

BASEMENT

by

Michael Hugins

BASEMENT

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BASEMENT

*For my mother, Mercie Hagins; my father, Butler Hagins, and
my love Nicole DeMilt (Soon to be Hagins)*

*Thank you Jan Bentley, for truly breathing life into this love story.
You are special beyond words.*

BASEMENT

Basement made its world premiere at the PIT Loft Theater in New York, NY with the following cast:

Lt. MICHAEL CRAWLER – Cameron Mason
KATRINE FAUSTIN – Shelby Anderson

Basement made its off-Broadway debut at the Gene Frankel Theater in New York, NY with the following cast:

Lt. MICHAEL CRAWLER - Anthony T. Goss
KATRINE FAUSTIN - Alexandra Cohler
MATTHEW WHITE - Ian Campbell Dunn

Cast: 1 M, 1 W (1 M can be added for voiceover or as onstage character)

Lt. MICHAEL CRAWLER	20s, male, African-American pilot of the Army Air Corps
KATRINE FAUSTIN	20s, female, French farmgirl and war-hardened survivor
MATTHEW WHITE	any age, male (can be live or voiceover)

Time: Summer of 1944, during World War II

Place: the basement of a small farmhouse on the countryside of France

*Note – the radio broadcasts are based on real broadcasts, and music may be added from the period at the director’s discretion.

* Lines in [brackets] are the English translation of the spoken French

BASEMENT

BASEMENT

ACT 1
SCENE 1

May 24th, 1944 at 3:00 pm The scene opens to a basement under the Faustin Farmhouse in France in 1944. There is a dresser, a desk and chair, a bureau with a radio, a small table by the bed, a lamp on each surface turned on and a queen-size bed. Opposite of the bed is a door. There is only one window, a thin piece of glass that is covered in black and only small bits of light shine through. In the bed lies MICHAEL CRAWLER. All of his wounds are wrapped up and he is wearing only a t-shirt, bandages, and his boxers. The radio is playing and the British radio announcer MATTHEW WHITE can be heard.

MATTHEW WHITE. You have been listening to Armed Forces Network. The day is May 24, 1944 and at the sound the time will be 3:00 pm. I am Matthew White, and I have been your wartime host. So for all my listeners, Godspeed to you and God bless. *(After a few moments, a loud explosion goes off, followed by gunshots that fade off in the distance. This startles Crawler and he begins to wake up. He jumps up with a start, hurting himself in the process. He is still very woozy but extremely confused. He looks under the covers to see his clothes removed.)*

CRAWLER. Hello? *(Silence. He looks around and listens for a response.)* Hello? *(Still silence.)* Where the hell am I? *(He feels his wounds, which are still tender.)* Well, I'm not dead. So far, anyway. It's not a camp or a cell. Too clean. *(He tries to get up, but his leg is practically numb)* God! Oh... I can't move. Come on! *(He tries to move, but it hurts too much. Finally, he just gives up.)* All right. Guess I should just wait. Whoever has me at least gotta feed me. *(He lies back slowly as the lights shift.)*

BASEMENT

SCENE 2

A few hours later. Crawler is asleep in the bed. There is no sunshine coming through the cracks of the window. The door opens revealing a set of stairs. A woman, KATRINE FAUSTIN, walks in. She is an early 20's French farm girl. It is obvious she has been working all day. She carries a glass of water and a rag. Katrine sets down the glass of water on the table by the bed. She looks disappointed at first but then notices that Crawler has moved and looks a little more relieved. She lightly pulls back the covers, puts down the rag and checks the bandages. Katrine then feels his chest softly, feeling to see if he's alive. He stirs a little bit as she jumps. She has a slight giggle then she picks up the rag and goes to leave. She softly closes the door. Crawler feels his chest a little then wakes up with a start. He notices the covers have been pulled back. He looks around and sees no one. He turns and sees the glass of water sitting there. He picks up the glass, looks at it suspiciously, takes a quick drink, swishes it in his mouth and then swallows it. He puts down the glass and lays back, still looking around as the lights shift.

