

GRFX: COLORIZATION
DRAFT (4/14/09)

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CALE

Keep calling then! Have all your people call all their phones in Berlin. You have an hour. Starting two minutes ago.

The CAMERA pulls back to reveal a swarm of activity as hotel employees set up banquet tables and staffers attempt to hang a giant banner reading:

Dreshers Publishing: Germany/America/China

CALE turns to the banner and goes on the offensive.

CALE (CONT'D)

(to the staffers)

No, no, no. I want it to read "A new era" or "A new century" or something.

He starts to leave, but turns back suddenly.

CALE (CONT'D)

And get rid of that German American shit! Just the company name.

4 EXT. ROOFTOP - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING - BERLIN - NIGHT 4

CHRISTIANE chugs a cigarette and rings someone from her cell. NILS paces back and forth, his laptop anchored against his hip, banging on the keys with one hand.

In the background, the giant tower at Alexanderplatz looms over them against the Berlin skyline.

NILS

It doesn't make any sense. Are you calling Tari?

CHRISTIANE

He never picks up when he's working.

CUT TO:

5 INT. TARI AND CHRISTIANE'S APARTMENT - BERLIN - NIGHT 5

A modern warfare video game erupts full screen! SPECIAL OPS AVATARS engage snipers in a gritty urban construct. The central AVATAR ducks for cover and slides on a pair of NIGHTVISION goggles. The screen goes infrared black and white as he emerges into full on combat.

Be pull back to reveal, TARI (27), an American of french and Lebanese descent, playing furiously. He speaks Denglish into his headset.

TARI
(to internet partner)
Do him! Scheiss the fucker!!!

Suddenly his cell rings. He doesn't flinch.

His AVATAR tosses a flash grenade over a wall and the screen goes white for a moment. He trots on to the next encounter.

TARI (CONT'D)
Oh, scheisse, dude. Das war dufte!
Total dufte! Who be the flott-guy,
little dude?

INTERNET PARTNER
(voxed thru headset)
Du bist, dude!

TARI
That's right, baby! Okay,
rumschnueffeln around the Ecke.
Pass auf! Look out! Shoot him..
There, there! Schiess ihn!

More gunfire. TARI's eyes are locked until -- a sniper whacks his AVATAR right in the forehead.

TARI (CONT'D)
Dick!!! Arschloch.

Beat. Tari is stunned. His phone continues to ring. He casually grabs it and waits for his character to respawn.

TARI (CONT'D)
What?

6

EXT. ROOFTOP - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING - BERLIN - NIGHT

6

CHRISTIANE jumps to attention.

CHRISTIANE
Hey! Tari, Hon, I'm trying to get home, but we're in trouble here. The Hong Kong Schnippi files won't upload and Atlanta's freaking out.

INTERCUT PHONE CONVO: SPLIT SCREEN

TARI manages to talk and play at the same time, his eyes darting back and forth on the game screen.

TARI

Their over-lay protocol is different. Limit your variables.

CHRISTIANE

I'm trying, but every time we upload the lettering as an 2473-c file we get a optional color palette we can't close out of.

TARI

Well, black reads as a color, you gotta send the ink renders back to yourself as a PDF and then --

CHRISTIANE

(looks to Nils for help)
No, that's not the problem.

NILS grabs the phone from her. TARI is still shooting soldiers and talking all at once.

NILS

Black's not the problem. I can see the lettering, panel titles -- everything -- just not the images. They're blank.

TARI

That's weird.
(beat)
You sure it's not some other strip saved under the wrong name?

NILS

No, it's the new Schnippi, I can see the picture captions, just not the picture.

TARI

These are the originals?

NILS

Yeah, from Atlanta. I downloaded them this morning.

TARI let's his fingers rest on the controller. The video game battle continues. His eyes locked on the screen, but he's in deep thought.

TARI
I have an idea. Head down to the
design suite.

NILS
Okay.

And NILS thrusts the phone back to CHRISTIANE and launches
down the stairs. She marches after him.

CHRISTIANE
(to Tari)
Arg! I'm coming home in ten
minutes no matter what.

TARI
Yes, ma'am.

CHRISTIANE
You better have your clothes off
when I get there.

7 INT. SCREENING ROOM - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING - ATLANTA - DAY 7

Several CHINESE BUSINESS MEN sit in the back of a darkened
room watching a large projection SCREEN. Playing is a short
B& W documentary, "SCHNIPPI, A DRESHER'S RETROSPECTIVE."

INSERT RETROSPECTIVE NOTES HERE

The CHINESE BUSINESS MEN whisper to one another.

Just outside the room, we see HOLLIS (38), a somewhat
reluctant VP watching behind heavy eyeglasses. KATIE (28), a
type "A" Dresher's staffer taps him on the shoulder.

KATIE
Cale's back from the reception
hall.

