

**KYLA'S WAR**

Hank Isaac

Episode #1 -- Series Pilot

*"Snow Angels"*

KYLA'S WAR - Episode #1 - "Snow Angels"

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. POLISH COUNTRYSIDE -- DECEMBER, 1939 -- DAY

Snow covers everything. Wisps of fog stir in the valleys. Gigantic mansions and castles poke up here and there near the tops of rolling hills -- road maps and mileposts of a once grand culture. Truly a fairy-tale world. But then...

A WHIRLWIND OF SNOW

...races through the trees and seems to gobble up everything around it. Then, like a knife punching out of a pillow...

A SHINY BLACK LOW-SLUNG MERCEDES CONVERTIBLE

...bursts from the cloud and plows its way along what is revealed as a barely cleared road. The tailored fabric top is up and drawn tight. Tight like the rest of the automobile. Images of Winter flow across the car's buffed body.

THE DISTINCTIVE MERCEDES HOOD ORNAMENT

...seems airborne as the landscape flashes past. Tiny icicles cling to the chrome and stream behind it like frozen wings.

ON THE DOOR

Markings and emblems leave no doubt that this vehicle is at the disposal of someone highly placed in the Third Reich.

INT. THE CAR

THE DRIVER, a German Panzer Corps. Lieutenant -- rod straight and all business. In the back, a fleshy, spit-shined, middle aged SS OFFICER.

Next to him sits ELENA, a demure attractive 16 year old. A wool blanket covers her legs. Everyone's breath steams into the air.

THE SS OFFICER

...peels back Elena's blanket to reveal his hand as it strokes the slim legs that blossom from beneath her bunched-up dress.

Elena hates this fellow -- he's a real leech. And she pays a high price to avoid the officer's gaze as...

HER POV

...painful bursts of low sunlight assault her eyes. But then -- THUMP! THUMP! -- everyone is jostled as the car crosses a set of railroad tracks.

EXT. WOODS

Snow flies as the car races past ancient trees. And as the forest closes in from all directions, the whole world suddenly becomes dark and ominous.

EXT. A SMALL CLEARING NEAR THE ROAD -- LATER

The Mercedes is parked next to some trees. The nearly frozen Lieutenant paces a short distance away. He works hard to stay warm.

THE CAR'S WINDOWS

Steamy and crusted with ice.

INT. THE CAR -- BACK SEAT

Elena is jammed against the seat with the hem of her dress up around her neck. Her legs have been forced wide apart.

THE SS OFFICER

...is on top of her and presses himself into her as if he were some thick blob of mortar beneath an anxious bricklayer's trowel.

ELENA'S FACE

Flushed and drenched with tears.

THE SS OFFICER

...mashes his drooling lips against Elena's cheek. He cries out in ecstasy as he lifts his head up high.

As Elena inhales to scream...

CRACK!

The window above her shatters and the SS Officer's head explodes like a popped cherry. The officer's blood splatters against Elena's face as if someone has thrown a water balloon full of it. Tiny pebbles of glass fall like icy rain.

Instantly the officer's whole body goes limp and he drops onto Elena like a sack of wet concrete. His wide open eyes make him look like a discarded figure from a wax museum.

AT THE CAR

The Lieutenant spins around. The rear side window is gone.

HIS FACE

Dazed. Confused.

But as he recovers, he snaps around and reaches for his holstered Luger. He struggles to undo the protective flap.

As he wrestles with it, he's suddenly aware he's not alone.

THROUGH SEVERAL SETS OF BOOTS

The puzzled Lieutenant stares at this rag-tag assembly of small footwear.

THE LIEUTENANT

What is this, a joke?

The butt end of a rifle lifts off the snow and disappears.

CLICK! CLACK! CLICK!

...as the rifle is loaded and cocked.

THE LIEUTENANT (CONT'D)

Wait...

HIS FACE

Suddenly washed with horror as...

CRACK!

...a large hole is blown into his forehead, bouncing him off the Mercedes then smack onto the frozen ground.

WHAT HE SAW

FOUR CHILDREN stand in a line and face the Mercedes.

JOZEF, a 14-YEAR-OLD BOY, lifts the wood forearm of a large old rifle off his shoulder as he straightens up to his full height.

12-YEAR-OLD KYLA JANKOWSKA lowers the rifle -- it's nearly as long as she is tall. Her ratty jacket & pants, fingerless gloves, smudged face, and innocent expression make her seem like a street waif from a Dickens novel.

She opens the bolt and steam rises from the hot spent shell casing as it joins the cooler one in her hand.

Kyla pockets both then slings her rifle. It barely clears the ground.

TWO OTHER BOYS, LUBEC, 10, and JAN, 11, flank Kyla and Jozef. All four children stare at the death scene as if this is not what they'd expected.

A moment, then they walk as one toward the Mercedes and the disaster that surrounds it.

KYLA (O.S.)  
(softly)  
Almost fifty meters.

JOZEF (O.S.)  
Twenty.

KYLA (O.S.)  
At least forty.

Suddenly, Elena's angry shouts radiate from every part of the Mercedes.

The kids freeze.

JOZEF  
Perhaps thirty. But no more.

THROUGH THE STEAMY WINDOWS

Elena's arms and legs kick every which way into the air.

JOZEF (CONT'D)  
(stares at the body)  
I don't think he's the one.  
(he waits)  
Kyla? I said he's--

KYLA  
I don't care.

JOZEF  
It's not him. It would never be him. He's a...

He walks around to get a better look at the fat officer.

JOZEF (CONT'D)  
He's a major. Schutzstaffel, no less.  
(the others freeze)  
So you're going to kill them all?  
Until you get to the right one?

Jozef goes to Kyla and turns her toward him.

JOZEF (CONT'D)  
And how would you even know?

It's clear he has some affection for her.

JOZEF (CONT'D)  
Stefan would be proud of you, you  
know. Yes, he would.

Kyla doesn't appreciate the comment. As she moves closer to the Mercedes, Jozef watches after her. He wonders if he just said the absolute wrong thing.

JOZEF (CONT'D)  
(shouts)  
But he would tell you stop! Enough,  
he would say!

AT THE CAR -- MOMENTS LATER

Lubec peers through the now glassless window.

HIS POV

Elena is trapped under the hulk of the dead SS Officer.

ELENA  
WELL?! WELL ARE YOU JUST GOING TO  
STAND THERE?!

A moment where it seems like that's just what they might do, then...

KYLA  
(detached)  
Jan. Jozef. Please help my sister.

JAN  
I wish Stefan was here. If he...

He suddenly realizes he's just said the wrong thing. He looks up to see...

HIS POV

...Jozef and Lubec as they stare at him, then at Kyla, then back to him.

KYLA  
(wipes her eyes)  
Go ahead, please.

JAN  
Kyla, I'm... I'm sorry.

Kyla reflects for a moment, then walks away from the car.

The boys pry open the door and get to work.

LUBEC

What about me?

Kyla returns and caresses him.

KYLA

Get a branch. Rub the snow where  
our boots were.

(Lubec understands)

It won't fool them. Not for long.

But it may confuse them.

(looks all around)

For long enough.

The other two boys proceed to wrestle the dead officer off  
of Elena. They wince and grimace - they don't like being  
this close to smelly and sweaty blood-soaked death.

THUD!

The SS Officer's considerable bloody bulk tumbles out of the  
Mercedes and half buries itself in the snow.

THE MERCEDES - THROUGH THE WINDOW

Elena tries to recover some level of dignity.

THE CAR'S DOOR

Elena kicks it all the way open - several times, as it won't  
stay open. Jan finally keeps it from closing.

As she leans out, Elena slips and sprawls all over the snow.  
She is quite the mess -- dress twisted all out of shape,  
frozen tears, snotty nose, smeared makeup, and drying blood.

She struggles to her feet then kicks at the car's door over  
and over again. The others watch. It's clearly painful as  
she finishes then limps toward Kyla.

KYLA (CONT'D)

I--

WHACK!

Elena wallops Kyla and sends her and her rifle flying.

All the boys freeze and just stare at the two girls.

Elena storms off then spins around and looms above Kyla.

ELENA  
 I HEARD IT! THE GODDAMN BULLET! I  
 HEARD THE GODDAMN BULLET!

She kicks at Kyla.

ELENA (CONT'D)  
 For God sake, why did you wait so  
 long?!

KYLA  
 (still flat on her  
 back)  
 I couldn't see!