SCENE 3

The next morning. Crawler is asleep in the bed. Katrine enters the room again. This time she has a teapot and teacup with her. She walks quietly over to the bed and fills the teacup with some of the warm tea. Crawler begins to stir a little. Katrine begins to back out of the room, still watching him. She slips out just as Crawler again wakes with a start. He smells the warm tea and sees the tea cup.

CRAWLER. *Damn it. (He's disappointed he's once again missed his keeper, but he picks up the cup and drinks some of the tea. It tastes great as he looks around and the lights shift.)*

BASEMENT

SCENE 4

Later that day. Crawler is still awake. We hear faint sounds of battle nearby. The glass is now empty and the sun shines a little more through the cracks of the window. He hears footsteps coming down the steps. He decided to lay back and pretend to sleep. He rolls over and faces away from the glass as Katrine quietly enters with the teapot and a rag. She looks at him then pours the tea into the glass. Crawler rolls over and reaches out his hand.

CRAWLER. Thank you. *(Katrine screams and drops the teapot, making Crawler scream and back away, making him fall off the bed. Katrine draws a pistol and aims it at him, ready to shoot.)*

Wait! *(holding out his hand)* I'm sorry! Don't shoot!

KATRINE. Restez là ! [Stay where you are!]

CRAWLER. I'm not gonna hurt you!

KATRINE. S'il me faut, je tirerai! [I will kill you if I have to!]

CRAWLER. I'm an American!

KATRINE. J'essayais de vous guérir ! [I was trying to heal you!]

CRAWLER. I'm on your side!

KATRINE. Que voulez-vous de moi ? J'essayais de vous aider, et vous m'effrayez comme ça? Etes vous fou?! [What do you want from me! I tried to help you and you scare me like this! Are you crazy?!] *(Silence for a moment. Crawler suddenly realizes...)*

CRAWLER. Wait, do you know English?

KATRINE. Je ne vous comprends point. [I don't understand you at all.]

CRAWLER. What country is this?

KATRINE. Parlez-vous Français ? [Do you speak French?]

CRAWLER. Français? That sounds familiar. Is that French?

KATRINE. Français?

CRAWLER. Is this France?

KATRINE. La France. Oui. C'est la France ! [France. Yes. This is France!]

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. This is France?

KATRINE. Oui ! Vous êtes en France ! [Yes! You're in France!]

CRAWLER. (*shocked*) I'm in France.

KATRINE. Evidemment oui, vous êtes en France. Combien de fois dois-je le dire ? [Yes, you're in France. How many times must I say it?]

CRAWLER. Wait, (*starting to get up*) how did I...

KATRINE. (*aiming the gun*) Non, restez là! [No, stay there!]

CRAWLER. Whoa! All right! (*staying down*) Look, (*speaking slower*) I'm...not...going...to...hurt... you. (*standing up and holding out his hands*) I'm cool.

KATRINE. Restez juste là! Je ne vous connais pas, et je ne fais pas faire confiance en vous! [Just stay there. I don't know you and I can't trust you!]

CRAWLER. OK, I have no idea what the hell you just said, but I'm a pilot for the American Army Air Corps. I fly planes. (*imitating a plane holding out his arms*) I fly. I fight the Nazis. (*imitating the machine gun, which startles Katrine and makes her aim the gun again*) Wait! (*holding out his hands*) Sorry! Bad choice! (*holding out his arms again, imitating a plane*) I fly planes. (*pointing up*) I was up there.

KATRINE. Ah ! Vous êtes un pilote ! C'est vous qui avez volé l'avion que j'ai vu dans l'accident. Je sais où votre avion s'est écrasé. [Oh! You're a pilot! You flew the plane I saw in the crash. I know where your plane crashed.]

CRAWLER. Huh? What?

KATRINE. Vous ne me comprenez pas. Vous êtes un pilote. [You don't understand me. You're a pilot.] (*puts down the gun, takes her right hand and imitates it as a plane flying around and crashing into his hand*) J'ai entendu votre accident. J'ai trouvé votre avion. [I saw your crash. I found your plane.]

CRAWLER. (*a little sensitive*) Uh...yeah...great picture. But, yes... (*nodding happily*) I am a pilot.

