually down the streets of Laran, dressed like ordinary French women, carrying handbags. Nothing out of the ordinary. Léon passes them on a bike without a glance, or any sign of recognition in public.

ÉLISE

How did you end up here?

SIMONE

Sent by the Brits. I'm SOE, sent to help the French Resistance.

ÉLISE

What sort of help?

SIMONE

Coordinating supply or weapon drops, teaching how to sabotage the enemy, and so on. For example, you really should be using a code word or phrase for this meeting in the church.

(CONT'D)

They pause as an older gentleman in a dark coat passes them.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Otherwise it could be anyone you meet with. You've all got a lot to learn. You maquis aren't nearly as organized as the larger Resistance networks.

Another pause as they're passed by a cyclist.

ÉLISE

I don't know if I should go to that meeting. I don't know if I'm cut out for this... I thought I was, but... Guillem might be right, I'll just end up getting myself or someone else killed.

SIMONE

How long have you been with this cell?

ÉLISE

Just over a month.

SIMONE

That's not long, but... you're still alive. So you must be doing something right. When -

Simone stops as they turn a corner and see a Milice street checkpoint ahead. They keep walking forward, confidently. Élise fumbles around in her bag for her papers.

MILICIEN 1

How are you ladies today? I wasn't going to ask for papers, but since you've already got them out...

He glances over Élise's papers, scrutinizing her. He hands them back and raises his eyebrows at Simone, clearly asking for her newly minted fake papers.

She hands them to him with a smile.

MILICIEN 1

(glancing at papers,  
smalltalk)

How has your day been?

SIMONE

I was shocked by that explosion earlier, but better now that I'm talking to such a handsome man in uniform.

The man blushes and hands back Simone's papers quickly.

MILICIEN 1

Oh, you - you think so? Why... Thank you, mademoiselle!

Simone winks at him as the women walk away. Once they're away, Simone links arms with Élise and speaks quietly.

SIMONE

Don't pull out your papers early like that. They'll think you're nervous. Just do what they ask and as a woman they'll usually just let you go without hassle.

ÉLISE

I know, I'm not sure what I was thinking. Still on edge from this morning.

Simone pats Élise's arm in a friendly manner, smiling at a passerby.

SIMONE

It's alright. You'll learn.

The women keep walking down the street. A couple cars pass. The buildings are beginning to thin and they seem to be reaching the edge of the town. Élise and Simone continue down the road, arms still linked together.

INT. FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Élise and Simone walk through the living room, paintings of animals adorning the walls. It's cluttered, with a couple tables and men carelessly building makeshift explosives, talking in a mix of French and Polish.

They enter the back room, where Léon and Guillem can be heard faintly.

LÉON (O.S.)

...because you're not French! It's not your family who will suffer reprisals!

INT. FARMHOUSE BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Élise and Simone enter, cutting the men off. They sit across a table from each other. The table has a few wine bottles and papers on it. Radio operator equipment sits in a corner. There are a couple empty chairs.

Léon gets up and gives Élise a hug.

SIMONE

Guillem can I speak to you for a moment? We need to coordinate another supply drop from London.

Guillem nods and they walk out, leaving Léon and Élise.

ÉLISE

I don't think I can keep doing this...

LÉON

Did you have to... to kill anyone?

ÉLISE

No, but there was a woman that Guillem wanted me to, and... I... couldn't. I don't think I'm cut out for this.

They sit at the table. Élise puts her head in her hand.

LÉON

You can't just quit, Élise. You committed to this. You know names, locations, faces... It's not a game.  
(CONT'D)

Guillem walks back in, taking stock of the situation.

GUILLEM

You want out.

ÉLISE

I don't know, today, that woman, I -



GUILLEM

That is how wars are won. Cutting wires and hiding will only get you so far.

LÉON

I didn't realize wars were won by poor decisions that put everyone at risk.

GUILLEM

There is one less goddamn Milicien out there! Can't you see that? One less of those fuckers!

LÉON

And how many of our comrades will get caught in the crossfire because of that one Milicien? They Wehrmacht has razed villages for less! Innocent people, Guillem! Not that you'd care about us though. You only want to see a free France so that you can go back to your precious Spain and just keep fighting there until finally -

ÉLISE

Stop shouting! Both of you, please! Please. I'll stay with you - for now. But only to deliver messages. I want nothing to do with the rest of it.

(looking at Guillem)

I'm not going to kill anyone.

Guillem shakes his head. He picks up a bottle of wine.

GUILLEM

Someday you might not have a choice.

He leaves. Léon leans back for a moment, then puts his hand over Élise's.

LÉON

We'll get through this.

ÉLISE

Together.

LÉON

Together.

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE TOWN - DAY

Élise rides a bicycle down a country road, spring in bloom. A military truck passes her, paying no mind.

INT. FARMHOUSE LIVING ROOM- DAY

Élise hands Léon something from her bag. He gives her a kiss and waves her out the door.

EXT. LARAN TOWN SQUARE - DAY

Élise walks across the square in front of the church, holding a baguette under her arm, reminiscent of her routine before she joined the maquis.

A man passing subtly tips his Basque beret to her. She gives a small, friendly nod.

INT. UNDERGROUND NEWSPAPER DORMITORY - NIGHT

Élise, Jacques, and Simone sit around a small table under an exposed bulb hanging from the ceiling, playing cards and laughing with a bottle of wine open.

EXT. TOWN STREETS - DAY

Élise passes smoothly past a small checkpoint, smiling at a guard.

INT. VICHY FRANCE GOVERNMENT OFFICE - NIGHT

Fancy office with a painting of Pétain behind a large desk and maps of France. Milice and Nazi flags sit side-by-side.

One man, a Vichy OFFICIAL, sits behind the desk. Across from him is MARTIN BÉCHARD, a lithe man with sharp features and dark eyes. The official places a photograph of the murdered Bernier in front of Béchard.

OFFICIAL

Phillipe Bernier was the Milice Company Commander in Laran-Sainte-Marie, a town east of Limoges, in Limousin. He was assassinated by the maquis a week ago ago.

(CONT'D)

The official stands and turns to face the portrait, away from Béchard.

OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

The Wehrmacht is preparing for an Allied landing and the closest units are in Limoges, exhausted from the Eastern Front. They cannot be relied upon solely to put down any resistance in the métropole. This job now falls to the Milice, and it must be done clearly and without hesitation. A message must be sent.

(CONT'D)

The official turns to face the expressionless Béchard.

OFFICIAL (CONT'D)

This is why you have been chosen as the new Company Commander in Laran. Use whatever methods you deem necessary. We cannot allow the town to become a rallying symbol for those who resist us. These actions -

(pointing to the photographs)

-merit consequences. Do what must be done.

The corners of Béchard's mouth twitch into a ghastly smile.

BÉCHARD

With pleasure.

INT. GOTHIC CHURCH - DAY

A warmly lit cathedral with an upper balcony, light streaming through stained-glass windows. A couple people sit scattered throughout the pews, praying quietly.

Élise, with her beret and a red jacket, sits at the aisle-edge pew about halfway down the nave. The doors creak open and then swing closed again. Another woman, part of the LIMOGES maquis sits down in the pew behind Élise. This LIMOGES WOMAN is wearing a dark blue coat and wide white hat, obscuring her face.

LIMOGES WOMAN

Élise?

ÉLISE

Yes.

LIMOGES WOMAN

Good. We received news from Lyon that might be of use to you. They say that the Milice has -

(CONT'D)

A loud commotion outside the church, followed by a single gunshot cuts the conversation. The muffled voice of the new Milice Commander Béchard filters in.

BÉCHARD (O.S.)

People of Laran! Please assemble in the square presently!

LIMOGES WOMAN (CONT'D)

What's going on?

ÉLISE

I don't know, let's go have a look.

Behind Élise, there is rustling as the woman from Limoges leaves. Élise follows suit after, crossing herself as she stands and leaves separately. The few other people in the church look worried.

EXT. LARAN TOWN SQUARE - DAY

In the square, a crowd has gathered. The plaza itself is of medium size, with wide lamp posts around the perimeter, and a fountain at the center.

A car sits at the edge of the square, surrounded by armed Miliciens. Béchard stands on the car's roof, surveying his new kingdom of Laran; a wolf sizing up its prey. He's in uniform with aviators on and hands clasped behind his back.

BÉCHARD

My name is Martin Béchard and  
I will be taking his position as  
head of the Milice in this town.

(CONT'D)

Élise, in the crowd, looks around uneasily.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

My father taught me that actions carry  
consequences. In my family, if you were  
caught lying or shirking, you would get  
the belt. Insubordination was not  
permitted.

(CONT'D)

Béchard nods to his men. They grab seven people out of the crowd, as the people crowd together and try to back away. The crowd stays, but more cautiously as the seven are taken toward Béchard.

Five are forced to kneel, facing the crowd, and two are manhandled around the car, toward several lampposts.

Béchard steps down onto the hood of the car, unholstering a revolver, loading it slowly.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Last week, Company Commander Philippe  
Bernier was found in his office, murdered  
in cold blood by a group of hateful,  
brutish Résistants.

(CONT'D)

Béchar'd's face remains expressionless as he shoots the first person kneeling on the ground. The crowd gasps and bristles but the armed Miliciens leering at them make them think better of trying to do anything.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Laran is my new home, and I would like to think of you all as my new family. I would like to be a father to you all. And, like a father, you may love me or you may hate me. Yet you will respect me.

