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Summary of untranslated scenes in German in "Open City"

Soldiers come to the commandant (Obersturmbannführer), tell him that they have searched the sacristy and the priest's house, and give him what they have found, forged identity cards. The commandant is afraid that they might have been seen, but they tell him that there was only a boy in the church. The commandant asks how late it is (8:30 p.m.), and remarks that they only have ten hours, that the men must talk before news of their arrest spreads.

Later he questions the prisoner, reputed leader of the committee of national liberation, tells him he knows all about his past and present, tries to get him to talk and to become a spy for the Nazis, but the man will not acquiesce. He is taken out to be tortured, and the priest is brought in. The commandant shows him the papers that were found, accuses him of sheltering saboteurs and German deserters, and tells him that he is violating the rights of the occupying forces. The priest insists that he doesn't know anything, that he was only doing his Christian duty and trying to help a fellow human being. The commandant tells him that the other man is a subversive and fought in Spain. He tells the other soldiers to call him if anything happens, the torture will probably take some time, and then goes into the officer's club.

He is told that the deserter has hanged himself, and yells, "Idiot!" In the club some officers are playing cards, as usual, and there are also two women. An officer named Hartmann, sitting by the piano, asks the commandant if it's been a strenuous evening, and he replies yes, it has, but interesting; he has a prisoner who must talk before dawn, and he's sure that he will. Hartmann says that if he doesn't, it would mean that an Italian is worth as much as a German, and that there is no difference between the blood of a slave race and that of a master race. And above all, there would be no reason for this war. He remembers that 25 years ago, as a young officer, he had commanded firing squads in France; at the time he had also believed in the master race theory, but the French patriots had rather been hanged than talk. The Germans simply do not comprehend one thing -- that people want to be free. Enraged after this story, the commandant shouts at Hartmann that he is drunk. Hartmann replies that that is true, that he drinks every evening to forget, but the result is that he only sees more clearly: the Germans don't do anything but kill, kill, kill. Europe will soon be covered with corpses, there is only hate, without hope, and everybody will die. The commandant shouts at him to shut up, forbidding him to say any more. A soldier comes in and reports to the commandant that the prisoner is totally stubborn and apparently impervious to the pain, that he has not talked; the soldier asks what is to be done. The

commandant goes over to the room where the prisoner is being tortured, and is told that they will have to wait until the man revives before they can try again. He says impossible, it's already too late; perhaps they should try psychological means; this is ridiculous, the man must talk soon. They give the man an injection; he revives, and the torture continues until he dies.

The two women come in to look. The one remarks to the commandant that she had told him it wouldn't be easy, and she asks for a cigarette. The priest is called for quickly, and is made to watch as the man dies. The commandant flies into a rage again and orders everybody out, yelling about "the dumb Italians." He says that the Germans have failed badly in their mission, and intimates that it's the priest's fault for having upset him. The woman tells him again that she had said that it wouldn't be easy, and he says that she's always right. An orderly asks him about the death certificate, and he replies that they should say it was a heart attack. He is also asked what to do with the other woman, who has fainted at the sight of the tortured prisoner, whom she had apparently betrayed, and the commandant says that she should be incarcerated for a couple of days and then presumably let go. The commandant and the woman start to leave to go have a drink. The orderly asks what name they should give the erstwhile prisoner. The commandant tells him to call the man Giovanni Episcopo, otherwise they'll only make new martyrs. The woman says just a minute, goes over to the woman lying unconscious on the floor, takes the fur coat from her, saying, "For the next time." Hartmann, who has been standing there watching, mutters, "We are a master race!"

Synopsis prepared by Ginny Lackner  
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