ELENA  
 What were you thinking?! Wait. YOU  
 SHOT ANYWAY?!

KYLA  
 Before I couldn't see anything at  
 all. Yes. Before I--

Elena jumps on Kyla and pins her wrists deep into the snow.  
 Kyla just takes it.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
 Go on, hit me! HIT ME! That's what  
 you really want, isn't it?! ISN'T  
 IT!

JOZEF  
 Elena!

He grabs her arm but Elena wrestles it free.

She gets ready to punch Kyla but then suddenly a mechanical  
 noise intrudes.

FROM WAY DOWN THE ROAD

A German military troop truck approaches.

The children freeze. They all look at each other, then at  
 the two dead officers. It's a real mess.

FADE OUT:

## ACT ONE

EXT. THE SMALL CLEARING NEAR THE ROAD

The troop truck races toward the kids. They're torn between fighting and fleeing.

ELENA

(to Kyla as she stands)

You're too lucky for your own good.

(to the others)

Jan, Jozef! Get out of here! Go!  
Get to the horses! And take Lubec  
with you!

She offers her hand to Kyla but Kyla gets up on her own.

Lubec pulls away from the other boys. He's ready for anything.

LUBEC

(to the girls)

We can fight them! Right here!

ELENA

Your grandfather's rifle?

LUBEC

And those.

He points to the officers' Lugers.

ELENA

And you know how to shoot?

LUBEC

No, but... Stefan taught Kyla and...

He realizes he too has said the wrong thing.

LUBEC (CONT'D)

Well, she can teach me. Kyla can.

ELENA

In twenty seconds?

LUBEC

Well... no, but... Oh, how come I  
never get to do anything?

ELENA

All of you! Get going! NOW!

THE TROOP TRUCK

...suddenly accelerates and barrels right for them.

SOLDIER'S VOICE

(from the truck's  
megaphone)

Stay where you are!

Elena shoves the boys along. But then she feels around her neck.

ELENA

Damn!

(to the boys)

GO! GO!

KYLA

What's wrong?

Like a crazy person, Elena races back to the Mercedes and starts to hunt everywhere in the passenger compartment. She's disgusted by all the blood.

Kyla rushes to her side but keeps an eye on the approaching truck.

KYLA (CONT'D)

Get out of here!

ELENA

I can't find it.

KYLA

What?

ELENA

My necklace.

THE TRUCK

...gets closer and closer.

AT THE CAR

Kyla tries to wrestle Elena out of the back. No luck.

KYLA

You're going to get us killed! Just forget it!

ELENA

(her head deep in the  
car)

I worked a whole month to get that  
fat ugly... Nobody knows. I'm not  
giving up the secret. No matter  
what.

Kyla looks over her shoulder at the approaching truck. Then she pulls at Elena even harder. Elena fights her off even as she continues to hunt.

The boys continue to look on.

JOZEF

KYLA!

Kyla waves him off. But then Jozef pulls her off Elena and she sprawls onto the snow. He starts to pull Elena when...

THE FOOT WELL -- ELENA'S POV

Her precious necklace.

ELENA

FOUND IT!

She grabs it and now all the kids stare at the approaching truck.

KYLA

Your vanity is going to get us killed.

Elena snubs her then aims the boys toward the woods.

Kyla starts to follow but pulls up short and doubles back to the Mercedes. Elena shoves the boys into the woods.

They vanish and now Elena confronts Kyla.

KYLA (CONT'D)

Go.

Kyla grabs her rifle and lies on the ground behind the body of the dead SS Officer. She lays the rifle on his chest and aims toward the approaching truck.

The fog begins to thicken.

ELENA

Must it always be you? Must you  
always be the one?

KYLA

Go! There's no time. We waited too long.

ELENA

I hate you!

Kyla ignores her.

ELENA (CONT'D)

If you get killed... Well don't you imagine I will tell Papa what you've been up to.

Elena takes one last look at the truck.

ELENA (CONT'D)

Because I will not.

She hurries after the boys.

Kyla reaches deep into her pocket. She comes back with a handful of brass - but only one unused round. She pockets the shells then wipes off the unused one on the officer's uniform. She loads it. She aims at the truck but then notices something.

HER POV -- THE DEAD OFFICER'S FACE

His eyes are open and stare right at her.

KYLA

(to the dead officer)

What do you care?

No response, of course, but his stare is getting to her. So she removes one of her gloves and covers his eyes with it.

KYLA (CONT'D)

What you don't know can't hurt you.

She wiggles her rifle into the officer's uniform.

KYLA (CONT'D)

You eat far too much for your own good.

She leans into the weapon and braces herself against the side of his chest.

HER BOOTS

...pound the ground behind her -- like a little kid having a tantrum -- as she slams her toes deeper and deeper into the snow to form a sort of backstop.

## THE TRUCK

Half again closer.

## KYLA'S RIFLE

Rock steady, as Kyla's dispassionate eye takes aim. The truck plays hide & seek in the fog and each time it reappears it's much closer.

## THE TRUCK

Only moments away now.

Kyla closes her eyes and musters all her strength. Then, eyes open. One last check and...

BANG!

Kyla winces as her whole body recoils from the shot. Her glove is blown off the officer's face. But at the same time...

## THE TRUCK'S FRONT WINDSHIELD

...disintegrates. Its DRIVER slumps and the truck careens off into the trees.

The truck slams into a huge tree so hard the canvas cover and frame over the cargo area fly off into the woods. SOLDIERS tumble everywhere. Moans. Groans. Cries for help.

## ON THE SNOW

Kyla is as much surprised as she is pleased.

She cocks the rifle's bolt and the spent shell casing is ejected. She juggles the hot brass into her pocket then backs away around the far side of the car.

She looks at the whole disaster she created.

KYLA (CONT'D)

(under her breath)

That was the longest one yet! Stefan,  
I...

She looks all around for someone to share her triumph. Then she remembers. But then suddenly...

## HER POV

A SOLDIER limps toward her from the truck. He seems to be the only one able to move -- and he's after her.

He pulls out a Luger and starts to fire in her direction.

Kyla darts back to the dead Panzer Corps Lieutenant.

HIS HOLSTER

...as Kyla tries and tries to pry the flap open. It's clear now why he never shot back.

BANG! SNAP!

A bullet blows a chunk of bark off a tree right next to her.

She glares at the approaching soldier then stands and gives the Lieutenant one good kick in his ribs.

EXT. THE WOODS -- MOMENTS LATER

Bullets hit all around Kyla as she runs an erratic path from tree to tree. She struggles to sling her rifle as she picks up speed.

Angry shouts from the soldier follow her, but she's fast and he's hurt and the combination may just save her life.

EXT. DEEP IN THE WOODS

Kyla races up to her friends. She's out of breath -- points behind her.

Lubec holds the reins of THREE BEAUTIFUL HORSES. These are show animals or maybe thoroughbred racers. Breath from the horses' nostrils adds to the thickening fog. Kyla smiles when she sees the animals.

But suddenly more shouts come from the woods. They seem to come from everywhere -- GERMAN SOLDIERS. Another truck? Or perhaps the soldiers from the wreck weren't hurt that bad.

The children panic. Jozef boosts a reluctant Kyla up onto the saddle of the sleekest of the horses. Then he and Jan mount the remaining horses.

Jan and Jozef surround Elena and both pull her up and onto Jozef's horse. He doesn't like all the blood.

Jan hoists Lubec up behind him.

ELENA

(to Kyla)

Tonight. Don't be late. I can't keep making excuses for you.

KYLA

And now you.

ELENA

If you're late again, they will begin  
to wonder, and then...

Kyla agrees.

ELENA (CONT'D)

All right. Just don't be late.

Everyone agrees, then the horses flee into the woods.

Except Kyla pulls up after only a short distance. She watches  
after her friends, even as the soldiers' voices close in  
from all directions.

THE VOICES

...shout to each other in German.

Now a SOLDIER appears out of the fog. He's barely an adult.  
He startles when he sees Kyla and her horse. Kyla spins her  
horse around. It rears up.

The soldier fumbles his Luger onto the ground. As he does,  
Kyla kicks her horse into a gallop and vanishes in the fog.

THE SOLDIER

...blows a shrill whistle then...

SOLDIER

Over here! Over here!

MORE SOLDIERS come up behind him. One pushes a motorcycle.

ELSEWHERE IN THE WOODS -- LATER

Kyla's horse walks. But then Kyla hears something. She  
stops. Listens. Caresses her horse. Listens again. Must  
be her imagination. So she starts off again.

