

## JERRYBAG

On the final day of Jersey's occupation during World War II, a local woman learns that no matter what side you're on, everyone has a sense of duty. Whether it's to your country, your neighbour, or the German soldier you love - it takes strength to do what's right.

BLACK.

SUPER: JERSEY, CHANNEL ISLANDS... 8 MAY 1945.... ONE DAY  
BEFORE LIBERATION...

EXT. SMALL TERRACED HOUSE - DAY.

A magnolia wall. Aggressively and sloppily scrawled across it in red paint is the word 'JERRYBAG'.

Soapy water splashes onto the writing on the wall. It trickles down, obscuring the letters before a hand slams a brush to it. MILLIE(20s) scrubs at it furiously. It's a hot day and beads of sweat form on her forehead.

She scrubs vigorously, using two hands to push the brush even harder, but the paint doesn't seem to be coming off easily. From over the small fence, Millie's neighbour SUZETTE(40s) watches. Smoking a cigarette, she looks disinterested and lacking in sympathy. As Millie steps back from scrubbing to catch her breath she sees Suzette watching.

MILLIE

I ought to try some bleach  
perhaps...

Suzette takes a long drag of her cigarette and doesn't answer. She holds an uncaring look on her face.

Cutting into the awkward silence, voices rumble from down the road. Hearing this, they both look across to see two German soldiers HEINRICH(20s) and STEFAN(20s) walking down the country lane. They aren't marching, more just wandering - they don't seem to show much regimental discipline. In fact, they are drunk. Noticing the women, STEFAN(20s) looks up from joking around with his friend. The ladies stare back blankly. Stefan spies the vandalised wall. He turns to his friend.

STEFAN

(in German)

What does this mean?

Heinrich just shrugs, neither of them look like they're taking their job too seriously at all. The two soldiers laugh and continue down the road, but Stefan stops in his tracks and stumbles around again. He thinks deeply and drunkenly on how to speak English, with theatrical drunken decorum.

STEFAN (CONT'D)

(German accent/broken  
English)

Uhh... Goodbye ladies...

He waits for a response, but the two women just stare back blankly - it's clear these soldiers hold no authority. Stefan becomes aggravated. His hand rests on his holstered pistol.

STEFAN (CONT'D)  
 (in German)  
 I'm trying to be gracious!

Heinrich forward as if to calm him, ready to intervene as it's clear he's drunk and after a fight. The second soldier points at Millie with no regard that she's actually present.

HEINRICH  
 (in German)  
 This is Dietrich's girl.

Stefan looks at the writing again and nods in understanding.

STEFAN  
 (in German)  
 Ah... Yes! Well, it is he who  
 should be ashamed.

He shoots Millie a glare before the two stumble off. Suzette takes another drag of her cigarette, watching them go.

SUZETTE  
 Be glad to see the back of them.  
 (with a hint of spite)  
 Won't you?

She stubs out her cigarette and flicks it into Millie's garden - more out of carelessness than malice.

SUZETTE (CONT'D)  
 Any day now.

She goes back into her house. After a moment Millie gets back to the scrubbing - a little angrier this time.

EXT. RURAL COUNTRY LANE - NIGHT.

A few hours have passed. It's early evening and Millie walks down the lane with a box of rations in her arms. As the sun sets, a red glow illuminates the few cottages she passes.

She walks by a FARMER(50s) leaning against a wall reading the local newspaper. As she passes she scans the headline: 'ALLIES VICTORIOUS IN EUROPE!'. He looks up at her. As if in response to the headline Millie smiles at him, but he just watches her blankly. It's uncomfortable. Continuing down the lane, she starts to feel a little on-edge. She looks over her shoulder, but there's nobody there. She carries on walking.

Unable to shake the feeling that she's being followed, Millie turns again, stopping to look back down the path, listening out for any sound of movement. She hears cracking tree branches and leaves rustling from the overgrown borders of the lane. She focuses on a nearby bush, convinced there's someone there.

MILLIE  
Who's there...

No response.

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
I'll alert the authorities.