KATRINE. (*motioning with her hands*) Quand je vous ai trouvé, des soldats vous attaquaient.. Je vous ai ramené ici, et je vous ai

BASEMENT

aidé. A propos vous êtes lourd. [When I found you, soldiers were attacking you. I brought you back here and helped you. By the way, you're heavy.]

CRAWLER. What? What was that?

KATRINE. Quand vous vous sentez mieux, je vais vous apporter à votre avion. Il est complètement démoli, mais... [I can take you to your plane when you are better. It's completely destroyed, but...]

CRAWLER. Damn it! I don't know what you're saying...
(winces in pain, falls onto the bed)

KATRINE. *(helping him down and sitting next to him)* Allez vous bien? [Are you alright?]

CRAWLER. What?

KATRINE. *(putting her hand on his hand, slowly)*
Vous...devez...reposer. [You need to rest.]

CRAWLER. Re-poser?

KATRINE. *(pushing him to lay down in the bed)* Reposer. Dormez. Nous parlerons demain. [Rest. Go to sleep. We'll talk tomorrow.]

CRAWLER. Uh, yeah...OK...whatever you just said. *(pulling the covers over himself)*

KATRINE. Dormez bien, mon ami. [Sleep well, my friend.]

CRAWLER. Mon ami...That sounds familiar...

KATRINE. Mon ami. *(putting her hand to her heart)*

CRAWLER. *(confused, putting his hand on his heart)* Yeah, mon ami.

KATRINE. *(smiling)* Bonne nuit. [Good night.] *(leaves upstairs)*

CRAWLER. Yeah, uh... *(having trouble with the words)* bon-ne nu-it...uh, never mind, good night. *(curls up and goes to sleep as the lights fade.)*

BASEMENT

SCENE 5

The next day. Crawler is awake in the bed. Katrine opens the door with one hand carrying a tray with a bowl of soup and a glass of water in the other. She puts down the tray on the dresser.

KATRINE. Monsieur, comment allez-vous aujourd'hui? [Sir, how are you today?]

CRAWLER. What?

KATRINE. Ah oui, vous ne me comprenez pas. [Right, you don't understand me.] *(slowly)* Comment...allez-vous...aujourd'hui?

[How...are...you...today?]

CRAWLER. *(slowly)* What?

KATRINE. *(frustrated)* Oooo! *(goes over to the tray and picks up the soup)* Tenez. Vous devez manger. [Here. You need to eat.]

CRAWLER. Ah, food. Now that I can understand! *(readies himself in the bed)*

KATRINE. C'est potage de lentille. C'est tout ce que nous appartient. [It's lentil soup. It's all we have.]

CRAWLER. What kind of soup is it?

KATRINE. Comment? [What?] *(She hands him the bowl and walks back over to the tray to get the water. Crawler takes a spoonful of the soup and tastes it. He spits it out quickly.)*

CRAWLER. Ugh! What the hell is this!

KATRINE. *(quickly turning)* Qu'est-ce qui s'est passé? Vous allez bien? [What happened? Are you all right?]

CRAWLER. What kind of mess are you serving me?

KATRINE. Ah, c'est probablement trop chaud. [Oh, it's probably too hot.] *(taking the bowl from him and passing him the water)*

Difficultes à avaler? [Having trouble swallowing?]

CRAWLER. Is that what you call it? *(drinking the water trying to wash out the taste)*

KATRINE. Ici, essayez encore. [Here, try again.] *(taking up the bowl and blowing on it to cool it down and stirring it)*

CRAWLER. Encore? Are you crazy?

BASEMENT

KATRINE. *(holding up a spoonful)* Encore.

CRAWLER. No! No encore!...Wait a minute...

KATRINE. Une minute? [A minute?]

CRAWLER. We spoke. We understood each other.

KATRINE. Comment? [What?]

CRAWLER. What is this? *(pointing to the glass of water)*

KATRINE. Quoi? [What?]

CRAWLER. This. *(pointing to the glass of water)* What is this?

KATRINE. C'est un verre d'eau. [It's a glass of water.]

CRAWLER. *(slowly)* C'est...un...ver-re...d'eau

KATRINE. *(catching on)* Verre d'eau.

