

BLACK CAP #4 script – “The Cut”
By Robert Morales

Page 1:

1) INT. U.S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS (NYC)--DAY:

FROM BEHIND Faith Bradley, whose body language says “I’m not going anywhere until I get my answers!”; and she’s dressed in the same suit she wore on her wedding day in **Issue #1**--smart church hat and pocketbook:

A WHITE FEMALE SECRETARY is getting up from behind her desk, looking at Faith with some anxiety, and saying--

SECRETARY: HOLD ON, I’LL GET YOU A MEETING WITH THE MAJOR **RIGHT AWAY**--

CAPTION: U.S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK CITY. JULY, 1942.

2) INT. MAJOR’S OFFICE:

Standard office furnishing, American flag--roomy with a window looking out onto other Manhattan office buildings.

A pudgy career bureaucrat who hasn’t seen action since basic training, THE MAJOR is in his 30’s and has a drastically receding hairline. He sits behind his uncluttered desk, speaking with open hostility to the bristling Faith seated across from him.

Standing in the b.g., holding a sheaf of papers, is CORPORAL EDWIN HIMES, a black man in his mid-20’s, looking like he’s stumbled into a battle between a bear and a tigress.

MAJOR: LADY, DO I HAVE TO SPELL IT OUT TO YOU IN **BLACK AND WHITE?** TO MAKE ALLEGATIONS LIKE THESE WHEN YOUR HUSBAND WAS **CLEARLY BURNED BEYOND RECOGNITION** ...!

FAITH: SO, WHAT YOU’RE **SAYING**...

3) MAJOR’S POV--CLOSE ON Faith:

It’s a cold look of fury that Faith gives the man.

FAITH: ... IS THAT **THE ARMY** CAN TELL ME WHAT **CHARRED MY HUSBAND** INTO A SKINNY, DEAD **WHITE MAN?**

Page 2:

TOP HALF OF PAGE:

1) EXT. U.S. ARMY HEADQUARTERS (NYC)--DAY:

Faith is *fuming* as she walks toward us in **panel-right f.g.**, her pocketbook clamped under one arm.

The Army HQ is one of Manhattan's armories, concrete steps leading up to the front entrance. In the **b.g.**, we see Corporal Himes (now wearing an Army cap) exiting at the top of the steps, calling after Faith.

The street is lined with jeeps and trucks; populated by soldiers and civilians.

HIMES: **MISS!** PLEASE WAIT!

REMAINDER OF PAGE:

2) Faith is irritably turned toward Himes as he approaches with his hands open in a placating gesture.

FAITH: WHAT, THEY SEND YOU DOWN HERE TO EXPLAIN THINGS TO ME IN **COLOR?**

HIMES: MISS--

3) Faith regards Himes coolly, while he looks relieved she's listening to him at all.

FAITH: **MRS.**

HIMES: **MA'AM.**

4) FAITH'S POV:

Himes holds his Army cap in his hands, unsure how to start.

HIMES: MRS. BRADLEY, I'M CORPORAL EDDIE HIMES.

Page 3:

1) CLOSE ON Faith, who wears a contemptuous smile. Is the guy hitting on her?

FAITH: YES?

2) TWO SHOT:

Faith gives Himes her full attention.

HIMES: THIS ISN'T SOMETHING PEOPLE **TALK** ABOUT--EVEN **IN** THE ARMY, YOU UNDERSTAND? BUT YOU STRIKE ME AS A **STRONG** WOMAN...

FAITH: GO ON...

3) CLOSE ON Himes, his face solemn.

HIMES: WHEN THERE'S AN **EXPLOSION**, IT'S MOSTLY **IMPOSSIBLE** TO IDENTIFY THE ... REMAINS OF THE FALLEN, YOU SEE.

4) CLOSE ON Faith, listening intently to an OFF-PANEL BALLOON:

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: SO THE ARMY COUNTS ALL OF THE MEN AS **ONE**. AND THEY TRY TO GIVE **ENOUGH** TO EACH FAMILY, SO THEY CAN PUT **THEIR** MAN TO REST.

5) TWO SHOT:

Himes looks sympathetically at Faith, her face now downcast.

HIMES: YOU UNDERSTAND...?

FAITH: NO... I HEAR YOU.