Still, nothing.

Slowly, suspiciously, she turns back around. As she does, standing in front of her is DIETRICH(30s) - a smiling German soldier in uniform. He has a thick German accent, but his English is good.

DIETRICH  
Boo!

Millie jumps, nearly dropping her rations parcel.

MILLIE  
Ahhh! Oh! Oh my!

DIETRICH  
Got you.

MILLIE  
You rotten thing that's not funny!

DIETRICH  
(coy)  
We Germans don't have a sense of  
humour, isn't that right?

Millie, unable to stay angry at him, cracks a smile.

MILLIE  
I could have dropped my rations.

Dietrich takes them from her. He carries her parcel under one arm and they both continue walking together.

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
I'm perfectly capable.

DIETRICH

I know, but I may as well earn my  
keep whilst I'm still here.

He nods to the box of rations. Millie looks up at him and  
laughs - the cheek he has to assume she's cooking for him!  
Dietrich smiles. They walk along in silence for a while.

DIETRICH (CONT'D)

I hear rumours that the surrender  
order has been accepted, but who  
knows... they don't tell us  
anything. Not any more. I suppose  
that's the confirmation, isn't it.

MILLIE

I saw some of your friends earlier.  
Drunk, looking for a fight.

DIETRICH

We dress the same, doesn't mean  
we're all friends.

Millie smiles at him. He takes her hand, but she hesitates,  
looking around to make sure they're not being followed.

DIETRICH (CONT'D)

It's fine, we're alone.

They hold hands. As they get further down the lane, a pair of  
black boots step into frame. They're being followed.

INT. SUZETTE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.

Suzette sits in a chair by her window. She looks out and sees  
Millie and Dietrich arrive at Millie's house, laughing  
together. Suzette puts down the book she was reading, stands  
up and closes her curtains.

EXT. SMALL TERRACED HOUSE - NIGHT.

Dietrich stands looking at the graffiti'd wall. Where Millie  
has been scrubbing, the lettering now just says '\_\_\_RRYBAG'.  
The scrubbed out letters are still faintly visible. It's a  
little while before he speaks.

DIETRICH

Who did this?

MILLIE

I don't know. Does it matter?

Dietrich is suddenly very stern and soldierly.

DIETRICH

No wonder you're looking over your shoulder everywhere you go.

MILLIE

It's just letters on a wall. It doesn't mean anything.

DIETRICH

It does to them.

He turns away, ashamed.

DIETRICH (CONT'D)

And it should to you, too.

MILLIE

What do you mean?

DIETRICH

I shouldn't be here.

He hands Millie back her box of rations.

MILLIE

It's nothing. Honestly.

She motions to take his hand but he pulls it away before turning and quickly striding off - continuing down the road.

P.O.V - someone watches from the bushes as he leaves, leaving Millie alone outside her house.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

She goes after him, tripping over her wash bucket from earlier. By the time she stands up to follow, he's gone.

EXT. SMALL TERRACED HOUSE - NIGHT.

After a moment, Millie rises to her feet, angry at the situation. Looking at the markings on the wall once more, she picks up the water bucket she tripped over and storms inside.

INT. SMALL KITCHEN - NIGHT.

She fills up the bucket again, adds soap and bleach, and marches back outside to the wall, tossing the water on it once more.

INTERCUT RURAL COUNTRY LANE/SMALL TERRACED HOUSE

EXT. RURAL COUNTRY LANE - NIGHT.

It's dark, and Dietrich treads along - deep in thought. Behind him, someone follows. Just boots first, then a pistol is pulled from a holster. They edge closer to Dietrich. He doesn't hear them until they're right behind him. He turns to defend himself. The attacker is still unknown and it's confusing in the dark, but Dietrich wrestles him, trying to disarm him. Their hands fumble the gun dangerously as they fight for control in the dark.

EXT. SMALL TERRACED HOUSE - NIGHT.

As this unfolds, Millie once again scrubs at the wall - harder and harder, breaking a sweat again until-

-A gunshot! Echoing from the direction Dietrich walked. Millie gasps, turning around wide-eyed with fear.

