

Viktor Gaal – WAR movie treatment

1.: WELCOME

We fade into the point of view of a man, crawling in a narrow tunnel. Hear him breath hard, see his hands covered in mud. And there is a dim light at the end of the tunnel – we are getting close. As the crawling goes on, we see the sides of the tunnel go past us. As it is covered in moss and dirt, it appears to be somewhat soft and warm.

When the man gets to the end of the tunnel, the light becomes too bright for a minute as he falls out of it, splashes into a puddle. The camera looks around in a frightened, disoriented way, and we see a woman rushing towards us.

The man can hardly move. The woman gives him clothes, then calls him ‘Ember’ – and right after this, the camera leaves the POV of the man, but without a cut.

((Note: This switch would get used a lot. FPS mode in battles, then moving out of it. The fewer the cuts, the better.))

The man, ‘Ember’, is very young at this point (looks about 20). The woman is older, about 40.

She takes the man to her car. She obviously cares a great deal about him. On the way, in the car, she ask questions. From these (and from the scenery outside the car) we learn that there is a war going on, and the man is a key member, a ‘great warrior’, in this fight, who ‘came back’ to help them to victory. The role of the woman is unspecified, besides that she (obviously) loves him, and is here to take care of him.

After this, the man falls asleep – fade out.

2.: THE BLUES

When we fade in, the car is slowing down, as there are men blocking the road in front of us. They all wear blue armors and are equipped with futuristic guns (the Enemy). However, the woman instructs the man to lay down. The Enemy soldiers come to the car – then all of a sudden, there is a gun in the woman’s hand, and she shots them. More of them are coming, but she speeds up and gets away in no time.

Sleeping, again.

3.: THE REDS

Fade in to the door opening, and there are people outside, who cheer and smile and anxious to greet Ember. All are wearing red, body-tight armors, made out of leather (and futuristic guns, of course). We are in a huge hangar, some kind of a training area. Note that here, every color is a shade of red (if not grey).

Three man stand out of the crowd, whom greet Ember as an old friend. They are named Gasp, Mack and Baldy. Note that all three have officer’s ranking.

Ember is escorted to meet ‘the General’, the leader. A man of great importance and power. His face is hardened, concerned; he calls everyone ‘his son’.

The General asks a few questions about ‘Embers last mission’, then tells that the next operation is already underway.

Ember ends up in a room. Technically, as there is a war, everything is dirty and run-down. The city, the building, even the room is. In the room, there is a table, a bed, a sink, a few posters about the ‘war’, guns, and an armor hanging on the wall. Could even be the room of a 6 year old kid. Only the woman follows him here. When he sits on the bed, she helps him take his clothes off.

‘Such a fine man you are!’, she says, while examining his hands and face.

‘I love you for what you have done’, he says.

‘And I love you, no matter what’, she replies, then kisses his forehead, stands up, and

leaves. Ember is alone, in silence. The sounds of the military base can be heard only faintly.

Ember lays back on the bed. We get under the covers.

‘I’m ready!’, he says, then falls asleep.

4.: DREAMING

This is Ember’s dream. Flicks of images:

– His POV: holding a gun, shooting at people.

– The General saying: ‘The fate of the world... Infiltrate and exterminate... Good and Evil...’

– Ember in a High-Tech lab, looking at tanks with men (clones?) floating in them.

– A beautiful, green valley. The General saying: ‘Good and Evil’.

– A group of men standing on a cliff. Noble, peaceful faces. All are wearing shiny armors, holding great swords in front of them. The wind blows sand; the ones standing further are off-focus.

– A woman’s voice saying ‘Wake up!’

5.: THE BRIEFING

Ember wakes to a beeping sound, the alarm. A loudspeaker announces that ‘all warriors are to report at the training area’. He dresses, goes to the sink, washes his face, and looks in the mirror. He looks just a bit older than the day before. More concerned.

On the way out he passes a cart with food on it; he takes some, and eats it while going to the ‘training area’. He obviously knows the place. His three mates (Gasp, Mack and Baldy) fall in with him; all are very anxious to fight, explain that they are about to launch a counter-offensive.

When they get to the training area, they find themselves in a huge group of armed men and women. Some loud, some scared, some playing, others are played with (eg.: beaten up). Most are young, the elder members are more quiet, they are clearly ‘captains’, leaders of the army. Ember is introduced to an older captain, the commander of his squadron. And there is a young, blonde woman staring at Ember.

When the General enters, all fall to silence. He walks to a pulpit; there are a few others behind him, one of them is the woman who helped Ember.