6) CLOSE ON Faith, a **glint** in her downcast eyes.

FAITH: I WON'T EVER GET ISAIAH BACK.

Pages 4 and 5:

PANORAMIC SPREAD:

EXT. THE BLACK FOREST—NIGHT:

It's a Steranko-style FULL SHOT, crammed with action.

In the surrounding b.g., the forest is thick with darkness and ancient tree trunks.

The scene is **harshly lighted** by the FIRING OF GUN MUZZLES.

In the f.g., we see the **super-sized** Sgt. Evans, Dave Plumb, Isaiah Bradley, Maurice Canfield and their FELLOW BLACK DOGFACES--*except* for Damon Larsen (we'll see him soon)--all dressed head-to-toe in tight **black** David Niven-*Guns of Navarone* military garb w/ knit caps.

The unit is in mid-battle with a NAZI MILITARY CONVOY—a few JEEPS and a half-dozen SUPPLY TRUCKS, interrupted for our grisly entertainment. There are Nazi BODIES strewn about. Exiting their truck cabs, Nazis fire at the dogfaces. We see TWO DEAD NAZI OFFICERS, still bleeding in their jeep with their DRIVER. They all have MACHINE GUNS and LUGERS.

There are *dead* black dogfaces.

From **spread left b.g.**, Isaiah is running toward a Nazi facing us with his machine gun, who's practically strafing Dave Plumb *and* a Nazi he's hoisted by the neck, in the **spread left f.g.**--both men erupting with blood from the gunfire; Dave's face contorted with pain.

In the **middle** of the **spread**, impossibly high above the throng in mid-John Woo leap, Maurice is firing his machine gun at screaming Nazi targets, some of them ineptly firing back.

In **spread right f.g.**, Evans faces THREE NAZI SOLDIERS (wearing HELMETS; it's important). He has a revolver; they have machine guns pointed at him and they look pissed.

CAPTION: AT THAT VERY MOMENT, IN GERMANY'S **BLACK FOREST**--

ISAIAH: DAVE!

PLUMB: **ARGGGH!**

Page 6:

1) FROM BEHIND Evans, his arm and gun **blurred into three phantom positions** as he shoots the soldier on the left in the face, gives the soldier in the middle a glancing shot to the helmet, and again delivers a headshot to the soldier on the right. From the middle soldier's helmet comes a SOUND FX:

SOUND FX: **KLING!**

2) Isaiah slams into the back of the soldier who'd shot Plumb, his machine gun now firing into the air.

SOLDIER: **OOF!**

3) FROM BEHIND flailing Nazi soldiers: they're being machine-gunned by a crouching Maurice in the b.g.

DYING NAZI: **AFRIKANER?!!**

4) Evans approaches the soldier whose helmet he'd shot; the soldier now removing said helmet, oblivious of the Sarge, his own machine gun at his feet and his dead Nazi buddies nearby.

SOLDIER: ACH!

Page 7:

1) CLOSE ON Isaiah throttling Plumb's killer. Isaiah's teary with anger, his teeth are bare. For his part, the soldier's tongue protrudes from his gaping mouth.

SOLDIER: HHHHHHHHH--!

2) CLOSE ON Evan's Nazi, clutching his ears, eyes clenched shut.

SOLDIER: AH! ACH!

3) PULLING BACK on **panel 2**, enough to show Evans's HANDS are now reached into the panel, clamped atop the Nazi's. The Nazi's eyes stare distantly as Evans crushes his skull.

There's an OFF-PANEL BALLOON:

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: OH, FOR PETE'S SAKE!

SKULL SOUND FX: KRAAAAK!

4) Nazi soldiers are turning to see Maurice mow them down. We get the impression he's leapt over them to shoot at their backs.

Page 8:

1) A HELMETLESS NAZI SOLDIER, his face **visibly bruised**, runs toward **panel left**, past a JEEP. His holster is empty; there's a "POTATO-MASHER" HAND GRENADE in his belt.

A parachute is draped over the jeep's 4 DEAD PASSENGERS, seated upright but clearly dead: someone's stabbed them *through* the 'chute before they could respond; we see multiple **bloody slashes**.

From **panel right** comes an OFF-PANEL BALLOON:

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: HEY NOW! WHERE YOU GOIN'?