CRAWLER. Ver...re d'eau.

KATRINE. Verre d'eau.

CRAWLER. Verre d'eau! *(he gets excited and spills the glass of water on the bed)* Verre d'uh-oh.

KATRINE. *(giggling)* D'eau renversée! [Spilled water!] *(They laugh together. There is relief that they actually understand each other. Crawler moves the wet sheets off of him. Katrine sits next to him)*

CRAWLER. My name is Michael Crawler.

KATRINE. Michael...Crawler?

CRAWLER. Yes! Me...Michael Crawler.

KATRINE. Michael... un plaisir de vous rencontrer. [Michael...a pleasure to meet you.] *(offering her hand)* Katrine Faustin.

CRAWLER. *(shaking her hand)* Katrine...a pleasure to meet you.

KATRINE. *(grabbing the bowl of soup)* Êtes-vous prêt pour encore de potage? [Ready for some more soup?]

CRAWLER. Oh, God, no!

KATRINE. *(disappointed)* J'ai compris cela. [I understood that.]

CRAWLER. Wait, I'm sorry. *(puts his hand to his heart)* Sorry?

KATRINE. Êtes-vous désolé ? Pourquoi? [Are you sorry? Why?]

CRAWLER. I'm sorry. Look, I'll eat the soup.

KATRINE. Vous ne l'aimez pas ? J'essaierai d'obtenir quelque chose d'autre. [You don't like it? I'll try to get you something else.] *(she goes to take the bowl)*

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. *(grabs her hand gently)* No, I'll eat it.

KATRINE. Non, monsieur, J'obtiens d'autre chose. [No, sir, I'll get something else.] *(pulling to take the bowl)*

CRAWLER. No, you made it, I'll eat it. *(pulling it back)*

KATRINE. Monsieur, le laissez aller. [Sir, let it go.]

CRAWLER. I'll eat it!

KATRINE. Laissez-le! [Let it go!]

CRAWLER. I'm sorry!

KATRINE. Bien! [Fine!] *(she lets go of the bowl. Crawler splashes the soup onto himself and falls back on the bed covered in soup. Katrine is trying to contain her laughter)* Vous êtes gourde! [You're clumsy!]

CRAWLER. I guess that takes care of dinner.

KATRINE. Maintenant, j'espère que vous allez me laisser obtenir d'autre chose pour votre dîner! [I hope now you'll let me get you something new!] *(she laughs as she picks up the spilled bowl and spoon, wipes some off with a rag then hands it to Crawler to dry off)* Voici monsieur. Essuyez-vous. [Here, sir. Clean yourself up.]

CRAWLER. *(taking the rag)* Thank you. Hmm... *(holding up the rag, then pointing and nodding his head)* Thank you.

KATRINE. Comment? [What?]

CRAWLER. I think 'comment' means what, right?

KATRINE. Hé, Vous connaissez le 'comment' [You know 'what'?]

CRAWLER. OK, lost all of that, but I get it. 'Comment' means what.

KATRINE. 'Comment'...means...what...

CRAWLER. What.

KATRINE. What.

CRAWLER. Comment.

KATRINE. Comment.

CRAWLER. What.

KATRINE. What.

CRAWLER. Alright, we're making progress!

BASEMENT

KATRINE. What?

CRAWLER. See! We are getting it! What's next? (*winces in pain from his wounds*)

KATRINE. Mon dieu! Qu'est-ce qui vous etes arrive? [My god! What's wrong?]

CRAWLER. Uh... 'comment'?

KATRINE. (*slowly*) Qu'est-ce qui...vous...etes arrive?

CRAWLER. (*slowly*) 'Comment?'

KATRINE. (*pointing to his wounds*) Qu'est-ce qui vous etes arrive? Avez-vous mal? [What wrong? Are you hurt?] (*pointing to his wounds again*)

CRAWLER. My wounds? (*pointing to the bandage on his right arm*)

KATRINE. Vos blessures. Ce sont vos blessures. [Your wounds. These are your wounds.] (*pointing at each bandage*) Blessures.

CRAWLER. (*pointing at each wound*) Blessures?

KATRINE. Blessures.