‘There is a war’, he begins his speech. He explains that this operation will be a very important one, for freedom, for bringing peace, for humankind. Against the Enemy, the bluecoats. They have to conquer a certain part of the city. And thanks to recently acquired data, the Enemy headquarters are located, so a special commando (including Ember) will go and blow up that building.

6. THE GREEN WOMAN & THE DEATH

Everyone rushes to their destination, huge masses of people marching around in haste. Ember finds the blonde girl standing next to him.

‘I’m afraid’, she says.

‘Stay close to me’, he replies.

The commando goes into a transport-craft, taking them to the battleground. When the doors open, they find themselves on a pretty average city-street, except that everything is covered with rubbish, burnt-out cars, and occasional bodies. The main color is grey; no real colors are present.

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Here, lots of running and fighting commence (from Ember’s POV) between the reds and the blues. Not just shooting, but swordfight (with Japanese katanas). Gruesome, ugly – yet it seems like it is not affecting the warriors. His mates are even telling jokes to each other.

And, in the middle of the mayhem, Ember sees a mysterious woman, dressed in green,

and with long, brown hair. She is perfectly calm, even though there is continuous shooting, grenades detonating, people dieing. Yet, she just walks by, unharmed, touches Ember lightly on the shoulder, then disappears.

The commando gets into a huge building, the headquarters of the Bluecoats. As they enter and are about to place a bomb, in comes a counter-attack, and they have to flee deeper into the building. They figure that they have to get out through the sewer system. They separate into two groups, one distracting the Enemy, the other going back to set off the bomb.

The Commander takes the blonde woman (and others) with him. Ember stays behind, to distract. And here, one of his mates tells about the Greens:

‘The greens? You saw a green woman? Dude, you are fucking lucky! You should be dead by now. Those are hideous. An urban legend. Noone knows where they come from. Madmen! They kill everyone, regardless of their color. If you see one, shoot, and pray that you will be the faster.’

More fighting, and the Commander dies a horrible death. His dead, broken body ends up on top of an elevator, which raises towards the sky. Half of the building is demolished, so the structure of the elevator raises into open space, supported by one wall only. The elevator, with the body of the commander, stops at the top of this pillar. Then, below him, the building explodes, and the elevator falls back into the flames.

7.: THE HOTEL

Ember and the others are running away; the flames can be seen behind. The Enemy is chasing them. He loses his comrades, is left alone – but then the blonde woman appears. Turns out she is the only survivor of her group.

By this point, Ember is older; looks around 25 (stubble, maybe?).

And it also turns out they cannot go back home, to the base, they have to dig themselves in for the night. So the two of them end up in an old, once-luxurious hotel. Fine-looking furniture, statues, etc. They find a huge bed with a mosquito-net in one of the rooms.

The blonde woman seduces Ember; small-talk leading to sex. As he is on the bed and she crawls into it (naked), the white net atop the bed embraces her, falls on her shoulders. She gets atop him, fucks, talks about how wonderful life will be when they win, and then they fall asleep.

8.: INTERROGATION

Morning: Ember is woken by shouting, he is forced to the ground, being kicked. The Enemy! They’ve found him – and turns out it is the blonde woman who betrayed him. An enemy agent.

He is taken to be tortured and interrogated.

The interrogation should be from his POV, leaving it only when he is being tortured. The interrogator is clean-cut, his servants do the dirty job for him, he only does the talking. Here, every color is a shade of blue. All clothes, equipments, etc.

(and the torture should be something very gruesome.)

The talk goes like this:

Interrogator: ‘We want order. We want prosperity and security for all’.

Ember: ‘Yes. By controlling people. By telling them how and when and why can they be happy. Giving them false dreams and lives.’

‘Because people are amazing creatures. They don’t know how to be happy. You have to give them choices. Now here is your choice: tell me all the plans you know – or die.’

However, Ember resists. He is taken to a prison cell.

As he is laying on the ground, he is hallucinating. He sees the noble warriors, standing in the wind, watching him.

But he does not give up. When they come for him again, he takes down the guards... in a very bloody way (smashing-tearing) as he has no weapon in the beginning (note that blood shows on the blue armor, but it does not show on his red). He gets a gun and a katana.