2) FROM BEHIND the soldier as he stumbles forward, away from us as an OFF-PANEL BALLOON looms over him.

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: WE GOT US SOME UNFINISHED FUN, HUH?

3) SOLDIER'S POV:

LOOKING UP at the huge, leering Damon Larsen, dark clothes slick with blood.

LARSEN: YOU MY FIRST WHITE MAN!

4) Larsen cheerily picks up the struggling soldier, his bruised face pleading.

SOLDIER: NEIN! GENUG!

LARSEN: I KILLED ME A LOTTA MEN AND WOMEN--

LARSEN: --KILLED ME SOME KIDS TOO.

Page 9:

1) CLOSE SHOT:

Larsen slyly looks into the soldier's terrified, bruised face.

LARSEN: IT'S BEST TO TAKE YOUR TIME.

2) CLOSE ON Larsen, laughing. The soldier's hand is in the panel, holding a stick with which he's futilely tried to brain Larsen.

LARSEN: YEAH! FIGHT ME!

3) LARSEN'S POV:

Staring into the soldier's face, we see a look of surprise.

4) Holding aloft the now-resigned soldier, Larsen looks down at his feet, which are **out of panel**--

5) LARSEN'S POV:

The business end of the potato-masher, resting near his combat boots on the dirt ground.

Page 10:

1) An EXPLOSION, obliterating the silhouettes of Larsen and the soldier.

SOUND FX: **KA-BOOM**

2) Maurice is peering into the back of one of the supply trucks, while Evans is staring at the **off-panel** explosion.

MAURICE: NO! SARGE, LOOK AT THIS--

3) MAURICE'S POV:

The back of the supply truck, filled with BOX upon BOX of medical supplies, EACH STAMPED with the words **KOCH PHARMAZEUTIK**. Addressing the sight is an OFF-PANEL BALLOON:

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: IT'S NOT GUNS, IT'S **MEDICAL SUPPLIES**--

Page 11:

1) Stricken, Maurice is rearing from the back of the supply truck. Evans is reaching his hand out to him, as Isaiah joins them.

MAURICE: MY GOD, WHAT ARE WE **DOING**, SARGE?

ISAIAH: LOOKS LIKE WE THE ONLY ONES **LEFT**.

2) Maurice is agitated and Evans has his hands on Maurice's shoulders, trying to calm him.

MAURICE: HEAR THAT? ALL OUR GUYS ARE **DEAD**—BECAUSE WE DIDN'T WANT THE ENEMY TO GET THEIR **BANDAGES!**

MAURICE: WHAT KIND OF **SOLDIERING** KEEPS THE WOUNDED FROM BEING **HUMAN BEINGS?**

EVANS: MAURICE--! LISTEN TO ME!

3) MAURICE'S POV:

Evans' intent face, with a concerned Isaiah over his shoulder.

EVANS: WE DID WHAT WE HAD TO.

EVANS: WE'LL DO A LOT MORE THAN THIS IF WE WANT TO SEE HOME.

Page 12:

1) INSET:

CLOSE ON Isaiah, intently reading a BATTERED COPY of Timely Comics' **CAPTAIN AMERICA #1**. Clearly, it's been vertically folded again and again to fit in a back pocket. (AXEL: Kyle could use a **high-res scan** here from Marvel's art/production dept; he'd be able to mess with it, then simply paste it into the scene.)

There's an OFF-PANEL BALLOON:

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: ISAIAH, WHAT ARE YOU READING THAT NONSENSE FOR?

2) LARGE PANEL:

EXT. CASTLE (PORTUGAL)—DUSK:

PULLED BACK from **panel 1**, we see Isaiah and Evans are in civilian workman's clothes.

It's an achingly beautiful **Maxfield Parrish sunset**. Looking up from the comic at Evans, Isaiah sits atop a bastion wall belonging to the ruins of a Moorish castle with steep sprawling steps, overlooking the steep rough-and-tumble Portugal countryside.

Evans is angled away from us, fists on his hips in a bemused stance, every bit the Sarge.

ISAIAH: I LIKE FUNNY BOOKS, BE MAKING ME MY OWN IF I COULD DRAW A LICK.

