

"Azért is..!"

("Despite everything..!")

Animation script by

Anikó J. Bartos & Alan C. Baird

Registered WGAw
© Anikó J. Bartos &
Alan C. Baird
HotTip@Gmail.com
www.9TimeZones.com/scr

"Azért is..!"

FADE IN:

EXT. MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

A graceful DOE bounds into view, then quickly vanishes into the deeply-shadowed recesses of this hilltop canyon. She's closely pursued by a bearded HORSEMAN, who reins in his mount to scan the horizon for his prey. Slowly, he becomes entranced by the view beyond: a verdant plain stretches as far as the eye can see, shimmering gold in the afternoon sun.

HORSEMAN
(unrecognizable
foreign tongue)
Url! Jung'f guvf?!

Seven groups of RIDERS gallop to his side and their gazes follow his outstretched arm. One by one, each face breaks into a smile.

WIDER ANGLE

The horsemen ride down into the valley and set up tents.

OVER LONG PASSAGES OF TIME

...these temporary dwellings gradually morph into permanent houses.

EXT. VERDANT PLAIN - ANOTHER DAY

A handsome YOUTH saunters between the rows of houses, which have now become much more numerous. He enters a building that prominently displays a wooden cross.

INT. MONASTERY - CONTINUOUS

Several MONKS turn toward the blond youth and beckon him over to the altar... where he notices a glittering crown, topped with a slightly-leaning golden cross.

ZOOM IN ON THE CROSS, THEN ZOOM OUT

The crown is now upon the handsome youth's head, in the midst of a coronation ritual. This religious ceremony takes place inside a large cathedral, replete with pomp, circumstance, and the requisite CLERGYMEN.

YOUTH

(orating in that
unrecognizable
foreign tongue)

Jr Zntlne snpr n terng qrfgval...

EXT. CASTLE AT THE RIVER'S BEND - EVENING

A dark-haired, well-dressed NOBLEMAN approaches the castle on foot, and stops to rinse his hands in a cistern of water. After he removes his ornate gold ring, a RAVEN swoops down to seize the bright piece of jewelry with its beak and strut around the cistern's edge.

NOBLEMAN

(explodes with
laughter)

Fb lbh guvax vg tbrf orggre jvgu
oynpx srnguref, ru?!

CLOSE SHOT

...of the raven with its newfound ring. The bird's outline gradually becomes inanimate, two-dimensional, and we see that it's now printed on the first page of an ornately-bound leather book, which rests comfortably in the nobleman's hands, many years later. His eyes shine with the remembrance of that long-ago evening by the cistern.

EXT. EMBASSY COMPOUND - MORNING

A red/white/green, horizontally-striped flag SNAPS in the breeze outside this stately gray building. Another flag, red/white/red, flutters next door... and this second color scheme is duplicated on the flapping pennants of a nearby open car, which is speeding southward. A young ARCHDUKE in the back seat GIGGLES when he spills a few drops of champagne upon his meticulously-arranged sash.

WIDER ANGLE

...a *much* wider angle - we can actually see the borders of this country from impossibly high in the sky, and it is colored red/white/red, top-to-bottom, just like its flag. Stretching along the eastern border is another country, colored red/white/green. Surprisingly, we can still make out the progress of the red/white/red open car. After crossing its southern border, this car becomes the target of GUNSHOTS.

BREAKNECK ZOOM IN, ON THE CAR

...to find the young archduke's bemedaled sash in a bloody mess. Assassination is never pretty.

ZOOM OUT AGAIN

...to view huge cannons, BOOMING in the north. Marching ARMIES dressed in saucy pointed helmets salute their leader, and the well-known outlined map of Europe becomes an angry black-and-red volcano. The volcano ERUPTS.

ZOOM IN

...on a SOLDIER who tries to see what's happening, from the safe confines of his red/white/green country. He puts down his rifle and cranes his neck to get a better view.

ZOOM OUT

...moving north and west to the Eiffel Tower, then to the Paris suburb of Versailles, and finally into the Trianon, located on the south forty of Louie's opulent estate.

INT. TRIANON - LATE, LATE, LATE AT NIGHT

What's this? A meat hook impales the familiar shape of that red/white/green country. The supporting cable contains a weight-scale meter, which reads 100.

An officious little FUNCTIONARY with a huge nose approaches the meat hook. He brandishes a much-too-big cutlass, and obviously fancies himself quite the swordsman.