9.: THE WARRIOR

Back on the battlefield, he crawls-sneaks his way back to his forces. More bombing & flames. He hides out in a building overlooking a river. He has to wait for the night before he can cross the river. And in the building, he finds a blue warrior. A high-rank, elite soldier – but wounded, dieing. He is just half-sitting there, rubbish and debris holding his back. Blood around him, a katana in his hand... but he has no energy left to lift the sword. Instead, he starts to talk to Ember:

‘It was all a lie! Whatever they taught us or you... it was all a lie! Out here, noone cares if you were the best at the Academy. They thought us how civilized people should fight, but out here nobody follows those rules. Kill or be killed. That is it. And if you follow some kind of ethical rules, you are most certainly going to die. And yet, everyone wants to be the best.’ He looks at Embers gun. ‘The numbers of enemies you killed. The missions you accomplished. When you go back – if you go back – that’s all they are interested in. Have you seen the cloning tanks? This whole thing... this war... we have to fight it, because we do not know how else to behave.’

The scene ends with Ember standing in front of the other warrior, looking at him as he passes away with the rays of the setting sun blazing his body.

10.: BACK HOME

So, Ember gets the feeling that there is something very wrong with this all. See how pointless this all is. The sides, the fight, the ‘trying to be the best’. When we see him going back, he’s already thrown away his weapons. He looks about 30 years old. Shorter hair, lines on his face.

And we see that the green-brown woman is watching him enter the Base.

As Ember enters, noone greets him this time. He gets weird looks. Guards meet him and order him to follow them to the General. He starts to explain what happened him and that maybe they should make peace, but noone listens to him...

The surprise is that the blonde girl got back first, and informed them that Ember is the enemy spy. She stands by the side of the General, looks at Ember in disgust.

No matter how he protests, he is thrown in a prison-cell – again.

First, the blonde woman comes. He is outraged. She leans close and whisperes:

‘In time of war, sweetie, all weapons are allowed to prevail.’

Second, the elder woman comes. Ember swears that he did nothing, it was the blonde woman. Yet, the elder woman is distant, isn’t listening to him. She says:

‘I’ll do all I can to prevent execution. There is no greater shame. A warrior has to die in battle.’

Scene ends with Ember crying that they are all insane.

11.: TRIAL

Ember is trialed and judged guilty of treason. All the way along he swears that it was the blonde woman, and that he has important information, he knows the whereabouts of the enemy base. They do not believe him, of course.

He is sentenced to death – but the verdict is not execution, but to be ‘braced up’ on ‘The Borderland’.

‘You are such a letdown, my son!’, says the General.

12. EXECUTION

The Borderland is a long square of the city, with the ruins of a temple. There is a wooden fence running in the middle of the square – with corpses in red and blue uniforms crucified on it. Ember is dragged to a pole of this fence. He is forced to stand in front of a plank, and then his arms are nailed to the wood.

He is left there by his comrades, crying and bleeding away. His face is all about pain and emotions.

He is alone, getting delirious, talking about peace and war and how stupid he was.

And then, a group of blue soldiers appear. They rejoice upon finding him – happy that they can torture and kill an enemy soldier. They start with humiliating and beating him up.

Ember is about to lose it. Behind his torturers, he sees the ancient warriors, looking at him, standing in the wind.

The blue soldiers move on to a more cruel game: they are about to slice off pieces of Ember. But in the last second, an unseen force stops them. A blade flashes, the soldiers are dead. Out of thin air, the green-brown woman is there, standing in front of Ember, on the blue corpses. She leans to Ember, kisses him on the lips.

‘Stay with me!’, she whispers.

We fade out.

13.: COMING TO SENSES

When Ember comes to his senses, he is high above the city, on one of the top floors of a skyscraper. The windows are broken out, the wind is blowing hard. He is a few inches away from the edge of the floor, as he looks down, he can see the whole city. We stay in his POV until the green-brown woman enters the scene, to feed him, take care of him, nurse him back to life.

They talk. The woman reveals little of herself. Tells that they have to go someplace safe, out of the city, that is. Her name is ‘Ivey’.

‘How are we going to get out of the city?’, asks Ember.

‘We’ll turn into ghosts’.

Under the cover of the night, Ivey takes Ember to trails he didn’t know before. They go atop and under buildings, avoiding the battle going on on the streets. They leave the city behind, and end up in a forest – in a hidden valley, one with nature. But the city can be seen in the distance.

In the valley, there is a small village. Where people are not wearing uniforms; where there is a rainbow on the sky with all the variety of the colors. And no one is fighting. But the kids are frightened of Ember. But he is too weak to do anything. Escorted to a Japanese-style house, where he collapses and sleeps.

In his dream:

– He sees his torturers. General saying: ‘Good and Evil, Allies and Enemies’.

– the cloning tanks

– and Ivey, telling him to wake up.

14.: ILLUMINATION

Ember sits in a small garden, under a crooked tree.