CUT TO:

EXT. RURAL COUNTRY LANE - NIGHT.

Frantic, Millie runs down the dark lane. Out of breath and disorientated she follows the direction she thinks the gunshot came from, scared for what she might find.

MILLIE

Dietrich!

Calling out into the darkness, she looks around desperately.

DIETRICH (O.S.)

Here.

Two figures become discernible in the darkness, one lying down and one kneeling by their side. As she gets closer she realises it's Stefan, the soldier from earlier, lying on his back with Dietrich leaning over him applying pressure to the wound in Stefan's torso, there's a lot of blood.

MILLIE

Oh my God...

Dietrich is in military medic mode.

DIETRICH

He's badly injured.

MILLIE  
You shot him?

DIETRICH  
He pulled the gun on me. It was an  
accident - self-defence.

Millie catches a glance at his face.

MILLIE  
He's the one from earlier!

DIETRICH  
He must have been following me.

MILLIE  
Why?

Dietrich is busy trying to stop the bleeding...

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
I... uh, I can try to call for an  
ambulance, or the police...

DIETRICH  
No time... Here, help me lift.

MILLIE  
But D, he needs-

DIETRICH  
Eins zwei drei... lift!

Millie lurches forward at the instruction and helps Dietrich  
lift Stefan. They heave him off the ground clumsily.

STEFAN  
(in German)  
Ahhhhh stop, don't touch me!

DIETRICH  
(in German)  
You're okay, try to relax.  
(In English, to Millie)  
We need to get him to your house.

Millie looks bewildered and scared, but after a second she  
nods firmly and they start moving back down the dark lane.

INT. MILLIE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.

Millie sweeps everything off her table and Dietrich lumps the  
wounded soldier on top - he winces in pain.



STEFAN  
 (in German)  
 Traitor! Traitor!

DIETRICH  
 I need dressings, and alcohol. Do  
 you have a first aid kit?

Millie hesitates, thinking.

MILLIE  
 Uh...

DIETRICH  
 Anything to stop the bleeding! And  
 clean the wound - quickly!

MILLIE  
 Uh alright! Yes! Just a moment.

Millie rushes out the room. Dietrich looks down into Stefan's eyes. The soldier stares back with fierce anger and disdain. They may be on the same side, but they're clearly wildly different people. Millie returns with a first aid kit.

DIETRICH  
 Here, keep the pressure on.

Millie hesitates. Should she be doing this? He's an enemy. The end may be near but does this count as aiding & abetting?

DIETRICH (CONT'D)  
 Millie!

MILLIE  
 Okay.

She replaces Dietrich's hand on the wound as he takes the first aid kit. Recognising her from before, Stefan smiles a cruel grin and, through gritted teeth, tries English again.

STEFAN  
 Jerrybag...

Millie stares down at him, a little shellshocked. Dietrich opens up the first aid kit and rifles through it. Shortly after, he returns to Millie with gauze and takes over again.

DIETRICH  
 I need hot water.

Millie remembers that her water bucket is outside. She rushes out the front door to get it.

EXT. SMALL TERRACED HOUSE - NIGHT.

Blinded by haste, Millie looks around in the dark for the bucket - not seeing Suzette standing smoking over the fence.

SUZETTE  
Entertaining are we?

Millie, now having found the bucket, jumps and wheels around.

MILLIE  
Uh, no... no, just... tidying up.

Suzette notices Millie's frantic face and for once shows a little hint of compassion.

SUZETTE  
What is it? What's wrong?

MILLIE  
Nothing, I'm fine.

She peers in the door and sees the soldier on the table.

SUZETTE  
Christ, Millie!

MILLIE  
No, wait!

Suzette practically launches over the small garden fence and barges in to Millie's house.

INT. MILLIE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT.

Suzette stands in the doorway, with a nervous Millie behind her and stares, mouth agape, at the two German soldiers. Dietrich too busy to pay her any attention.

SUZETTE  
What have you done?