(CONT'D)

Béchar'd shoots the next person then continues to leisurely stroll down the line, still betraying no feeling. In the back of the crowd, Élise clenches her jaw.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

We cannot have a happy family or a house in order if murderers walk among us. Those who would see good French citizens killed for supporting their rightful government. They disrespect France. Disrespect me.

(CONT'D)

Nothing stirs on Béchar'd's face as we hear another shot. He seems perfectly at ease amidst these extrajudicial killings. Another. Then the final fifth shot.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

These five consequences are for the killing of Bernier. And those two -

(CONT'D)

He gestures behind him. Miliciens begin to hoist up and hang the final two crowd members from the lampposts. Over Béchar'd's shoulder, we can see kicking and squirming legs.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

- are for your disloyalty. Each day until Bernier's killers are caught, two more will be hung. In the interest

(CONT'D)

BECHARD (CONT'D)

of your country, your neighbors, and your families, you will come to me with information about the resistance operating in this town. Curfew begins at 19:00. Disperse.

Élise turns and walks away quickly, the crowd all equally shocked. A ringing sound muffles out the sound of the street.

EXT. STREET CORNER - DAY

Élise gets around a corner and looks at her shaking hand, then takes a deep breath and dry heaves, leaning against a brick wall. Several people pass her, until a PASSERBY pats her on the back, concerned, checking if she's alright.

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

In the office, Jacques and Élise sit by the radio, speaking quietly. There are a couple other men sitting around, but the mood is somber and muted.

ÉLISE

And your family? Are they safe?

JACQUES

As safe as they can be. My mother and sister stay inside, and I try to keep away from them as much as possible.

ÉLISE

Do they know? What you do for us?

(CONT'D)

Jacques shakes his head no. Élise looks down and nods, understanding.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

They're safer that way.

After a moment of silence, Jacques takes a deep breath, refocusing.

JACQUES

Right. Getting to business. I radioed Léon and Guillem to meet at the farmhouse to discuss this new Milicien. I hear those two are fighting again.

ÉLISE

Those idiots are always at each other's throats.

JACQUES

(in a playful tone)

And yet you're in love with one of those idiots.

ÉLISE

Oh, shut it. Better than falling for a British spy. No, don't give me that, I see how you look at Simone. Admit it.

JACQUES

(blushing)

Well... maybe once the war is over, if it ever ends. If we're alive. But you've heard her go on about not being "compromised." There's no way she'd ever -

Suddenly, a CRASH from above and shouting! The Milice have found the office! The few men in the room scramble frantically, one falling out of his chair. One grabs a gun, another looks around frozen, a deer in headlights. Another tries to wriggle out the small window.

Jacques bundles Élise up and through a door, into -

INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE DORMITORY - DAY

The dormitory looks much the same as it did when Léon and Élise were there a few days before.

Hurriedly, the pair rush to the back of the room, slamming the door behind them. The shouting is closer. No shots are fired but there is a fair amount of commotion.



Together, they work to pull the dresser away from the wall, revealing a small passage, just big enough to crawl through.

JACQUES

Go! Get out of here! Make sure the others know we've been found out!

ÉLISE

Come with me!

JACQUES

(essentially shoving her into the passage)

Can't close it from the inside!

And then Élise is in the passage and Jacques is pushing the dresser back against the wall, as someone pounds on the dormitory door. Just before the door gives way, he finally gets the dresser flush and darkness swallows Élise.

EXT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

Élise crawls quietly out of a trapdoor in some bushes about fifty feet from the building that the office is housed in. It's a two-story house with a lawn and bushes/plants surrounding it. Bushes where Élise has found herself at the end of the passage, looking through the foliage.

Several Milice walk out of the house. A line of four maquis come out after them, hands on their heads, followed by some more maquis.

Élise's throat catches as the maquis and Milice stop in front of none other than the menacing figure of Béchard. Béchard seems to be speaking to the maquis, who don't move. He moves closer to one of them, who remains still. A Milicien standing next to Béchard hits the maquis man in the stomach but is then stopped and seemingly reprimanded by Béchard.

An OLDER WOMAN walks out of the house and Béchard goes over to speak with her. A SMALL BOY appears in the doorway next to her and she pushes him back inside. The woman points to

one of the men - Jacques. Béchard hands her something - ration slips or money most likely - and has a couple men grab Jacques. He struggles but is then hit. He goes limp and is dragged away.

At this, Élise gasps and moves, causing the brush to rustle.

Béchard looks over sharply at the bushes. He scans them, watching for any movement. Nothing that we can see through the foliage from his vantage point on the lawn.

Élise holds her breath as a Milicien steps toward the bushes where she hides, but is stopped by Béchard, who says something indistinct and gestures that the man should stay with the prisoners.

Élise begins to quietly back away from the scene through the bushes.

Béchard watches the foliage rustle ever so slightly as his men file out with their prisoners. He seems to know someone is there. Then, he turns his head and follows his men, away from the house.

EXT. LARAN STREETS - DAY

Élise appears out of the bushes and walks down the sidewalk toward more dense buildings. She checks over her shoulder, breathing heavily, making sure that nobody has seen or is following her.

She rounds a corner, checking over her shoulder again and - bumps into a MILICIEN! She's startled and flustered, still shaken up by the raid.

It's the bored guard who was on guard outside of Bernier's offices, who was distracted by the painters, with his scar.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

Where are you off to in such a hurry?

ÉLISE

(Flustered)

I was just... I was going to the boulangerie but I was told to go home by the Milice up ahead.

The Milicien raises an eyebrow, unconvinced.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

Papers?

Élise pats where her bag should be, but it's gone, left behind in the rush.

ÉLISE

I... I left them at the boulangerie this morning. I was on my way to pick them up. That's why I was -

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

What boulangerie?

Élise pauses for a moment. A moment too long. The Milicien steps closer, and just over his shoulder Élise catches the eye of a woman walking past. A woman with a fashionable headscarf on, hiding her cut hair. Marianne.

Marianne walks up and takes Élise's arm warmly, like a friend.

MARIANNE

Louise? How are you? Is this man giving you any trouble?

The Milicien seems unsure of what to do. His certainty of Élise's lie is fading.

ÉLISE

I'm well. He's just doing his job.

MARIANNE

(to Milicien)

Is there something wrong with my friend's papers?

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

She doesn't have them on her.

Marianne reaches into her own bag and retrieves her papers, handing them to the Milicien.

MARIANNE

Here are mine. Marianne Comtois. Born the 5th of January, 1914. I will vouch for my friend here. Her name is Louise Laurent. We grew up together on Rue de la Fontaine.

The Milicien hands back the papers slowly, his brow furrowed. Marianne holds his gaze intently as he looks between the women who stand, arms linked.

He sighs and shakes his head.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

Get your papers, Mademoiselle Laurent. If I see you again without them, I'll have to take you in.

He straightens his jacket and continues walking, rounding the corner out of sight.

The women stroll forward. It takes a moment for Élise to speak up.

ÉLISE

You didn't have to do that.

MARIANNE

You didn't have to stop that man in the office from killing me.

They stop walking and unlink arms.

ÉLISE

Thank you.

Marianne holds eye contact for a moment. Then she turns and walks away, leaving Élise standing still for a moment on the empty street before she takes a deep breath and continues on her way.

INT. FARMHOUSE - DAY

Élise hurriedly rushes into the living room of the farmhouse. There's a couple men quietly talking, who nod to Élise.

INT. FARMHOUSE BACK ROOM - DAY

Inside, the room looks much the same, only the table is more cluttered, with a couple maps and a photo of Bechard, stabbed through with a knife, pinned down. Guillem and Léon are at each other yet again, and Élise immediately gets roped into the conversation.

LÉON

Élise! Didn't I tell trigger finger here that this would happen? That the reprisals would be worse than anything we could do to them?

(at Guillem)

Those innocent deaths are on your hands!

GUILLEM

My hands? It wasn't me that shot those people in the square! Those the people I'm trying to stop!

The men only then seem to notice that Élise seems off, shaky, still shocked from the raid (that they don't yet know about).

LÉON

Élise?

ÉLISE

The office... Milice raided the office. They took Jacques, and the rest of them, I don't know -

GUILLEM

Slow down. Start at the beginning.

He pulls up a chair for Élise, who half falls into the chair.

ÉLISE

I was in the newspaper office and then all of a sudden there was this shouting and Jacques shoved me into a passage. They took Jacques separately.

GUILLEM

Damnit! They must have known somehow that he was a radio operator. We have to move, get the men somewhere safe... How did they find the office?

LÉON

Someone sold us out obviously. Stopping two hangings a day is a pretty good incentive to hand us in.

GUILLEM

Collaborators.

ÉLISE

They're just trying to save their neighbors...

GUILLEM

Or their own skin. By killing us.

Léon lights a cigarette. Guillem curses in Catalan and kicks a chair.

ÉLISE

We have to help Jacques.

GUILLEM

And risk more lives for his? No.

LÉON

We can't just let our comrade suffer!  
We have to try to help him.

GUILLEM

(bitterly sarcastic)

And how do you propose we do that?  
What brilliant plan do you have?  
Let's hear it. We'll just end up  
with more losses than we gain.

ÉLISE

Jacques is the only radio operator  
we have right now. We need him to  
coordinate with other cells or with  
London, or even each other.

(softer)

And... he's our friend. He's a good  
person.