CRAWLER. Kind of an odd word for wounds.

KATRINE. Wooo...ooo...?

CRAWLER. Never mind. I think this will work. I'm going to learn French, and you're going to learn English.

KATRINE. Vous parlez drôle parfois. [You talk funny.]

CRAWLER. I will figure out what the hell you just said. In time. (*They look at each as the lights shift.*)

SCENE 6

June 7th, 1944. Crawler is lying in bed while Katrine is rewrapping his right arm. Crawler feels a little pain. They are teaching the numbers to each other.

CRAWLER. (*putting up one finger*) One.

KATRINE. Un.

CRAWLER. (*putting up two fingers*) Two.

KATRINE. Deux.

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. *(laughing a little)* Deux...that's funny...Deuuuuux...

KATRINE. *(confused)* Comment?

CRAWLER. *(shaking his head)* Nothing. *(putting up three fingers)* Three.

KATRINE. Trois.

CRAWLER. Interesting. *(putting up four fingers)* Four.

KATRINE. Quatre.

CRAWLER. Quatre?

KATRINE. Oui.

CRAWLER. Hmm... *(putting up five fingers)* Five.

KATRINE. Cinq. *(CRAWLER goes to lift up his other arm, but he winces a little)*

CRAWLER. I think that's enough for today.

KATRINE. Pas de six?

CRAWLER. [Six?] That means six?

KATRINE. Oui. Six. *(holding up six fingers)*

CRAWLER. Wow, so close.

KATRINE. Oui.

CRAWLER. What's seven? *(holding up seven fingers with a little difficulty)*

KATRINE. Sept.

CRAWLER. *(confused)* Set? I already am.

KATRINE. *(annoyed)* Sept. Sept!

CRAWLER. Oh. Got it. Sept. That's it?

KATRINE. That's...it.

CRAWLER. OK. *(as he holds up the fingers they say them together)*

KATRINE. Huit, Neuf, Dix.

CRAWLER. Huit, Neuf, Dix.

KATRINE. Ça, c'est un à dix. [That's one to ten.]

CRAWLER. That's one to ten. I get it...c'est un à dix!

KATRINE. Oui!

CRAWLER. Alright, now what do I say to get to the bathroom?

KATRINE. Comment?

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. The bathroom. (*motioning*) The toilet.

KATRINE. (*understanding*) Ahhhhhh...Eewwww...

CRAWLER. What?!

KATRINE. Il vous faut utiliser la toilette? [You need to use the toilet?]

CRAWLER. Yes, that. 'oo-tiliser' la toilette.

KATRINE. Oui ! Toilette ! Vous apprenez tellement bien ! [Yes! Toilet! You are learning so well!]

CRAWLER. Yeah, seriously...I need the toilette. (*Blackout. The British radio announcer Matthew White overlaying*)

MATTHEW WHITE. And this just in from our wartime reporters that an invasion of Normandy that took place yesterday on June 6th, 1944 was successful in their attempts to breach the German beachhead. We continue to receive developments and will update our loyal listeners on the movements into the French countryside. And we will interrupt the program as to any details as they become available. In the meantime, this is Matthew White, continuing to follow on the efforts to end the German war machine.

SCENE 7

June 17th, 1944. Katrine is sitting on the bed. Crawler is lying in bed but feels noticeably better. In the distance are the sounds of battle, only it's closer than last time. They are talking and continuing to learn each other's language.

KATRINE. Aujourd'hui c'est mercredi, le sept juin, mille neuf cent quarante quatre. [Today is Wednesday, June Seventh, Nineteen Forty-Four.]

CRAWLER. (*trying to figure it out*) Au-joord-hue... uh... le... Sept... Joon...

KATRINE. (*slowly*) Aujourd'hui est mercredi, Le Sept Juin, mille neuf cent quarante quatre.

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. Uh... Mercury... Le... Sept... June... Dix... Neuf, mille neuf cent quarante quatre...

KATRINE. Vous faites bien. Vous apprenez. [You're doing well. You're learning.]

CRAWLER. I'm learning. I'm trying. Alright, your turn.

KATRINE. (*trying*) The... ch... aire... iz... un... deerrr... the... desk.