INT. MILLIE'S KITCHEN - NIGHT.

A short time has passed. Suzette is smoking a cigarette, tapping ashes into Millie's sink. Millie has told her the story and Suzette seems to be digesting it.

SUZETTE  
So they're turning on each other.

MILLIE  
He's trying to help!

Suzette thinks about this, face blank as it normally is.

SUZETTE  
They're Germans, Millie. This is  
between them. It shouldn't concern  
our... community.

MILLIE  
Our community? Suz, we used to be  
friends. Now you can barely stand  
to look at me! And he could be put  
to death for this!

Suzette simply shrugs - so what?

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
You're the one who came barging  
into my house-  
(composing herself)  
This isn't about allegiances or  
national pride... All I know is  
that there's a man in there who  
needs help and another man who's  
giving it, that's all there is.

Suzette thinks for a second, unconvinced. She taps more ash  
into the sink. Millie frowns, unimpressed.

MILLIE (CONT'D)  
He's a good person.

SUZETTE  
To you, perhaps! This is the enemy  
and you're playing nurse for  
them... You may as well be flying  
their flag! They know they're  
moments away from full surrender  
and they're scared for their  
miserable lives, they don't know  
what to do with themselves.

MILLIE  
You talk about them like animals.  
What if it was your husband on that  
table... or your son. What kind of  
'community' do you want to be a  
part of where one has to check an  
injured man's birth certificate  
before helping them? Perhaps you're  
the one with a flag to fly...

Suzette opens her mouth to respond, but can't think of anything. She looks down, a hint of shame on her face. They hear a scream of pain from the other room. With a final glare Millie storms into the living room to help, leaving Suzette alone staring down, deep in thought about their discussion.

INT. MILLIE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY.

Hours have passed. It's dawn and the wounded soldier drifts in and out of consciousness. There are bloody bandages everywhere, but Dietrich seems to have done what he can.

STEFAN

(in German, barely  
intelligible)

These people... not like us... you  
spit on the German kind...  
Fraternising with mongrels....

Asleep on the sofa, Millie rests her head on Dietrich's shoulder. He looks tired but sits bolt upright, staring at his patient carefully. Stefan's mutterings wake Millie.

MILLIE

What's he saying?

DIETRICH

Nothing worth hearing.

MILLIE

You saved him.

DIETRICH

Maybe.

MILLIE

Even though he tried to kill you.

Dietrich just stares into the distance for a while.

DIETRICH

It doesn't matter who he is or what  
he does. Friend or enemy.

MILLIE

They'll know you shot him.

DIETRICH

I'll explain.

MILLIE

What if they don't believe you?

Again, Dietrich doesn't respond. He knew he had to help - there's no other way around it. Consequences come later.

MILLIE (CONT'D)

Are you my enemy?

Dietrich turns to her and takes her hands in his.

DIETRICH

Never.

A tender moment, until Stefan starts to choke and gargle. Dietrich darts up to his side to tend to him.

MILLIE

What can I do?

Dietrich is so engrossed in trying to tend to the wounds once again that he doesn't respond - his fight isn't over yet.

Millie hears rumbling of people coming from outside - like faint cheering. She rubs her face, gets up and looks out the window. Unable to see much, she goes to the front door.

EXT. SMALL TERRACED HOUSE - DAY.

As she steps outside the cheering grows louder. She sees people walking down the country lane with some haste.

To Millie's surprise, Suzette stands to her side, scrubbing at the graffiti'd wall with a brush. She must have got through to her. Millie stares, bewildered. Suzette doesn't return her gaze, just keeps scrubbing - stoic as usual.

MILLIE

What is it? What's happening?

SUZETTE

British ships on the horizon. It's over.

Millie lets this news wash over her. Instead of jubilating, she takes a deep breath, turns to Suzette and gives her a deep look of solemn understanding.

After a moment Millie looks down, picks up a second brush from the bucket of water, and without another word joins Suzette at the magnolia wall. They scrub at the remaining graffiti - two neighbours, working together.

THE END.