Wait. There it is again. Kyla stops. Listens. Yes, there  
it is. A mechanical sound.

Louder and louder. Closer and closer.

Kyla tries to zero in on the sound. She can't locate it.

VROOOMMM!

Motorcycle sounds seem to come from every direction at once.  
Kyla's horse rears up and nearly throws her.

## STACCATO SHOUTS

...in German. Orders. Warnings. The sound of weapons as they're cocked.

## SOLDIER (O.S.)

Halt! Halt! Stay where you are!  
Do not move! You are surrounded!

## ONE MOTORCYCLE

...evolves out of the fog and pulls up just beyond Kyla. The SOLDIER jumps off and points his Luger right at Kyla. Then he blows his whistle over and over again.

Now even more motorcycle sounds approach.

Kyla watches the soldier carefully.

## HER POV

Just as he pockets his whistle, Kyla kicks her horse into a gallop.

## THE SOLDIER

...is caught off guard. He doesn't know whether to shoot or give chase. Finally, he races to his motorcycle but misjudges the distance. He trips over it and knocks it and himself to the ground.

## THE WOODS

Kyla races flat out.

Barely able to see more than a few yards ahead of her, Kyla dodges a continuous stream of trees.

## THE MOTORCYCLE SOUNDS

...follow close on her heels.

More shouts. Orders. The CRACK! CRACK! CRACK! of gunfire behind her.

The light beams from the motorcycle headlamps engage in maniacal fencing matches among the trees.

## KYLA'S POV

The motorcycle headlamp beams form a solid wall ahead.

She can't make it through.

## SOLDIER'S VOICE (O.S.)

It is useless to run! Stay where  
you are!

Kyla wheels her horse around. Can't go back. Have to find  
a way through.

So she stops. Her horse's heavy panting is suddenly matched  
by rapid footfalls. Kyla feels for her rifle.

VROOOOM! VROOOOM! VROOOOM!

The unseen cyclists rev their engines in triumph -- just  
like a modern-day biker gang. Kyla studies the wall of light.  
The motorcycle soldiers search in the wrong direction.

But now A YOUNG SOLDIER, still a teen, materializes out of  
the fog. He strains to see who's there.

In a panic, Kyla wheels her horse around. But the horse  
isn't ready and he balks. Kyla flies off her saddle...

PLOP!

...and hard onto her back.

The soldier tries to get his Luger out.

Kyla rolls over and struggles to free her snow-covered rifle.

The two are now in a panicky race to be the first to fire.  
They shout and curse, but at themselves, not each other.

Kyla wriggles around as she tries to free a single round  
from her pocket.

As the young soldier scrambles toward her, totally focused  
on his holster, he trips and falls. Now both of them writhe  
in the snow trying to get their weapons working.

## KYLA'S POCKET

As she finally extracts a round.

PLOP

She drops it into the snow. Gone!

She tries to get another from her pocket while at the same  
time her hand searches the snow like a starving animal for  
the one she dropped.

## THE YOUNG SOLDIER

...finally frees his holster's flap.

He yanks his Luger out so hard and so fast it sails through the air and lands in the snow.

Both Kyla and the young soldier freeze and stare at each other. An awkward moment, then both scramble through the snow once again.

KYLA'S HAND

...finally finds the round in the snow. She tries to clean it on her clothing, but she's soaking wet.

So she loads it wet and dirty and slams the bolt closed.

HER POV

The young soldier is nearly in tears. He kneels and faces her. He knows he's dead. He pulls out his whistle and tries to blow it. But he's so scared and so exhausted he can barely make a sound.

Kyla squeezes the trigger.

CLICK

Nothing happens.

She cocks the gun, ejects the round, then loads it again.

CLICK

Still nothing.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER

Gripping his Luger with two shaky hands, he aims at Kyla.

KYLA

...spots him and rolls away, just as he pulls the trigger.

CLICK

The Luger misfires.

CLICK - CLICK - CLICK - CLICK

Nothing.

The young soldier tries to fix his gun.

KYLA

...ejects the unused round again and works hard to clean it and dry it off.

The frustrated young soldier gives up and lunges for Kyla. She tries to roll away but he's too fast.

They fight.

But Kyla is no match for the young man and he tosses her around as if she were a rag doll.

Kyla keeps reaching for her rifle but the soldier keeps shoving her away. Finally, she positions the intact round in her fist and swings wildly at the soldier.

THE YOUNG SOLDIER'S FACE

As the pointy bullet slices a gash across his cheek.

He's momentarily stunned but then screams at the top of his lungs as he races at Kyla.

KYLA'S HORSE

...rears up. The soldier panics. He grabs for Kyla as he tumbles head over heels. As he does, he rips off her hat.

Kyla's long blonde hair explodes out.

The soldier pivots around as he pushes himself to his knees. But then he stops cold when he sees Kyla.

YOUNG SOLDIER

You're a girl! A child! You're a  
goddamn child!

They stare at each other for a moment, not really sure what's supposed to happen next. The soldier lets a nervous smile wash onto his face.

Kyla grabs her rifle and slams the round into it. Tears flow freely now and she can barely control her sobbing as she drops onto her back in the snow and stretches out. Then she presses the stock into her shoulder and props the barrel between the tips of her boots.

It's aimed right at the young soldier.

He can't believe what's happening. Like a madman, the young soldier looks everywhere at once for his Luger.

Kyla tries to focus through her tears.

HER POV

The soldier can't find his gun. Arms at his sides...

YOUNG SOLDIER (CONT'D)

(gently)

You are a good girl, yes?

Kyla hesitates. But then the soldier grabs his whistle. As he inhales to blow...

BANG!

Kyla fires. The soldier flips over backwards. His whistle soars through the air. He sprawls onto the snow. Dead.

Kyla starts to sob uncontrollably.

Her horse sniffs at the dead body then walks over to Kyla. He nudges at her with his nose. She caresses him.

WHISTLES

...blow from seemingly everywhere at once.

THE LIGHT BEAMS

...begin to wiggle through the trees like stiff glowing worms. But the bad news is: They're all gradually coming around to point in Kyla's direction!

INSISTENT VOICES

...begin to move toward her.

Kyla flings herself into the saddle and grabs the reins. She walks her horse over to the dead young soldier.

KYLA'S POV

The pattern in the snow around the dead young soldier looks just like a "snow angel." His face is peaceful -- angelic, even.

Kyla is clearly conflicted.

From this height, Kyla easily spots the boy's Luger in the snow. She debates grabbing it. But the sound of the motorcycles and soldiers' voices is getting closer.

KYLA

(whispers to her horse)

Don't worry, Talos. There will be other chances.

She hurries off and quickly vanishes into the fog-laced woods.

FADE OUT:

## ACT TWO

EXT. THE WOODS -- DAY

SEVERAL SOLDIERS come upon their dead young comrade. An OFFICER, LT. VOLKER, kneels down and puts his hand on the dead soldier's chest.

LT. VOLKER

Leibnitz.  
 (looks at one of his  
 soldiers)  
 Seventeen?

The soldier agrees.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH (O.S.)

Herr Leutnant!

A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH kneels and examines the snow. Lt. Volker walks over.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH (CONT'D)

Herr Leutnant, look! Horses!

Lt. Volker scans the woods.

EXT. AMONG THE TREES

Kyla walks her horse to what appears to be a frozen stream. A quick look and a listen behind her, then she turns and closely parallels the riverbank.

She walks Talos on for a bit until she spots what she's looking for.

HER POV -- LARGE FLAT ROCKS

...which barely stick up above the snow cover as they cross the stream. And their tops are free of snow.

Kyla nearly falls several times as she carefully guides a nervous Talos footstep by footstep across the rocks.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STREAM

Kyla checks the rocks.

HER POV -- NO HOOFPRIENTS

So she carefully follows the line of the opposite bank, being careful to have Talos plant his hooves exactly onto the ragged bank edge.

LATER

SEVERAL SOLDIERS, some on foot, some pushing their motorcycles with great difficulty, follow in Lt. Volker's wake as he tracks the hoofprints in the snow. But then Volker pulls up short.

HIS POV

The prints end right at the edge of the frozen stream.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH  
Herr Leutnant?

Volker holds up his hand to silence him.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH (CONT'D)  
He crossed the river. Here.

