

YORKTOWN

by

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INT. IN WASHINGTON'S NEW YORK HEADQUARTERS

Wider angle

General Washington is in his headquarters pacing. He stops and looks at some papers on a table, shakes his head. An aide, dressed as an American soldier is working diligently at the table. He is reading a paper and the writing on it with a feather pen. There is a knock at the door. George turns towards the door.

GEORGE

Come in.

French General enters the room. George and Rochambeau salute each other. Rochambeau hands George a parchment roll.

Angle to

ROCHAMBEAU

Here is a message from Admiral De Grasse, zee Commander of the French Fleet in the West Indies.

Angle to

GEORGE

What is his response to my asking for help to recapture New York from the British General Clinton?

Angle to

ROCHAMBEAU

He disagrees with you, and so do I. Zee tide has turned in our favor in zee South.

Wider Angle

Aide looks up. He rises from his chair. George and Rochambeau turn and look at aide.

AIDE

General Cornwallis was beaten at Cowpens. He lost more men at Camden and Guilford Courthouse. He needs help.

Angle to

GEORGE

Yes, you're right. General Cornwallis has moved his army to Yorktown on the Chesapeake Bay. He has fortified the town, but he is short on men and supplies. He is waiting for help from the British fleet sailing from New York.

Angle to

ROCHAMBEAU

Admiral De Grasse wants to sail to zee Chesapeake Bay. He thinks he can defeat zee British fleet and prevent Cornwallis's escape by sea.

George places the parchment roll on the table. George, Rochambeau, and the aide all sit down at the table.

Two Shot

GEORGE

We must march south, join up with our southern forces, and attack Yorktown by land.

ROCHAMBEAU

De Grasse also can provide an additional 3,000 troops.

GEORGE

That would give us 17,000 soldiers. I think we can do it.

ROCHAMBEAU

What about New York?

GEORGE

This is a better plan, but first we must convince Clinton that we are going to attack New York.

ROCHAMBEAU

How?

Angle to

GEORGE

I'll leave behind a small force building large encampments at Fort Lee on the high ground overlooking New York City. Hopefully Clinton will think that we are planning to attack New York from this point. It will give us time to move our army south before he can send reinforcements to Cornwallis.

Angle to

AIDE

General Washington, we have one problem. Congress has not given us any money for supplies and pay for my soldiers.

Angle to

ROCHAMBEAU

Don't worry. I'll give you half of my own war chest. Let's go.

EXT. AT AN OUTDOOR ENCAMPMENT

Wider Angle

Aide approaches Washington.

Two Shot

AIDE

Clinton has just realized we are going after Cornwallis and not him. But we are already through Philadelphia and moving rapidly to Yorktown.

GEORGE

Clinton now will be sending reinforcements by sea. Let's hope the French fleet gets there first and defeats the British fleet.

AIDE

Maybe Clinton doesn't know that the French navy is on the way to the Chesapeake.

GEORGE

Maybe not. In the meantime, tell the officers to keep the men moving quickly.

INT. AT YORKTOWN HEADQUARTERS

Wider Angle

Rochambeau is opening a leather pouch and taking out some papers. He shows one of them to George.

ROCHAMBEAU

Zee French fleet of 36 warships arrived at Chesapeake Bay before the British. This means our fleet is blockading Yorktown. Zee outnumbered British fleet of 19 warships must defeat us to get in.

George opens the door. Canon fire can be heard at a distance.

GEORGE

I can already hear the guns from the warships.

Cut to

Soldier rushes in through the open door.

Angle to

SOLDIER
(*excitedly*)

The French won the naval battle! The British are sailing back to New York in defeat.

Wider Angle

George, Rochambeau, and the soldier give each other the high five and bump hips.

GEORGE

We must force Cornwallis to surrender before Clinton sends back an even stronger fleet.

ROCHAMBEAU

Do you have a plan?

GEORGE

I do.

Cut to

George is looking at a map showing a fort surrounding Yorktown with small canon forts called redoubts arranged in front. There is a zigzag line between two of the redoubts leading up to the main fort. George turns to Aide.

GEORGE

Tell General Ben Lincoln I want to speak with him.

AIDE

Yes, sir.

Cut To

General Lincoln enters the room and salutes. George points to the zigzag line.

GEORGE

I want you to have our soldiers dig zigzag trenches up to Yorktown. When these trenches are close to Yorktown's walls, bring up the artillery and bombard the town.

LINCOLN

Yes, sir.

Cut to

GEORGE

Get me Captain Hamilton.

AIDE

Yes, sir.

Cut to

George and Alexander Hamilton looking at the map. George points to the two small canon forts.

GEORGE

Alex, We have been firing at Yorktown for six days with 50 canon emplacements from the trenches. Now I want you and a French commander to take out the two redoubts closest to the town. Then turn their own guns on them. Do you think you can do it?

HAMILTON

You bet I can.

GEORGE

Go to it.

Cut to

George and Rochambeau are pacing the room.

Two Shot

ROCHAMBEAU

We have been exchanging canon fire for nine days. Clinton's help has not arrived. Their supplies are running out.

GEORGE

We have the British surrounded. They cannot escape by sea. It's just a matter of time before they surrender.

Wider Angle

Lincoln rushes in.

LINCOLN
(*shouting*)

The white flag has appeared! The British are willing to surrender!

Lincoln and Washington give each other the high five. Rochambeau and the aide rush in giving Washington another high five. Washington pours glasses of water and holds up the glasses.

WASHINGTON

To our great success!