FUNCTIONARY

(oily; another
unrecognizable
foreign tongue)

Fbbbbbbbbbb... jr'yy grnpu lbh gur
vaf naq bhgf bs qvcybnpl.

As he delicately slices a small piece from the red/white/green map's left side, its weight-scale now indicates 98, and a tiny drop of red liquid runs down the side of the meat-hook-impaled map.

The functionary grabs the portion he's carved off, and throws it to a slaving DOG over in the shadows. The pooch is oddly colored - red/white/red, top to bottom.

The functionary now begins to relish his bloody little task, and steps up to the map with enthusiasm. When he severs a sizable chunk from the top, his weight-scale shows 79 and the red liquid flows down freely, all over the map. He tosses this newest filet negligently over to several smaller DOGS, waiting hungrily in another dark corner.

SLASH! Another incision appears near the map's bottom, and the weight-scale hovers near 60. This wedge sparks a fight among an unruly PACK of canines. Blood spurts all over them.

One last gash butchers a huge area from the right side, dropping the weight-scale below 29. The functionary is now smeared with red, and he's grinning fiendishly as he hands over the territory to a PIT BULL. This dog is also colored strangely: blue head, yellow midsection, and red hindquarters.

INT. CSABA'S HILLSIDE COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

CSABA awakes and peers outside his window into the town square, a kilometer below his aerie. As the sun rises over the horizon, a red/white/green flag begins to go up, but it is quickly pulled down and a blue/yellow/red flag is raised in its place.

ZOOM OUT

...moving north inside the fluid map of Europe. A slick-haired POLITICIAN, pencil-thin moustache, finishes buttoning his brown shirt and starts to HAMMER in his workshop. He's building a swastika, and when it's completed, he gives it a vigorous spin.

"Azért is..!"

5.

The four-limbed symbol just coughs out a few abortive "PUTT-PUTT" sounds, but on the next try, it BURBLES like an underpowered lawn mower.

IT SEEMS LIKE ONLY MOMENTS LATER

...that ARMIES are marching and saluting again, but this time they're spewing the infamous "Heil." Europe's outlined map becomes another savage black-and-red volcano, which, of course, EXPLODES with a second eruption.

EXT. EUROPE - A FEW YEARS FURTHER ALONG

A bald Yank GENERAL, a fat Limey CIGAR-SMOKER, a husky Rooskie DICTATOR and an aloof Gallic MEGALOMANIAC each grab a leg of the swastika, which has PUTT-PUTTED into silence. They make a wish, and SNAP it apart. The dictator takes his piece and strolls serenely back east, across the map of Europe. His footsteps leave a spreading crimson trail wherever he passes.

Some vermilion inevitably oozes southward to the dismembered red/white/green country... its vibrant colors begin to fade, gradually becoming a washed-out pinkish tint.

EXT. RED/WHITE/GREEN COUNTRY'S BORDER - MORNING

ÁRPÁD crosses the border with his ten-year-old son JENŐ, who carries a book. Árpád shivers when he looks up at the blue/yellow/red flag under which they now walk.

INT. CSABA'S HILLSIDE COTTAGE - AN HOUR LATER

Csaba gazes out the window of his aerie, as before. That blue/yellow/red flag is still flying in the town square, and Csaba's young son, KÁROLY, looks at his father with concern. Csaba's eyes fill easily with tears, especially when his glance strays toward the rough pine coffin in his back room. The body inside is that of a 30-year-old woman.

CSABA
(numbly)
Fur'f ng crnpr abj.

Árpád walks in and embraces Csaba, while Jenő distracts Cousin Károly with his book, which features colorful photos. Likewise, Árpád pulls out a round, pocket-sized bottle of spirits to distract Csaba, who shrugs his acquiescence.

INT. CSABA'S HILLSIDE COTTAGE - AN HOUR LATER

The bottle's label prominently features a red cross on a white background, and now it's nearly empty. The two men intently play a game of cards, while the two boys pass their time with a pile of photo books. Jenő looks over at the cards visible in his father's hand.

JENŐ

(inquisitive)

Jub'f gur zna jvgu gur pebffobj,
Sngure?

Árpád is surprised, and disgustedly throws his cards onto the table, face up. Jenő's hand covers his mouth, eyes wide. Csaba, still very sad, manages a small CHUCKLE. Árpád discreetly notices this welcome shift in mood and CALLS to his son, with open arms. He begins telling a story about two of the cards, starting with the iconic man holding a crossbow:

EXT. FOREST - DAY

Rossini's "William Tell Overture" PLAYS quietly in the background as the famed marksman, WILLIAM himself, carefully peeks out from behind a tree. His young SON peeks with him, and they both watch a sleek 12-point BUCK graze contentedly, thirty meters away. When William silently fits an arrow onto his crossbow, the young boy's eyes go round, while he covers his mouth. William smiles and aims.

