

GODLIKE



One o'Clock Wake-Up

A GODLIKE adventure for 13 regular grunts

By Greg Stolze and Shane Ivey

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A *GODLIKE* Adventure for 13 Regular Grunts

By Greg Stolze and Shane Ivey, © 2003

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The Battle of the Bulge

In December 1944, after six months of battle from the shores of Normandy to the borders of Germany itself, the Germans finally retreated across their reinforced borders at the Siegfried Line and the Allies settled into the Belgian woods for some much-needed rest and recuperation.

The men of the 112th Regiment of the 28th Division (U.S. V Corps) were billeted in the towns of the Our River valley on the borders of Belgium, Luxembourg, and Germany, about 10 miles south of Allied command at St. Vith. They had six weeks of nightmare combat in the Huertgen Forest behind them—combat that claimed more than 6,100 men of the 28th Division alone, earning the 112th the nickname “Bloody Bucket” for more than its red keystone emblem—and they looked forward to a peaceful Christmas in the European snows.

It was not to be.

On December 15, mere days after the last fighting ceased, an eerie glow lit the night sky as distant German spotlights shone on the overhanging clouds and turned the darkness to twilight. Then sentries saw curious pinpoints of light winking in the distance and wondered what the Germans were up to—until the shells started falling. German infantry and tanks roared over Allied positions, led by the dreaded *Überkommandogruppe SS Heinrich Himmler*, the first army composed entirely of Talents.

Somehow, Hitler had taken a battered army and a demoralized populace and forged them into a force ready to shatter the Allied victory. The Battle of the Bulge had begun.

The units of the 112th Regiment were overwhelmingly outnumbered, with scattered patrols and squads facing four entire infantry divisions and three *panzer* divisions. But they held fast where they could. Some of them interrupted the German advance, but others were pinned in their towns and bunkers by massive Tiger tanks and simply passed by in the Germans' *blitzkrieg* rush westward.

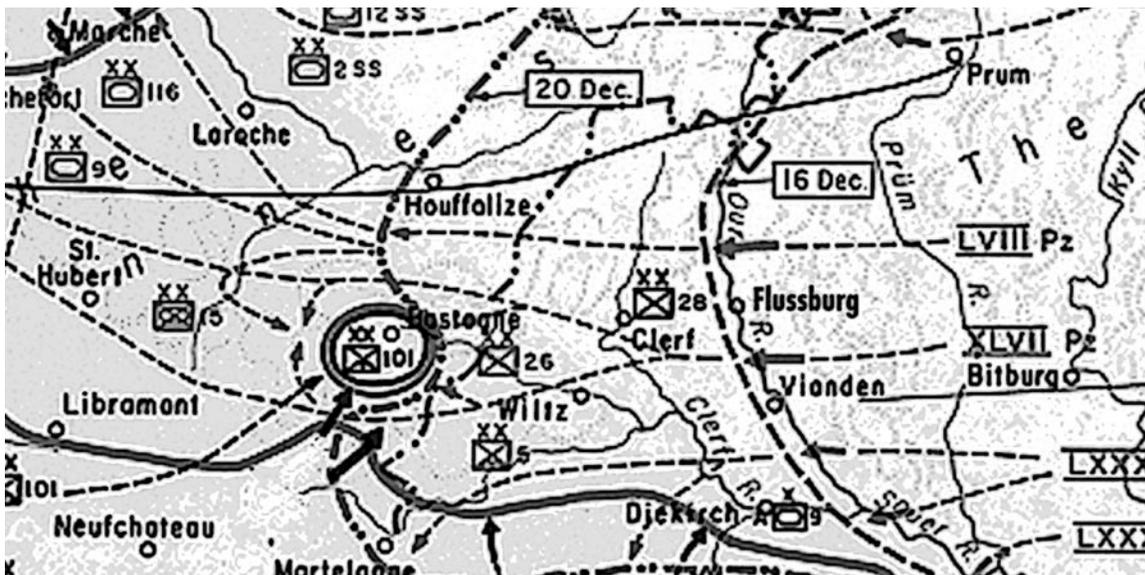
Deadly American artillery fire and the bombs of U.S. fighter-bombers checked the Germans briefly on December 17, but not for long. That night, having lost contact with the rest of the 28th Division, most of the 112th Regiment retreated across the Our river at the town of Ouren to hold new positions on the west bank.