GUILLEM

I want to rescue him as much as you  
do. But we can't get him out of whatever  
prison they have him in. We don't have  
the men or the experience.

ÉLISE

What about using the disguises again?

GUILLEM

Those only worked because Bernier was  
lazy and arrogant. This new Commander,  
Bechard, is more careful. We'd be caught.

ÉLISE

(in thought)

Jacques knows how to get in touch with  
London. That would make him of interest  
to the Nazis, yes? They would likely  
transfer him to a larger city where  
he can be put into Gestapo custody. We  
can hit them on the road.

GUILLEM

If they transfer him... that's a big if.

LÉON

That's a good plan Élise. But it sounds like we can't do anything right now. We've already waited too long. I need to get my men out of here. Élise, can you let Simone know as well, wherever she is?

Élise nods assent as Léon leaves, speaking indistinctly to his men in the house. Guillem pulls the knife from the photo and stalks out. The gruff man stops briefly by Élise.

GUILLEM

You did well today.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Élise and Simone sit at a park bench. The park is on a rise, overlooking the Laran-Sainte-Marie. A river meanders along the edge of town, and the facades of the church and train station are visible above the other, typically central French buildings. It's a pleasant spring day.

They share a baguette as they talk.

ÉLISE

I wish we had some Gour Noir to go with.

SIMONE

Really? I've always preferred a nice simple Brie or Camembert. Can't go wrong.

ÉLISE

Good choices.

She offers the baguette to Simone, who shakes her head.

SIMONE

I'm alright, thanks. Not very hungry.



ÉLISE

Jacques?

(CONT'D)

Simone nods her head, looking out over the town.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

Do you... I mean - I know he has a soft spot for you.

Simone takes a deep breath and considers her answer.

SIMONE

I have... grown fond of him. But he cannot be more important than the war. And to win this war I need to try to

(CONT'D)

SIMONE (CONT'D)

keep you all alive and fighting. Just a while longer. How many of your lives will we be risking to get him back?

ÉLISE

We can't just leave him.

Simone eyes Élise for a moment.

SIMONE

Then promise me you'll bring him back.

ÉLISE

I don't know if -

SIMONE

Just promise me.

ÉLISE

I promise.

(CONT'D)

The women pause again, to gaze over the spring day. It's beautiful, and it seems so calm after the past years of war. Élise sets down the baguette between them on the bench.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

What will you do after the war?

SIMONE

I want to go home.

ÉLISE

Where's home for you?

Simone pauses again, measured, guarded.

SIMONE

I'm not sure I know anymore.

ÉLISE

How can you not know?

SIMONE

(nodding at town)

Is this still your home? Is this Laran still the Laran you're fighting for?

ÉLISE

I'd like to think it's still there somewhere. It's easier to think that on days like this, from up here.

Simone nods gently and smiles. A breeze blows softly through the trees as they sit together, watching the day.

SIMONE

I hope we both see it again someday.  
Home.

EXT. FOREST - DAY

In the evening light, Élise leads Guillem and three armed maquisards through the woods. Guillem is carrying a worn hunting rifle.

The undergrowth isn't too dense but they have to push through a bush every so often.

ÉLISE

It shouldn't be too much farther now.

They push through another bush into a small clearing. There, more maquisards wait, a group of seven or so, including Léon. They're all checking guns, ammunition, or simply waiting.

GUILLEM

Where is the road from here?

LÉON

Just down there.

He points away from where Élise and Guillem just came from, uphill slightly. Guillem, on his stomach, peeks over the top of the little embankment and surveys the road; it's set in a little divet between small rises on either side.

GUILLEM

This is perfect. We can get above them on both sides.

(CONT'D)

Guillem crawls away from the edge and steps back to the other men.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

And we're certain there's only one car coming? No escort?

ÉLISE

Unless our intel from Simone is wrong, but have you ever seen her make a mistake?

GUILLEM

I haven't... yet.

LÉON

You're doing the right thing.

Guillem sighs, not sure if this really is the best option.

GUILLEM

(addressing everyone)

Alright men. Just after nightfall they're transporting Jacques to Limoges. Léon and his men will get a tree trunk across the road so they have to stop. I want half of you on the other side of the road. Stay hidden until they're out of the vehicle. Jean-Luc?

(CONT'D)

JEAN-LUC, a wiry man with large ears salutes.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

You'll command that side of the road. Make sure that nobody shoots too early. The rest of you will be on me.

(CONT'D)

Guillem takes a long look at Léon as he continues.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

If there is more than one car you are not to shoot. I repeat: if there is a second car you will stay hidden, they will clear the road, and continue. I will not risk losing more men. Am I understood?

CHORUS (MAQUISARDS)

(various agreements)

Yessir. Understood. Understood, sir.

GUILLEM

Get across the road now and then get some rest. Keep a lookout posted.

(in Catalan, to himself)

Stay alive, boys.

The men begin to get up and get to their business. Guillem unholsters a Lueger whose previous owner must no longer have a good use for it. He holds it out to Élise.

ÉLISE

Oh no, I -

He presses the small gun firmly into her hand.

GUILLEM

If you're here you should be armed.  
Just in case. May you never need to fire it.

LÉON

(seeing what's happening)  
Guillem, she told you she wouldn't do  
this again.

GUILLEM

That's fine. Then she can leave. Go back  
the way you came and don't help us save  
Jacques. But it's her choice. Get back at  
them for those people in the square. For  
the raid. What do you say?

They both look at Élise. Guillem steps back. Élise pauses,  
torn: should she leave safely or should she help them save  
Jacques. She looks at the gun, heavy her hands.

ÉLISE

I stay.

INT. MILICE COMMANDER OFFICE - NIGHT

Bechard stands, hands clasped behind his back. On the heavy  
desk sits... Élise's bag that she left in the newspaper  
office - with her papers in it. On the wall are maps and a  
few police-style sketches of people that are hard to make  
out.

Headlights turn onto the road below from the Milice  
Headquarters. A Milicien (from the checkpoint Élise and  
Simone passed through) walks in and salutes.

MILICIEN 1

Sir, the prisoner has been sent on his way to Limoges.

BECHARD

Good. Now, listen carefully. I you to wait five minutes then take another car with eight men. Follow the road to Limoges, after the prisoner's transport.

MILICIEN 1

Sir, may I ask why we didn't initially -

BECHARD

The maquis will, predictably, try to rescue the prisoner during transport.

MILICIEN 1

Bait.

BECHARD

(turning to face the man)

Precisely. You and your men will clean them up when they think they're in the clear.

MILICIEN 1

Sir.

The Milicien salutes again and exits. Bechard turns to look at the wall and the sketches more closely. They're rough, but recognizable. Guillem, above the others. Léon below him. Jean-Luc. Élise. A few other maquis.

BECHARD

Five. Six with the driver. That should be convincing.

(to the portrait of Guillem)

Your move.

Another set of headlights pulls out of the Milice headquarters, into the night.

EXT. FOREST ROAD - NIGHT

Down the road, headlights flash past trees and round the bend, moving toward the tree laying across the road. Only one set of headlights.

The car comes closer, the headlights flickering past trees and briefly playing across the faces of maquisards hidden on the embankments; Guillem, Léon, Jean-Luc. Élise is further back, gripping her Lueger tightly, trembling slightly.

It's a van with two seats up front and an enclosed back, ideal for transporting prisoners. The van slows, seeing the fallen tree across the road, coming to a stop. With the engine still running and headlights still on, the MILICIEN (2) riding in the passenger seat cautiously clambers out, gun at the ready.

He raps on the side of the van.

MILICIEN 2

Robert, Dédé. Get out, help me clear the road.

The doors of the back swing open and two more Miliciens, ROBERT and DÉDÉ hop out, also looking around nervously. Someone shuts the doors of the back again from the inside.

A maquisard glances at Guillem, but he holds out his hand as if to say "wait." Below, the Miliciens seem to have decided it's safe enough. They begin to try to get the fallen tree out of the way, but it's slow going.

The MILICIEN DRIVER gets out too to help them, unarmed, and clearly annoyed that it's taking so long. Guillem, from the embankment, aims his rifle and takes a deep breath.

The van rumbles idly, front doors open, as the four Miliciens, backlit by the headlights, work to push the trunk out of their way on the empty forest road. A moment of calm - then the night bursts into sound and chaos.

The unarmed Milicien driver crumples to the ground. The other three immediately drop the log and dive into cover - one behind the log and two on the far side of the van from Guillem.

The Milicien (2) behind the log searches the forest for something to aim at, but the wood in front of him splinters and cracks and shots hit the wood.

MILICIEN 2

Where are -

He's cut short as he's hit from the side of the log he's hiding on, slumping against the fallen tree - the first victim of the deadly crossfire.

On the far side of the truck from Guillem, Dédé peeks around the corner, and is hit from behind him.

Robert, the final standing Milicien, scrambles around the front of the van away from the direction that Dédé was shot from, through the headlight beams. He shoots blindly into the treeline.

Woods splinters around the Miliciens and a maquisard braced against a tree falls backward, hit.

The man falls backwards, next to Élise, where she is trying to stay out of the way. She starts and gags, seeing his lifeless expression. The shooting has stopped. Guillem kneels and puts his hand on the dead man's shoulder. He shakes his head with a deep sigh, then gets up and glances at Élise, shaking.

GUILLEM

Leave him. Come on.

She waits for a moment, her gaze lingering before she follows on uncertain legs, beginning to walk down the embankment to the road. Léon stops her at the treeline.