CRAWLER. The chair is under the desk.

KATRINE. The... chhhh... airre... iz... un-ddeerrr... the... deesskk?

CRAWLER. Close. You're getting there. You're smart. (*pointing to her and then at his head like he's smart as Katrine picks up an apple.*)

KATRINE. C'est une pomme. [This is an apple.]

CRAWLER. C'est ... une ... pomme. [This...is...an...apple.]

KATRINE. Pomme. [Apple.]

CRAWLER. Pomme. [Apple.]

KATRINE. Oui. C'est une pomme. [This is an apple.]

CRAWLER. Got it. In English...this is an apple.

KATRINE. This...is...an...apple.

CRAWLER. Apple.

KATRINE. Apple.

CRAWLER. Oui. Très bien. [Very good.]

KATRINE. (*takes out a pen*) C'est un stylo. [This is a pen.]

CRAWLER. C'est ... un ... stylo. [This...is...a...pen.]

KATRINE. Stylo. [Pen.]

CRAWLER. Stylo. [Pen.]

KATRINE. C'est quoi en anglais? [What is this in English?]

CRAWLER. This...is a pen.

KATRINE. A pen.

CRAWLER. Oui. A pen.

KATRINE. Ugh. Simple.

CRAWLER. Sample?

KATRINE. Oui. Simple. You know simple?

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. Sa...sample? Wow. This is too simple for you? I'm barely keeping up.

KATRINE. Comment? [What?]

CRAWLER. Never mind. (*looks at the radio*) Hey. What's that?

KATRINE. Radio.

CRAWLER. No, I mean in French.

KATRINE. C'est francais. Radio.

CRAWLER. Really?! That's just 'radio?'

KATRINE. Oui.

CRAWLER. Man. That's something. Hey...can we turn it on?

KATRINE. Oui. I mean...O...K... (*Katrine walks over to the radio and turns it on.*)

CRAWLER. (*to himself*) She is something.

KATRINE. Monsieur?

CRAWLER. Oh, I'm just impressed. I am amazed.

MATTHEW WHITE. ...it was tough, it was brutal...hearing about the invasion of France...yesterday many reports...from the American military's position on the beach in Normandy...hearing our boys fight and sadly watching many of them fall, crossing over the cliffs and hills that lead into the valleys and rivers... (*it continues on in the background*)

KATRINE. ...invasion of France...

CRAWLER. It happened?

KATRINE. Ils viennent. [They are coming...]

CRAWLER. What does that mean?

KATRINE. Americans...English...the invasion...they come nearby... (*pointing out the window*)

CRAWLER. That way? They're coming from that way?

KATRINE. L'ouest. [The West]

CRAWLER. That means the west, right? L'ouest? [West?]

KATRINE. Oui.

CRAWLER. My friends. My troop. Um...army...they are close.

KATRINE. Rescue...you.

CRAWLER. Oui. Rescue us.

KATRINE. No. Rescue...you.

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. You don't need rescuing?

KATRINE. I am...O.K.

CRAWLER. You're OK?

KATRINE. I am O.K.

CRAWLER. You're braver than me.

KATRINE. Brave?

CRAWLER. You...brave. Amazing.

KATRINE. La flatterie ne vous menera nulle part, monsieur.

[Flattery will get you nowhere, sir.]

CRAWLER. Didn't catch any of that.

KATRINE. (*mockingly*) Never mind.

CRAWLER. You are a fast learner.

KATRINE. Go. Sleep. Tired.

CRAWLER. Tomorrow?

KATRINE. Tomorrow.

CRAWLER. Hey.

KATRINE. Oui?

CRAWLER. Can you put music on the radio? Helps me sleep.

KATRINE. Oui, monseieur. (*Katrine changes the radio, gives him a smile, then exits. The radio plays quiet, somber music. Crawler smiles and turns to sleep as the lights fade.*)

SCENE 8

The next morning. Crawler is asleep in the bed. Katrine enters with a tray and some fruit and a cup of coffee. She sets it on the table and goes to check on Crawler. She sits on the bed and checks him. Crawler smells the coffee and wakes up. They're very close, almost face to face.

CRAWLER. Good morning.

