

Artur sits at the head of a table. Beside him, scientists eat from empty plates. Among them DR. LEONID VASILIEV (55) tells a joke, prompting LAUGHTER.

## DARK FOREST

ARTUR (V.O.)  
Date: 11 December 1947.

SUPER: Day 1.

Artur wakes to the RINGING of an alarm clock. The room is only sparsely furnished. Stopping the alarm, he flips on the lights and washes his face.

ARTUR (V.O.)

Last night was more... personal in nature. Of particular note was a group of colleagues led by my superior, Dr. Vasiliev, feasting on... nothing. This likely indicates...

PRE-LAP: An announcement tone BEEPS.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

Artur walks down a crowded hallway. Soldiers, medical personnel, and researchers push past in the throng.

INTERCOM (V.O.)

Experiment will begin in 15 minutes. All personnel must report to their designated positions or risk disciplinary action.

A large crowd walks toward Artur, and he freezes. A hand with a small charm bracelet pulls him aside. A sharp woman in a doctor's coat examines him--DR. NADYA SOKOV (30-40s).

NADYA

You look worse than the picture they gave me.

ARTUR

The picture...?

NADYA

Quiet!

She grabs his cheeks, turning his head side to side, then pulls him in close and checks his eyes, his ears, his nose...

ARTUR

(fixing his glasses)  
Who are...?

GENERAL (O.S.)

Dr. Sokov. Please unhand Dr. Kowalczyk.

She lets go.

GENERAL (CONT'D)

Dr. Kowalczyk, Dr. Nadya Sokov: Chief Medical Advisor and fellow guest. Come, we don't have much time.

They move down the hallway. The intercom BEEPS overhead.

INTERCOM (V.O.)

Reminder: All staff must receive  
prior approval before leaving the  
facility. Failure to do so may  
result in injury or death.

From a room up ahead, a man SCREAMS.

TORTURED MAN

No! No please! AGHHH!

There's a metallic CLANG, then two soldiers exit the room carrying blood-soaked bear traps. They pass by without a word. Artur looks to the General, shocked.

GENERAL

We've been having problems with the  
wildlife. The traps are quite  
effective at keeping them out.

NADYA

(touching the bracelet)  
Or people in...

INT. CONTROL ROOM - DAY

They enter a room HUMMING with industrial lab equipment. Researchers and assistants fill the room while a number of soldiers stand guard.

In the center is the TEST CHAMBER--a large circular chamber with 5 porthole-style windows. An airlock-sealed hallway connects the chamber to an adjoining room.

A blonde soldier with a long scar across his face joins them--DMITRI VOLKOVSKI (30s). His confidence is apparent.

DMITRI

Sir.

GENERAL

Ah, Dmitri. Welcome.  
(to Artur)  
Captain Volkovski will supervise  
this operation in my absence.

ARTUR

Your absence, sir?

GENERAL

Mm. The Kremlin is demanding complete confidentiality. After the trials in Germany, the State cannot draw more scrutiny than it already has. Therefore, I must remain offsite to retain plausible deniability. Following this conversation, my men and I will leave you to proceed on your own.

ARTUR

That was not detailed in the parameters.

GENERAL

Perhaps not. But I do not argue with the Kremlin. If I am contacted, the experiment will be terminated immediately. Is that clear?

(to Dmitri)

Have the subjects arrived?

DMITRI

Yes sir.

GENERAL

Excellent. Dr. Sokov will have her initial assessment, then Dr. Kowalczyk: you may begin.

DMITRI

(clears throat)

Sir.

GENERAL

Doctors, this is where I leave you. *Udachye.*

He follows Dmitri out.

NADYA

Relax your shoulders.

ARTUR

Hm?

NADYA

Are you alright?

ARTUR

This place reminds me of somewhere I'd rather forget.

NADYA  
Then why come?

ARTUR  
I didn't have much of a choice.

NADYA  
Hm. Interesting how that works.

She looks him over again and exits.

INT. MEDICAL BAY - LATER

The subjects await the beginning of the experiment. Their hands are cuffed, their heads shaved, and they wear plain clothes with no shoes.

Numbers are tattooed on the left shoulder of each man.  
Grigory - 1, Mishka - 2, Klaus - 3, Yuri - 4, Adrik - 5.

