

THE LOST ALIEN (EXTRACT)

Written by

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FADE IN:

BLACK SCREEN

TITLE BOARD: GERMAN AIR BASE NEAR TO COMMERCY, FRANCE 1944

EXT. ABANDONED AIR BASE - NIGHT (AUGUST 1944)

PITCH BLACK. The air base is seen momentarily as volleys of LIGHT from a distant BOMBARDMENT illuminate its features.

The distant light is continuous (throughout the scene) though the sound of the bombardment is lost under the DRONE OF PROPELLOR ENGINES (O.S.).

RUNWAY

SS OFFICER GOTZ FRIEDBACHER, 24, a man as mean as the scar on his face, paces nervously. He waits for a volley of light to look at his watch.

ON WATCH: Ten past eleven.

He turns around to where the dark shadow of the...

DORNIER 217 BOMBER

...stands ready to go with propellers at full throttle. Slightly back and below its glass cockpit front, a PILOT squats beside the open bomb hatch doors as he also waits.

INT. TROOP LORRY ON ROAD (TRAVELLING) - SAME TIME

A dozen SS TROOPS - faces blacked out - sit in the rear, either side of a large crate.

It cramps their space. However, legs are splayed for a completely different reason because a few seconds later...

...the plywood surround of the crate glows with LUMINOUS GREEN LIGHT as something inside the box pulses its existence.

Illuminated, the troops glance at one another with anxious looks. As the pulse of light fades into darkness, the stencilled address on the crate is momentarily visible.

It reads: 'M. PURSCH, FARM EQUIPMENT, BILBAO.'

TYRES SCREECH (O.S.) as the lorry swings into:

EXT. AIR BASE - GERMANY - NIGHT (AUGUST 1944)

The lorry - with slits for headlights - hurtles through the base and out onto the runway. It stops metres from the plane. The troops disembark, relieved to be away from the crate.

Gotz steps forward.

GOTZ

Quick. There's no time.

The troops carry the box over to the plane. They struggle to lift its awkward proportion through the open bomb hatch doors.

GOTZ (CONT'D)

Useless! Lift! Lift!

Suddenly, the crate starts to glow. Panicked, the troops muster herculean strength to lift it through the doors and into the aircraft. They stumble away from the aircraft and collapse on the runway, exhausted.

Inside, the PILOT waits for the GREEN LUMINOUS LIGHT to fade then hurriedly secures it with cargo straps. Gotz walks over to the troops. Over the ROAR of the engines...

GOTZ (CONT'D)

What are you doing? Get up!

The troops stand, form a line and straighten to attention.

GOTZ (CONT'D)

Out of your uniforms.

The troops look at one another, uncertain.

GOTZ (CONT'D)

Now!

Instantly, they undress. As they shiver in their underpants.

GOTZ (CONT'D)

Pile them here. I'll get the clothes for your journey.

Gotz points. As the troops heap their uniforms in a pile away from the aircraft, Gotz bends and walks under the...

WING OF THE AIRCRAFT

...to where a gasoline container and large holdall are hidden behind the wheel. He picks them up, and returns to the...

RUNWAY

...where troops stand to attention beside the pile of clothes.

GOTZ
You! On the end.

Gotz holds out the gasoline container. A TROOPER runs over and takes it from him. As he turns to leave...

GOTZ (CONT'D)
Wait!

The trooper stops. Gotz passes a clip of MATCHES and the trooper runs back to the pile of clothes.

As he empties the gasoline over the uniforms...

GOTZ (CONT'D)
Enough.

The trooper lights a match and drops it onto the pyre.

WHOOSH!

The uniforms are aflame. The flash illuminates the troops who with blacked out faces, shiver in their white undergarments.

The trooper returns the gasoline tank to Gotz then takes his place beside the others.

The flames also illuminate the holdall in Gotz's hand. It's rather light for a dozen sets of clothes.

GOTZ (CONT'D)
Don't worry. Won't be cold for long.

The men smile and turn to one another. Gotz raises the bag towards them. Suddenly...

A BURST OF STACCATO LIGHT as a MACHINE GUN FIRES through the bag. The unsuspecting troops are riddled with bullets. They fall where they stand, heaped over one another.

As he lowers the machine gun, the holdall falls to the ground. Gotz walks over to the prostrate bodies.

A trooper GROANS. Gotz stops and applies the coup de gras with a short VOLLEY OF BULLETS.

PILOT (O.S.)
Okay?

Gotz looks round and raises a thumb to the pilot who stands at the hatch illuminated by the green light behind him.