LÉON

You don't have to go down there.



ÉLISE

I promised Simone I'd get Jacques.

LÉON

I'm sorry I got you involved in all of this.

She leans her forehead into his shoulder.

ÉLISE

It was my choice.

She looks up at him and composes herself. He looks concerned but doesn't say more. They hang back as the maquisards materialize out of the trees and surround the back of the truck.

Guillem and Jean-Luc are the closest to the van's back door, guns at the ready.

GUILLEM

Come out with your hands up.

Inside, a muffled voice.

VAN MILICIEN

Open it.

The door swings open and Jacques cautiously, slowly, gets out, followed closely by the VAN MILICIEN, who is holding a handgun to Jacques' head and using him as a shield.

Jacques is handcuffed, with a swollen black eye and bruises and cuts across parts of his face. Nevertheless, his expression brightens somewhat when he sees the maquisards - only for the gun to be pressed to his temple harder.

JEAN-LUC

Drop the gun.

VAN MILICIEN

You'll just shoot me.

JEAN-LUC

Then we seem to be at an impasse.

Guillem nods to a couple men who begin to walk slowly around the van, flanking the Milicien, whose eyes dart around. He backs closer against the back of the still-open van.

VAN MILICIEN

(urgent, tense)

What are they doing?! Stop, stop or -

GUILLEM

Give us the prisoner and you can go.

VAN MILICIEN

You swear?

GUILLEM

On my honor.

The Milicien wavers for a moment, then slowly lowers the gun and tosses it away, skittering on the ground. Jacques steps forward and then begins to fall. Jean-Luc catches the beaten man as he slumps forward.

The final Milicien stands still, a deer in the headlights.

VAN MILICIEN

Can I go?

Guillem raises his gun in a fluid motion and shoots the Milicien. Élise cries out.

Guillem ignores her, slinging the rifle over his shoulder.

GUILLEM

Can he walk? We'll take...

(CONT'D)

The sentence dies in this throat they all turn, hearing a rumbling noise from down the road, growing rapidly. An engine.

Headlights round the bend.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

Move! Into the woods! Go, go!  
More might be coming!

The maquisards scramble into sudden movement. Jacques is thrust into Élise's arms by another maquisard. He's still supported on the other side by Jean-Luc. Léon stays between Élise and the Miliciens, shielding her back.

Élise and Jean-Luc stumble up the hill holding up Jacques between them. Tires screech as the second car (a truck) pulls up sharply on the road and Miliciens pour out of the back.

Behind Élise, the man who handed Jacques off to her raises his gun in the road but is shot. As they crest the embankment past Guillem and a couple other maquisards who are in cover at the treeline taking potshots at the truck, Jean-Luc topples forward, hit.

GUILLEM

Jean-Luc!  
(in Catalan)  
You'll pay!

Suddenly Léon is on the other side of Jacques, taking the fallen Jean-Luc's place.

LÉON

Keep going! Make it into the forest!

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Élise and Léon continue dragging the, by this point mostly unconscious Jacques, away from the gunshots by the road. Light spills over the embankment and men flit between the trees, cries and shots ringing out seemingly all around.

The Miliciens seem to have crested the embankment. Guillem, ahead of them in the gloom, beckons them forward.

GUILLEM

Faster!

With everything in chaos, it's difficult to tell who has the upper hand, if anyone.

Léon cries out and falls onto one knee - his leg has been caught by something - a bullet or shrapnel from a tree.

ÉLISE

Léon, get up! Please!

Guillem, still further ahead, beckons.

GUILLEM

Hurry! Goddamnit Élise, leave him!

Élise is frozen for a moment, supporting Jacques' slumping frame. Caught in the dark woods, with lights and shots playing out around through the trees; does she haul Jacques forward to Guillem, or does she help Léon? She freezes, panicked.

LÉON

Leave me, get out of here! I'll slow you down!

She stays frozen for a moment longer.

ÉLISE

I can't -

LÉON

GO!

And then Guillem has his arm around Jacques and they're moving and Élise's legs are forced to work again and they're moving away, and Léon is trying to load his gun on the ground.

Élise, Guillem, and Jacques move away through the woods and underbrush, away from the shouting behind them. Guillem seems to be saying something, but there's a ringing and

Élise can't hear it, eyes focused ahead, movements mechanical, as if she's not there.

EXT. MAQUIS FOREST CAMP - DAY

Élise wakes up on a bedroll, under a makeshift tent. The maquis forest camp, Guillem's current headquarters is waking up.

The camp is in a small clearing, with tarps and tents set up. A small cooking fire is being set up. Guillem stands next to a chair at a small table they've managed to get to the camp, maps spread in front of him.

Élise sits across from where he stands, on a stump that's being used as another chair. He glances up briefly.

GUILLEM

How'd you sleep?

ÉLISE

Didn't. You?

GUILLEM

I haven't slept well in years.

(nodding at campfire)

See if they've got any coffee.

(CONT'D)

Élise returns a moment later with two small cups of a dark, gritty liquid. Guillem downs his in one swig. Élise manages to choke down a sip.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

You get used to it. Wakes you up,  
at least.

Élise tries another mouthful before setting the cup down.

ÉLISE

Do you think Léon is alive?

Guillem sits down in the chair.

GUILLEM

We lost five men getting Jacques back. Even if he is, we can't risk it.

ÉLISE

He would do it for any of us! We have to -

GUILLEM

Would he? Would he really? Would he help me? Besides, he can finally get his martyrdom for "the cause" he's always on about.

ÉLISE

How can you say that?! How can you possibly be so callous? When you first spoke to me you asked if I wanted to fight. I do. I want to fight. I want to fight for the people I care about, the people I love. What's the point if I just... let them die?

Guillem rubs his face with his hand, fatigued, looking like the years have suddenly caught up to the veteran.

GUILLEM

Look, kid. You can't save everyone. we got Jacques back but now we're right back where we were, only with three less men. I've fought for a longtime. And I've lost people. People I loved and cared about. I tried to save them and kept fighting and fighting and eventually they were all gone and I was still fighting. And I'm still fighting. And I'm tired. I'm so goddamn tired.

ÉLISE

Then why are you still fighting?

He looks at her, his gaze piercing, measuring her again. His usual countenance returns and he closes up again. The veteran has replaced the tired man.

GUILLEM

Don't push it, kid. Finish up that coffee then I'm going to send you with a couple men to take Jacques to a safehouse outside of town. They'll show you how to get there but after that I'll need you to deliver food to him and carry us his messages from the radio. Got it?

Élise meets his gaze defiantly for a moment, then looks down and manages to down the rest of her "coffee."

INT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY

The house is fairly dark, with blinds drawn over the windows. It looks like it's been vacant for a while, apart from a few signs of life where Jacques has been.

Simone and Jacques sit at the table, Jacques with headphones on. He hands them to Simone, who holds them up to one ear as Élise enters with a small bag of food, which she sets on the counter.

Jacques is looking better; he's got a faded black eye and a couple fingers in a splint, but he's healing. They're being quiet so the house seems to still be vacant.

ÉLISE

(quietly)

Wasn't expecting to see you here, Simone.

Simone looks up, a smile across her face.

SIMONE

I had to hear it for myself.

She looks at Jacques.

ÉLISE

Hear what?

JACQUES

The rumors are true.

Understanding spreads across Élise's face.

SIMONE

The Allies have landed in Normandy.

ÉLISE

It's happening. It's finally happening.

Simone puts her hand on Jacques, but he grimaces and pulls it away, disguising it as if he's scratching his face, where he's cultivating a layer of stubble.

ÉLISE

It doesn't seem real.

SIMONE

London's been preparing for a while now, but... you're right. Only a little longer.

She glances at Jacques.

JACQUES

(hesitantly)

Only a little longer...

ÉLISE

I have to go tell Guillem!  
The men need to know!

Élise's face suddenly falls. Simone tilts her head sympathetically.

SIMONE

He'd be proud of you, you know.

(CONT'D)



A moment of silence. Simone puts a hand on Élise's shoulder. Jacques looks down at his feet. Élise takes another moment, then looks up and wipes her eyes dry.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Now go tell Guillem that -

EXT. MAQUIS FOREST CAMP - DAY

GUILLEM

- the Allies have landed. And they're breaking out of the beachheads.

Guillem nods solemnly. Suddenly he looks tired again.

ÉLISE

Isn't that good news?

GUILLEM

Yes, I... Let me speak to the men first. Wait here.

(CONT'D)

Guillem strides out into the camp. the men take note and stop their conversations.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

Attention, lads. The rumors are true. The Allies are in the north and they're pushing the Germans back. Slowly.

(CONT'D)

A murmur ripples through the fifteen or so men assembled in the camp.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

But they're coming. I do believe we're going to see this one out. We're not done yet, but we're close, men. The Allies won't be here, in Limousin for a while, but it takes the pressure off us here. If we can push the bastards out, they might

(CONT'D)

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

stay out. Almost there. We're almost there. Now, let's break open that wine we've been saving.

(CONT'D)

The men, grinning, pull out the wine. Some hug each other, celebrating the first good news they've had in a while.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

Mathieu! Marcel! Not you two, you've still got guard duty! The rest of you leave enough for them! And not too loud!

(to himself more than  
the men)

Savor this.

He walks back to Élise, by the map table. He sits at the chair. They've managed to find another chair, and Élise sits across from him. She studies him.