He looks about 35 years old. His face is clean, but with lines and scars, some kind of a mustache and beard, maybe.

Just sits and stares. All is silent. We can see far into the distance, a lake, mountains, the sky. And this cut should be at least a minute long, or as long as possible. And the scenery

would change, very slowly, would do a full 4-seasons circle, spring-summer-autumn-winter.

And when we get to the winter, and everything is covered with snow, the ancient warriors are standing in front of Ember. He stands up, draws his sword. The warrior closest to him steps forward. They fight. Ember wins. Another warrior comes. This goes on for a little while, when he sits back, panting, realizing that he cannot win, there are too many of them.

Instead, he takes a dagger laying by his side. Very slowly, he starts to push it into his abdomen. A thin stream of blood goes towards the snow. But before it would be too late, Ivey appears on the scene. She gently puts her hand on his, and he freezes instantly. Ember lets go of the dagger. Looks up to meet Ivey's gaze.

'What? What then? What am I to do?'

She strokes his face. Holds his head in her hands.

'Love.'

They make love.

By the end of which the scenery is back to spring again.

15. THREAT

Ember and Ivey walk by a field, people of the village harvesting ripe, golden-colored wheat (or things like this, showing that these folks are living in harmony with nature).

Then they are in the forest: they see a transport-ship landing, full of red soldiers. The soldiers search the area; Ember and Ivey hide in the trees. 'We have to tell the others', Ivey says.

The council of the village is summoned; Ember watches from the background. They discuss if the soldiers are a threat. Here, many things are revealed:

- That the fight in the city has been going on for decades.
 - That the village was founded by people who had enough of the fight and managed to escape. They made a new order; the village is prospering – as long as it is left unharmed. But the Red Forces began to venture further and further away from the city.
 - There are a few of the village folks called 'sentinels', who's task is to sneak back to the city, search for outcasts and revolutionaries (like Ember). Ivey is one of the sentinels.
 - The main dilemma is about what they should do. They do not want to fight (fighting with the Enemy makes you one with the Enemy). But they have to do something.
- Ember leaves the scene.

16. GOING BACK

Ember is putting on an armor (surprise: this armor is green-brown), checking his weapons. Ivey appears behind him, asks him what is he doing.

'I was bred to be a warrior. I tried to kill that part of me, but I have to face it: this is who I am. Those soldiers were searching for me. And if I stay here, I'll turn this place into one like that. So I'm leaving. I have to go back – and be who I am.'

'I'm going with you'.

17. ENDGAME

Flashes of scenes: The Armies. A huge battle. Ember and Ivey, back in the city, watching the fight. Noone notices them, as they are dressed in green-brown. The whole battle looks just pathetic.

We get a few shots of a Blue Commander (the Interrogator?) ordering his troops. And then Ember appears on the scene – and kills the Blue commander.

Next, in the Red Headquarters, the General is informed that the blue forces are retreating. He orders a celebration.

But Ember infiltrates the base, and while the red soldiers are partying, he gets to face the red general, alone, one-on-one.

‘I’m not mad at you anymore’, he tells the General. ‘Even though I served you loyally, and you were the one betraying me. But I understand. I wanted peace. But peace is not an option for you. You want total devastation. You want war. So I killed the enemy leader. Just the way I’m going to kill you now.’

And so he kills the General.

18. CONCLUSION

Ember is just standing atop a ruin. Watching the city. Behind him, Ivey climbs the stairs, stands behind him. We see Ember’s face. His hair is turning grey on the sides. His face is hardened, calm, like the faces of the ancient warriors (He looks about 40).

‘Why?’, she asks.

Silence. We get into his POV, follow a young soldier, running on the streets.

‘The thing is, I figured out that they cannot live without the battle. Peace they cannot have. Would I have only killed the blue general? The reds would’ve prevailed, yes... and then they would fall into two factions, battling each other yet again. I’m sure it happened before. In they war, they are more than controllable. They are prisoners, really. The freest persons are the soldiers on the battlefield, dieing.’

We, still in his POV, witness the young soldier being overrun by his enemies, who kill him, then celebrate on his corpse.

‘I realized that all I can do is to try to defend your people. You are weak. They’d overrun your village in no time. But if they are busy fighting each other, if the war is their only concern... that gives time for your people to grow strong enough.’

‘And what now, then?’, Ivey asks.

‘I stay. I stay and make sure they kill as many of each other as possible. I became a beholder, predator of predators.’

The very last shot is total silence; only the wind blows. Ivey takes Ember’s hand, and they watch the city.

THE END