GOTZ
Get going.

PILOT
(salutes)
Hail Hitler!

Gotz offers a rather weary salute. He walks back to the troop lorry as the pilot closes the hatch.

INT. TROOP LORRY - NIGHT

Gotz climbs into the driver's seat and exhales with relief.

GOTZ'S POV: (through windscreen) A light blinks as the aircraft taxis onto the runway. Suddenly, it turns sharp, accelerates and ascends into the darkness.

Gotz smiles. He turns the ignition key. The engine roars to life. A good night's work.

INT. COCKPIT - DORNIER AIRCRAFT (TRAVELLING) - NIGHT (LATER)

As green light pulses from the crate, it illuminates the cockpit. The pilot is at the controls. The other seats around him are empty.

Suddenly...

The cockpit fills with BRILLIANT LIGHT as the plane is locked in the crossbeam of searchlights below.

In the same instant, a LOUD EXPLOSION shakes the aircraft as it is caught in the accompanying anti-aircraft fire.

The pilot adjusts the plane's trajectory and the cockpit returns to darkness.

A second later, it is again illuminated as searchlights relocate its position.

Suddenly, a DEAFENING BANG as a shell shatters the cockpit window. LOUD SOUND OF HOWLING WIND as glass and shrapnel fly everywhere. One piece goes into the leg of the pilot.

PILOT
Shit!

The pilot clutches his leg. Blood pours from the wound but there's no time to dwell because now the ALARM SOUNDS and every warning light on the control panel is lit up.

Before the pilot can react, the aircraft lurches forward. It goes into a nose dive. The pilot pulls back on the controls as he fights to steady it.

EXT. DORNIER OVER RURAL FRANCE (DESCENDING FAST) - NIGHT

The aircraft - its engine on fire - hurtles towards the French countryside made silver by moonlight.

INT. COCKPIT - DORNIER AIRCRAFT (DESCENDING FAST) - NIGHT

Every vein in the pilot's face and neck protrude as he strains to keep control of the aircraft.

PILOT'S POV: (through shattered cockpit window) The outline of fields, copses and hills rise to meet him at speed.

Adrenalin kicks in. The pilot manages to pull the aircraft up out of its dive but the reprieve is short-lived.

Seconds later, it CRASHES into a wooded area.

The pilot raises arms to protect himself as the cockpit goes BLACK and the plane is swallowed up into the canopy of trees.

In the darkness, LOUD BANGS and GROANS OF TORTURED METAL (O.S.) as the aircraft slows to a stop. Silence.

EXT. DORNIER CRASH SITE - COPSE BESIDE FIELD - RIELLA - NIGHT

A large field with hedgerow perimeter bathed in moonlight.

On one side, the small copse in which the intact fuselage of the Dornier aircraft now rests in an upright position.

Behind it, a large scar traverses the wood where the plane crashed through trees and lost its wings.

A small plume of smoke rises from one of the engines still attached to a wing left a short distance behind the fuselage.

Drawing away, nothing stirs. The site is rural. Remote. No light shows anywhere. MATCH CUT harvest field, copse and plane as they DARKEN into:

BLACKBOARD

Then....

TITLE CARD: 'SW FRANCE 2014 - SEVENTY YEARS LATER.'

The TITLE CARD BRIGHTENS into:

EXT. DORNIER EXCAVATION SITE - FIELD - RIELLA - DAY(2015)

The same MATCH CUT scene (as in 1944) but now the field has been ploughed and the copse cut back so that almost none of trees and their foliage remains.

Instead, the major pieces of the Dornier that broke away in the crash are now made visible by lines of red and white marker flags that surround each section.

Beside the fuselage, a TEAM OF EXCAVATORS (aged 18-60) kneel in old clothes as they conduct a finger-tip search of the area close to a large mound of excavated earth.

The EXCAVATORS are assisted by a ROVING EXPERT who collects what is found and transports it to a WHITE TENT that borders a hastily erected...

PERIMETER TAPE FENCE

...to keep onlookers away. With back to the tape, local TV news reporter, JULIA SARGUNA, 25, nears the end of her piece.

JULIA

(to camera)

...many believe the Dornier crashed in the woods and was later covered in a landslide.

(she points to the mound)

How it remained buried for so many years is anyone's guess. What we do know is, it's proving a hit with the public.

Cameraman, SERGE, 40, pans from Julia to a group of MILITARY AIRCRAFT ENTHUSIASTS (all 50+) who stand along the tape a few metres away.

THROUGH CAMERA VIEWFINDER

A few enthusiasts look towards the camera. The camera shot returns to Julia.