GUILLEM

I've thought a lot about what you said. When you asked me why I'm still fighting.

ÉLISE

I'm sorry, I wasn't thinking when I -

GUILLEM

No, it's alright. I... I wish I could put the gun down. To stop fighting. But I just don't know how. It's all I've done for so long. All I know how to do anymore. I say it's for France, or so I can get home to Spain, but...

(he shakes his head)

When does it end?

ÉLISE

Will it ever end?

Guillem stands, walks to where the men are, and gets a partially drunk bottle of wine, bringing it back over. The men are arm in arm, laughing.

GUILLEM

This war will end. Sooner or later,  
at least on paper. In your head?  
Who knows. I'm still fighting every  
damn one.

(CONT'D)

He takes a swig of the wine, then wipes off the mouth of the bottle with the inside of his jacket and offers it to Élise.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

Sorry we don't have glasses.

Élise can't help but smile at that.

ÉLISE

I'll manage.

(CONT'D)

She takes a long drink of the wine, savoring it.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

Do you have anyone left? In Spain?

Guillem takes the bottle back. He glances at the men sitting in the camp.

Guillem reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small, faded photograph of a younger, cleanly-shaven Guillem next to another man. They're both wearing uniforms and smiling.

He hands Élise the photo. She sets it on the table in front of her. She smiles.

ÉLISE

Who is he?

GUILLEM

His name was Pablo. He was... he was  
my best friend.

ÉLISE

Was.

GUILLEM

It was during the Civil War in Spain.  
I - I miss him. He wouldn't want  
me to... to be who I am now.

Élise hands him back the photograph and puts a hand on his  
arm.

ÉLISE

I'm sure he'd be proud of you. Look  
around - look at these men. They've  
followed you through Hell. You're  
fighting for us, for our country. I  
wouldn't be here now if it wasn't for  
you.

GUILLEM

I want you to promise me something, kid.

ÉLISE

What?

GUILLEM

If this war ends - when this war ends...  
Let it end. Don't do what I've done.

ÉLISE

I'll try.

(CONT'D)

Guillem looks down at the photo one last time before  
folding it gently and putting it back into an inner jacket  
pocket.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

You could try to stop fighting too.  
You know, after.

GUILLEM

That sounds real pretty.

Guillem smiles sadly. Will he ever be able to stop fighting? They sit silently at the table, watching the men and their small celebration in the forest. Someone is singing *La Marseillaise* quietly.

EXT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY

The summer is passing.

Élise glances over her shoulder, looking around to make sure she isn't being followed or observed. She carries a small basket. The safehouse is an old, two-story building at the edge of town. The street is empty.

She then walks around to the back of the house. A couple old, weatherbeaten linens flutter weakly on a clothesline. She gives a patterned knock, identifying that it's her. Jacques quickly opens the door and she steps in quickly.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - DAY

The house is still dark and very little has changed. Jacques looks much better and the radio is still on the table, with headphones. A few papers are scattered around it and a map, showing the Allied advances in Northern France.

Élise sets down the small basket, revealing that it contains food. They seem to talk briefly and Jacques nods. He picks up a piece of paper and hands it to her. She folds it up and tucks it into her shirt.

Jacques thanks Élise and then watches her leave. He sighs deeply as she walks out, then goes and locks the door behind her. He sits at the radio and puts on the headphones.

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE SAFEHOUSE

Simone, hidden from view, watches as Élise leaves the safehouse and walks off. Simone stays, watching the building discreetly.

EXT. FOREST CAMP - DAY

Élise hands the paper to Guillem, who is cleaning his gun at the table, parts organized in front of him.

He glances it over, then calls two men over and begins to impart his orders.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Élise, wearing red, waits in the church for the woman from Limoges. Despite being in the peak of summer, it's a bit overcast and the sunlight isn't as bright through the windows.

The woman from Limoges settles behind her. They talk for a moment before the woman stands, walks to the altar, crosses herself, and then walks back down the aisle. As she walks past, Élise hands her a slip of paper.

INT. MILICE COMMANDER OFFICE - NIGHT

Bécharde looks at the wall with maps of Laran and drawings of the maquisards. Some of the drawings have photographs next to them.

Bécharde turns and opens a file on his desk and pulls out two sheets of paper, each with a photograph attached. The photographs are of the two maquisards that Guillem was just talking to in the forest camp. Their dead eyes stare up from the photographs.

The paperwork lists their causes of death: "heart attack," and "influenza." The photographs don't seem to match this.

Bécharde tacks these up over the drawings of the two men. The door opens and Bécharde turns. A Milicien enters, places a file on his desk, salutes and waits.

Bécharde opens a new file and lays out the contents on his desk. He leans back and strokes his chin. He looks up at the Milicien and then nods to the man. The man salutes again and leaves.

Among the contents of the file is a picture of the woman from Limoges.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Élise sits in a church pew, again wearing red. Someone settles in behind her. She waits for the code phrase, but instead hears a chilling male voice.

BÉCHARD

Élise Vaillard, yes?  
(CONT'D)

Élise's eyes widen in fear. Behind her, Bécharde looks around easily, at ease, insolently.

BÉCHARD

Very good. My name is Martin Bécharde.  
You can call me Martin, if you'd like.  
I believe I have something of yours.

Élise, with stiff movements that she tries to make seem natural, glances around her feet.

ÉLISE

Do you? Have I dropped something?

Bécharde leans forward and drops a small woman's handbag down onto her pew, followed by her identity papers. Élise looks down at them and then freezes. She's taught, her straight back rigid.

BÉCHARD

The name on those papers doesn't seem to be accurate, but... it is yours isn't it?

ÉLISE

What is this about?

BÉCHARD

Mademoiselle Vaillard - is that how  
you prefer to be addressed?

(CONT'D)

Élise swallows and nods, still facing ahead.

BÉCHARD

Very well. Mademoiselle Vaillard, I want  
you to think hard. Very, very hard.  
Is there... anything else that you may  
have lost?

(CONT'D)

Élise looks up to the stained glass windows, light  
streaming through them. Behind her, Béchard lights a  
cigarette with a match, then waves the match out and  
nonchalantly tosses it into the church aisle.

ÉLISE

We've all lost something, haven't we  
Monsieur Béchard?

BÉCHARD

Please, Martin is fine. I was thinking  
of something a bit more...tangible?  
You can't think of anything you've  
lost, misplaced... left lying about?

(CONT'D)

He takes another long pull on his cigarette, his eyebrows  
raised expectantly.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Nothing? Well.

He turns his head and signals someone behind him. The door  
of the church creaks open and two shapes enter. A GUARD and  
a prisoner, limping.



When they're close, the guard shoves the prisoner forward. He stumbles up to Béchard's pew. It's Léon. He looks roughed up, but defiant. He takes a hesitant step forward, glancing at Béchard, who nods encouragingly to him.

Élise finally turns her head and looks at Léon. Her face softens and she stands slowly. She embraces him, his arms limp at his sides. Neither of their eyes are dry.

ÉLISE

I thought I'd lost you.

BÉCHARD

What do you know? She had lost something after all. How sweet is this? Truly heartwarming. Anyhow, I believe you had something to say to Mademoiselle Vaillard, didn't you?

(CONT'D)

Léon steps back and looks at Élise. They're both standing in the church aisle. Béchard sits beside them in his pew, legs crossed, smoking, looking horribly entertained.

BÉCHARD

Go on, Léon. What do you want to tell her?

Léon takes a shuddering breath. His eyes seem to say "I'm sorry." Béchard stomps out his cigarette butt on the floor at the edge of the aisle.

LÉON

They are going to... They're going to kill me.

BÉCHARD

(prompting, as he lights another cigarette)

When?

LÉON

A week from today. Next Monday.  
They have... *permitted* me to ask  
you...

(CONT'D)

He glances over at Béchard, who again nods his  
encouragement with a fake smile plastered across his face.

LÉON

I don't have a ring.

BÉCHARD

(pretend confusion)

Why would a dead man need a ring?

Léon goes down on one knee. Élise's mouth opens.

LÉON

Élise Vaillard, will you marry me?

Élise glances between Léon, who is looking at the ground,  
and Béchard.

ÉLISE

(to Béchard)

What is this? What have you  
done to him?

Béchard unholsters a pistol. His cheerful facade drops.

BÉCHARD

If you say no, I'll shoot him  
here and now.

Élise stands frozen for a moment. Béchard shrugs and  
stands, cocking the gun, then -

ÉLISE

Wait! Yes. Yes. I will.

(to Léon)

Yes.

Léon looks up, a tired smile on his face, and she reaches her hand out to help him up. As soon as their hands meet, he's dragged to his feet and away by Béchard, then bundled away by the guard. He tries to shout, but is hit in the stomach and marched away. Béchard's smiling act is back.

BÉCHARD

Wonderful! Always such a special thing to see two people find happiness. This Sunday, noon. And why don't we have it here? Such a nice little building...

(CONT'D)

His cigarette finished, he puts it too out on the aisle ground with his toe.

BÉCHARD

Oh, and bring all your little friends! It's a wedding after all!

ÉLISE

Fuck you, Béchard.

BÉCHARD

(tutting)

Such language in a house of the Lord! How disrespectful. And please, I've already said you can call me Martin.

(CONT'D)

He pauses for a moment, Élise glaring at him. If looks could kill, Béchard would have no chance. Béchard claps.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Well! I'll see you on Sunday, Mademoiselle Vaillard. Until then!

