

— *June 9th, 1916. Kohlbrück, Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, 12:00 P.M.* —

Kohlbrück was an old mining settlement established in the German region of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, located about 70 kilometers away from the city of Rostock. The settlement only had about thirty or so people living there, mainly miners and their families. They mined salt there. The settlement was so small due to the overall secrecy of the mining potential, so not many people knew it existed. It mainly consisted of tents, general merchant stands, and other areas. The bare essentials for the average person to get by.

One sultry summer day, the Golden Battalion Gibor Squad arrived in Kohlbrück after days of marching around the territory. Sergeant Kollner had all thirty citizens standing in one giant group as his ten soldiers stood in a line, facing the salt-covered settlers. All of them had been sweating under their golden pickelhaube helmets, and their hands became slick, making it challenging to hold their Gewehr rifles properly.

“We have received word that a Psychokinetic resides among you all.” Kollner announced, pacing around the group of miners. Their brows were furrowed from the sun in their eyes.

“Psychokinetics? You mean those fairy-tales of the Empire?” Bowers, the chief of the mining settlement declared.

“Unorthodox place, is it not? That’s what makes it such a good hiding place.”

Bowers scoffed. “Why would those tree huggers be working in a SALT MINE?”

Kollner got into Bowers’ face. The dust-covered mining chief backed away a bit.

“You pretend not to know anything about them, yet you know this?”

“Of course we know this. Your propaganda posters littering the country say as much,” The man spat. He looked behind him and at his own people. They were all hungry and dirt-covered. The women and children stood under the beating sun, their eyes barely open from

the sunlight and dust. Bowers turned back to Kollner. “So can we hurry this up? Mining is the only way we make money so far out here.”

One of the soldiers raised his voice, “If you’re hiding Greenbloods out here, just say to.”

Kollner quickly marched back to the soldier and banged against his helmet. “I’m the one in charge here, Schultz!”

Schultz repositioned his rifle. “Yes, sir.”

Kollner looked back at the group of settlers. He stood up straight and fixed the collar and buttons on his officer uniform “Let’s get right to business, then. There is a suspected Psychokinetic amongst you all. One of you must turn in this traitor to the German Empire, and we will let you go.”

“And if we don’t?” Another female villager, holding onto the shoulder of her teenage son.

“Simple,” Sergeant Kollner gained a malicious smirk. “All in this settlement will be charged with sedition and be summarily executed.”

Kollner threw up a hand gesture and all ten soldiers latched onto the bolts of their rifles and aimed their rifles at the poor citizens. The children and teenagers clung onto their mothers while the men of the settlement shifted to the front of the group to shield the women and children.

One of the teenage boys stepped forward. “You can’t get away with this!”

“With what? We have our orders from the Kaiser himself. We’re simply protecting our country during this Great War.”

“Screw this—” The boy rushed forward before his mother latched onto his shoulder.

“Carl, don’t!”

Carl yanked his arm off of his mother. He looked at the men threatening to kill his family, friends and community. He was going to stop them. Carl let out a primal scream as he tried to charge the soldiers. One of them pulled the trigger of his Gewehr. A loud bang rang out. Carl flopped to the ground face-first. A little bit of dust kicked up where he landed. The citizens jumped backward in fear of the violence that had occurred in front of them.

“I’ll give you one more chance,” Kollner warned. “If any of you are Psychokinetic, or know the one in question, speak up now.”

Not a word. The settlers shared the same petrified, wide-eyed look. Kollner shook his head in disapproval.

“What a shame.” He remarked. He pointed two fingers toward the group, signaling them to fire. Almost simultaneously, the Golden Battalion soldiers fired their rifles. Plumes of smoke piled up from the collective discharge of the weapons as the bullets danced together in the air. Like dominos, the settlers all fell on top of each other. They lowered their rifles until the smoke settled. Kollner looked down at the carnage.

“Good work, men.” The sergeant proudly smiled at his underlings. The ten soldiers holstered their weapons, strapping them to their backs.

“What should we do about the bodies?” Schultz asked, squinting his eyes down to keep more mining dust from getting in his eyes.

“Leave them. This settlement is pretty remote.”

“Can we go now? It’s hot out here.” Another soldier complained.

“We’re returning to Berlin, boys. Once we’re back home, we can enjoy a nice, cold—”

A huge gust of wind tore through the air and flung Kollner and his men off of their feet and into a giant pile of salt, causing sodium particles to fly everywhere. In the middle of the salty

fog, stood a young blonde man. Kollner regained his balance and stood up. The soldiers tried to get up and ready their weapons in time, but the cloaked youth reached out for the mountain above the group. He swung both arms down, bringing down an avalanche of dust. He leaped away from the settlement as the Golden Battalion became buried under the thick plume of soot. It took several minutes for the air to become even slightly visible. Once it was over, the eleven men shared the same look of pure annoyance.

“You mean to tell me the ONE person that wasn’t here just happened to be the greenblood?” Schultz exclaimed.

“Then what was the point of this?” Another soldier demanded.

“We can question that once we get back to the capital,” Sergeant Kollner rolled his eyes.

“General von Falkenhayn is going to be pissed.”