JULIA

This is Julia Sarguna, for C-T-V
Twelve, reporting from the site...

The same TV image plays in the...

INT. RECEPTION DESK AND LOUNGE - TOURIST CENTRE - MARMONT - DAY

...on the wall television located above boards of adverts for tourist excursions and special offers.

(NB The LOUNGE is 'L' shaped with the BACK ROOM OFFICE close to the DESK)

EDWARD LEGRAND, 65, a man much younger than his face suggests, stands beside a desk as he watches the TV report with the remote control in his hand.

ON TELEVISION:

JULIA (CONT'D)
 ...of the crashed Dornier.

THE REPORT ENDS WITH A CAMERA SHOT OF THE DORNIER.

Edward PAUSES the television and spins around to where...
 ...well groomed THIERRY MARTIN, 30, sits at the desk.

EDWARD
 That plane is going make us money!

Thierry glances up at the television screen then continues with his work.

EDWARD (CONT'D)
 Another couple booked a tour just yesterday.

Thierry gives a disparaging nod. Suddenly, Edward is animated. He pushes papers around the desk as he looks for something.

EDWARD (CONT'D)
 Where is it?

THIERRY
 What?

EDWARD
 The book I gave you.

Thierry shrugs. Edward bends down, opens a few drawers and finds what he's looking for.

He removes a large book and thumps it down on the desk beside Thierry who looks down at it.

CU ON BOOK: 'WORLD WAR 2 BOMBERS - THE DORNIER 217.'

EDWARD (CONT'D)
 Find out everything you can. The tourists will expect you to know.

THIERRY
 (sighs)
 Sure.

Edward smiles and walks into the OFFICE. Thierry waits for him to go, picks up the book and places it back in the drawer.

GEMMA (O.S.)
 Thierry?

Startled, he looks up. American tourist GEMMA, 35, stands in front of him. Immediately he is out of his seat.

THIERRY

I thought you were going home today?

GEMMA

We are...

Gemma nods to the entrance where female FRIENDS wait for her.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

...I came to give you this.

She draws two 50 euro notes from her handbag and hands them to Thierry.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

We really enjoyed having you as our guide.

Thierry smiles. He pockets the money and nods to the women at the door who wave and smile.

As Thierry talks with Gemma, his sister FLORENCE BERTRAND, 35, enters past the women. Her appearance is dowdy as befits a woman whose life has been spent in dusty rooms doing archive research. She waits for Thierry to finish.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

And this is from me.

Gemma hands him her business card.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

We fly tonight. Maybe you could pop round. For a drink?

He looks down at the card.

CLOSE ON BUSINESS CARD: One side is her name and business address in WASHINGTON DC.

He turns it over.

CLOSE ON OTHER SIDE OF CARD: in blue handwriting pen 'Hotel du Soleil. Room 347.'

Thierry reads it. He is about to say something when he sees Florence out of the corner of his eye. His manner changes instantly.

THIERRY

Sorry.

Thierry returns the card to her.

THIERRY (CONT'D)

I can't.

GEMMA

Oh.

Gemma is taken aback. She backpedals, embarrassed.

GEMMA (CONT'D)

(confused)

Okay. Well...bye.

Gemma frowns, confused. She rejoins her friends and the group exit. Florence is suddenly on his shoulder.

FLORENCE

Look at you.

THIERRY

Eh?

She smiles, broadly.

FLORENCE

Never thought I'd see the day you
turn down a pretty woman.

Thierry shrugs.

THIERRY

I'm in a relationship.

Florence smiles.

THIERRY (CONT'D)

Is there a reason why you're here?

Her smile drops. She frowns, serious.

FLORENCE

Actually, I was wondering if you
could help with Mum's meal and
groceries.

THIERRY

Sure. What week are we talking
about?

FLORENCE

(sheepish)

Today?

THIERRY

What!

FLORENCE

I wouldn't ask only I'm needed at
the library.

THIERRY
I'm needed here.

FLORENCE
Please Thierry.

Beat. Thierry shakes head.

THIERRY
Fine.

Florence launches herself forward and embraces him.

FLORENCE
Thank you. I'll make it up.
Promise.

Before Thierry can speak, she breaks the embrace and is out the door.

EXT. OUTER SPACE -

Myriad upon myriad of distant stars perforate the black canvass. Suddenly -

...a white ball of light appears out of nowhere. It travels fast. Too fast to be of human design. Its smooth spherical appearance tells us it is neither meteorite nor star as it zooms past on route to a destination unknown.