He turns away, the sickly smile and condescending pleasant expression on his face quickly dropping, his expression now devoid of feeling.

Élise takes an unsteady step and steadies herself on a pew. Sunlight streams into the church as her breaths come rapid and shallow.

INT. SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

Élise sits on an old armchair. Jacques is at the table with Simone and Guillem paces around the room.

GUILLEM

It's too dangerous to attack them in the church. Even though we've been whittling them down, they still outnumber us at least three-to-one. And they may yet request aid from the Germans.

SIMONE

If I may -

GUILLEM

No. You may not.

SIMONE

Guillem, this is my job. I am here to -

GUILLEM

Yes, to help the Allies win the war.

SIMONE

So then why -

Guillem stops pacing and fixes on Simone angrily.

GUILLEM

You said there would only be one truck! When we got Jacques back you told us that there was one car. We lost good men because of that. Why should I trust you?

SIMONE

You think I'm a traitor? After everything I've done? For you, for the Allies -

GUILLEM

No, I just think you're inept. So we're going to do this my way.

JACQUES

And what is your way?

Guillem returns to pacing.

GUILLEM

They mean to draw us out, obviously. But if they're all grouped together this may be our chance to hit them hard. We just have to be smart about it. Don't do what they expect.

JACQUES

And what are we expected to do?

GUILLEM

That's the question, isn't it? You saw Léon and spoke to him, yes?

ÉLISE

Yes.

GUILLEM

They've kept Léon alive. He's not a radio operator like Jacques. He knows a fair amount, but they would have wrung everything out of him by now. Which means they're keeping him alive as bait.

Élise's brow furrows and she shifts in her chair. Guillem stops pacing, fixated on the idea forming.

GUILLEM

Yes, Léon is the key here. They've kept him alive to use him against us. So we'll do exactly what they don't expect us to.

ÉLISE

(slowly, worried)

Guillem, what do you mean?

Guillem is silent for a moment, then looks at Élise.

GUILLEM

We're going to bomb their convoy.

Silence for a moment, then everyone starts speaking.

ÉLISE

No! But we'd  
kill Léon!

SIMONE

How will you  
possibly be able -

JACQUES

What if they  
anticipate -

Guillem silences them all quickly.

GUILLEM

This is my way. This is...  
this is our way. Léon will likely  
die. He's going to die anyway.  
But for one of our men, we get how  
many of theirs? They'll certainly be  
in truck or marching together from the  
Milice station to the church.

(CONT'D)

Tense silence.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

We can take the town if we do this  
right. End the war. One man -  
(he looks at Élise)  
cannot be more important than that.

ÉLISE

And if it was Pablo?

Nobody in the room moves. Guillem looks like he might kill Élise right then and there.

GUILLEM

(hissed)

It isn't.

(CONT'D)

Élise holds his gaze, defiant, until he turns.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

We have four days to prepare.  
No time to waste. Come to the  
château northeast of town. It's  
safe enough.

(to Jacques)

Bring the radio. And you -

(to Élise)

speak to me when you get there.

Guillem places a hat on his head and shrugs on a long coat, then leaves out the back door.

Everyone in the room takes a deep breath. Élise puts her hands to her temples. Simone shakes her head and Jacques turns to the radio.

INT. MILICE COMMANDER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Bécharde stands at his desk, over the Milicien with the scar sitting in front of him, head bowed.

BÉCHARD

What do you mean? Not even a few men?  
We have the chance to destroy the  
Resistance in Laran here!

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

Sir, with all due respect, the Wehrmacht  
explicitly stated that they don't have  
the men to help us. The Allies are  
nearing Paris in the north, and...

BÉCHARD

And?

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

And the Germans call this region  
"Little Russia." The maquis here  
are a particular thorn in their side.  
They can't even move from town to  
town without being harassed and  
losing men.

Bécharde sits and composes himself.

BÉCHARD

They see the war as lost.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

I do believe so, sir.

(CONT'D)

Bécharde ponders this for a moment.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR (CONT'D)

Will we still... ?

BÉCHARD

This is my town! We have every  
advantage. We have more men! The  
people of Laran support us! A little  
band of insurgents will not take this  
from me! It's mine! I will not be  
disrespected!

(CONT'D)

BÉCHARD pauses to breathe for a moment.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Even with our losses through the  
summer, we still have enough men  
to fight off unorganized guerrillas.  
And we know their plan.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

We do?



BÉCHARD

They will attack the convoy as  
we move to the church.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

Our informant told you?

BÉCHARD

As I said, we have every advantage.  
They are careless, worthless idiots.  
I've been one step ahead the whole  
time.

MILICIEN WITH SCAR

Of course, sir.

BÉCHARD

Wehrmacht or no Wehrmacht, on  
Sunday we will destroy the Resistance.  
I will not tolerate them any  
longer. You may leave.

The Milicien nods, salutes, and exits. Béchard gets up and stands at the window, staring at his own reflection.

EXT. CHÂTEAU THAT HAS SEEN BETTER DAYS - DAY

Early summer morning light bathes a château that's past its heyday. It's fairly small, with only two floors and a little, overgrown garden. Some windows are broken and the roof needs some repairs. Ivy grows up one of the sides.

A fair number of men slowly begin to trickle out of the building's doors and down a set of three short stairs to a patio area in front of the garden. Some carry small guns that they're tucking into jackets. A few light cigarettes.

All in all, there are about twenty to thirty men when all assembled in one place for once. Jacques stands at the edge of the men, fidgeting. Simone stands a little ways off, and Guillem is in front of the men - the commander addressing his troops.

They're all talking amongst themselves until the door opens and Élise walks out. She's wearing a simple white dress and a beret.

GUILLEM

There she is! The bride! A fine day for a wedding, what do you say?

She stands, seemingly unsure of what to do with herself and all the attention on her. Guillem nods his head to the side, indicating for her to step down while he talks. She walks over to Simone. Guillem looks over the men.

GUILLEM

How long have we been fighting?  
How long have we hoped for this war to end? Today we've got a chance to do just that. To end the war here.

(CONT'D)

The men are silent. A few puffs of smoke here or there, but Guillem certainly has their attention.

GUILLEM

The Allies are just outside of Paris. Other maquis in Limousin are taking back towns. The Wehrmacht is on the retreat. And in the midst of all of that, I believe an opportunity has fallen into our lap...

As he speaks, Simone leans over to Élise.

SIMONE

(whispered)

How did he convince you to go along with this plan? To lose Léon?

ÉLISE

(also whispered)

He didn't.

Simone looks at Élise, concern and mild alarm in her eyes. Élise looks back at Guillem with pursed lips.

GUILLEM

... all of the Milice in Laran will be there. Including that butcher Béchard. If we can kill him - if we can destroy the Milice... The town will be ours.

(CONT'D)

He looks the men in the eye as he speaks, his dark eyes intense. The maquisards are enthralled.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

They won't be able to take it back. Do you want to see your home free?

(CONT'D)

The men murmur in assent. Guillem looks at them, head cocked, waiting, until they cheer louder.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

Now, we have a change in plans.

(CONT'D)

Simone glances at Élise. Jacques' brow furrows sharply. There is some muttering among the men that's quickly silenced as Guillem continues.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

We're going to do what they least expect us to. I'll speak to each of you in groups about your orders. The plan is that we'll be attacking while they're gathered in and around the church. And men -

(looking at Élise)

- if any of you have a shot at Béchard, you take it. No matter who or what might get in the way. That shot could cut the serpent's head off. That shot could end the war here in Laran. Whatever

(CONT'D)

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

you're fighting for - home, family, a better future, anything. It's all a few dead Miliciens away.

(CONT'D)

He pauses again, letting his words sink in for the men.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

Now break into your groups.

The men gather into groups of four to five and Guillem speaks quickly to each one. Once he's given their orders, they head off into the garden or around the châteaux, leaving to get to position in town. As they do, Simone turns to Élise.

SIMONE

Did you know about this change of plan?

ÉLISE

I did. He told me when I arrived here. He didn't think I'd go happily along with that plan anyway.

SIMONE

So why did he...

(CONT'D)

Élise only looks at Simone. Comprehension spreads across the British spy's face.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

He doesn't trust me. After I told him only one car would be with Jacques. How could he not trust me, I'm -

Guillem walks over to Élise and Simone, interrupting.

GUILLEM

(to Simone)

You stay.

SIMONE

I'm on your side, Guillem.

He clenches his jaw.

GUILLEM

You stay.

(to Élise)

When the shooting starts, get down.  
There's a door at the edge of the  
transept in the church. Get Léon and  
get out of there. Got it?

(CONT'D)

Élise nods.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

Say it.

ÉLISE

I understand.

GUILLEM

Good. Best of luck, kid. Imagine  
your wedding after the war.

With that, Guillem turns and leaves.

SIMONE

Jacques.

ÉLISE

Jacques?

SIMONE

Where is Jacques?

ÉLISE

Didn't he go with the rest of  
them?

SIMONE

No, he wasn't in any of the groups.

(CONT'D)

Simone looks around, then, worried, looks back at the château.

SIMONE (CONT'D)

Wait here.

Simone quickly walks back to the doors and goes inside, leaving Élise outside in the early spring morning. Élise looks around. It's peaceful and calm. A beautiful day. But then she looks back at the château and sighs deeply before she follows Simone.

INT. CHÂTEAU FOYER - DAY

The foyer is dimly lit, with a few windows providing light. The signs of the maquis - some boxes, sleeping pads, and so on are scattered around.