LT. VOLKER  
No. You see? The ice is intact. A horse would break through.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH  
But--

LT. VOLKER  
This is no country fool we have here.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH  
Yes, Herr Leutnant.

LT. VOLKER  
(as he stands)  
Deifenbach, take the men.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH  
Sir?

LT. VOLKER  
Take them along the bank.

He stares back to where they just came from.

LT. VOLKER (CONT'D)  
I think he is playing games with us.  
He wants us to think he crossed here.

Corporal Deifenbach starts the men heading downstream.

CORPORAL DEIFENBACH  
Very good, Herr Leutnant.

LT. VOLKER  
 (kicks at the snow)  
 I suspect we've not seen the last of  
 this fellow.

He doesn't like being outwitted.

EXT. A MEADOW

But it's so foggy, the only way to tell it's a meadow is  
 that there are no trees.

THE SOUND OF A HORSE BREATHING

...drifts out of the fog.

Its hooves crunch along. Now another, softer set of footfalls  
 joins them.

A moment, and Kyla and Talos can barely be seen as Kyla walks  
 and leads her horse with his reins. Talos doesn't like not  
 being able to see anything.

KYLA  
 (whispers)  
 It's all right, Talos. I will be  
 the eyes for both of us.

She stops and kneels down.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
 You see how the ground slopes? Just  
 so? And the little snow mountains.  
 Like frozen waves in the sea. You  
 see? The wind. It comes from there.  
 (she points)  
 Northeast today. And yesterday also.  
 It is a compass.  
 (she turns and points)  
 That is the way home.

Talos whinnies and pulls at his reins.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
 Shhhhh.  
 (whispers)  
 So, you do not trust me. Even after  
 all we've been through together.  
 (Talos pulls again)  
 I am truly offended.  
 (she stands)  
 I will just have to prove it to you.  
 Come.

She tugs on his reins and the pair vanishes into the fog.

ELSEWHERE IN THE FOG -- LATER

Kyla slugs along through snow that's getting deeper and deeper. Talos protests. Kyla tugs on his reins.

KYLA

Well, at least no one chases us.  
Yes?

But then she panics. Thinks she hears something.

Talos whinnies. Kyla covers his nose and mouth with her hands as best she can. She whispers close to him...

KYLA (CONT'D)

Shhhh. Listen.

Both she and Talos seem to hold their breath.

CLANG

A distinctive metallic sound. Talos tries to pull away.

KYLA (CONT'D)

(smiles)  
It's all right. We know this sound.  
Come.

She pulls him along.

MOMENTS LATER - THEIR POV

A giant ornate wrought iron fence looms up out of the fog ahead. As they get closer, it's clear the ancient metal has been set in a series of decoratively carved rock piers of some sort.

THE FENCE

...seems to go on forever and clearly belongs to someone with a lot of money to spend on fences like this.

KYLA (CONT'D)

You see. I told you, did I not.

OVERHEAD

The sound of a small airplane engine approaches. Kyla freezes. Talos gets nervous.

Kyla scans the sky. Of course there is no sky visible, just interminable fog, fog, fog.

The engine sound passes low above them, then fades into the distance. Talos whinnies softly.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
 Perhaps. But they will not find us.  
 Not this evening. Besides, there is  
 a party for me and a warm blanket  
 and a bucket of oats for you.

Talos nuzzles her.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
 I think I should prefer the blanket.

She pulls him along as they walk on, sticking close to the  
 fence.

ALONG THE FENCE -- LATER

An even more ornate gate rises up to meet them.

BEHIND THE GATE

HERMANN, the aging CARETAKER, unlatches the massive swinging  
 portal and - SQUEAK - SQUEAK - SQUEAK - guides it open just  
 enough to let Kyla and Talos through.

HERMANN  
 You are soaking wet.

KYLA  
 I need to rub him down.

HERMANN  
 No. Give to me. I will fix.

KYLA  
 But--

HERMANN  
 No. You are late. Your mama has  
 already asked about you. Twice.

KYLA  
 And Papa?

HERMANN  
 He is on the phone all day.

KYLA  
 Warsaw?

HERMANN  
 I don't know. There has been too  
 much to do. The party. Tonight.

KYLA  
 I am supposed to get information.

HERMANN

You are supposed to be getting dressed.

(checks her out)

No. Go to the kitchen. Get out of these wet things. Do not let your mama see you like this. Yes?

He grabs the reins from Kyla.

KYLA

I promised him a blanket.

HERMANN

Yes, yes.

KYLA

And oats. A bucket.

HERMANN

Yes, yes. All right. Just go. Please!

He walks Talos away. Kyla stares up at what must be her home, but only portions are visible in the fog. It's really quite the mansion.

INT. MEAT LOCKER

Kyla's breath steams in the air as she passes rows of hanging carcasses.

INT. KITCHEN

Designed to prepare food for large numbers of people. THE KITCHEN STAFF all greet Kyla affectionately. They are concerned about her and check her over.

A WOMAN examines the bruise on Kyla's face, but Kyla pushes her away. Instead, Kyla unslings her rifle. She's about to pass it to SOMEONE when...

PLOP!

She collapses in a heap.

KYLA'S POV -- AS IF SHE WERE CONSCIOUS

EVERYONE stares down at her.

THE HOUSEKEEPER, KLARA, bends over Kyla.

KLARA

All of you! Back to work! We have guests in less than two hours!

Everyone races around to do his job.

KLARA (CONT'D)  
 (to the unconscious  
 Kyla)  
 What are we to do with you?

A SERVANT grabs the rifle and it's passed from hand to hand until it's slammed into a small broom closet.

INT. ARTIST'S STUDIO -- LATER

Evidence of seasoned talent sits on easels, tables, or leans against the walls.

Kyla sits on a stool in her underclothes and winces as Hermann carefully dabs bits of flesh color over her bruise.

ON HIS PALETTE

...are globs of egg gesso paint in various shades of flesh tone.

HERMANN  
 (sniffing at the paint)  
 I think maybe you should not go too  
 near anyone tonight. Hmmm?

A YOUNG KITCHEN MAID

...curtseys to Kyla as she offers her a cup of coffee.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
 (to the maid)  
 Put it down there.  
 (he indicates where)  
 She can drink when this has set.

The maid does as she is told. She doesn't like Hermann.

HER POV

Kyla's rifle rests flat on a table.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
 (to Kyla)  
 How did you get this one? Nevermind.  
 I don't want to know.

The maid curtseys then exits.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
 (as he studies Kyla's  
 face)  
 Well... All right. I think this is  
 not what means having egg on your  
 face, hmmm?

Kyla isn't convinced this is a good idea.

KYLA  
It feels like plaster.

HERMANN  
Hush.

The artist will not be dissuaded.

INT. KYLA'S BEDROOM

A SERVANT fusses with Kyla's hair. Kyla puts up with it as long as she can. No, that's enough. She brushes the servant away.

SERVANT  
All right, Miss. I'll see to Miss  
Ola now.

Kyla grabs the servant's arm.

SERVANT (CONT'D)  
Miss?

Not what Kyla has in mind.

INT. A LITTLE GIRL'S BEDROOM

OLA, about six years old, bears a striking resemblance to her older sister. She fidgets in a chair as Kyla tries to lace her shoes.

KYLA  
(whispers)  
Because I love you. That is why I  
do these things for you.  
(she looks all around)  
And for no one else.

Ola leaps forward and hugs Kyla like she'll never let go.

Kyla gives her sister a moment, then holds her at arm's length. She stares at Ola then kisses her on her lips.

Ola clearly adores her older sister. A quick nearly toothless smile, then Ola scampers out of the room.

KYLA'S HAND

...carefully lowers one side of her dress to reveal...

A LARGE BRUISE ON HER SHOULDER

...where the stock of her rifle would normally rest. It hurts a lot.

INT. GRAND BALLROOM -- NIGHT

A lavish party is underway. GERMAN OFFICERS and their LADIES, all dressed in their finest. Prominent POLISH CITIZENS. A flock of SERVANTS. And a SMALL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA.

SEVERAL CHILDREN

...ring the dance floor. And right in the middle of all of them is Kyla. She's dressed as befits the child of a wealthy family.

Kyla goes to touch her painted bruise. But from...

WAY ACROSS THE BALLROOM

...a SERVANT shakes her head cautiously.

So Kyla first folds her arms across her chest, but then looks to the servant for guidance.

THE SERVANT

...allows her arms to hang obviously at her sides, then holds one hand in the other.