ARROW'S POV

After William pulls the crossbow trigger, his arrow heads straight for the deer in (relatively) slow motion. As it nears the target, we begin to notice a small piece of cloth, entangled in the buck's magnificent horns. The arrow embeds itself--TWANG!--in a nearby tree, with the flapping piece of cloth impaled upon it. The startled animal looks up and bounds away gracefully, now free of the bothersome cloth. William's son hugs his father's leg and gazes up adoringly.

EXT. FOREST VILLAGE - 10 MINUTES LATER

William and his son walk hand-in-hand into the village, where they're greeted warmly by several TOWNSPEOPLE. Nearing the village square, they notice that some SOLDIERS have just ripped down their flag (a white cross with a red background) and thrown it onto the ground.

The director of this activity is a fat man, HERR GESZLER, who gives his own befeathered hat to some of the soldiers and motions for them to raise it on the flagpole. He ORDERS other soldiers to bow down and remove their helmets in front of this new "flag." Geszler then turns to the passing townsfolk and COMMANDS them to do the same. Faced with his soldiers' weapons, the frightened people hesitantly bow and remove their hats.

Upon seeing this ridiculous tableau, William LAUGHS heartily. Geszler quickly strides over to him, and makes several attempts to grab the marksman's hat. William easily fends off the fat man, but Geszler CALLS OUT to his soldiers, who march in his direction. William gauges their approach, then removes his hat and tosses it high into the air. When it lands atop the flagpole, covering Geszler's hat, the townspeople CHEER and APPLAUD loudly.

GESZLER

(incensed)

Fb lbh guvax lbh pna qvfborl zr,
ru?

Geszler's eyes narrow, and he casually walks over to a FRUIT VENDOR. Everyone becomes silent while he picks up an apple, as if to eat it. Changing his mind, he throws the apple to one soldier, and BARKS out an order to the rest of his troops. They seize William's son and drag him over to a huge oak tree, thirty meters away, where they balance the apple on top of his head.

Geszler gestures toward the flagpole and mimes obeisance, then points at the apple. Which will it be? William's son SHOUTS reassurance to his father; his eyes are full of confidence and adoration. William stares uncertainly at his son, then, with hatred, at Geszler. Reluctantly, the archer pulls two arrows from his quiver: he fits one onto his crossbow, while the other goes into his belt.

Rossini's overture becomes LOUDER in the background, rising to its climax.

"Azért is..!"

8.

William aims carefully, shoots... and the apple is split precisely in half.

ANGLE ON GESZLER

He's surprised by this incredible feat of marksmanship, but he's even more astonished by the second arrow, which is suddenly--TWANG!--embedded in his own chest.

ANGLE ON FLAG

The white cross on its red background is reverently lifted off the ground by several townspeople.

BACK TO CSABA'S HILLSIDE COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

The small round liquor bottle, with its red-cross-on-a-white-background label, is now completely empty. The two young boys stare with wonder at the playing-card portraits of Geszler and Tell. Outside the window, that blue/yellow/red flag still FLAPS in the town square.

Csaba appears to be even more depressed; Árpád gazes at him, and then at young Károly, for a moment... then, with sudden inspiration, he points to the wall calendar. Half its days have already been marked with "X," and Árpád lifts up the page, to point at the first day of the next month.

ÁRPÁD

(rising inflection)

Qb lbh guvax Xáebyl pbhyq ivfvg hf
sbe n pbhcyr bs jrrxf?

This interrupts Csaba's mournful reverie, and he stares at Árpád, not really comprehending. Then, for a brief moment, his eyes light up, and he SPEAKS a few words to Károly. The young boy thinks for awhile, and then points at one of the brilliant photos in Jenő's book. Árpád looks at Jenő, and they both turn to nod at Károly.

EXT. ROAD TOWARD RED/WHITE/GREEN COUNTRY - 1 HOUR LATER

Károly happily clutches the book... and his free hand is enfolded in Árpád's gentle grasp. Jenő holds his father's other hand, and they all CHAT animatedly.

"Azért is..!"

9.

A worried FARMER overtakes them, and runs past. Several other PEOPLE are also jogging in the same direction, and one of the women SHOUTS a warning back to Árpád. His once-smiling face is now filled with concern, and he hurries the boys toward the border.