ISAIAH: SO I TRADED SOME CHOCOLATE FOR THIS ONE WITH ONE OF THOSE RED BALL EXPRESS GREASEMONKEYS BEFORE WE LEFT SPAIN... BUT, SARGE--?

EVANS: WHAT'S THAT?

CAPTION: SINTRA, PORTUGAL. SEPTEMBER 1942.

3) CLOSE ON Isaiah, his face scrunched up as he tries to articulate his thoughts.

ISAIAH: DON'T IT MAKE YOU CURIOUS? I MEAN, THIS CAME OUT MORE'N A YEAR AGO, BUT YOU PRETTY MUCH GOT OUR WHOLE STORY—

ISAIAH: IT HAS DOC REINSTEIN, THE DRUG WE GOT, AND THIS STEVE ROGERS FELLA'S THE BRASS IS SO HIGH ON...

4) TWO SHOT FROM BEHIND Isaiah, who's holding the comic up to a rueful Evans.

ISAIAH: BUT THIS IS HAPPENING NOW, RIGHT? NOT LAST YEAR, SO...?

EVANS: SON, LET ME PUT TO YOU LIKE THIS—

Page 13:

1) ISAIAH'S POV:

Evans has raised his hands expansively, the way one does when explaining something obvious to a beloved child—

EVANS: COMIC BOOKS AREN'T REAL.

2) A sheepish Isaiah listens to Evans, driving home the point.

EVANS: THIS IS A WAR. AND IN A WAR, THE ARMY DECIDES EVERYTHING IS GOVERNMENT ISSUE.

EVANS: THAT MEANS MAYBE "REINSTEIN" ISN'T THE DOC'S NAME. MAYBE THE ARMY FOUND CAUSE TO COMMANDEER THAT BOOK OF YOURS, WHO CAN SAY.

EVANS: I SURE KNOW ONE THING—

3) LARGE PANEL:

LOOKING DOWN ON Isaiah and Evans as Maurice—similarly dressed—approaches them. On **panel right**, we see the tubby Lt. Merritt a few minutes away from them as he huffs up the stone steps.

EVANS: IF THE ARMY DETERMINES THEY NEED A STEVE ROGERS, THEY'RE GOING TO MOVE HEAVEN AND HELL TO GET ONE, THE POOR BASTARD.

MAURICE: DON'T GIVE THE MAN TOO MUCH SYMPATHY, SARGE.

Page 14:

1) Isaiah and Evans listen to the indignant Maurice.

MAURICE: THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A CLANDESTINE RENDEVOUS? YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE THE WELCOME WAGON THEY'RE PUTTING OUT FOR THIS FELLOW, ROGERS.

2) ISAIAH & EVANS' POV:

An angry Maurice with a sputtering Merritt trotting up behind him.

MAURICE: SOMEONE WE'VE ONLY SEEN IN THE NEWSPAPERS WHILE WE TAKE ALL THE RISKS, COMING OUT OF THE WOODWORK TO LEAD OUR MISSION...

MERRITT: YOU SHUT YOUR TRAP, CANFIELD!

3) Heatedly, Merritt addresses the cool Evans, while a nervous Isaiah and defiant Maurice look on.

MERRITT: BETTER CONTROL YOUR MEN, EVANS!

EVANS: WHAT'D HE DO, LIEUTENANT?

4) CLOSE ON Merritt.

MERRITT: HE HAS NO RESPECT FOR WHAT HQ DEEMS BEST FOR THE WAR EFFORT BACK HOME! HE'S CRACKING WISE WHILE WE'RE SETTING UP—

5) Maurice interrupts Merritt, but speaks to Evans as the open-mouthed Isaiah looks on.

MAURICE: I SAW HIS COSTUME, SARGE—

MAURICE: WE'LL LOOK LIKE MINSTRELS LED BY A CONFEDERATE CIRCUS CLOWN INTO BATTLE--!

6) Merritt blows up at the sneering Maurice.

MERRITT: YOUR KIND COULD NEVER BE GOOD ENOUGH TO WEAR THAT SACRED UNIFORM! WE SHOULDN'T EVEN HAVE YOU IN THIS MAN'S ARMY!

MAURICE: WELL, WE'RE HERE, LIEUTENANT, WHAT'RE YOU GOING TO ABOUT IT?

