

Balkhyrie 3

the Night Witch



The story ...

Transylvania, 1945

Romania has fallen to the Red Army and the war is supposedly near to its final conclusion, but deep within the Borgo Pass there remains one last, secret holdout of the Axis forces that could change everything, dramatically for the worse ...



A year ago, the recently-resurrected vampire **Princess Mariska Báthory de Ecsed** (1475-1492 ... then 1942-present), along with the aid of ex-mother superior (and now vampire knight templar) **Lady Romana Pasztor**, launched a vengeful attack against the Waffen-SS division who had captured her prince, along with several innocent children for their obscene bio-occult experiments. Having saved the hostages, they cornered the chief researcher **SS-Obersturmführer Bram von Hellman** within his laboratory bunker, turned him into one of their own kind, then sealed him into the bunker, immortal but entombed forever ... or so they dared to hope.

But they had underestimated the cunning and determination of the dark occultist. Sustained by ego, hatred, and the blood of the few unfortunate rats entombed along with him, he survived long enough to adapt to his new vampiric

powers, and thus learned the skill of phasing through solid matter. Armed with his new supernatural skills, and an inhumanly iron will, he returned to his SS unit, turned a chosen few of his junior officers to immortality, brainwashed the rest of his men into obeying him even over the Führer himself, and set up a new research base devoted entirely to creating occult super-weapons that would enable him to become absolute ruler over all mortals and immortals, for all eternity.

Mariska and Romana have found out about this plan, but their intel is all discouraging. Already, von Hellman has V-2 rockets almost in launch condition, carrying warheads of deadly magical bio-weapons that have the potential to change whole urban populations into his mutated thralls. Worse still, not only is the base heavily defended by conventional and experimental weapons, but its ground perimeter is equipped with spiritual wards to defend against vampires. A swift and decisive aerial assault is the only plausible strategy, but since the base security is at its strongest during the hours of night, this attack would need to be conducted in daylight hours. That is not a task the vampires can undertake without outside help, so they quickly investigate whom they can look to ...



Alyona Orlov was born in 1924 in Odessa to a couple of mixed background: her father a respected Jewish doctor and her mother of Ukrainian rural stock, her family steeped in ancient traditions. Although Alyona's mother – the first woman in her family to receive a modern education, under the auspices of the Soviet regime – drifted away from these folk beliefs to share the scientific outlook of her father, the same could not be said for Alyona herself. Enchanted by the strange ways of her maternal grandmother – her herb-lore, charms, and incantations – Alyona struck up a close relationship with her, and found her very willing to pass on her knowledge of these and even more mysterious arts to her youngest descendant.

Her parents found all of this harmless enough, but they were more worried, as Alyona entered her teenage years, of how she seemed to easily form very close

relationships with girls of her age while being totally indifferent to boys. Fearful for her social prospects, her parents sent her to attend a prestigious academy of engineering in Moscow, hoping to give her an advantageous education and also to break up some of her more troubling friendships. Ironically, finding herself now boarding in shared dormitories with other young female students, and with none of the restrictions of home life, did nothing to discourage these inclinations in her. She did, however, thrive in her studies, especially in the field of aeronautics.

In 1941, Axis troops invaded Odessa, massacring the Jewish population of the city, including all of Alyona's family. When news reached her, she swore vengeance, and volunteered to join the women's 588th Night Bomber Regiment – known disparagingly by the German forces as the “Night Witches.” That is an insult Alyona owns with pride, as she thinks of her murdered grandmother, and imagines her spirit flying alongside her biplane while she carries out her daring raids, inspiring and empowering her with the magic of her ancestors. She sometimes believes that perhaps that is something more than mere imagination ...

As the end of the War approaches, Alyona finds herself dreading her imminent return to civilian life: with all of the friends and family she has lost, she has little left except for her surviving comrades-in-arms, and the 588th will soon be disbanded. Uncertain how she will ever readjust to a normal existence, she is pleasantly surprised when her squadron leader comes to her with one last, secret mission.

“We have received some mysterious but disturbing intel, along with a plea for help,” she explains, “and somehow, Lieutenant Orlov, I feel that you may be the ideal candidate for this assignment ...”



Having flown to the pre-arranged location at the chosen time – well past nightfall – Alyona meets her anonymous contact, and is surprised to find a young, blonde, pale woman with curiously reddish eyes, dressed in what looks curiously like a shortened nun's habit over leggings and combat boots. As the stranger greets her,

Alyona catches sight of her inhumanly long, sharp canine teeth and is briefly taken aback. The woman cringes in shame, clearly mortified at being thus ‘discovered,’ but Alyona quickly reassures her:

“Please, don’t concern yourself. I have my reasons to be less frightened of the supernatural than you may think,” she explains, and wonders if that is the reason she has been chosen for this already-surreal mission. “Still, you are not at all what I expected. I certainly did not expect to receive my orders from someone either so holy or so attractive ... if I may say.”