They cross into the red/white/green flag's territory, after passing under the blue/yellow/red flag, at precisely 5:59 p.m. Just as they leave, GUARDS on the other side SLAM the gates and begin to NAIL them shut. Árpád's face is very troubled, when he stares down at young Károly.

INT. SWIMMING POOL STADIUM - 10 YEARS LATER

Árpád CHEERS wildly as two water polo PLAYERS break away from their DEFENDERS and work together brilliantly to score the winning goal, just before the final BUZZER. The rest of the CROWD goes CRAZY, too. When these two heroes emerge from the pool and take off their red/white/green swim caps, they are revealed to be--of course--Károly and Jenő.

EXT. CITY STREET - A HALF-HOUR LATER

Árpád walks with his arms around the two strapping young men, who smile modestly at his extravagant PRAISE. Suddenly, a tank RUMBLES around the corner, followed by jogging SOLDIERS: they all wear uniforms marked with a red flag. Outraged, Árpád walks over to the troops and ARGUES vociferously. Two of them drag him into an alley, while their comrades hold back the terrified boys.

Several SHOTS ring out.

INT. ÁRPÁD'S HOUSE - NEXT DAY

Jenő and his MOTHER comfort each other, both trying not to look at the coffin in their back room. Károly stands at the door with a suitcase, confused and grief-stricken. When Jenő nods at him, Károly rushes over to hug both of them. But Jenő's mother firmly leads Károly back to the door. She picks up the suitcase, puts it into his hand, and pats him on both shoulders.

"Azért is..!"

10.

INT. SWIMMING POOL STADIUM #2 - WEEKS LATER

This stadium is many times larger than the first one, and Olympic posters, in several languages, cover the walls. The CROWD is DEAFENING. Károly and his teammates stand at one side of the pool, again wearing the red/white/green swim caps. On the other side, their OPPONENTS wear caps emblazoned with red flags... just like the soldiers who were jogging with the tank. Károly is extremely worried, but then someone SPEAKS from behind:

VOICE
(unrestrained
confidence)

Gurl'yy arire or noyr gb orng HF.

It's Jenő! He pulls on his cap, ready to swim. Károly, like the rest of the team, is overjoyed.

INT. POOL - AN HOUR LATER

The water is now slightly pink, instead of clear, and rivulets of red are running into the pool from fresh wounds on several red/white/green players. However, this battered team is all smiles, because the scoreboard shows they're in the lead, 3-0!

Károly and Jenő work their magic to score once more, but an opposing player viciously PUNCHES Károly's face, even as Károly SLAMS in the fourth goal. REFEREES immediately stop the violent match and declare a red/white/green victory.

EXT. PASSENGER BOAT DOCK - SEVERAL DAYS LATER

Károly's new scar will certainly be impressive, but the gold medal around his neck is even more impressive. Jenő hugs him, and picks up a suitcase.

JENŐ
(one last try)
Ner lbh fher lbh jba'g pbzr onpx?

Károly shakes his head, gingerly tracing the outline of his not-yet-healed scar. He then takes off his medal, places it carefully into Jenő's hand, and pats him on both shoulders.

EXT. RED/WHITE/GREEN COUNTRY'S BORDER - WEEKS LATER

Jenő approaches the border he once crossed as a young boy. That blue/yellow/red flag is still flying on the far side, and the gate is still nailed shut. His face drops with disappointment, and he starts to walk back. After leaving the guards' sight, though, Jenő strikes off through the forest. He soon comes upon a fence, topped with barbed wire.

INT. CSABA'S HILLSIDE COTTAGE - MANY HOURS LATER

Csaba lies in bed, near the window of his aerie. He's badly injured, with several scars on his face, and he appears to be deathly ill. The blue/yellow/red flag still dominates the town below.

Jenő walks in, pretty well sliced up with fresh wounds, but he's glowing with happiness. Csaba's eyes also sparkle, and the two men embrace warmly. Jenő rinses out the compress on Csaba's head, while the older man RAMBLES in his feverish haze. Jenő quietly slips Károly's gold medal out of his pocket, and hangs it near the window. As night falls, he continues sitting by the older man's side, while listening to stories of a glorious past.

CSABA'S FEVER DREAM - CONTINUOUS

Against the BUZZING of cicadas, and the unnatural SOUND of an overinflated basketball that's bouncing much too slowly, Csaba imagines himself to be young again, and healthy, and strong.

And he's holding aloft the hope for a future where justice will prevail... despite everything.

THE END