Page 15:

1) MERRITT'S POV:

A contemptuous Maurice leaning quietly toward us, an upset Evans visible over his right shoulder.

MAURICE: REALLY, MERRITT, WHAT ELSE COULD YOU DO?

EVANS: MAURICE!

2) CLOSE ON Merritt, freaked but feisty.

MERRITT: YOU, YOU THINK YOU'RE AS GOOD AS ME?! YOU'RE LIVING ON FOOL'S GOLD, BOY, NO MATTER HOW MUCH OF YOUR DEAD PAPPY'S MONEY YOU GOT WAITING—

3) CLOSE ON Maurice, stunned.

From panel right, where Evans had been, there's an OFF-PANEL BALLOON:

MAURICE: MY FATHER?

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: MAURICE...

4) CLOSE ON Merritt, oiled by satisfaction.

MERRITT: COULDN'T HANDLE LOSING HIS WHELP IN THE WAR, SO HE SHOT YOUR MAMMY TO DEATH THEN HIMSELF!

5) LARGE KIRBYESQUE PANEL:

A reeling Merritt is propelled toward us in the f.g. as we see a wide-eyed, screaming Maurice in the b.g., frozen in mid-roundhouse, as Evans and Isaiah move to grab him.

MAURICE: **ARGHHH!**

Page 16:

1) TIGHT SHOT:

Maurice is flipped out: Isaiah's trying to get him in a bear hug from behind, like one of the guys that beat up Maurice in **Issue #2**; Evans is grappling with Maurice's left arm.

EVANS: MAURICE, STOP!

2) Maurice has flipped Isaiah toward the bastion wall, his left wrist held by Evans.

3) FROM BEHIND Evans as he yanks a stumbling Maurice by his left wrist toward the wall—

4) FROM ABOVE AND BEHIND THEM, so we see a distant Isaiah plummeting toward the rocky ground. Evans is slamming his left fist into Maurice's head, still holding him by the wrist.

EVANS: YOU CRAZY MANIAC!

5) Evans again punches Maurice, who has his back angled toward us and is grabbing the edge of the bastion wall for support with his free right hand.

Page 17:

1) Maurice has broken off a hefty chunk of wall and has slammed it into Evan's face, stunning him.

EVANS: **HUMPH!**

2) Maurice is on top on the prone Evans now, lifting the arm with the stone.

3) CLOSE ON Maurice, crazed as he brings his arm down out of frame.

4) PULL BACK to show an angry Maurice looking up at us, a SHADOW CAST OVER HIM.

5) FROM BEHIND Maurice, crouched over Evans' body, as he regards a battered, crookedly erect Merritt, who has his pistol trained on him and looks at him blankly.

Page 18:

1) INT. HOSPITAL WARD:

It's dark, not a prefabricated Army building, but a retrofitted field location. Maybe it's even in a castle.

We see Merritt, heavily bandaged around his head with his upper torso in a cast, lying unconscious in a hospital bed, an IV dripping from a glass bottle into his arm.

We're not exactly near him, but a slight distance off, as if we're considering him from another patient's bedside—which we are.

There's an OFF-PANEL BALLOON:

OFF-PANEL BALLOON: OUR NEW PRIVATE GOT OFF EASY WITH A BROKEN COLLORBONE, DON'T YOU THINK?

2) A POV SHOT, looking up at a standing Colonel Walker Price, who looks back coolly.

PRICE: A REAL COCK-UP, AS THEY SAY. TWO OF YOU DEAD WITH NO EXPLANATION WHY AND OUR EXPECTED GUEST DELAYED BY A MONSOON IN THE PACIFIC THEATER, AND YET THE CLOCK IS STILL TICKING.

3) ANOTHER POV SHOT, Price still talking, but really thinking out loud.

PRICE: OBVIOUSLY, THIS IS NOW A CERTAIN SUICIDE MISSION FOR YOU, SO IT STRIPS THE OBJECTIVE DOWN TO ITS ESSENTIALS.

4) YET ANOTHER POV SHOT, as Prices arches an eyebrow at us, wickedly.