KYLA

...pantomimes the move.

KYLA'S POV

In one corner of the room, Elena smiles at TWO GERMAN OFFICERS. She spots Kyla out of the corner of one eye but then focuses on her admirers.

Now the orchestra starts to play dance music. COUPLES take the floor.

KURT DORFMANN, A YOUNG GERMAN OFFICER

...limps toward Kyla. She glances at the OLDER GIRLS on either side of her. But then KURT stops right in front of her. He clicks his heels together and bows.

KURT

Kyla Jankowska. I have the pleasure of addressing Dr. Jankowska's daughter?

Kyla looks for someone, anyone, to rescue her.

KURT (CONT'D)

(to Kyla)  
Miss?

He offers his hand to her. Ooops. Not in tonight's plan.

Kurt looms above Kyla. His closeness makes her uncomfortable. And she really doesn't want to dance with him.

KYLA'S POV -- KURT'S FACE

Where a recent bruise has been tended to.

KURT (CONT'D)

Your father assures me you are a fine dancer.

Kyla tries to get her hand back. But he won't give it up.

KURT (CONT'D)

And he warns me you will protest.

Kyla looks for help from somewhere. Anywhere.

HER POV

A DISTINGUISHED LOOKING MAN, presumably Kyla's FATHER, stands at the far end of the room and chats with SEVERAL PEOPLE.

Kyla scowls at him. Kurt follows her gaze.

KURT (CONT'D)

But he assures me you will give in.

Kyla wants nothing to do with this party.

KURT (CONT'D)

Come. We will have fun. And I promise not to step on you. Well, not too many times. Yes?

Kyla looks at all the OTHER OFFICERS there. She's trapped and she knows it. She glances down at Kurt's legs.

KYLA

You are hurt?

KURT

It is nothing. Some trouble today.

Kyla looks in turn at everyone there, then back to Kurt. Suddenly, she assumes a dignified posture. She faces Kurt and curtsseys deeply to him.

Kurt smiles. Victory!

EXT. SCULLERY ENTRANCE -- NIGHT

Hermann speaks with Jozef. They're both wary and speak in guarded tones. Jozef reads a tiny folded note.

JOZEF

I don't care how good a shot she is.  
She nearly has us all killed today.  
She is going to make a mistake and--

HERMANN

Perhaps. You memorize?  
(he has)  
Eat.

He pretends to chew. Something that isn't hunger compels Jozef to down the paper -- like a cat trying to swallow a mouse-size hairball.

HERMANN (CONT'D)

Good.  
(turns back to his  
desk)  
Next time your brother comes. Yes?

Jozef runs for the door.

HERMANN (CONT'D)

Jozef.

Jozef pauses at the door.

HERMANN (CONT'D)

You are a good boy, Jozef.

And Jozef is gone.

INT. GRAND BALLROOM

A flighty waltz is underway.

ON THE DANCE FLOOR

Kyla dances, but she's clearly in pain. Kurt is hurting as well. Both try to hide it.

Each time Kyla passes close to the distinguished looking man, she stares daggers at him.

KURT

(plays the peacemaker)  
Your father is correct. You dance quite well. And for such a young age.

Kyla can't be bought with talk.

KURT (CONT'D)  
Your age is...? Fifteen? Sixteen?

Especially not with overt flattery.

LATER

Kyla and Kurt stand and drink punch. He absentmindedly rests his hand on her shoulder. Kyla winces in pain as she tries to maintain a dignified posture.

CRASH!

A MAIDSERVANT has dropped a tray full of hors d'oeuvres as she stares open mouthed at Kyla and her officer.

A FASHIONABLE WOMAN -- ANNA, KYLA'S MOTHER

...hurries to the maidservant, even as OTHER SERVANTS reach her and quickly contain the mess.

Anna shoots a disapproving glance at Kyla.

CRASH!

SOMEONE drops a glass. It shatters all over the floor.

ANNA  
(in German)  
Our glasses and plates do not know  
we are no longer enemies.

EVERYONE laughs -- especially all the GERMAN OFFICERS.

EXT. TINY COURTYARD -- TOWN OF LODZ, POLAND

A cold and unfeeling place.

MEN'S BOOTS AND SHOES

...shuffle across the paving stones as they are herded against a wall.

SOLDIER'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Halt! Proceed, Lieutenant!

LIEUTENANT'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Ready!

Many rifles are cocked at once.

LIEUTENANT'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Aim!

Somewhere, A WOMAN screams.

LIEUTENANT'S VOICE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Fire!

Close rifle shots explode the silence. Immediately, BODIES belonging to the footwear crumble in a heap. A moment, then...

SMOKE

...from the rifles drifts over the dead mass.

INT. OFFICE -- GERMAN OCCUPATION FORCES

Cigarette smoke drifts across a messy desk. MAJOR SCHMIDT finishes his exhale, then extinguishes his smoke.

MAJOR SCHMIDT

I don't like this Polish garbage.  
See about getting a case from Berlin.

LIEUTENANT BECKER (O.S.)

Right away, Herr Major.

LIEUTENANT BECKER sits at another desk and makes a crisp entry in a leather bound memo book. Glasses and short-cropped hair make the Lieutenant seem scholarly.

He snaps the book closed.

MAJOR SCHMIDT

And Becker...

Becker snaps his memo book open.

LIEUTENANT BECKER

Yes, Herr Major?

MAJOR SCHMIDT

(to his own desk)  
Do something about this, will you?

LIEUTENANT BECKER

Yes, Herr Major!

Just as he stands and snaps to attention, AN AIDE enters.

AIDE

Major...

But A FILTHY SOLDIER wearing filthy motorcycle garb pushes his way into the Major's office and past the aide.

MAJOR SCHMIDT

Eric.

The officer, ERIC LEUTNER, leans over the Major's desk. He has clearly intruded into his commandant's personal space.

The Major searches his pockets. He pulls out his nearly empty pack of Polish cigarettes. He pauses, then looks up at Lieutenant Becker.

LIEUTENANT BECKER  
(electrified)  
Right away, Herr Major!

And he exits quickly.

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
(to Capt. Leutner)  
So?

CAPTAIN LEUTNER  
Volker was on his trail. We had him. We had him. We were... We had him.

Major Schmidt eyeballs the Aide. The Aide gets the message -- he leaves too.

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
Yes, I see. And so?

CAPTAIN LEUTNER  
The damn fog. It was the damn fog.

Major Schmidt looks as if to ask, "So where is he, then?" And Captain Leutner responds with an expression which suggests utter helplessness.

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
I see.

CAPTAIN LEUTNER  
We...

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
Twenty-five seasoned soldiers against one teenaged boy.

CAPTAIN LEUTNER  
And a horse. He was...

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
Yes, of course. A boy and his horse.

He looks through each of his desk drawers.

MAJOR SCHMIDT (CONT'D)  
Touching.

Captain Leutner snaps to attention.

MAJOR SCHMIDT (CONT'D)  
 And what do I say to Corporal Miller's  
 wife and children? Hmm? And Private  
 Hermann with his broken back. Oh,  
 and Leibnitz. Leibnitz is dead now,  
 you know. Hmm? Just a young boy.  
 Well, well, this is a dilemma, is it  
 not.

CAPTAIN LEUTNER  
 Herr Major, I...

Major Schmidt stands and flips through wall calendar pages.

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
 What is it now? Four months? Four  
 months and we are still unable to  
 stop them.

He faces Captain Leutner.

MAJOR SCHMIDT (CONT'D)  
 Four months, Leutner. Four months.

CAPTAIN LEUTNER  
 Herr Major, I am at a loss to...

The Major holds out his hand as if asking for something.

CAPTAIN LEUTNER (CONT'D)  
 Sir?

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
 (motions with his  
 hand)  
 Your papers, if you please.

CAPTAIN LEUTNER  
 Sir, I...

MAJOR SCHMIDT  
 Come, come.

So Captain Leutner, clearly in pain from his encounter in  
 the woods, produces his I.D. packet. Major Schmidt points  
 to his desk. Captain Leutner arranges his I.D. on the desk.  
 But the Major wants more. So the Lieutenant hands over a  
 set of keys and another packet of papers.

But the Major wants even more.

So the Lieutenant unstraps his Luger and lays it on the desk. Major Schmidt pulls the Luger from the holster and examines it. He smells the gun.

CAPTAIN LEUTNER

Herr Major, I can not shoot at what  
I can not see.