To the right is the door into the what seems to be a dining room or kitchen. Élise glances inside but there isn't any motion.

ÉLISE

Simone? Jacques?

Nothing. She turns and walks up the stairs.

INT. CHÂTEAU GALLERY - DAY

Up the stairs, Élise passes through another room with some tables into a larger gallery room. The ceiling was once intricately painted and statues and mirrors adorned the walls, not mostly broken. There is a pair of double doors at the end of the gallery, one slightly ajar.

Élise begins to walk slowly through the gallery, looking around. Something feels wrong. Where are Simone and Jacques?

ÉLISE

(quietly calling out)

Simone? Where are you?

Noise from the room at the end of the gallery. Élise's pace falters.

SIMONE (O.S.)  
 (distant)  
 Away from the radio I said!

JACQUES (O.S.)  
 (similarly distant)  
 Wait, Simone -

SIMONE (O.S.)  
 Why Jacques? Why would you -  
 (CONT'D)

Élise keeps moving forward tentatively, as their voices begin to grow louder and their tone escalates.

SIMONE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 Woah, put the gun down! Down!  
 Hands where -

A sudden shot rings through the gallery. Élise gasps and freezes. It's followed almost immediately by a second shot. Something thuds against the door and it closes. Élise begins to step forward again, carefully. She gets to the door and listens. Ragged breathing from inside.

She presses into the door but something is blocking it. A trickle of dark liquid begins to run under the door by Élise's feet. She covers her mouth and turns around, then steels herself. She pushes the door more firmly and it begins to open. She peeks into the room -

INT. CHÂTEAUX RADIO ROOM - DAY

It's a small room, with a view over the gardens. There is a fair amount of radio machinery set up on a table. By the opening door, on the ground, legs stick out on the ground. It's Simone. Simone is what's blocking the door.

But Élise doesn't have time to process most of this - through the narrow opening Jacques is framed, holding his stomach, his hand bloody, pointing a gun at the door. Élise quickly steps back.

ÉLISE

Jacques, what did you do?

JACQUES (O.S.)

(through sobs and ragged  
breath)

I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry!  
Simone, I -

He breaks down.

ÉLISE

Jacques what have you told them?

JACQUES (O.S.)

They had my sister! And my mother! I  
had to, I didn't know...

He trails off in more sobs.

ÉLISE

Jacques, I'm going to open this door.  
Put the gun down. Please.

(CONT'D)

Jacques only keeps sobbing about his family, about how he didn't have a choice, and that he's sorry.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

Alright Jacques, I'm going to come in.

She slowly puts a hand on the door. No movement. She pushes it farther and opens it enough to walk in.

Jacques is sitting against the wall, gun loosely in one hand, his other still on his bloody stomach. He's crying.

He looks up at Élise, his expression defeated and pained. He's very pale.



JACQUES

I'm sorry.

He raises his hand with the gun and Élise cries out and turns away -

ÉLISE

Wait!

- and one final shot rings out. Glass breaks. Élise stands for a moment, hands protecting her head before she begins to move and realizes that she's not hit at all.

Behind her, Jacques' hand falls loosely to the floor, the gun slipping out of his bloody fingers.

Trying not to look at where Jacques is slumped, Élise walks inside and kneels by Simone. The Brit's neck is bloody and her eyes stare up at the ceiling. Élise closes Simone's eyes.

Élise goes to rub tears off her cheek but realizes that there's blood on her hands. She wipes them on her now dirty white dress. She sits by Simone for a moment, collecting herself.

ÉLISE

(choked up)

I hope you get home.

Élise stands and walks out into -

INT. CHÂTEAU GALLERY - DAY

- the gallery, where Élise takes stock. Simone is dead, Jacques was an informant and is now dead, the Milice may know their plans, and she needs to leave to get to her wedding. She takes several deep breaths, closes her eyes and opens them again, and walks back through the gallery.

EXT. LARAN TOWN SQUARE - DAY

The church bell rings noon. The square is mostly empty, and several shapes hang from lamp posts - the woman from Limoges is one of them. A couple men are painting the side of a building near the church.

Through the center of the square, walking directly toward the cathedral, is a woman, surrounded by three men in Milice uniforms. She wears a white dress stained with blood and a Basque beret, a symbol of the Resistance.

The square itself has less the atmosphere of an occupied, WWII square, and more of Hell itself.

Élise walks, head held high. The church doors open before them and they enter the building.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Inside, leering Miliciens wait for their entertainment to begin. The three men around Élise close the doors and go to join their friends, leaving her standing alone at the end of the aisle.

Standing at the altar is Léon, alone, head down. He looks up as Élise enters.

Suddenly someone is standing beside her and is offering an arm to hold. Élise looks up into the goading face of Béchard.

BÉCHARD

May I? Seeing as your father isn't here to escort you down the aisle?

She begins to step forward without him, but he grabs her arm and pulls her into a slow step beside him. The Miliciens in attendance laugh or cheer.

ÉLISE

(hissed)

Let go of me.

BÉCHARD

(ignoring her question)

It's rather a shame that your friends didn't come. I was looking forward to meeting up with them on the way here. What kind of friends would miss a wedding?

(CONT'D)

Élise remains stubbornly silent as they continue, nearing Léon and the altar

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Oh, smile would you? After all, it's the happiest day of your life.

(CONT'D)

Bécharde gives Élise one more nasty smile before they reach Léon and he releases her, then goes to stand in the place of someone officiating.

The whole church is laid out before them. From Bécharde between Léon and Élise, who face each other to the Miliciens in the pews, laughing and talking to each other. There are a couple Miliciens on the upper balcony stretching back toward the front of the church.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Welcome! Everyone, welcome! Today, as you know, is a very special day for our happy couple here!

(CONT'D)

The audience of Miliciens settles down a bit, enjoying Bécharde's performance.

BÉCHARD (CONT'D)

Unfortunately, their families were unable to make it, so we'll have to do our best and support them as much as we can.

At this mention of "support," Béchard gives Léon's leg - the one that was shot and he's clearly avoiding putting weight on - a little kick and Léon falls, to the amusement of the Miliciens in the crowd.

Élise helps Léon back to his feet, making sure he's ok.

ÉLISE

(to Béchard)

Just get on with it.

BÉCHARD

Get on with it? Did you hear that, boys? She wants to just get on with it! She can't contain herself. She's begging to say that *elle le veut!*

(CONT'D)

Again, the audience laughs.

BÉCHARD

Very well, Mademoiselle Vaillard. Let us "get on with it." Now, I've never officiated a wedding before, so bear with me. How does it go again...? Ah! I nearly forgot! We need *témoins!* Your witnesses!

(to the crowd)

Who would like to be a witness for the lovely couple?

Several men raise their hands, eager to take part in the pageant. Béchard chooses a couple of them.

In the background and easy to miss, a man on the balcony suddenly disappears. The men that were up there no longer seem to be.

At the center of attention, the Milicien with the scar and another man are chosen to be the *témoins* - the witnesses. They come and stand by the altar as well.

## MILICIEN WITH SCAR

(to Élise)

No friend now to help you.

Élise clenches her jaw, looking intently at Léon. He meets her gaze. He looks sad and resolved, but his eyes widen slightly when the message of her look gets to him - that the maquis are coming.

Bécharde looks out over the church once again. He motions for the men to be silent.

## BÉCHARD

Now, we shall begin.

He stops for a moment, his brow furrowing and his smile disappearing slowly as he looks up the balcony. The empty balcony.

A single small shape arcs over the edge of the balcony.

It hangs in the air for a moment in the silent church. The grenade lands in the middle of the pews and the church explodes in chaos.

In the chaos, Élise stumbles back toward any cover she can find - the front pew. She tries to stay low, working toward a pillar at the edge of the church. Something grabs her ankle and she kicks hard. It's the Milicien with the scar.

She tries to scramble farther away but he's trying to pull her back. She tries to kick him again but he manages to cover himself. She tries to hit him with something, anything, pulling off her beret and ineffectually shoving it in his face as if it would suffocate him, then trying to claw at his face as they scramble while trying to stay in cover of the small pew. He pulls a gun out of a holster, and -

-several bullets shoot through the pew and a little piece of wood catches him in the eye. He cries out and the gun falls out of his hands, toward Élise!

She grabs the gun as a dead Milicien falls over the pew, onto the Milicien with the scar. On her back, she points the gun at the Milicien.

He looks up at her, his face bloody from the little splinters of wood, pinned beneath another man, staring at Élise and the gun. Élise stops for a moment, then squeezes the trigger.

Nothing happens. She looks at the gun and both of them sees what has happened. The safety is on.

She fumbles with the gun, trying to move get away as he pushes the body off of himself and, trying to get to her faster, stands up -

-and is hit when he stands. He falls to his knees, then lifeless onto the stone floor beside Élise.

Élise pulls herself behind the pillar, which seems fairly sheltered. Her ears - everything, it seems - is ringing. She closes her eyes, holding the pistol with both hands, sitting with her back braced against the stone pillar. Her arm is bleeding from a long, thin cut that appeared sometime during the chaos.

The sounds of fighting are faint under the ringing. One of the transept doors has been thrown off, and many of the stained glass windows have been shattered. Another one breaks. A man falls from the balcony. The church is full of chaos and smoke.

Gradually, the ringing fades. Élise opens her eyes and shakily looks around, peeking over into the nave. It seems to have quieted. The smoke is clearing.