PRICE: SOLDIER, AT THIS MOMENT YOU MAY NOT THINK THERE'S MUCH DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE GERMANS AND US, BUT IF WE WIN THE WAR, YOUR FAMILY WILL LIVE.

PRICE: AM I MAKING MYSELF UNDERSTOOD?

5) LARGE PANEL—PRICE'S POV:

Isaiah sits up in his hospital bed. He's heavily bruised and he looks at us with raw, bloodshot eyes.

Floating in the air around him are the faces of those he's lost: Evans grinning to his left, Faith and their daughter over his shoulder, and a smiling Maurice to his right; a heart-wrenching tableau.

ISAIAH: NO, I HEAR YOU.

Page 19:

1) INT. SITUATION ROOM:

Price is looking at his wristwatch, standing over a large dining table covered with blueprints and maps, grease pencils, steaming coffee mugs, half-filled glasses and liquor bottles—what have you. Tully and Dr Reinstein stand with him, listening as he speaks. They're captured in a **nimbus of light**.

PRICE: THEY SHOULD BE APPROACHING FROM THE NORTH SEA RIGHT ABOUT NOW...

TULLY: HOW DO YOU RATE OUR CHANCES, PRICE?

2) Price looks like he's musing over what bathroom tile to buy, his face slightly scrunched, as Tully and Reinstein look on.

PRICE: TULLY, THEY'RE NOT GREAT. **CAP** AND THE THREE OF THEM COULD'VE ROOKED **THE ENTIRE CAMP**. BRADLEY'S OBJECTIVE NOW IS TO HIT THE MAIN FACILITY BEFORE HE GETS **TAKEN OUT**.

PRICE: THE AUTOPSIES TELL YOU ANYTHING, REINSTEIN?

3) Reinstein seems mildly puzzled as Price and Tully listen.

REINSTEIN: SUBJECTS A-27 AND A-32 HAD **BOTH** HIGHLY EXAGGERATED THYROID GLANDS, BUT **SUCH FEROCIOUS BEHAVIOUR** CAN BE EXPLAINED ONLY BY UNFORSEEN **INHERENT** NATIVE FLAWS.

4) Now Price is back to his sardonic form as he addresses the two men, but he's looking at someone approach from **off-panel**.

PRICE: WELL, LET'S HOPE **BRADLEY** CAN COVER OUR BUTTS AS WELL AS **YOU** JUST DID, DOCTOR.

PRICE: WHAT IS IT, CORPORAL?

5) Corporal Himes, who we last saw consoling Faith on page 3, is whispering to Price, who's alarmed--as are Tully and Reinstein.

PRICE: **WHAT?!!**

PRICE: WE CAN'T **ABORT**, THEY'RE IN **RADIO SILENCE**.

6) Himes stands awaiting further orders, as Price, Tully and Reinstein exchange sober looks.

PRICE: FELLAS, WE'VE ESCALATED TO A NEW LEVEL OF **DENIALBILTY...**

Page 20:

FULL PAGE SPLASH:

EXT. SKY—NIGHT:

FULL SHOT LOOKING UP at a determined Isaiah, parachuting toward us...and, *holy shit*, he's wearing goggles and dressed in a CAPTAIN AMERICA OUTFIT, a METAL CRESCENT SHIELD over his right arm—on which he's drawn a **VERY CRUDE "DOUBLE V" SYMBOL, W/ AMERICAN EAGLE** and the words **VICTORY – AT HOME + ABROAD**.

In the b.g., we see the dark underbelly of a small military aircraft, departing in the moonless sky.

Page 21:

1) EXT. FIELD—NIGHT:

Dense forest in the b.g., we see Isaiah furling in his billowing parachute.

2) There's a mound of a freshly turned earth by Isaiah's feet—he's buried the 'chute. The forest behind him, he stands looking past us with shield in hand.

3) The forest behind him, Isaiah grimly runs toward us.

Page 22:

FULL PAGE SPLASH:

REVERSE ANGLE from preceding page:

Isaiah's running all out to cross a desolate field of, say, a few miles—toward a CONCENTRATION CAMP, an industrial city looming in the b.g. against the moonless sky, looking like a huge dark beast **backlit** by unseen activity.

CAPTION: SCHWARZEBITTE, GERMANY. OCTOBER, 1942

CAPTION: TO BE CONTINUED.