Unfortunately, several squads of the regiment's “G” Company remained trapped on the east bank at Flussburg, two miles south of Ouren, while Germans stormed past.

On December 18, a patrol reported that the situation of the trapped company had worsened overnight: German *Übermensch*en had arrived to root out the Americans once and for all.

Out of contact with his commanders, and lacking orders to the contrary, Major Freeling of the 112th Regiment made an executive decision to rescue those trapped men. He ordered squads of companies E and G to do the job, with help from a few stray Sherman tanks of the 7th Armored Division, while the rest retreated slowly westward.

“Hit those *Überkrauts* hard and break our boys free,” Freeling said. “Then come west across the river again. We'll catch the Germans there and give them hell!”



Flussburg in the Battle of the Bulge. Permission granted to photocopy for personal use.

Tactical Map: *Frankburg* Date: *Dec 8 44* Officer: *Simonson* Grid Location: *T4 21*



The tank commander's map. Permission granted to photocopy for personal use.

Rise and Shine

In “One o’Clock Wake-Up,” the players are not Talents facing mundane and superhuman threats—they are the regular Joes of the U.S. Army. Some of them are volunteers and some are draftees, but all are just trying to stay alive. Many are veterans of the recent campaigns, but none have been in this man’s Army even a year.

This time, the Talents are the enemy. The players’ only mission is survival.

Hand your players all 13 pregenerated characters and let them pick the ones they want. Have each player take more than one character if necessary, or hold the extras as NPCs and replacements. Either way, keep them around. The players will need them. (Character sheets and damage silhouettes can be found online at www.arcdream.com/godlike.)

The mission begins with every character unconscious. Tell each player to pick one character and roll 1d. Whoever rolls highest wakes up first.

The GIs are scattered across a crater-scarred cobblestone road, lying in mud and ice as snow gently drifts from the gray sky. They are surrounded by bodies, dozens of them, many of them very obviously dead. A Sherman tank lies upside-down not far away. Behind them is the shattered stump of a once-beautiful bridge, standing high over the frigid Our river. Before them is a quaint German town, its neat rectangular buildings and tree-lined streets smoking

and ruined by shelling and combat. German machine gun nests have been dug in to the nearest corners facing the bridge, now blasted by artillery fire and piled high with dead Germans. Thick fog limits visibility to less than 100 yards.

It is deathly quiet, except for the distant, muted sounds of combat to the west—across the river.

Only nine riflemen are alive among the nearly 30 lying on the bridge. Inside the Sherman tank, three of the five crewmen survive—a gunner and the tank commander, Lt. Simonson, are crushed in the wreckage. Another tank crewman is alive on the ground with no idea how he got there; his own tank is nowhere to be seen.

Every soldier is shocked and dazed at first, but they can gradually piece together their situation. Give them hints from “What Happened?” (below) or let them have the whole story at once, as pacing allows.

Their commanding officer, Captain Farley, was one of those caught in the open, and there’s barely enough left to identify him. His map is burned to a cinder. In the tank, Simonson’s maps are blood-soaked and all but illegible. The survivors are leaderless and lost, there’s no sign of the men of “G” Company; and the closest thing to safety is on the other side of that river.

Now they just have to find a way across.



What Happened?

Late in the morning of December 18, riflemen of Company "E" crossed the middle bridge escorted by three Sherman tanks. Halfway across, they began exchanging fire with German machine gunners.

Give each rifleman with a Sight skill of 1d or more a Brains+Sight roll to remember seeing a lone German in a black SS uniform run out into the street, shrugging off bullets like they were pellet-gun BBs. He gestured at the tanks and shouted—

—and suddenly, one of the Shermans flew up into the sky. It came down in the middle of the advancing Americans, shattering the bridge like a bomb and taking another Sherman and several GIs with it into the icy waters. The *Übermensch* turned on the third tank and shouted, and it rose into the air. . . .

Then the streets all around exploded with incoming artillery fire. It was American "time-on-target" fire, several batteries timed to drop all at once on the German positions. Nobody knew who had called it in, or why it was only dropping now that the Americans themselves were right in the thick of it.

One of those first shells exploded near the *Übermensch*, killing him instantly. The tank fell 15 feet to the cobbled street and landed upside-down.

The shells kept falling as the Americans charged across the bridge, looking for any cover they could find. Some of them made it into newly blasted craters. Others were caught in the open. Within two minutes, the shelling stopped. Every German in sight was dead and every American was dead or unconscious on the ground.

Grenadiers and Übermenschen

Flussburg is a small German town on the German-Belgian border, famous for its three bridges spanning the Our river. Like many German towns it was abandoned with the onrush of the Allied advance, and it is now empty—almost.

A German *Jagdverbände*—a "hunting patrol" of about a dozen SS *Übermenschen*—came to Flussburg late last night. They were disgusted to find the inexperienced soldiers of the German 560th *Volksgranadier* Division holding the town without having uprooted the Americans trapped there. The *Übermenschen* acted decisively, launching a sudden assault on the houses and shops held by the Americans, overwhelming their defenses long enough for the other Germans to sweep in and capture the survivors. Three *Übermenschen* died in the attack—an affront that the *führer* of the *Jagdverbände* punished with typical SS ruthlessness.

After fruitlessly brief interrogations, he marched the Americans to the south bridge, telling them that they would be released if they promised to return to their commanders and report how a mere squad of *Übermenschen* had overwhelmed their entire company. The Americans couldn't believe their luck.

When they reached the bridge, he had them all shot.

Hours later, the American counter-attack all but destroyed the Germans in Flussburg. The *Übermenschen*

and *Volksgranadiers* battled the American platoons to a brutal standstill on all three bridges, only to be blasted by artillery just as they moved in to capture and kill their attackers. Three *Übermenschen* and a handful of regular soldiers survived.

The surviving *Übermenschen* are SS *Obersturmführer* Wilfred Stark (called *Der Holzfäller*, "The Lumberjack"), second in command of the *Jagdverbände*; SS *Sturmscharführer* Paul Krähe (*Das Nebelgaspenst*—"The Cloud Ghost"); and SS *Unterscharführer* Emil Rasch (*Die Raserei*—"The Rage"). Stark is now on the north bridge, one of the few survivors of the fight there after the Americans retreated westward. Rasch is on the south bridge, having barely survived when artillery shells blasted it to smithereens around the attacking Americans. Krähe, knocked out of the sky by a stray airburst as he flew low across the town, is a few blocks from the middle bridge.

Locations in Flussburg

(1) **The Middle Bridge.** This is where the players start—dazed, vulnerable, and lost. They can collect two intact M1 Garand rifles and extra rifle ammunition (68 rounds) from the fallen Americans nearby, if they want them.

Inside the up-ended Sherman tank are a first aid kit, an intact spare periscope (heavy but serviceable), hand radios, flashlights, and a wide variety of tools.

The tank radio (more powerful than a hand radio) is not badly damaged and can be put in working order with a successful Brains+Electronics roll and a car engine to power it. Unfortunately, the only thing coming through is Wagner, from the Ring cycle—the Germans are jamming every frequency with *Der Führer's* favorite tunes as they sweep west.

There is nothing salvageable in the German machine-gun nests.

(2) **The German Bunker.** An ugly little concrete slab built in the middle of a riverside row of quaint shops and apartments (now mostly blasted by shelling), this bunker is obviously destroyed. The wall facing the river is blown wide open and the interior is full of spent shell casings and dead Nazis. The steel back door (HAR 4) is unlocked and stands open, only lightly damaged. Even better, the roof (HAR 4) and three remaining walls (HAR 5) are undamaged.

From the back door, the bell tower of the town hall can be made out through the fog with a successful Sense+Sight roll.

(3) **Town Hall.** The Flussburg town hall (once a church) is topped by a tall, proud bell tower. The tower commands a stunning view in every direction, even in the thick winter fog and snow—the three bridges can be seen to the west, and it is obvious from here that only the northern bridge is intact. The bell tower, obviously, is a natural choice for any sniper. Its walls are HAR 3.

(4) **The Bloody Square.** This is where the men of Company G were slaughtered. The ground is still slick with frozen blood and their bodies have been piled in heaps at the side of the road; the Germans prepared to defend the town rather than wasting time throwing them in the river. Among and around the bodies, the players can find a dozen intact helmets (LAR 2), a German stick grenade with the