Élise stands, and, staying close to the pew in case she needs to duck down, looks around the church.

INT. DESTROYED CHURCH - DAY

The church is ruined. Stained glass windows are jagged, broken, or shattered. Pews are overturned or blown apart. Chunks of several pillars have been shot away. Bodies lie everywhere. Someone moves out from behind a pillar, takes three steps, then falls.

Élise is nearing the front of the aisle, still sticking by the shot-up pew, when the smoke is clearing enough to see down to the main doors. A single shape walks in. It's Guillem, the grizzled veteran.

He walks down the aisle. Someone's hand (their body hidden by the pews) reaches up feebly as he passes. He fires a single shot and the hand falls.

Élise waits at the aisle for him. He reloads as he walks.

GUILLEM

Where is Béchard?

ÉLISE

I don't...

GUILLEM

BÉCHARD! GET OUT HERE!

A noise comes from behind the altar. Guillem raises his rifle and Élise turns and shakily raises the pistol.

Béchard stands up - holding a gun to Léon's head and using him as a human shield. For a moment nobody moves, the Béchard whispers something into Léon's ear and they begin to shuffle unevenly forward, moving in front of the altar. Béchard's eyes flicker toward the open transept door.

BÉCHARD

He leaves if you let me go.

Put your guns down or I'll shoot.

Élise glances at Guillem.

LÉON

(through gritted  
teeth)

Don't do it!

Bécharđ shoves the gun against Léon's head harder.

BÉCHARD

Not a word! Shut up!

Neither Guillem nor Bécharđ budges.

Élise looks at Guillem again, then at Léon. Then she sets her gun on the ground and steps back.

LÉON

Élise, no!

BÉCHARD

What'll it be then, Spaniard?

Guillem holds Bécharđ's gaze, his gun still raised. One shot to end that war in Laran. His finger tightens around the trigger, then he hesitates.

LÉON

Do it, Guillem! End it!

Guillem glances at Élise, then back at Bécharđ. Can he stop fighting? Can he also put the gun down? Guillem takes a deep breath, then -

-lowers the rifle slowly from his shoulder. As he does, Léon grows more agitated.

LÉON

No, no, NO! What are you doing? Shoot him!

With a growl, Léon tries to reach up and wrestle the gun from Bécharđ, moving quickly, but his leg gives out underneath him, and Bécharđ acts faster.

Bécharđ shoots Léon.



It happens fast, and Guillem hasn't yet even set his rifle down. It jumps back to his shoulder and he shoots four times. They hit Béchard in the chest, and he drops his gun, falling onto the altar, arms splayed out, before the dead Milicien slides down to slump on the ground.

A stunned silence in the church follows. Élise stumbles to Léon, holding his hand, crying.

ÉLISE

Léon, no, no, no, please, no...

Guillem is silent for a moment. He had tried to put the gun down. He tried to stop fighting. And he couldn't. He puts a consoling hand on Élise's shoulder. She looks at him with red, sobbing eyes.

GUILLEM

He always wanted to be a martyr.

(CONT'D)

He takes his hand back and begins to walk away, but stops, looking back.

GUILLEM (CONT'D)

He was a good man.

And with that, Guillem slings the rifle over his shoulder and walks down the aisle of the destroyed church, toward whatever fight he can find next.

Élise is left alone, cradling Léon's body, her beret on the floor a little ways away, dirty and bloody and torn.

EXT. LARAN STREET - DAY

Élise Vaillard walks down the street, three maquisards around her. She's wearing men's clothing. The sleeves of her shirt are rolled up and her arm is bandaged.

French flags hang from windows, and the Cross of Lorraine has been painted on walls.

Against a wall, two dead Miliciens sit, the word "COLLABORATEURS" above them in dripping paint.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY

Élise and the maquisards walk on into a small courtyard, where, out of a house come two FRENCHMEN, dragging a struggling woman. The woman is recognizable - her hair has grown a bit, but it's Marianne.

ÉLISE  
What's going on?

The men look up, pushing Marianne to her knees.

FRENCHMAN 1  
Look at her hair!

FRENCHMAN 2  
She's a horizontal collaborator!

FRENCHMAN 1  
She slept with the enemy.  
(he spits on her)  
Traitor.

ÉLISE  
We'll take her.

FRENCHMAN 2  
And make an example out of her.

FRENCHMAN 1  
Might as well do it now, eh?

ÉLISE  
Stop! I'll deal with her.

FRENCHMAN 2  
You sure?

The Frenchmen look at the male maquisards.

ÉLISE  
I said she's mine.

The Frenchman raise their hands.

FRENCHMAN 1

Just see to it that the little  
slut is punished.

ÉLISE

Leave.

(CONT'D)

The Frenchmen turn and wander off. Élise turns to the  
maquisards.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

I'll deal with her.

The maquisards leave as well.

MARIANNE

Please...

Élise looks down at the woman coldly and pulls a handgun  
from her waistband, checking that it's loaded and the  
safety is off. Marianne seems to shrink and sag on the  
ground, seeing the end coming.

Élise, businesslike, steps behind Marianne, who closes her  
eyes. Élise's eyes are cold as she cocks the gun, looks at  
Marianne, then fires.

Marianne opens her eyes and looks up. Élise's gun is  
pointed at the sky. Élise tucks the weapon back into her  
waistband.

ÉLISE

Get up.

(CONT'D)

Marianne hesitates for a moment, then stands, shaking,  
taking several large breaths.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

Come with me.

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Élise and Marianne sit on the park bench, watching the sunset over Laran-Sainte-Marie.

It's a wonderful, late summer sunset, full of red and gold.

ÉLISE

I wanted to kill you today.

MARIANNE

Why didn't you?

Élise thinks for a moment, then asks a question of her own.

ÉLISE

Why did you collaborate with them?

MARIANNE

I have a daughter. I wanted to keep her fed, keep her safe.

ÉLISE

What's her name?

MARIANNE

Simone.

Élise smiles sadly.

ÉLISE

It's a good name.

They sit in silence again for a moment. An elderly couple walk by.

MARIANNE

So why didn't you shoot me?

ÉLISE

I want to tell you - to tell myself - that it's because you're just doing what you can to survive. To help your

(CONT'D)

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

daughter. To say that I saw myself kneeling there. But that's not why. I didn't shoot you because if I had I don't know if I would have been able to stop. I don't want to end up like...

(CONT'D)

Élise shakes her head.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

I want to be done fighting. I want it all to end.

(CONT'D)

Marianne looks at Élise, who is still staring out over the town.

ÉLISE (CONT'D)

If you could...

Élise trails off, then slowly pulls out the gun again. She sets it down between them on the bench, then looks squarely at Marianne.

Marianne looks at the gun and almost touches it gently, then stops. She shakes her head. Élise sighs and looks back toward the sunset.

Marianne stands and takes Élise's hand for a moment. The war is over, but they're not sure if they'll ever escape it. Élise squeezes the woman's hand, then Marianne lets go and walks away, down the path.

Élise is left on the bench, alone, the gun sitting beside her. She watches the sun set over Laran-Sainte-Marie.

**THE END.**

This project was written as a first draft. I've never written anything of this length before and really had to learn how to KEEP GOING instead of revising everything along the way (in which case I'd never have finished).

Because of this, there are numerous margin notes about improvements and fixes that will not appear on the final PDF, so I want to highlight a few of them while I also talk about the "roadmap" for future revisions.

First, I'm going to step away from this project for a while. When I return to it I can take a more critical look at what I've written.

The next draft will ideally fix some of the structural issues and scenes that don't "turn" (such as the scene just after Jacques is rescued). I have also written a fairly short script (91 pages) giving me around 20 more pages that I could reasonably use if I wanted - and with a project of this scope it would likely strengthen the entire piece. A major addition here would be a subplot in the second half of ACT II about a mole in the maquis - leading (and adding weight to) the conclusion of Jacques's and Simone's arcs.

More historical fact-checking will also be required, to make sure that every scene is (generally) feasible - even if some, like the finale, are exaggerated or Tarantino-esque. Later, detail-oriented fact-checking (the cost of a black-market baguette) can come on a much later draft.

Finally, making sure that the structure of the screenplay supports Élise as the main character (of a single-protagonist, classically-structured screenplay). Every scene should "turn" and have an effect or focus or relevance to her in some way.

Once I have fixed and am content with the structure I will work on characterization (this would be draft 2.5 or so). Working on better understanding the characters - especially Élise, Léon, and Guillem, so that the ideological core of the film is clearer and the tension is stronger between them.

These character changes would also help ensure that the screenplay is "character-motivated," instead of "plot-motivated," which can feel contrived. Essentially, this will give the sense that the actions are authentic to each character and, even if unexpected, what happens is the only thing that could happen.

These are large, large fixes. Further on, after this characterization work (draft 3 or thereabouts?), I can begin to iron out more of the dialogue and pare it down from what will likely be a highly expositional and clunky state. I can begin to polish, format, and so on.

That is, ideally, the future of this screenplay. It'll be a LOT of work, but for now I am happy and proud to present this 91-page, 17,336-word first draft as my Capstone Project.

Special thanks to Professor GREG YOUMANS, who has been unbelievably supportive of this project and always offering thoughts on how to improve and strengthen this script.

Perhaps one day you'll see Élise Vaillard on the big screen but for now, I hope you've enjoyed LA RÉSISTANCE -

LUKE GRIFFIN  
March 11, 2021