Major Schmidt cocks the weapon and with no hesitation aims right between the Captain's eyes.

MAJOR SCHMIDT

A problem I do not seem to have.

His finger squeezes back on the trigger and...

BANG!

INT. GRAND BALLROOM

A CHAMPAGNE CORK

...explodes from its bottle and flies across the room. Everyone laughs and applauds. Foam shoots everywhere.

IN ONE CORNER

Kyla is about to take a sip from someone's abandoned champagne glass. As she checks all around...

HER POV -- A SERVANT

...shakes his head, "No."

But Kyla downs the champagne and flashes a victory grin at the servant.

INT. SERVANTS' QUARTERS -- HALLWAY

Hermann examines Kyla's eyes.

KYLA

I must return. They will miss me.  
They will...

HERMANN

Hold still, please.

He exposes the area behind her eyelids.

HERMANN (CONT'D)

Hmmm...

KYLA  
What? What is it?

HERMANN  
You are overtired.

Kyla pulls back, crosses her arms, then stamps her foot.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
Ah, so...?

KYLA  
You are not my papa!

Hermann looks around nervously. He motions Kyla silent.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
I said...

Hermann shushes her as the sound of men's boots races past the door.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
They found...

Hermann clamps his hand over her mouth. She wriggles free easily. Hermann grabs for her but misses. Kyla tiptoes fast to the door. Listens. Nothing.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
(to Hermann)  
You think...?

Hermann shakes his head even as he shushes her again. Everyone holds his breath for what seems like an eternity.

HERMANN  
Your papa leaves for Warsaw. Your mother will retire early. You have what you need?

She does.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
Very well then.

As Kyla cracks the door open...

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
And little one... Come back to us.

Kyla smiles then she's gone.

FADE OUT:

## ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODED CHURCH CEMETERY -- NIGHT

An ancient edifice rises from a white-blanketed fairyland. Kyla leans against a tree and stares off into the distance -- dressed for the cold night -- her rifle is slung across her back.

JOZEF (O.S.)

Bang!

Kyla could care less.

A moment, then Jozef slides up just behind her. But not too close. It's almost as if he understands he must keep some proprietary distance between them.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

I could have killed you.

KYLA

I heard you coming.

JOZEF

No you didn't.

KYLA

The whole time.

JOZEF

No. You...

As Kyla speaks, the scene...

INTERCUT: EXT. WOODS -- FLASHBACK/AT THE TREE

...plays out exactly as she describes it.

KYLA

You pause by the cemetery gate.

JOZEF

No I...

KYLA

You pause by the gate, then you move along the fence. You step on the frozen leaves.

JOZEF

Wait, I...

KYLA

You step on the frozen leaves then realize you make too much noise. So you cross the path and pause by the rotten old stump. A piece of rotted wood breaks off in your hand...

Jozef examines his reddened palm. Bits of wet bark still cling to his skin.

KYLA (CONT'D)

...and you go to throw it away, but then think better of it and place it carefully on the snow. You back away from the stump then circle around to the left. Through the deeper snow.

Jozef checks out his soaked boots and pant cuffs. Kyla unslings her rifle and checks it over.

JOZEF

Kyla, I...

KYLA

You stop at the marker.

JOZEF

Father Petrov. He--

KYLA

You lean against it, but then remember it is a sacred thing. So you make uncertain steps back... maybe one, maybe two meters. Two. Yes, two meters. Then you cross yourself.

JOZEF

How...?

KYLA

(rubs her chest)

The folds of your jacket make a sound when your hand moves just so.

She imitates the movement at exactly the same time Jozef does. This unnerves him.

KYLA (CONT'D)

Then you think to yourself--

JOZEF

That's enough.

Her back to Jozef, Kyla smiles. She's comfortable with her abilities.

Jan comes up behind them. He carries a sack.

KYLA  
(without turning)  
You have everything?

Jan nods. Kyla can't see, but...

KYLA (CONT'D)  
Good. We go.

She heads off. They follow.

EXT. AMONG THE TREES

A freezing cold Kyla, Jozef, and Jan lie flat on their bellies and stare out at...

THEIR POV -- RAILROAD TRACKS

...which pass through the forest along a narrow clear-cut strip.

AT THE TRACKS -- LATER

The trio works to position explosives carefully along a section where the rails are joined.

THE EXPLOSIVES AND DETONATOR

...have been cleverly disguised as a section of gravel. But there's a slight problem.

JAN  
It's all wrong. The color doesn't match.

JOZEF  
It will be good enough. It's enough that it doesn't look like dynamite.  
(to Kyla)  
Please to thank Hermann. He is truly a magnificent artist.

Kyla agrees.

JOZEF (CONT'D)  
Now lay the wires. And be thorough this time.

Jan doesn't appreciate the warning. He begins.

IN THE TREES -- LATER

The trio is back on their bellies. Jozef cradles a magnetic coil twist detonator device. Their world is strangely silent, save for the sounds of the nighttime forest.

Kyla gets more and more impatient until...

KYLA

I'm going to check.

She starts to rise, but Jozef pulls her back and she tumbles to the ground. As she starts to get up, Jozef shoves her back down and climbs on top of her. He pins her wrists to the ground as she struggles.

KYLA (CONT'D)

What is wrong with you!?

JOZEF

This is not about you always. Each of us has lost something.

Jan agrees.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

Each of us is angry. Each of us hates them. Each of us...

Kyla breaks free and flips Jozef off her.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

You know I am right. You know I am.

Kyla gets up and brushes herself off.

KYLA

I am just going to listen for the train. That is all. Just listen.

She slinks toward the open ground and the rails on it.

JOZEF

(to himself)

Just be careful.

Jan starts to go after Kyla but Jozef holds him back.

JAN

I wish Stefan was here.

## ON THE TRACKS

A mist hangs in the cold night air. Everything is shades of white, blue, and gray as...

## KYLA'S EAR

...comes to rest on the polished steel top of one of the rails.

The bare metal is really quite cold as she tries to listen carefully. Nothing. She shakes her head, "No," toward where the others are hiding.

## IN THE WOODS

Jan starts to go to her again but Jozef yanks him back.

JAN

She's going to get us killed.

JOZEF

(smiles to himself)

No. I think not yet.

Jan is anything but pacified.

## ON THE TRACKS

Kyla presses her ear against the cold steel even harder.

Then suddenly...

## HER EYES

...widen. She changes position to listen better. Now another spot. And another. Yes! This is it!

## IN THE WOODS

The two boys motion for Kyla to get back. But instead...

## KYLA

...stands between the rails and stares into the darkness -- mesmerized -- like a David, waiting for her Goliath.

The boys frantically motion for Kyla to get out of there. Jan starts to shout but Jozef covers his mouth.

## A SHAFT OF LIGHT

...plays against the distant trees. It gradually works its way around the bend and now ominously slides toward Kyla.

Jozef can't wait any longer. He dashes from his hiding place and literally drags a catatonic Kyla back to the woods.

IN THE WOODS

Kyla and Jozef struggle to catch their breath.

JOZEF

What is wrong with you?

JAN

I told you.

JOZEF

Silence!

(to Kyla)

Don't do that. Never again.

Kyla nods as if in a trance.

ON THE TRAIN -- ENGINEER'S POV

A world of noise, smoke, and flame. Steam hisses everywhere and makes it difficult to see details ahead. The tracks seemingly end just beyond the headlamp's beam.

IN THE WOODS

Jan tries to twist the bare wire ends together but his hands are so cold he just fumbles with them.

JAN

We should have done this before.

JOZEF

Here.

As he grabs them from Jan, the detonator box goes flying and rolls out into the open.

Everyone freezes for a moment, then Kyla starts to scramble for it. But Jozef literally claws his way over her and gets there first.

JOZEF

...freezes as the train's headlamp beam races toward him.

JAN

(in a whispered shout)

Jozef!

Jozef recovers and crawls back to their hiding place. Jan brushes furiously at the box as he tries to remove all the snow and ice from it.

JOZEF  
 (grabs the box)  
 Never mind about that.

He too tries to twist the wires together. No luck.

THE TRAIN

...rounds the far bend and approaches the spot where the explosives are set.

Jozef stares at it.

JOZEF (CONT'D)  
 (struggles with the  
 wires)  
 We MUST get the locomotive.

Kyla grabs the wires. A brief tussle -- snow flies -- then the two of them work together to get the wires connected.

THEIR HANDS

...tremble from the excitement or the cold. Or both.