KATRINE. Bonjour.

CRAWLER. Is that coffee?

KATRINE. Oui.

CRAWLER. That smells REALLY good.

BASEMENT

KATRINE. *(handing him the coffee cup)* I get provisions.

CRAWLER. Oh, you went out last night? You left?

KATRINE. Oui. It is a...how you say...gift.

CRAWLER. Oh man. This is so good. I don't deserve this. Thank you...um...Je vous remercie.

KATRINE. Very...good.

CRAWLER. Getting better. You're ahead of me though.

KATRINE. Radio helps.

CRAWLER. Hey, can we turn it back on? I want to hear more about the invasion.

KATRINE. Oui. And I need...check...blessures. Change... bandages.

CRAWLER. Sure, OK. *(Katrine goes and adjusts the knob to change the channel. Crawler gets out of bed and stands. He finishes the coffee and takes off his shirt.)*

MATTHEW WHITE. *(plays throughout in the background)*
...the Germans had strong defenses. They were better protected than the Allied troops on the beaches. But the Allied soldiers had greater numbers. Slowly they moved forward on one part of the beach, then another. The Allies continued to build up their forces in France. They brought nearly ninety thousand vehicles and six-hundred-thousand men into France within a morning. And they pushed ahead. Reports say that Hitler was furious. He screamed at his generals for not blocking the invasion. And he ordered his troops from nearby areas to join the fight and stop the Allied forces. But the Allies would not be stopped...

KATRINE. Vos blessures guérissent bien. [Your wounds are healing well.]

CRAWLER. Oui. Je me sens beaucoup mieux. [I feel much better.]

KATRINE. Oui! Not bad!

CRAWLER. Thank you...um... merci. Excellente professeur. [Thank you. Excellent teacher.]

KATRINE. Thank you. You are...O.K.

CRAWLER. As a teacher? You made my job easy... 'sam-pluh.'

BASEMENT

KATRINE. English...not so hard to learn.

CRAWLER. Yeah. The languages...they're pretty close.

KATRINE. Heard it in radio sometimes. No need to know it.
(There is a loud knocking from upstairs. German voices can be heard)

GERMAN COMMANDER. Erschließen Sie! Schnell!
Herausgekommen oder wir kommen herein! Auslieferung! [Open up! Quickly! Come out or we will come in! Surrender!]

KATRINE. Merde! Des crapauds! Tenez, restez calme! [No! Nazis! Look, stay quiet!] *(she runs over and turns off the radio)*

CRAWLER. What? What's going on...

KATRINE. *(putting her finger on his lips)* Silence, s'il vous plaît, monsieur ! [Quiet, please, sir!] *(She draws the .45 and hands it to him, then runs out of the door. Crawler tries to stop her, but she is too quick. She goes out of the door, closing it behind her and locking it. He gets out of bed and slowly, albeit with some pain, rushes over to the door. Crawler has the gun ready crouched by the dresser. He listens at the wall for noise. There is the sound of voices talking angrily. Katrine lets out a scream. Crawler tugs on the door trying to open it, trying to stay quiet. He keeps trying to listen)*

CRAWLER. *(whispering)* Come on, what's happening...Why is this locked? Katrine? Katrine? *(There are some sounds of struggle, then quiet. Crawler is near panicking as he waits nervously by the door. Finally, after a few beats, the door unlocks, and Crawler backs away. Katrine slowly enters the room hurt.)*

KATRINE. ...ils étaient ici. [...they were here.]

CRAWLER. What happened? *(she remains quiet)* Never mind. Come here. *(he goes to help her, but she shoves him away)*

KATRINE. Ne me touchez pas ! Je vais bien ! [Don't touch me! I will be fine!]

CRAWLER *(slowly)* Let...me...help...you. *(He grabs the glass of water and rag on the table. He pats the blood off of her mouth and wipes off some of her dirt. Katrine suddenly loses it and begins to cry and hugs him. Crawler feels a little bit of pain, but*

BASEMENT

he hugs her back. Katrine wraps her arms around him tightly then quickly shoves herself off of him. She looks angry as she stares at him and puts out her hand, motioning for the gun. Crawler reluctantly gives her the gun, then Katrine storms up the stairs, slamming the door behind her and locking it.) I'm sorry. (Crawler lowers his head as the lights fade.)