“You ... may ... if you like,” the woman replies, confused and embarrassed, although not so ashamed as before. “Speaking of those orders, though, I had better tell you them quickly. We have so little time in which to act ...”



The mission ...

The assault on the enemy research base is divided into three stages, each subdivided into a ground assault and a aerial counter-attack that must be survived. During the ground assault stages, it is imperative that you target specific enemy assets, in order to sabotage their nefarious plans.

Zone 1 – Supply Line – Collapse the railway bridges along the Borgo Pass to disrupt the supply of raw materials and fuel to the base.

Zone 2 – Transit Camp – Prisoners are being kept in secure huts, awaiting delivery to the bio-research team for experimentation. Shoot the huts to free them.

Zone 3 – Base Perimeter – The enemy base is located among medieval ruins deep within the Carpathian Mountains. Destroy the V-2 rockets here to deliver a crushing blow to von Hellman’s insane ambitions.

Your Polikarpov Po-2 biplane “Sasha” is agile, well-suited for stealth bombing runs, but poorly armed at first. You can, however, upgrade your onboard machine gun

twice by collecting the power-up air drop (one per sub-level). This increases the range, velocity, and spread of your armament. If you lose a life, however, you will forfeit one upgrade point.

You can also improve your chances by fulfilling missions: every five mission targets destroyed will help you to tap into the witchcraft of your ancestors and add a level to your **Hex Power** ...

Level 1 – You gain a long-range magical projectile (slower, but larger than your standard weapon).

Level 2 – Doubles the power of your magic missile attack.

Level 3 – Adds directional firing capacity to your magic missiles, and also conjures a spiritual energy shield in front of your craft.

Additionally, destroying all fifteen mission targets will unlock the password for the true end sequence.

The enemies ...

(To destroy bosses, concentrate your fire on a single spot.)

Flak Cannon – Basic anti-aircraft guns that fire in a fixed direction.

Railway Gun – Heavy guns mounted on railway cars. They have limited manoeuvrability.

Panzer – These tanks are strongly armoured, manoeuvrable, and fire in the direction they are travelling.

Flettner Fl 282 – Small scout helicopters, slow and poorly armed.

Balloon Mine – Basic aerial defences that will detonate on contact.

Messerschmitt Me 163 – Rocket powered interceptor planes.

Fa 223 Drache (boss) – Transport helicopter, large and tough, but slow.

Turret – Armoured, retractable gun emplacements that fire randomly.

Messerschmitt Me 328 – Small pulse-jet experimental fighters, fast and very manoeuvrable.

Hela – These mutated, programmed beings are the results of von Hellman's

unethical experiments. In addition to the power of flight and having high endurance, they can generate a formidable bio-electrical charge.

Arado E.555 (boss) – Experimental heavy jet bomber, fast and heavily armed.

Mjölnir – Mobile Tesla coils that regularly generate lethal electrical charges all around them.

Loki – Experimental stealth aircraft that can intermittently make themselves invisible.

Naglfar (boss) – This bio-mechanical airship is the personal transport of the evil scientist himself, and as heavily-armed as one would expect.



“Is that all, then, my pretty vourdalak?” asks Alyona, dismissively. “I had expected a challenge.” She is not surprised when Lady Romana looks at her with a very sceptical raised eyebrow and a half-smile, but she does not let herself show any trace of fear or doubt. In truth, though, she knows this will be one of the sternest and most crucial fights of her life. For the souls of all humanity, no less ...

“I’m sure you are very skilled,” comments Romana, diplomatically. “Your military record speaks for itself ... but you should not underestimate the strength of the forces you will be going up against. Are you quite certain you are well enough equipped?” she asks, casting a doubtful look over Alyona’s fragile, obsolete wood-and-canvas aircraft.

“I accept your advice, lapushka,” Alyona replies, more humbly, “and I will not be reckless in such a vital mission, I promise you, but *you* ought not to underestimate Sasha. She may not look so powerful to you, but she has it where it counts. In any case,” she adds, slyly, “it would be foolish of me to take needless risks, when I have such a beautiful commander awaiting my return. Dasvidaniya, my Lady.”

... on which note she boards “Sasha” and sets course to the Borgo Pass,

leaving Romana in a still very confused, though not at all displeased mood ... and the fervent hope that she will indeed see Alyona return, for everybody's sake.



The credits...

Created by Eleanor Burns and Richard Bayliss.

Photographs (end sequence) – Audrey Hepburn and Amy Johnson.

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