

FALLEN EAGLE

FRONT TITLES

BLACK SCREEN

THE PERCUSSIVE SOUND OF A CLOCK BEATS OUT A SLOW-MARCH. A RHYTHMIC TICK-TICK-TICKING MARKING TIME. STEADFAST AND RELIABLE. LIKE A HEARTBEAT.

PROLOGUE:

FADE IN:

INT. COSBY PUB - DAY

From the black screen a clock-face comes into focus - gleaming brass, tarnished with age. Its Roman numerals shine, reflecting years of care.

The CAMERA WITHDRAWS to reveal a grandfather clock. It stands tall and proud against a wall. It's pendulum slowly swings to the metronomic beat.

More SOUNDS filter in: the CLINK of glasses, spirited CHATTER, someone LAUGHS loudly. The CAMERA PULLS BACK further to show the inside of a typical country pub.

Patrons stand in comfortable groups by a highly polished bar-top enjoying lunchtime drinks and easy banter. Old-style pumps stand at attention, their metal trims glinting.

The CAMERA PANS across the crowded bar to a table where one man sits alone by an open window. This is decorated World War Two veteran Giles MERRIDAY, an old campaigner in his nineties. A half-consumed pint is perched on the table before him.

Like the grandfather clock he has nobly stood the test of time. His posture is dignified, his appearance tidy. As the CAMERA CLOSES-IN we see he is in a quiet, reflective mood. The environmental sounds begin to hush.

MERRIDAY (V.O.)

I've never been much of a drinker. But, I come here once a year and usually about this time. It's a pilgrimage I've made for over sixty years.

(looks down to his hand -  
he's holding something)

I've no idea why I chose this particular place, but it's as good as any I guess you'd say. I simply come here to remember. A kind of tribute if you will.

(beat)

MERRIDAY (V.O.) (CONT)

I'd been in Normandy a little over two weeks. He was soldier, just like me. And our paths crossed, not once but twice. And you know ...

(pauses as he looks into his hand again)

... despite all the carnage, death and destruction, the broken bodies and brutality of those few hellish days ... of all those chaps I knew then, all my mates, fellow squaddies. Of all the faces ...

Merriday looks down into his hand once more as the CAMERA CLOSES IN to peer over his shoulder. His hand is a fist, palm down -- but we know he is holding something.

MERRIDAY (V.O.)

... it's his face I see. The face of my enemy.

(beat)

So I come here each year and reflect on our two brief encounters.

(pause as he thinks)

I believe someone once said "The door of history turns on small hinges, and so do people's lives". Well, I was several miles south of Caen when such pivotal moments occurred in my own life. During that scorching summer of 1944.

(beat)

At a place which would eventually come to be known as the Falaise Pocket.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK toward the window, leaving Merriday with his thoughts.

CUT TO:

EXT. COSBY PUB - DAY

The pub sounds diminish as the AERIAL CAMERA pulls up and away from the pub and into silence, extending the view to include rural middle England at the height of summer.

Multicoloured fields drape the land like a patchwork quilt. Clusters of woodland are scattered here and there. Narrow country roads lace the landscape. The scene is very English, orderly and serene.

FADE OUT.