

Silent NightA Short Play...No-Man's Land 1917 Night -12/24

Original Version

(Two Characters A. and G. Bare stage except some type of "crater" on stage left and center.

A. Stirs and looks up from center "crater". He makes some clanking noises. "Christ...that's it...why don't you just put up the white flag? You're makin' enough noise...Christ where am I?" (This is all said in a whisper) "How long have I been asleep? Oh man, I need a smoke..." (he rummages and produces cigarettes and a match. He lights the cigarette)

G. "I was wondering when you would wake up...Its been at least an hour since..."

A. "Who the Hell...Hey ! Don't try any tricks...I can..."

G. "Calm yourself...I'm in my own problems...I don't intend to bother you!"

A. "Well...You better not try anything. I've got a lot of support over here. We can blow you away, Kraut!"

G. "Ja..Ja...I see that ... but the reason I didn't kill you while you were sleeping like a baby...It's the Christmas. We have a cease fire in this sector. Like last year. The Brits and us; we shared some of our food and sing some carols...Then ...the next day, we went back to killing each other."

A. "You must think I'm easy pickin's...like some kid just got here and don't know the ropes..."

G. "Look...I don't want to argue...I just smelled your zigarette...we've been a little short of luxuries lately...and I was thinking..."

A. "I bet I know what you were thinkin'...You figured you'd con me with that Christmas claptrap...and then shoot me and take my cigs...Huh?"

G. "I was thinking that I would do just about anything for a zigarette...So...I'm going to put my rifle down and slowly crawl over there..."

A. "Hey ! That would just be the dumbest thing you did today ...If I see you comin' this way I just got to shoot you... So why don't you just..."

G. "Look !...Here's my rifle... and my bayonette...I'm putting them down where you can see them..."

A. "Look, fella...you might think I won't do it... but you better just keep your head down or I'll ..."

G. " Listen...I have some sausages, but no biscuits. Do you have some Bread, or even crackers ? I'll share with you...but by God ...I've got to have a zigarette."

A. "I'm tellin' you, I swear I'll shoot...now you stay there or..."

G. "I think I would be willing to die for a smoke... So here I come..."
(he begins to crawl toward A.)

A. "Hey ! Hey! I mean what I say ! You go on back , or I'm gonna have to shoot...(G. has left his shell hole and crawled a few feet. He stops and sits up)

G "Well ? Are you going to invite me over, or not ?"

A. "Jesus ! You are some kind of a crazy loon , ain't you? What makes you think I won't just shoot you now ?"

G. " I just thought that you would have a spark of humanity in you. You Haven't been here long enough to lose it like some of the others. I also think that you probably have never killed anyone. And that when you try, you'll see how hard it is!"

A. "All's I know is you think an awful lot about somebody you don't know at all! And that can get you killed. Or didn't they teach you germans anything?"

G. "Look, why don't you stop thinking about killing for a while. It's Christmas in an hour. The fighting has stopped. We could share a bit of Food, and a zigarette. I even have a bit of brandy left in my canteen. So, what do you say? Can I come over there?"

A. "You're leavin' your rifle and bayonette?(Pause) You really got some brandy? All right, you can come on over, but I want to frisk you after you get here!"

G. " :Ja , Ja! I hear. (he begins to crawl to the center shell crater.) Well here I am. Should I come over there?"

A. "No, no! You stay there! I'll meet you half way!"

G. "Allright, I'll stay here. But don't forget the zigarettes!"

A. (he crawls to the shell crater center, he has brought his gun) "O.K. open your coat. (G.Complies) All right I guess you're clean! Where's the brandy?"

G. 'My, my! What a piggy boy! Where's the zigarette? (they exchange)

A. (wiping his mouth) "God that's good brandy!"

G. " It's lousy brandy, but if you have enough, it's not so bad. (he drags on cigarette) You Americans make the best zigarettes in the world! Did you know that? I've have been all over Europe, and nobody makes a zigarette like the Americans! Why is that, I wonder?"

A. "Maybe 'cause what you're smokin' comes from the finest Virginia Tobacco. All you krauts is good for is cabbage and beer. But I guess beer Is a pretty good thing to be good at?"

G. "Ja! Beer! Our beer is like nothing you ever tasted in your life! You Americans don't understand beer. What you make is too much like dishwater! But...your Zigarettes! (he has finished it down to almost nothing) Can I have another?"

A. "Yeah, sure! But first let's see some of that sausage you was talkin' About! I could tie on the feedbag right now.

G. "All right! Here! Here is some sausage, but do you have any bread?"

A. "Sure! (he digs into his pocket) Here! (he breaks the bread into two pieces. They eat for a minute.) This sure hits the spot. I was hungry! I didn't eat since I was separated from my..." (He looks at G.) I suppose I shouldn't give you any information?"

G. "You better not say any more! I have a direct line to the Kaiser!" (he begins to laugh) Now how about that zigarette?"

A. (he has begun to laugh, also) "Sure, sure! Here! (he feels in his pockets and brings out the empty pack.) Shoot! Wait a minute! I got another box in my kit. (He begins to crawl back to his original position) Here we go! I've got 'em! (he crawls back to center and sits on the lip of the crater. He gives G. a cigarette, puts another in his mouth, and lights a match)

G. (Lunges toward A.) "No, no! Get down!"

A. (stops his motion, . The match is still lit. We hear the sound of a distant rifle shot. A slowly sinks down and onto his side)

G. "Bastards! Bastards! There's a cease fire! You bas...tards!" (he looks at A., shakes his head, and begins to crawl back to his shell hole. After he gets half way, he stops, crawls back and fishes the box of cigarettes from the dead mans' pocket. He crawls to his hole, lights a cigarette and says "American tobacco! It's the best in the world!"

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