JAN  
 (whispers)  
 Hurry!

JOZEF  
 We'll be lucky if it works with all  
 this snow and dirt around it.  
 (to Kyla)  
 Will you just...

He pulls the box toward him and tumbles backwards as he does.

Kyla jumps on him and straddles his chest as she tries to twist the last two wires together.

JAN  
 (whispers)  
 KYLA!

Kyla struggles to get the wires attached. As she does...

ALL THE TREES

...light up from the train's headlamp.

JAN

...tries to pull Jozef and Kyla back but they're all tangled up with one another and way too heavy.

JAN (CONT'D)  
 (whispers)  
 JOZEF!

AT THE DETONATOR

Jozef grabs the half-twisted wires out of Kyla's hands. As he does, the wires separate.

JOZEF  
 Damn you! We need the locomotive!

Kyla grabs the wires back.

KYLA  
 I had it! I almost had it! What's wrong with you?!

JOZEF  
 You're not doing it right!

KYLA  
 It's just two wires!

JOZEF  
 Here...!

He grabs for the wires. Kyla pulls them away as she rolls onto her back and keeps trying to twist them with her frozen fingertips.

Jozef tries to get it back and Kyla pushes herself to her feet. She cradles the detonator.

Jozef shoves her like a challenge.

JAN  
 JOZEF!

JOZEF  
 Silence!  
 (to Kyla)  
 Give to me!

But Kyla ignores him. So Jozef shoves her again. Kyla still ignores him.

Finally, Jozef tackles Kyla and the detonator rolls away as the two wrestle on the ground.

JAN  
 Are you crazy! The train, for God sake! The train!

Jan scurries around as he tries to collect the detonator and the now loose wires.

THE TRAIN'S LIGHT

...continues to sweep across the trees as it races toward the explosives.

Kyla and Jozef fight furiously. Punches are thrown. Kyla fights like a boy and she is no easy match for the bigger and stronger Jozef.

THE GROUND

...rumbles as...

THE TRAIN

...slips boldly into view.

JAN

...stares in disbelief at the whole mess. He runs to what has become a rolling grunting mass of clothing and starts to kick at the pair.

JAN (CONT'D)  
STOP IT! STOP IT! STOP IT!

He grabs Jozef's head and aims it at the train.

JAN (CONT'D)  
LOOK!

Jozef shoves Kyla away and hunts for the detonator like a deranged intoxicated boxer.

JAN (CONT'D)  
Here! I have it here!

He hands it to Jozef. Kyla wipes her bloody face and scrambles behind the trees. The boys follow.

THE TRACKS

The locomotive is nearly at the explosives.

IN THE TREES

Kyla finds the two ends of the wires. But her hands hurt too much from the cold and all the fighting.

KYLA  
DO IT!

JOZEF  
WHAT?!

JAN  
No.

KYLA  
I said do it! Now!

Kyla pinches the bare wire ends together.

JOZEF  
But--

KYLA  
There's no time! Just do it!

THE TRAIN

...passes over the dynamite.

JOZEF

...plants the detonator between his knees. He flashes an I-  
can't-do-this-to-you look at Kyla.

KYLA (CONT'D)  
(gently)  
Yes. It's all right.

Jozef looks at Kyla and pleads with his eyes.

FADE OUT:

## ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. WOODS -- NEAR THE TRACKS

The train rumbles past.

Kyla squeezes the detonator's wires between her bare fingers and jams her eyes shut.

Jozef closes his eyes too and...

HIS HAND

...twists the detonator lever.

But nothing happens.

Kyla opens one eye. She looks at the detonator, then at Jozef.

KYLA

Again.

She squeezes her eyes shut as Jozef twists the detonator again.

Nothing.

JAN

Squeeze harder.

THE TRAIN

...is nearly past the explosives.

KYLA

It's the detonator! I'm not feeling anything! It must be the--!

Jozef spins the detonator lever with all his might.

KYLA SCREAMS as...

KA-BLAMMMMMMM!

The three kids are knocked down by the tremendous blast.

BITS OF TRAIN

...fly overhead and into the trees.

THEIR POV

The fireball is just dying out as flames and a swirling cloud chase after what's left of the train. But what blew up was only the last car -- a boxcar with a guard's shack.

SQUEEEEEEEEEEEK!

As the train's breaks are slammed on hard.

JOZEF

...is surprised and elated as he turns to share the moment with Kyla.

HIS POV

Kyla is flat on her back, stunned and shaking. She cradles one hand in the other. Smoke rises from her burned fingers.

JAN

I'll--

JOZEF

No. Go. GO!

Jan reluctantly takes off into the woods. Jozef pulls Kyla to her feet. She can't walk at all. So he hoists her over his shoulders and staggers off after Jan.

AT THE TRAIN

The locomotive steams and seems to breathe and heave as if it were some sort of mechanical bull taking a moment to recoup in the middle of a bullfight.

The ENGINEER and several SOLDIERS try to figure out what just happened.

DEEP IN THE WOODS

Jozef collapses under Kyla's weight.

JAN doubles back and tries to pull them up.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

(breathless)

I can't. Go on. Get out of here.  
Hurry.

JAN

But what about--?

JOZEF

Go, just go!

Jan runs off and disappears into the night.

Jozef pushes Kyla off of him then sits up and cradles her in his arms.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

What are we to do with you? Hmmm?

EXT. MEADOW -- IRON GATE -- THE JANKOWSKA ESTATE -- LATER

Jozef carries Kyla on his back as he reaches the gate. Hermann hurries to meet them.

HERMANN

Oh, my God! Oh, my God! Is she--?

JOZEF

Help me, will you.

They both carry Kyla in through the gate.

INT. JANKOWSKA HOME -- HALLWAY

More like a museum.

DOOR TO KYLA'S BEDROOM

Jozef kneels in front of a barely awake Ola.

OLA

But I want her to tell me a story.

JOZEF

Not tonight, my little princess.

OLA

But she always tells me a story.

JOZEF

You should be asleep.

OLA

I heard a noise.

JOZEF

Come.

He picks her up.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

I will take you back to your room.

OLA

I want to see my sister. I want to see Kyla.

JOZEF  
Not just now. Okay?

OLA  
But I--

JOZEF  
Your sister needs to rest now. I  
think you understand what I mean.  
Yes?

OLA  
(drowsy)  
Yes, but... Yes, all right.

She hugs Jozef as he carries her down the hallway but she  
stares at Kyla's bedroom door the whole way.

INT. KYLA'S BEDROOM

Kyla lies on her bed and pants. Hermann and the maid tend  
to her.

HERMANN  
We have to get these wet things off.  
Her bed. It is filthy now. Can you  
get new linens?

The maid can.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
Good. Help me now. Wait. What's  
this?

He examines Kyla's hand.

HIS POV

Kyla's burned fingers.

HERMANN (CONT'D)  
Oh my, we have a problem, don't we.

He cradles her injured hand.

EXT. JANKOWSKA ESTATE -- DRESSAGE RING -- DAY

Kyla is dressed in a formal riding outfit. She rides Talos,  
the same horse who saved her life earlier. She also wears  
gloves which are uncharacteristic for this sort of riding.

Elena is similarly dressed and rides alongside her.

HERMANN (V.O.)

She has an exhibition for the missus.  
The reins. How will she ever grasp  
the reins?

ELENA

Are you all right?

KYLA

Yes.

ELENA

Does it...? Do they...? Do they  
hurt very much?

KYLA

Yes.

She smiles at her mother, Anna.

ANNA

Sit up straight!

KYLA

Yes, Mama!

ELENA

What did she say about the gloves?

KYLA

Will you please keep quiet. I told  
her my hands were sore from grooming.

ELENA

And she believed you?

KYLA

Yes, now hush or you will get us  
both in trouble.

ELENA

Why? I am not wearing gloves.

She kicks her horse and pulls away from Kyla.

LATER

Kyla puts her horse through a series of schooled moves and  
is clearly a skilled horsewoman. Of course, we already knew  
that.

As she rounds the far corner for one more demonstration, she  
sees...

HER POV

Kurt, the young German officer from the ball as he walks up to her mother. He waves at her.

KYLA

...is caught unprepared and scared.

TALOS

...senses this and starts to act up.

Kyla does everything she can to calm him. But it's no use. and now...

KURT

...ducks under the fence and walks toward her.

TALOS

...gets even more skittish and rears up. Kyla holds on as best she can but her horse lunges and...