8 INT. LOBBY - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING - ATLANTA - DAY 8

We TRACK behind CALE's feet as he marches out of the elevator
and into the executive level.

Ahead at the front desk, a RECEPTIONIST and an attractive
young GERMAN INTERN play with the receptionist's BABY.

CALE
Baby. Gone.

GERMAN INTERN

Oh...

RECEPTIONIST

It's mine, I'm sorry.

They don't know what to do with the baby.

CALE

It or you.

(beat)

Katie?!

She appears behind him with a bundle of papers. HOLLIS stands with his hands in his pockets.

KATIE

Right here sir.

CALE

What time is it in Berlin?

KATIE

Almost nine.

CALE

That office frau --

KATIE

Christiane.

CALE

-- now has less than 30 minutes before she's unemployed.

KATIE

But --

CALE

(to Hollis)

Where -- the fuck -- are my panel galley's?

HOLLIS

It's possible that they already went home.

A tense pause.

CALE

Heads would roll.

HOLLIS
I'm just saying Cale, Berlin didn't
know about the deal, there's a
chance --

CALE
You're Goddamn right Berlin didn't
know about the deal! Unless
somebody told them!

The BABY starts to cry.

HOLLIS
No one told them.

CALE doesn't blink an eye but grabs the BABY, electrifying
everyone for a moment.

CALE
I've got six Chinese money men
waiting for the bottom fucking
line, I am not gonna blow this
today! Find a way!

He thrusts the BABY into KATIE's hands.

CALE (CONT'D)
(to Katie)
Get rid of that thing.
(to the German intern)
You. Let's go.

GERMAN INTERN
What?

CALE
You're Katie now.
(Beat)
Hollis, chop chop. 25 minutes.

CALE marches down the hall. The frightened GERMAN INTERN
tries to keep up.

KATIE
(after he's out of
earshot)
Chop chop?

TARI paces back and forth in front of the TV with the cell
pressed to his face. The video game continues behind him
with the occasional snap and pop of gunfire and explosions.

TARI
 You said the original renders were
 imported from the ATL?

10 INT. DESIGN SUITE - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING HOUSE - BERLIN - 10
NIGHT

NILS clicks furiously at the computer, talking with TARI on
 speaker phone. CHRISTIANE sits on his desk in her scarf and
 cap; ready to leave.

NILS
 Right. The Berlin set was created
 on the MAC CAD program, but it's
 easier for me to size the dialogue
 boxes on the PC program that
 Atlanta uses --

TARI
 -- Nils --

NILS
 -- but after uploading I started
 getting all the weird --

TARI
 Nils!

NILS
 Yeah?

INTERCUT PHONE CONVO

TARI
 Did you ever actually look at the
 Atlanta set on it's own?

NILS
 I couldn't get it open without the
 color key.

TARI
 Open the ATL file in regular
 photoshop pro.

CHRISTIANE circles around the computer and looks over NILS'
 shoulder.

CHRISTIANE
 I am so ready to go home.

TARI

On desktop, open color apps and
click palate system, options, color
range, and then disable.

NILS does. The computer screen whizzes through various
overly complex menus.

NILS

Done.

TARI eyes a an old Schnippi mag on his bookshelf.

TARI

Now, open.

CHRISTIANE

Open.

NILS clicks and several cells of "Schnippi in Hong Kong" open
-- in FULL COLOR!

NILS

What?

CHRISTIANE

Jesus christ.

TARI kicks the bookshelf.

TARI

I knew it.

NILS and CHRISTIANE stare amazed. TARI stands in thought and
--

TARI (CONT'D)

(into his headset)

Look man, you keep fighting, no
matter what.

(beat)

My nemesis just crossed the line.
I gotta do something.

The VIDEO GAME slows for a second. His INTERNET PARTNER'S
AVATAR almost looks back at him. Occasional gunfire in the
background.

INTERNET PARTNER

Good luck.

TARI

You too.

TARI tosses the cell phone onto the chair and removes his headset.

CHRISTIANE hears this and grabs the phone.

CHRISTIANE
Tari? Hey... Tari?

She looks to NILS for help, but he is transfixed on the colorized Schnippi.

CHRISTIANE (CONT'D)
Listen to me...

11 INT. TARI AND CHRISTIANE'S APARTMENT - BERLIN - NIGHT 11

We're CLOSE on the cell phone laying in the chair. In the background, we can see TARI throwing on what looks like a black bullet proof vest and a utility belt.

CHRISTIANE
(voxed through the phone)
Just stay there. We'll deal with this, don't go all superhero on me now, okay?
(beat)
Tari?

TARI opens the door into --

12 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - BERLIN - NIGHT 12

Music cue: Action/adventure tech.

TARI shuts the door behind him and turns around. He's impossibly covered in black tech gear just like his soldier AVATAR from the video game. He checks his watch: three minutes to nine. He quickly checks his surroundings and makes for the hallway door; loading his silencer pistol as he walks.

The hallway door opens and YOUNG COUPLE enters drunkenly from the bar. They take no notice of his tech suit or pistol.

YOUNG COUPLE
(as they pass)
Hey Tari, how's it going?

TARI
Not good. I got --

Suddenly -- several sniper shots rip through the glass of the hallway door! TARI takes cover like a pro.

TARI (CONT'D)
 (back to the couple)
 Get down!

But he realizes the YOUNG COUPLE is dead. Two head shots.

TARI (CONT'D)
 Bastards.

He slides his infra-red NIGHTVISION goggles over his face and peers out into the city. The snipers show up as glowing white behind windows in nearby buildings. The image is B&W NIGHTVISION; just like the game but more real. TARI readies his pistol and lunges into the street in a rain of gunfire!

13

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING HOUSE - ATLANTA 3-DAY

CALE sits at the end of a huge conference table with the nervous GERMAN INTERN at his side and the Atlanta skyline looming in the window behind him. Across the room sit the CHINESE BUSINESS MEN looking over a pile of contracts. CALE talks as someone driven by insane visions.

CALE
 And who cares about Spiegleman's Maus anymore? It's a comic history book. Marjane Satrapi is the only modern black and white that's selling worth a shit and Persepolis is a novelty title.

BUSINESS MAN #1
 Manga, I think you'll find, is still outselling all.

CALE
 That is my point, exactly. Manga's a brand. And what happens when the brand has a star?

BUSINESS MAN #2
 COLOR.

CALE
 I like the way you think. Double the sales. And most important...

BUSINESSMAN #2
 Action toys.

CALE

Exactly. Transmedia. Toys, shirts, TV, you name it. Schnippi is a brand -- and a star -- a certified, sales proven, breakout star in your country. Everyone who says it should remain pen and ink still wants the Mass in Latin and their fish cooked. Comprendo?

The CHINESE BUSINESSMEN don't get these references at all. THE GERMAN INTERN is completely lost.

CALE (CONT'D)

Of course not.

(beat)

Don't worry, we'll make you enough money for you to hire someone with a sense of humor.

CALE checks his watch. He's dying in here and needs those files.

14

INT. OFFICE - DRESHERS PUBLISHING - ATLANTA - DAY

14

Just outside the office, through paned glass, KATIE stands arguing with a TEMP in a colorized Schnippi MASCOT suit. He's got the head in his hands and looks rough as hell; like someone pulled off the street.

KATIE

No! Listen --

TEMP

-- I can't see through the eyeholes!

KATIE

All you have to do, is shake hands at the reception. Do your fucking job!

She pokes her head in the office. HOLLIS has the phone to his ear.

KATIE (CONT'D)

Hollis!

HOLLIS

(looking back at her)

IT'S RINGING!

15 INT. DESIGN SUITE - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING HOUSE - BERLIN 15

CHRISTIANE is standing at the door -- listening to all the office phones ring simultaneously.

 CHRISTIANE
 (turning to Nils)
 Send it. Just send the goddamn
 thing.

 NILS
 No. I'm not letting them ruin the
 strip. I'm not doing it.

 CHRISTIANE
 They'll fire you.

 NILS
 I don't care. I'll be an artist
 with my own studio; broke and
 lonely -- doing the shit I want to
 do and fucking this worthless shit
 parade.

16 EXT. BERLIN STREETS - NIGHT 16

TARI marches down a sniper in a nearby window. They both fire at each other repeatedly until -- WHAP! TARI gets nicked in the shoulder. This only makes him mad, which sends him into a precision frenzy, firing multiple bursts repeatedly into the window. The sniper drops to his death as --

More fire from behind! TARI starts running.

17 INT. DESIGN SUITE - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING HOUSE - BERLIN 17

NILS grabs a handful of his Black and White workprints off the desk and holds it up to Christiane.

 NILS
 For 60 years! Schnippi's art is pen
 and ink, Christiane. It's the last
 comic we publish that is actually
 art! *It has integrity.*

CHRISTIANE looks back toward the hallway. The phones RING louder and louder.

 CHRISTIANE
 We're not going to have this
 argument right, now.

NILS

I can't think of a better time to --

Suddenly -- sniper fire rips through the design suite windows sending glass through the room! CHRISTIANE ducks. NILS is transfixed. He looks down at the comic panels in his hand and sees --

18 EXT. BERLIN STREETS - NIGHT - ILLUSTRATION

18

Now in full pen & ink GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION.

1. TARI is facing down snipers on the ground. He knocks the gun out of one of their hands and slugs him the across the face.

2. Now several ASSAILANTS descend upon him.

3. TARI turns and sees DRESHER'S PUBLISHING only a few feet away!

4. He makes a break for it, but gets caught in headlock. They're choking him out!

5. He manages get his free hand around a GRENADE fastened to the assailant's suit.

6. In one swift move -- TARI headbutts him from behind and sends the ASSAILANT back into the others.

7. TARI looks down sees the GRENADE PIN in his hand.

8. Everyone realizes what is about to happen and --

9. A HUGE EXPLOSION rips through the streets send TARI right up to the front door of Dresher's Berlin.

10. Burnt and smoking he kicks open the door into --

19 INT. TECH BUNKER - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING HOUSE - BERLIN

19

Now live action, TARI steps into the room: A grainy NIGHTVISION black and white TECH BUNKER that vaguely resembles the design suite.

CHRISTIANE and NILS stand amazed, their clothes now tattered as if from a war torn country.

TARI

Stand back, honey. We're going to sabotage the file.

CHRISTIANE
We can't do that!

TARI
Cale's got people everywhere! This
is our last chance.

TARI steps past CHRISTIANE and over to the design computer --
now a huge computer TECH TERMINAL. He drops down and begins
rewiring the output.

CHRISTIANE
You're making it worse.

TARI
If I can just regain network
override, I might ... just
be able... to...

NILS is sweating; looking into the computer screen when
suddenly it fizzes and pops! An image appears onscreen of
Schnippi (fully animated) tied to chair. He's in color in a
B&W world.

NILS
Look!

CALE
(voxed through the data
feed)
Hello, Terry.

TARI stops working and looks to NILS.

TARI
Tari.

Onscreen: CALE appears behind Schnippi.

CALE
Whatever. You might find that not
only did I install overrides to
the fail-safe, but a reroute on the
disable code which essentially
makes it impossible to reprogram
AND... extremely deadly.

The computer suddenly starts beeping and flashing with a red
detonation light. CALE laughs a devilish laugh and a digital
clock appears onscreen flashing: 10, 9, 8 ...

TARI looks at the remaining two wires.

TARI
 Fuck! Nils! We're gonna have to
 cut the signal entirely!
 Red or the blue?!

NILS
 I don't know.

But NILS is covered in sweat; staring at the countdown. He's
 in the shit and can't handle it. TARI jumps up and slaps him
 across the face.

TARI
 Get it together man! Red or blue?!

NILS
 Oh god!

The clock is about to his zero when --

We hear a very simple beeping sound and the room becomes --

20 INT. DESIGN SUITE - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING HOUSE - BERLIN 20

Completely back to normal. No longer sci fi black and white.
 Quiet. CHRISTIANE wheels around from the computer screen.
 TARI has NILS by the shirt.

ON THE COMPUTER: a send notice executes.

TARI
 What happened?

CHRISTIANE
 I just went ahead and sent it.

She stands up and grabs her bag and her scarf, ready to go
 home. As though it's no big deal.

21 INT. LOBBY - DRESHER'S PUBLISHING - ATLANTA 21

HOLLIS runs full speed. A stack of papers in his hand.

22 EXT. ATLANTA STREETS - DAY 22

CALE and the GERMAN INTERN stand curb-side, funneling a line
 CHINESE BUSINESS MEN into a limo. He nods and laughs as they
 enter. Behind them the MASCOT now tries to get in, but slams
 his head on the door frame; blind as a bat.

CALE buries his annoyance, moves to step in when --

HOLLIS emerges with the panel galleys. He hands them off to CALE. They say nothing.

CALE takes the hand of the GERMAN INTERN and climbs into the limo.

HOLLIS watches as the car pulls away, the Schnippi MASCOT looking out the back window. They disappear into a colorful downtown filled with billboards of Coca Cola and Cartoon Network.

23

EXT. BERLIN STREETS - NIGHT

23

It's a quiet chilly evening. CHRISTIANE and TARI walk side by side through the Gendarmarket against a backdrop of historic Berlin. NILS strolls along several feet behind them, deep in thought.

TARI

It just doesn't make any sense.

CHRISTIANE

Color happens. They have to turn a profit.

TARI

I just feel like this is the end of everything.

CHRISTIANE

It's not the end of everything.
(she stops him)
Keep fighting the good fight. We need you.

TARI

I'm sticking to my guns.

CHRISTIANE

I know you are.

She shivers and starts walking ahead.

CHRISTIANE (CONT'D)

(turning back)
Come home with me.

TARI smiles. He turns and nods to NILS, before making his way after CHRISTIANE.

NILS nods back, his phone in his hand. He dials someone.

24

EXT. MONTANA FIELD - NOON

24

A beautiful expanse of the country. A man sits in silhouette on a motorcycle, sketching a picture of an Indian on a horse. This is PAUL DRESHER (29) heir to the Dresher's empire.

He answers his cell.

PAUL

Hello?

NILS

We have a problem, Paul. I think
your company's in serious trouble.

Fade to BLACK.