ADRIK  
(pacing around)  
I hate waiting around. Can we just get it over with?

YURI  
Perhaps we have started already.  
This could be part of the experiment.

GRIGORY  
No no, they said we'd be in some kind of chamber. I doubt this is part of it.

MISHKA  
Maybe they're figuring out what to do with the Nazi.

KLAUS  
(a German accent)  
What?

GRIGORY  
Leave him alone.

MISHKA  
So you defend Nazis now?

GRIGORY  
I am not defending anyone.

ADRIK  
Let's just calm down shall we?

MISHKA  
Stay out of this.

ADRIK  
Hey! You can't just bully people!

Mishka grabs Adrik by the collar.

MISHKA  
I said: Stay out of it.

GRIGORY  
Get off him!

Grigory THROWS Mishka off Adrik. The others JUMP at the sudden violence. Adrik stumbles back, rubbing his collarbone, while the two ex-soldiers stare each other down. They clench their fists, ready to fight. A BUZZER breaks the silence.

INTERCOM  
The experiment will start in five minutes. Prepare to be escorted to the testing chamber.

Grigory and Mishka shake off their stances as a door opens. Guards enter and escort the prisoners out.

#### HALLWAY

As they head toward the antechamber, they pass a group of soldiers led by Dmitri. Dmitri catches Grigory's eye. A memory FLASHES: Dmitri's face, bloodied, lying in the snow. Grigory's eyes widen.

#### ANTECHAMBER

Nurses take vitals one last time. The subjects are escorted into the chamber and their cuffs are removed.

SOLDIER 1  
Close the door!

The soldiers exit. The airlock shuts with a CLANG.

#### CONTROL ROOM / TEST CHAMBER

Artur watches the subjects through the one-way glass.

SOLDIER 2  
Airlock sealed.

NADYA (O.S.)  
Are you ready?

ARTUR  
Hm?

NADYA  
They're waiting.

ARTUR  
Oh... right.

Staff fill the control room. Artur goes to the command module. Dmitri gives him a permissive nod.

ARTUR (CONT'D)  
Status report.

RESEARCHER 1  
Air seal is secure.

RESEARCHER 2  
Electronic systems functional.

IVANOVICH  
Oxygen levels normal. Gas ready for introduction.

ARTUR  
(in intercom)  
Hello, thank you for volunteering... As you see we have provided you with books, food, water, and other necessities. Do not hesitate to use them. Though we will be monitoring you throughout the experiment, all communication will cease once we begin. Are there any questions?

MISHKA  
Just get on with it.

ARTUR  
(to Ivanovich)  
Administer the stimulant.

IVANOVICH  
Injecting stimulant into air stream... levels rising... 200 ppm... 500 ppm... 900 ppm...

The staff watches intently.

IVANOVICH (CONT'D)  
1100 ppm... 1400 ppm...

Klaus's eyes bulge. He COUGHS--then CHOKES. The other prisoners panic. Adrik POUNDS on the walls.

ADRIK  
Help! Someone help!

Grigory crosses himself. After a moment, Nadya goes to leave.

DMITRI  
(grabbing her arm)  
What are you doing?

NADYA  
My job. He needs help.

IVANOVICH  
1600 ppm...

DMITRI  
The parameters state we are not to interfere.

NADYA  
Unless it is deemed an emergency, which this is.

DMITRI  
We can afford to lose one.

Artur's eyes dart between them as Klaus falls to the floor.

IVANOVICH  
1800... Dr. Kowalczyk?

Klaus FLAILS on the ground. Nobody moves.

IVANOVICH (CONT'D)  
Capping at 2000 ppm.

Artur almost speaks, but is interrupted by LAUGHING from the chamber... coming from Klaus. He laughs harder and sits up.

KLAUS  
I really had you, didn't I? You should've seen the looks on your faces! Ah, that is the most fun I've had in a long time...

The others recoil, staring at him in disbelief.



11/11/2011

What?

ADRIK

We thought you were dying!

KLAUS

Well I'm not.

Artur relaxes.

DMITRI

See? Nothing to worry about.

IVANOVICH

All levels are stable, sir.

ARTUR

(noddin)

Phase 1 complete. Begin Phase 2 observation.

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