SCENE 9

The next morning. Crawler is doing exercises slowly. His body is turned away from the door. The door quietly opens and Katrine peeks in at him. She admires him a little from afar. She finally walks all the way in.

KATRINE. *(quietly)* Michael.

CRAWLER. *(stops and stands up)* Katrine, look...

KATRINE. I...am...sorry.

CRAWLER. No...uh...non. My fault. *(pointing to himself)*

KATRINE. You...are...mon ami. You are a...good man. *(A huge explosion hits in the distance. Crawler jumps a bit but Katrine doesn't budge.)*

CRAWLER. I guess you're used to that.

KATRINE. I...wait...for one to hit...here.

CRAWLER. Why were those Nazis here yesterday? What happened?

KATRINE. They...afraid. They question me about... invasion... they find your airplane. They know about you. They are... looking for you.

CRAWLER. They can come meet me. *(pretending to fight)* I ain't scared of them.

KATRINE. They is...comment est-ce qu'on dit? ...vieux [...how you say? ...vicious]

CRAWLER. Vicious. I heard...Nazis are racist. They hate everyone.

KATRINE. Racist.

BASEMENT

CRAWLER. You know what that means?

KATRINE. Racist is...the same...everywhere.

CRAWLER. Good point.

KATRINE. Hate Juifs [Jews]. Hate me. Hate you.

CRAWLER. I've heard. The men in my unit told stories. The people they find in the camps. The ones that escape... the marks... the wounds...

KATRINE. Blessures. No good. I see them on men and women.

CRAWLER. You've seen them? The men and women?

KATRINE. I...I go into town sometimes. I get food and provisions. I have to...cacher [hide]...some of the time. They have les prisonniers...of war...they take them to the camps. They move east...toward Germany. They take women, children, tout la famille...they take all...they are...they are...

CRAWLER. Evil.

KATRINE. Oui. Evil.

CRAWLER. That's why I joined up.

KATRINE. Fight evil?

CRAWLER. You actually make it sound more noble. No...I just...I wanted to help. I wanted to be a part of something. Where I'm from...I'm not exactly treated the same...and I thought maybe...maybe doing something--

KATRINE. ...noble—

CRAWLER. ...noble... would mean a lot to America... to... my... family and friends. In America... my people aren't exactly... loved. We are segregated...

KATRINE. Se...gregated...

CRAWLER. Um...split. My people live in Harlem. Other folks live in...nicer area.

KATRINE. What do you mean?

CRAWLER. Well, there's Harlem. And then there's...the rest. My folks stick to Harlem a lot. It's my home. Then when the war started, it was off to Alabama. A lot of folks hated us there. Calling us names, wanting us to quit. But none of us did. We're gonna be heroes. Then America, and those mean folks...they can't

BASEMENT

say nothing to us. They'll know we're heroes, cause we fought to save them. Save you. Save everyone.

KATRINE. You are...brave. You are...hero.

CRAWLER. Thank you. And next time they come here, *(pointing up then pointing to himself)*...tell me. I'll fight the captain himself. The commandant. One on one. Un de un.

KATRINE. You need...une arme. [A weapon.]

CRAWLER. Arm? A weapon? I got some weapons right here. *(holding and motioning his fists)*

KATRINE. *(looking at his fists)* Ils sont petits. [They are small.]

CRAWLER. Petits? Petits? Oh, you don't know me very well. *(getting into boxing, throwing jabs)* Hey, I was the best fighter in my unit. I was taking out grand hommes while vous toujours un bébé. *(He moves around the room ducking and moving, and trips on the leg of the bed, and nearly falls over. Katrine stifles a laugh.)*

KATRINE. Je suis sûr qu'il sera très inquiet quand il vous rencontre. [I'm sure he will be very worried when you meet him.] *(she leaves out the door laughing)*

CRAWLER. I heard that. Whatever the hell you just said. *(KATRINE leaves out the door still giggling a little as Crawler gets up slowly. Blackout as the radio announcer talks.)*

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