WHOMP!

Kyla is flat on her back in the dirt.

A fuzzy moment, then...

KYLA'S POV

Kurt and her mother peer down at her.

KURT

Ah! There she is!

KYLA

How long was I...? What...? What happened? Mama?

ANNA

Talos got a mind of his own. You did a very good job.

KURT

Yes, quite excellent. I was coming to your rescue, in fact.

ANNA

Yes, Kurt volunteered.

KURT

Two more seconds and I would have--

ANNA

Are you all right, dear?

KYLA

Yes. I think so. Help me up, please.

Kurt gives her a boost up. Kyla shakes off the fall -- and Kurt's helping hand.

HER POV

Everything is blurry.

KURT

Well, you have quite a bit of skill. I think maybe not so much as the fellow we were after in the woods the other day.

ANNA

Yes, Kurt... Lieutenant Dorfmann. Lieutenant Dorfmann was telling us all about it. A bit of excitement, I should think.

KURT

I suspect if your daughter should have that fellow's horsemanship, she would not have taken a spill. Not at all.

KYLA

Well, perhaps some day--

ANNA

Yes, dear. Of course.

KURT

Of course. I only meant--

KYLA

I think I'll walk Talos to the stables.

She retrieves the reins. She pets Talos and starts to walk him.

KURT

I'll join you.

He hurries after her like the opportunist he is.

Not exactly what Kyla had in mind.

INT. THE STABLES

Kyla closes the gate to Talos' stall. Kurt gazes all around the stable.

HIS POV

Old money plays here.

KURT  
(introspective)  
No doubt you see me as an old man.

KYLA  
Well, not so old I think.

KURT  
I am twenty-three. Of course a soldier ages more quickly than the average individual. Don't you agree?

KYLA  
I'm certain I have no idea.

Kurt paces but keeps himself on a short leash.

KURT  
Some day I expect I shall be a prominent person. Perhaps not so much as your own family, but certainly someone to watch.

He pauses for a reaction from Kyla but she doesn't oblige. As he speaks...

EXT. NAZI HEADQUARTERS -- NEAR LODZ

An old building that has been taken over.

A spit-shined convertible waits in front of the entrance doors. It is lightly guarded by TWO GERMAN SOLDIERS.

A few TOWNSPEOPLE move through the area as they go about their day.

KURT (V.O.)  
Perhaps I shall be a lawyer. I should like to be a writer, but my father insists that would be foolish. What do you think, hmmm? Foolish?

A HILL OVERLOOKING THE HEADQUARTERS

Nestled in the bushes are Kyla and Jozef. They are dressed to be hidden. The two speak in whispers.

Kyla starts to drag her huge rifle up.

JOZEF

Not yet.

He extends an old brass & wood spyglass that looks like something a pirate might have used.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

Nothing is happening.

KYLA

I need to be ready. I need my rifle.

JOZEF

Not yet. I don't want you shooting someone by accident.

KYLA

And since when--?

JOZEF

Wait.

(he strains to see)

No. Nothing.

KYLA

I need time to aim and consider the wind.

JOZEF

You remember who we're looking for.

KYLA

Dimnitz. Oberführer Otto Dimnitz. Yes, I studied the photograph. Did you?

JOZEF

I am not the one who will be aiming at his head. You--

KYLA

I know what to do.

She drags her rifle and settles it into position. She opens the bolt.

JOZEF

Not yet, for God sake.

KYLA

Stop telling me what to do.

She removes a single round from her pocket and polishes it on her sleeve. Jozef stares at this little ritual.

KYLA (CONT'D)

What?

JOZEF

Nothing.

Kyla slips the cartridge into the chamber and carefully slides the bolt into position.

CLICK!

Both kids freeze and stare at the two guards. Did they hear that? Apparently not.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

You're going to get us killed.

Kyla ignores him as she makes minor adjustments to the gun sight. She looks everywhere at...

HER POV

Smoke from a nearby building. Tall grass as it bends slightly in the breeze. A HAWK glides overhead. One of the guards lights a cigarette - the smoke drifts. The other guard chastises him so he stomps it out.

KYLA

Perfect.

JOZEF

The longer we wait, the more likely we will be seen.

KYLA

Go then. You don't need to stay. I can--

JOZEF

You can what? You mean like the train.

KYLA

That was different. That was--

Jozef puts his hand over her mouth. Kyla brushes it away.

KYLA (CONT'D)

Stop it. You're--

Jozef motions toward the headquarters building.

THEIR POV

GERMAN OFFICERS and MEN IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES begin to emerge.

Kyla wiggles herself into a tight position.

JOZEF

You only get one shot.

Kyla flashes him a gimmee-a-break look.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

Just so you know.

Jozef looks through his spyglass and studies everyone at the building's entrance.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

(as each person emerges)

No. No. No. Where is he? No.

No. No. No. This is useless.

Kyla sights her rifle.

HER POV

One tiny shape after another moves across the centers of the sights.

FADE OUT:

## CLIFFHANGER

FADE IN:

EXT. NAZI HEADQUARTERS -- NEAR LODZ -- LATER

The car in front is long gone. Only the TWO GUARDS remain and they chat with a MAN in civilian clothes.

IN THE BUSHES

Kyla dozes on her rifle. Jozef can't believe their target is gone. He nudges Kyla and she snaps awake.

JOZEF

We missed him.

KYLA

He never came out.

JOZEF

Damn.

He looks through his spyglass.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

Wait. Look!

THEIR POV

A GERMAN OFFICER exits through the doors and chats with the man in civilian clothes.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

Go on.

KYLA

What?

JOZEF

He's better than nothing.

KYLA

No.

JOZEF

At least we can say we got one.

KYLA

No.

Jozef reaches for her rifle.

KYLA (CONT'D)

Don't you dare. Besides, your aim is the worst in the whole country.

JOZEF

Is not.

KYLA

Ask anyone. They will tell you.  
They will all tell you.  
(she wants the spyglass)  
Let me have a look.

JOZEF

You're wasting time. Just shoot,  
for God sake.

But Kyla insists, so Jozef hands her the glass. She adjusts it then has a look at the new arrival.

HER FACE

Suddenly ashen and solemn.

JOZEF (CONT'D)

Shoot, already.

KYLA

No. Let's go. We are done here.

She starts to get up but Jozef pulls her down. They scuffle. But then they realize how much noise they must be making and flatten themselves in the underbrush.

AT THE ENTRANCE

Everyone stares up toward where Kyla and Jozef are hiding.

IN THE BUSHES

Both their faces are pressed into the grass.

KYLA (CONT'D)

Are they coming?

Jozef peeks.

JOZEF

No, but they're looking.

KYLA

Go, then. If they come I will do as you ask.

JOZEF

Now? Now you're willing to--?

KYLA

Go, please. Hurry.

A frustrated Jozef slides backwards away from the edge of the hill then runs off into the woods.

KYLA

...looks up.

HER POV

Only the German officer stares in her direction. He's like a wary animal who knows someone or something is out there.

MAN IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES

Are you coming?

GERMAN OFFICER

In a moment.

KYLA

...inhales with a start.

THE OFFICER

...listens. But then he's satisfied all is well. He rejoins the group.

KYLA

(whispers to him)

This is your lucky day.

She slides away, slings her rifle, then runs after Jozef.

AT THE BUILDING ENTRANCE

The man in civilian clothes waves to someone inside then comes over to the officer. As they start to walk off together...

THE GERMAN OFFICER

...turns to reveal...

HIS FACE

It's Kurt, Kyla's dance partner.

EXT. WOODED CHURCH CEMETERY -- DAY

Dawn is just breaking. Kyla kneels in front of a small grave marker and brushes snow off it.

THE MARKER

Stefan Kowalski  
Beloved Son  
1924-1939

Kyla runs her fingers over his name.

KYLA

Over a hundred meters. You would be... It was a good one. And we got three. Well, two and a half perhaps.

Kyla brushes tears away but ends up getting snow all over her face. She doesn't care.

KYLA (CONT'D)

I will find the one. I will find him. This is my promise. And when I do... When I do, I will make him pay. I will make him pay as no one has ever paid before.

Kyla rises slowly -- looks all around -- spots...

HER POV

A YOUNG DEER as it crosses the yard near her -- pauses -- stares at her.

KYLA (CONT'D)

One day we will be together again. As we should be. So... wait for me if you can.

Kyla walks away. The deer continues on its journey.

FADE OUT: