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BAA BAA BLACK SHEEP

DEVIL IN THE SLOT

by

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BAA BAA BLACK SHEEPDEVIL IN THE SLOTCAST

GREG "PAPPY" BOYINGTON

HUTCH

BRAGG

CASEY

ANDERSON

BOYLE

FRENCH

GUTTERMAN

T.J.

COL. LARD

ANDY VALARRO

CAPT. HARACHI

SAM

EDDIE

OFFICER (JAPANESE)

MECHANIC

SETSINTERIOR:

BOYINGTON'S TENT

CAPT. HARACHI'S TENT

SHEEP PEN

JAPANESE OPERATIONS SHACK

GUTTERMAN'S TENT

JAPANESE OFFICERS MESS

MECHANICS SHED

CORSAIRS

ZEROS

EXTERIOR:

VELLA LA CAVA

FLIGHT LINE

AIR STRIP

TENT CITY

MECHANICS SHED

GUTTERMAN'S TENT

BEACH

RONDOVA ISLAND

AIRFIELD

CORSAIRS

ZEROS

L-10

BAA BAA BLACK SHEEPDEVIL IN THE SLOT

FADE IN

1

BLACK AND WHITE NEWSREEL SHOTS - DAY

1

Shots of Corsairs flying in an empty sky.

NEWSREEL VOICE

As the war in the Pacific grinds on, Allied Commanders state that air superiority is paramount. The numerically superior Japanese airforce is wreaking havoc in the Solomon slot.

Shift to map shots of the slot.

NEWSREEL VOICE

The slot, so named by the pilots who fly there, is a narrow chain of islands in the Solomons. A shipping lane protected from the heavy weather. The slot has become a shooting gallery for seasoned Japanese pilots, many of whom have been flying in combat for years over China.

2

SHOTS OF DOGFIGHTS

2

Corsairs and zeros...from the deck of a ship.

NEWSREEL VOICE

A squadron of aces led by Japanese Captain Tcmio Harachi rain death and destruction on allied men and supplies. MacArthur states that if the war is to succeed, we must control the sky over the Solomon slot. To do that, we must vanquish the devilish Japanese pilots who have made that piece of sky their private hunting reserve.

On that, a shot of another American plane going down in flames and hitting the ocean. It punctuates the remark and we:

CUT TO

3 OMITTED

3

4 INT. BOYINGTON'S TENT - DAY

4

Boyington is asleep on his bunk and is almost being pushed off onto the floor by Meatball who grunts and cuddles closer to Greg who moves further away, one arm falling to the ground. Casey enters and shakes Greg gently.

CASEY

Pappy....

Greg opens an eye.

CASEY

It's O-five-hundred.

Greg grunts again, nods his head, says nothing. Casey exits. Greg rolls over and looks at Meatball.

GREG

Gimme a break, will ya? I only ask for half.

Meatball whines and looks up at him. Greg rolls out of his bed, his feet hit the ground. He tousles his hair.

CUT TO

5 EXT. JAPANESE AIR FIELD ON RENDOVA - DAY

5

This is so identified by a card. This base is also sleeping. As we watch, a Japanese officer comes out of an operations building, looks at his watch and moves across the compound. He enters a tent.

6 INT. CAPTAIN TOMIO HARACHI'S TENT - DAY

6

He is asleep on a grass mat on the ground. As the Japanese Officer enters:

OFFICER

(in Japanese)

Sir, it's time to get up...five o'clock.

Captain Harachi looks up at him and quickly arises. He looks at his watch and he nods:

CONTINUED

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3
(X)

6 CONTINUED

6

HARACHI

(in Japanese)

Thank you. We'll meet in the
operations shed in twenty minutes.

OFFICER

Yes, sir.

He turns and exits and Harachi moves over to a small parrot cage which is draped with a black cloth. He pulls the cloth off and inside is a colorful island parrot.

HARACHI

(broken English)

Good morning, Major Boyington.

The bird squawks and Harachi laughs, feeds him something from a bag that's attached to the side of the stand. Hold on this as he reaches through with his finger and scratches the bird's neck.

CUT TO

7 OMITTED

7

8 INT. SHEEP PEN - DAY

8

as the Black Sheep stumble in carrying plates of food. They sit at the tables, rubbing their eyes.

9 ANGLE - GUTTERMAN

9

He has a very depressed look on his face. T.J. looks over, sees the look on Gutterman's face.

T.J.

Eggs're burned....

GUTTERMAN

Is that a fact?

He looks down at his eggs and starts to eat. After a beat, Greg enters carrying a clipboard. Casey has his breakfast sitting at the edge of the table and Greg moves in and sits down at his place and finally looks up.

GREG

We're just on patrol again this morning. Only this time we're down to fifteen planes. Shields and Smithson stay home. Your birds are still in the pits.

(looks around
the room)

CONTINUED

9 CONTINUED

9

GREG (Cont'd)

We all gotta start taking better
care of our aircraft.

(pointedly)

T.J.

T.J. looks up.

T.J.

I'm flying with the thinnest
mixture in the squadron. If
anything, my bird's gonna die
of too much oxygen.

GREG

Then you won't be needing new
plugs this week, right?

T.J.

Well...ahh...I'm getting a little
misfire. I'd like to have some-
body at least clean 'em.

GREG

Fellas...we're in a bind. Every-
day we're flying less and less
equipment. Next guy who pukes out
black smoke is gonna get more than
a ring job.

(a beat)

Okay, let's finish and get up there.
On the flight line in twenty minutes.

He sits down and looks at his eggs.

GREG

(depressed)

How come Carlson always burns
the damn eggs?!

He shakes his head and starts to eat and, as he does:

CUT TO

10 OMITTED

10

11 INT. JAPANESE OPERATIONS SHACK - DAY

11

as the pilots move into their version of the Sheep Pen and
sit down.

HARACHI

(in Japanese)

Just a patrol today. We fly in
thirty minutes.

CONTINUED

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5
(X)

11 CONTINUED

11

They nod and grumble their replies. Harachi sits down and takes a spoonful of his rice concoction, says nothing, but his expression tells us it's shit.

CUT TO

12 EXT. VELLA LA CAVA FLIGHT LINE - DAY

12

as the engines turn over. Widen to show that Greg and the Black Sheep are getting going.

CUT TO

13 EXT. RONDOVA FIELD - DAY

13

As the Zeros fire up.

14 INT. TOMIO HARACHI'S PLANE

14

He looks at his gauges, taps one, the needle unsticks. He looks carefully at his instruments...finally closes his canopy. On the outside of his plane are twenty-five American 'kill' flags.

CUT TO

15 EXT. BLACK SHEEP TAKING OFF - DAY

15

as one-by-one, they streak off the end of the field and climb into the sky.

CUT TO

16 EXT. JAPANESE SQUADRON

16

doing the same.

CUT TO

17 EXT. BLACK SHEEP IN FLIGHT - DAY

17

as they head up toward the Slot and over this, perhaps, begging opening titles for:

DEVIL IN THE SLOT

18 INT. GREG'S COCKPIT - DAY

18

as he touches his throat.

CONTINUED

sa #46216 6 and 7
(X)

18 CONTINUED

18

GREG
You guys want to have a pool
this morning?

JERRY
Yeah...how much...five bucks?

GREG
Fine with me.

GUTTERMAN/OTHERS
Right.

19 ANGLE - PLANES IN FLIGHT

19

GREG'S VOICE
Little by little we'd been dying
on the vine. No parts, not enough
mechanics...and a captain named
Tomio Harachi who's racked up 25
American kills....

CONTINUED

19 CONTINUED

19

GREG'S VOICE (Cont'd)

(a beat)

I was after Tomio. For three weeks I'd been trying to get him...but he didn't seem to be gettable. Twice he'd left me with a plane-full of holes. In the three weeks we'd been flying against him, the score wasn't that impressive. Tomio Harachi and his meatballs had downed twelve of our planes and killed five of our pilots. Harachi himself had managed five unassisted kills. We, on the other hand, had shot down six of his and I'd been on a personal cold streak. One assist with Casey....

20 INT. BOYLE'S PLANE - DAY

20

as his eyes scan the horizon.

BOYLE

Okay, you bureaucrats...everybody pays Bobby Boyle. They're at ten o'clock.

21 EXT. JAPANESE SQUADRON - DAY

21

as perhaps twenty planes move in on them.

22 INT. GREG'S PLANE - DAY

22

He switches to a different radio frequency.

GREG

Morning Tommy. You bring your life raft?

23 INT. TOMIO HARACHI PLANE - DAY

23

Haraci's plane has a large number eight on its tail.

HARACHI

Not going swimming today, Boyington...maybe you.

jy	#46216	9	
24	EXT. DOGFIGHT - DAY		24
	as the planes wheel all over the sky.		
25	ANGLE - GUTTERMAN AND HARACHI - DAY		25
	as Gutterman has his hands full with the Japanese ace.		
26	SERIES OF SHOTS - THE DOGFIGHT - DAY		26
	as we see that Gutterman is clearly no match for the Japanese ace. He turns right, dives, Harachi is on him, his guns blazing.		
27	CLOSE ON GUTTERMAN		27
	in absolute terror.		
	GUTTERMAN		
	I need help...come on, somebody... bail me out!		
	T.J.		
	Coming, Jim.		
28	ANGLE - T.J.		28
	as he makes a pass on the two whirling planes, overshoots it, streaks by and makes a quick turn.		
29	INT. T.J.'S PLANE - DAY		29
	GUTTERMAN'S VOICE		
	(radio, scared)		(X)
	Ya missed him, T.J.!		
30	ON GUTTERMAN, HARACHI		30
	as it continues...Gutterman is a cooked goose.		
31	INT. GUTTERMAN'S COCKPIT - DAY		31
	He kicks the plane into a roll, Hirachi follows. Machine gun bullets rip the canopy. Gutterman's face is cut by flying glass.		
			(X)

s1	#46216	10	
32	NEW ANGLE - DAY - DOG FIGHT		32
	GUTTERMAN (sheer terror) Help me...somebody...get this devil off me.		(X)
	GREG Let's go, Casey.		
33	ANGLE - GREG banking a turn.		33
34	ANGLE - GUTTERMAN - DAY He tries one last desperate maneuver, rolls his plane onto its back (note: upside down camera) and, as he does, his plane explodes.		34
	GUTTERMAN I'm through...going in...cover me....		
35	EXT. GUTTERMAN'S PLANE - DAY as, trailing smoke, it goes down into the water.		35
	T.J.'S VOICE Black Sheep six to Air-Sea Rescue: we have a plane down 16° 2" by 27° 7".		
36	GUTTERMAN'S COCKPIT - DAY He bails out, floats down.		36
37	ANGLE - GREG, CASEY as they roar in on Harachi. Harachi flips his zeek out of the way, turns on Greg and gives him a burst in the belly.		37
	GREG Damn! He kicks his plane into a roll and goes out on Harachi's tail.		

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11
(X)

38

ANGLE - GREG - DAY

38

as he starts firing and, as soon as he does, Harachi stalls his airplane, lets it fall away, recaptures it. Greg has overshot him and now Harachi puts on the gas and powers up on Greg's tail, starts riddling Greg with bullets. Greg starts a right-hand roll, then dives left. Harachi can't follow and Greg peels off and spins around and heads after him, but he starts diving.

HARACHI

(into mike)

Not today...maybe tomorrow.

GREG

(into mike)

Don't spent it till it's in the bank, pal.

Harachi and his pilots turn off.

CUT TO

39

EXT. VELLA LA CAVA - DAY

39

Hutch is standing near a C-47 which is idling. A very large, slightly greying Marine Master Sergeant comes off the plane. This is Sergeant Andrew Valarro. Valarro is your old-time Marine: Crew-cut, tough as nails, old stogie cigar. Carrying his kit bag, he walks right past Hutch toward the maintenance shed, looking things over with extreme displeasure.

HUTCH

(smiling)

Howdy, Sarge ---

Valarro keeps walking and doesn't reply. Hutch starts after him.

HUTCH

You must be Andy Valarro.

(no reply)

I hear you're the best there is when it comes to engines...

(no reply)

Boy, we're glad for the help, that's all I can say.

VALARRO

(stops and looks at him)

Who's the major who runs this chicken outfit, anyway?

CONTINUED

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11-A

39

CONTINUED

39

HUTCH

(taken aback)

(X)

Major Boyington -- Pappy. You'll
like Pappy. He's out on a mission.
Be back any time.

Four other grease monkeys have gotten off the plane and are
standing looking around, looking at Hutch and Valarro.

(X)

VALARRO

(to grease monkeys)

You guys gonna take our picture or
you gonna go get set up in the pits?!

CONTINUED

s1	#46216	12	
39	CONTINUED		
	EDDIE		39
	Sorry Sarge.		(X)
	They move quickly away and Valarro follows.		
	VALARRO		
	(to Hutch)		
	Bet there's mosquitos out there, huh?		
	HUTCH		
	It's the South Pacific, Sarge.		
	VALARRO		
	That ain't my fault.		
	He moves off and we see that this is truly one belligerent son of a bitch old-time Marine.		
	DISSOLVE TO		
40	EXT. LANDING STRIP - DAY		40
	as the Black Sheep come home.		
41	ANGLE - HUTCH, VALARRO		41
	watching.		
	HUTCH		
	One short....		
	VALARRO		
	You only got fourteen birds up?		
	That's disgusting.		
	Hutch turns on him, exasperated.		
	HUTCH		
	You better talk to Pappy.		
	Hutch moves quickly out to see which of the pilots didn't come back.		
	VALARRO		
	(disgusted)		
	'Pappy'...what is this, a boy scout camp?... 'Pappy.'		(X)
42	ANGLE - CORSAIRS - DAY		42
	as they taxi up and stop and the pilots jump out and Hutch approaches.		
	CONTINUED		

HUTCH

It's Gutterman.

GREG

Air-Sea picked him up, but we lost his bird.

(sees Valarro)

That our new sergeant?

HUTCH

Yeah...sorta....

GREG

Sorta...?

On that, Sergeant Andy Valarro moves up, still chewing on the cigar.

VALARRO

Boyington...I'm Valarro. Your new maintenance chief.

(X)

GREG

Hey, glad to have you around, Sarge.

VALARRO

Can I talk to you for a minute?

GREG

Sure.

He moves away from the others a short distance off. As they move:

ANDERSON

(to Hutch)

That the new mechanic?

(X)

HUTCH

Yeah...that's him.

ANDERSON

He looks like old-time Marine.

BOYLE

I remember guys like him from basic.

(X)

(imitating)

When I'm talking to you, mister, I wanna see little points on the end of your ears....

CONTINUED

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14
(X)

42

CONTINUED - 2

42

The pilots laugh.

CUT TO

43

ANGLE - PAPPY AND VALARRO

43

VALARRO

You got a real problem here,
Major -- you don't put fifteen
birds in the air, you're gonna
lose your combat status ---

GREG

Now, wait a minute, Sergeant.
Before you start shooting from the
hip, suppose you take a minute to
find out what's going on here?

GREG

Before you start shooting from the
hip, suppose you take a minute to
find out what's going on here?

VALARRO

I know what's going on. You got a
real spare parts concession over
there...six airplanes collecting
dust. Now, if I'm gonna keep these
birds in the air, I'm gonna have
to do it my way.

GREG

Okay...do it your way....

Valarro is chewing on the cigar. Finally he drops it on the
ground.

GREG

(amused)

Aren't you gonna field-strip that,
Sergeant? After all, we're in a
front area.

Valarro looks Greg in the eye...a glint of humor is there.

VALARRO

Had a guy ask me to do that once
...officer at El Toro. It was a
big mistake. Cost me three stripes
and him twelve teeth.

Greg is getting interested.

GREG

You might fit in here, after all.

CONTINUED

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15
(X)

43 CONTINUED

43

VALARRO

You tell these college boys there's gonna be a mechanics briefing in the shed after chow. Anybody who don't come, don't get his bird serviced.

GREG

(taken aback)

Sure...I'll tell 'em....

Valarro slaps at a mosquito, turns and walks away.

CUT TO

43-A INT. GREG'S TENT - DAY

43-A

Greg has eaten lunch in his tent and is doing paperwork, absorbed.

44 EXT. MACHANICS SHED - DAY

44

Valarro is sitting on the wing of an airplane and he's looking at the collection of pilots. Everybody is there except Gutterman and Greg.

VALARRO

When you guys get through with a mission, everybody comes to me or to Hutch, here, and checks the plane back in. We're gonna have a mechanics debriefing: Engine check, cockpit check, armament check, we go over all squawks....

CONTINUED

T.J.

Look, Sarge...I know you're trying to help us, here, but that isn't really necessary. See, the way we do it...if something is wrong when we get back, we just tell Hutch.

BOYLE

Yeah. What's the point of going through all that every day. This is a mechanics shed, not a hatchback concession.

Valarro looks at them, heaves a deep sigh, then looks at Boyle.

VALARRO

Which one of these planes is yours, sonny?

Boyle stiffens slightly.

BOYLE

Bob...or Boyle...Okay?

VALARRO

(ignoring)

Which one?

Boyle looks out at the flight line.

BOYLE

(pointing)

Right there...third from the end.

Valarro looks.

VALARRO

No. That one's mine...show me yours.

BOYLE

Now...wait a minute....

VALARRO

All these planes are mine, college boys. I'm gonna loan 'em to you once or twice a day...and, God protect ya, if they come back busted...!

(X)

(X)

CONTINUED

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17
(X)

44

CONTINUED - 2

44

T.J.

Now, you just hold on, Sergeant!

Valarro gets down off the wing and looks at T.J.

VALARRO

You had something you wanted to
say, sonny?

T.J. looks at this killer and sort of shrugs it off.

T.J.

We're...ah...y'know...officers....

VALARRO

Was there anything else?

T.J.

No....

VALARRO

If you think of something else,
you ain't gonna forget to tell me.
Right, sonny?

T.J.

(backed off)

No...of course not....

VALARRO

Good.

Hold on this little tableau of the Black Sheep being held
at bay by this one rather-grim, bull-necked sergeant. Hold
for a beat and:

CUT TO

45

EXT. L-5 LANDING

45

It taxis up and Gutterman gets out. He looks at the pilot.

GUTTERMAN

Thanks.

The pilot pulls away and taxis off the the end of the strip
to take off. Gutterman is moving off the strip carrying his
Mae West. Greg comes up.

GREG

Jim...welcome home.

Gutterman looks up at him for a long moment.

CONTINUED

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(X)

45 CONTINUED

45

GUTTERMAN

Yeah.

GREG

Boy, old Tomio really was gettin'
a piece of you today. Shot my bird
up again, too.

Greg claps him on the back.

GREG

I'm gonna get that guy tomorrow.

GUTTERMAN

(bitter)

Is that a fact?

Greg looks at him.

GREG

Jim....

Gutterman turns.

GREG

Something climbin' your spine...?

Gutterman looks at him.

GUTTERMAN

Maybe I'm tired a hearin' how you're
gonna get up there tomorrow an'
smear those Tojos.

(a beat)

You ain't invincible. It ain't
down in anybody's book that Greg
Boyington can't get his tail shot
off!

GREG

(softly)

It's down in mine.

GUTTERMAN

That's exactly what's climbin' my
spine, Greg.

Gutterman turns and walks angrily away.

46
and
47

OMITTED

46
and
47

48 INT. GUTTERMAN'S TENT

48

He moves into his tent and kicks his val-pack out of the way, throws his Mae West down on the bed and slumps down next to it. He holds his hands out in front of him, they are shaking.

GUTTERMAN

Damn...!

They keep shaking. Hold on that for a beat and:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

49

EXT. JAPANESE AIRFIELD - DAY - ESTABLISHING

49

50

INT. TOMIO HARACHI'S TENT - CLOSE ON PARROT

50

as the black cloth is whipped off by Major Harachi. The parrot squawks at Harachi.

HARACHI

Morning, Greg....

MATCH CUT

51

INT. GREG'S TENT - DAY - ON MEATBALL

51

He moves Greg closer to the edge of the bed...finally he almost bumps him off. Greg opens an eye just as Casey moves into the tent.

GREG

I know...O-five-hundred....

CASEY

Right.

He leaves and Greg rolls over and glares at Meatball.

GREG

We're falling into a rut, darling.

Meatball barks and Greg rolls out of bed.

CUT TO

52

EXT. BLACK SHEEP FLIGHT LINE - DAY

52

as Greg and the pilots move out to their planes. Valarro is standing there with his clipboard. He hands each pilot a slip of paper.

BRAGG

What's this?

VALARRO

That, sonny boy, is a check list. You go through that check list with a mechanic on your wing. Mags, trim, oil pressure, everything. He checks you before takeoff.

(X)

CONTINUED

BRAGG

Look, Sergeant....

VALARRO

You ain't gonna be a hot dog, are you, sonny boy?

BRAGG

I don't see how come we gotta....

Greg moves in on that.

GREG

Do it, Jerry. We gotta get these planes back in shape somehow.

Greg moves to his plane and jumps up on the wing. Hutch is there, getting the straps fixed.

GREG

You check the drop on the left mag? (X)

Hutch looks uneasy.

GREG

Come on, Hutch...did ya, or didn't ya?

VALARRO'S VOICE

He didn't.

Greg looks down at Valarro.

GREG

Yeah...? Why not?

VALARRO

There was a briefing in the mechanics shed yesterday. All the pilots who came got their birds fixed. You weren't there, so I figured you don't need nothin'. (X)

Greg jumps down off the wing and looks Valarro in the eye.

GREG

You figured wrong, buddy.

VALARRO

Just tryin' to do my job, sir.

They are nose-to-nose and Casey runs down the row between the planes.

CONTINUED

52 CONTINUED - 2

52

CASEY

Come on, Pappy, let's mount up.
We're supposed to be outta here.

Greg reluctantly turns away from Valarro.

GREG

This thing will fly, won't it?

VALARRO

Beats me. When you hit the end of
the runway, we'll both know, won't
we, Major?

Greg snorts his disgust and jumps into the cockpit. Hutch
is on the wing. He looks at Hutch.

HUTCH

I'm sorry, Pappy. He wouldn't let
me touch it. But I did sneak a
look. I think you're gonna be okay.

GREG

What's that guy eat for breakfast?

HUTCH

(flat)
Officers....

Greg looks at him for a beat. Finally he laughs and we:

CUT TO

53 INT. GUTTERMAN'S COCKPIT - DAY

53

He has one of the new mechanics (Eddie) on the wing as he
taxi out.

EDDIE

This one is sort of wired up, sir.
We put in a new right mag and ran
her up to sixteen hundred. RPM
and pressure seem good...but take
it easy this time out.

(X)

Gutterman looks over and nods, says nothing.

EDDIE

You okay, sir?

GUTTERMAN

Look, get off the wing, will ya?

CONTINUED

53 CONTINUED

53

EDDIE

But the sergeant said we....

GUTTERMAN

Get off the wing.

Eddie looks at him and finally jumps off. Gutterman sits at the end of the runway and holds his hands out. They are still shaking badly.

GUTTERMAN

(losing his
patience)

Stop it...damn you, stop it!

He finally grips onto the stick and squeezes hard.

CUT TO

54 EXT. VELLA LA CAVA - DAY

54

as the planes take off.

55 EXT. PLANES FLYING - DAY

55

as they head for the slot.

GREG'S NARRATION

We were all getting edgy and the jokes were beginning to sound like gallows humor. But, at least, they were still joking. Casey suggested another pool.

56 BRAGG'S COCKPIT

56

BRAGG

You're on, Casey....

57 INTERCUT - COCKPITS

57

BOYLE

Listen. First guy to spot this guy oughta get thrown outta the squadron instead of win the pool.

GREG

You just leave ol' Tomio to me, fellas. I'm gonna get that rice-ball today, or I'm gonna know the reason.

CONTINUED

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25
(X)

57 CONTINUED

57

BOYLE

The reason...?! You want the reason? It's because he can fly the wings off you...that's the reason.

A couple of the other pilots laugh, including Greg.

GREG

Put your money down, you cowboys. Anything from even money to four-to-one. I'll cover everything.

58 SHOT OF SQUADRON

58

GREG'S NARRATION

And then a strange thing happened.

59 INT. GUTTERMAN'S COCKPIT

59

He is sweating and has been quiet throughout the above.

GUTTERMAN

(forced)

You guys are gonna have to do it by yourselves. Ol' Jimmy Gutterman's losing oil pressure.

60 ANGLE - GUTTERMAN

60

He looks at the other pilots in the formation.

GREG

Okay, Jim, pull out, headed for home.

(a beat)

T.J., go with him.

T.J.

Roger, Pappy.

61 OMITTED

61

SHOCK CUT TO

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62 EXT. DOGFIGHT - DAY 62

as Greg and Tomio whirl all over the sky, their guns clattering.

63 INT. TOMIO'S COCKPIT - DAY 63

as bullets riddle the cockpit and miraculously miss him.

64 INT. GREG'S COCKPIT 64

as he squeezes the trigger.

65 ANGLE - TWO PLANES - DAY 65

as Tomio Harachi gets Greg off his tail and picks off a Corsair flying past, hitting it and flaring it. It's Boyle.

66 INT. BOYLE'S COCKPIT - DAY 66

BOYLE
I'm hit...going in.

His plane is on fire...he peels back the canopy...out he goes.

67 ANGLE - GREG 67

as he sees this:

GREG
(into mike)
Anderson...follow him down.

ANDERSON
Roger Pappy.

Anderson peels off.

CUT TO

68 INT. SHEEP PEN - DAY 68

as Gutterman and T.J. are drinking scotch from canteens. They are alone.

GUTTERMAN
Power was coming back there at the end...probably should have stuck...y'know?

CONTINUED

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27
(X)

68 CONTINUED

68

T.J.

Nothing wrong with playing it
safe, Jim. The mechanics will
fix it. We'll be good for tomorrow.

GUTTERMAN

Mechanics probably won't find any-
thing. Like I said, it was coming
back. Maybe it was the RPM indi-
cator. Sometimes the instruments
will give ya a bum reading.

He is holding the canteen and it is shaking slightly.

69 ANGLE - T.J.

69

He sees this and looks at Gutterman's attitude which is
truly different.

T.J.

(concerned)

Yeah...probably the instruments.

CUT TO

70 EXT. PLANES LANDING - DAY

70

as the Black Sheep come in, one at a time and touch down.

71
and
72 OMITTED

71
and
72

73 INT. SHEEP PEN - NIGHT

73

The pilots are all having a wake, more or less. The attitude
is sullen and down. Greg isn't there, but Gutterman is and
he's belligerent.

CASEY

Listen, Boyle's gonna be all right....

ANDERSON

Last I saw him, he was out, at
least. But I got tangled up with
one of those Zekes and I couldn't
follow him down. I just hope Air
Sea Rescue picks him up.

CONTINUED

GUTTERMAN

Couldn't follow him down? I mean, what's so tough about gettin' on the radio and callin' for another pair of eyes!?

ANDERSON

I did that! I said: Gutterman, how about a little help, but you were back here, having a beer!

Gutterman explodes onto his feet.

GUTTERMAN

Whataya callin' me, Bob? You lookin' for some trouble?!

ANDERSON

(softly)

I don't think I can take you, Jim. But if you're lookin' for some trouble, I'm not sliding out under the door.

GUTTERMAN

I came back 'cause my RPM's were down. I ain't flyin' no dogfight with half power, especially not against Harachi.

Casey has been looking at Jim for a long moment.

CASEY

He puts his pants on, one leg at a time, just like we do.

GUTTERMAN

(getting pissed)

Who are you supposed to be, Knute Rockne or something?

That stops the conversation. Finally, in an effort to change the subject, Bragg sets his mug down.

BRAGG

Boy, what d'you guys think about Andy Valarro?

GUTTERMAN

(looking for trouble)

The man's a sergeant, isn't he? You're a lieutenant...you tell him to shut up or he's gonna go on a bone hunt!

CONTINUED

CASEY

I don't think that means much to him, Jim. I heard from one of the mechanics he's lost his stripes three times already.

GUTTERMAN

So you crack him in the mouth.

CASEY

(a laugh)

Except I think maybe he's what we've been needing...at least he's getting our planes flying.

Guttermann looks up. This appeals to him right now.

GUTTERMAN

I seen that guy. He's a tub a guts. Whatta you guys afraid of?

CASEY

Look, Jim...let's leave it alone.

GUTTERMAN

I ain't leavin' it alone. It's about time to teach this Marine a few manners.

Guttermann gets to his feet. He moves out of the Sheep Pen. French moves after him.

FRENCH

Hey, Jim, relax, will ya?

T.J. puts his arm out and restrains French. Guttermann is already out the door and heading down the steps of the Sheep Pen.

T.J.

Let him go.

FRENCH

He can get in big trouble choosin' off a non com.

(a beat)

It's the reason I haven't belted him myself.

T.J.

Let'm go, Don....

74
and
75

OMITTED

74
and
75
(X)

75-A EXT. MECHANICS SHED - NIGHT - MOVING WITH GUTTERMAN

75-A
(X)

He is rolling up his sleeves and muttering as he goes.
French, Anderson and T.J. are following a few steps behind.

(X)

GUTTERMAN

So we got us a tub of guts with a
bad attitude, huh? Well, we're
just gonna have to pound a little
politeness into this old boy...!

(X)

75-B NEW ANGLE

75-B
(X)

There are a bunch of mechanics working on the planes and
Gutterman storms into the shed, moves up to his plane, which
is being worked on by Valarro, who is looking into the engine
compartment.

GUTTERMAN

Understand you got an attitude
problem, Sergeant.

76 ANGLE ON VALARRO

76

He turns around and looks down at Gutterman, says nothing.

GUTTERMAN

Since I'm the executive officer of
this squadron, I make attitude
problems my specialty.

Valarro chews on the cigar, not at all concerned.

VALARRO

Ain't nothin' wrong with this plane,
Captain. How come you brought it
back?

GUTTERMAN

We ain't talkin' about airplanes,
Sergeant. I came on down here to
teach you how to salute and say
'please.'

CONTINUED

76

CONTINUED

76

Valarro jumps down off the wing and looks Gutterman in the eye.

VALARRO

If you come lookin' for me, sonny boy...you found me. Now you got the whole party whether you want it or not!

Valarro is so sure he's gonna destroy Gutterman that it almost convinces Gutterman, but he holds his ground and just gets meaner.

GUTTERMAN

Then, why don't we just get to it!

He swings on the Sergeant and the fight begins. It is the classic brawl: Sergeant Valarro is a bear, his blows rain destruction. Gutterman is faster, but will obviously tire. From the beginning it becomes obvious that Gutterman is no match for Valarro who wipes him out. Gutterman is game, but in a short while, he is unable to get up...he is badly beaten and bloody.

FRENCH

Even Pappy couldn't do that to Jim.

VALARRO

Maybe you college boys wanna truck this load outta here so I can get back to fixin' these birds.

(X)

77

ANGLE PILOTS

77

They pick up Gutterman and he is literally carried out of the shed. As he goes, we get a look at his face. It is stony, but there are tears coming down. Hold for a beat and:

CUT TO

78

EXT. LANDING STRIP - L-5 COMING IN - NIGHT

78

as it touches down and comes to a halt. Lard gets out of the plane and moves quickly to the mechanics shed.

(X)

79

INT. MECHANICS SHED - NIGHT

79

Hutch sees Lard coming and drops what he's doing. As Hutch out, Lard moves slowly past the three or four planes, looking (X)

CONTINUED

79

CONTINUED

79

at them carefully. The cowlings are off, the engine broken down, being worked on.

80

INT. GREG'S TENT - NIGHT

80

as Hutch skids in, looks at Greg.

HUTCH

Mayday...Lard's in the Mechanics Shed. He's taking a count.

GREG

I'm on my way. Get to Valarro. Tell him to dummy up.

HUTCH

I'll try, but you know the Sergeant. He ain't much on taking orders.

(X)

Greg is already on his feet, grabbing at his shirt and is out of the tent.

CUT TO

81

INT. MECHANICS SHED - NIGHT

81

as Lard is walking along with Valarro, asking questions. Valarro doesn't like Lard any more than any other officer.

LARD

How 'bout this one, Sergeant?

(a beat)

Is it going up tomorrow?

VALARRO

Well, that's a good question, Colonel. Depends on the run-up once we get the new jugs on. I'd say there's a chance...either way.

(X)

LARD

(pissed)

That's pretty vague, Sergeant.

VALARRO

I've had it with you guys! All I need is some Colonel prowling around in here now, slowing me down. I already had to throw the

(X)

CONTINUED

VALARRO (cont'd)
executive officer outta here on
his butt.

(a beat)

Leave me alone! I'm doin' the
best I can!

He can't believe a sergeant is talking to him that way. He
shakes his head in disbelief.

LARD

I'm gonna give you a break, mister,
and pretend I didn't hear that.

VALARRO

You wanna give me a break? Clear
outta here. I got work to do.

LARD

You're on report, sergeant...that's
one too many. Go to your quarters.

VALARRO

(hands him a
wrench)

Fine...you wanna tighten down the
jugs on that bird? Get the lugs
at exactly 300 pounds.

On that, Greg is there. He hears the end of the conversation
and, as Valarro hands the wrench to Lard, Greg takes the
wrench out of Lard's hand and hands it back to Valarro.

GREG

(pulling Lard
away)

Sergeant, lemme talk to the Colonel
a minute.

LARD

I just put that man on report. I
want him confined to quarters.

GREG

I wanna talk to you first.

He steers Valarro out of the mechanics shed.

GREG

Sir...ahh, you're absolutely right
in putting Valarro on report.

CONTINUED

GREG (cont'd)

I heard the way he was talking to you when I came in. But I think you oughta know something, sir....

LARD

I don't need to know anything. I want him removed.

GREG

His wife Patty...died in her sleep last night...in Des Moines...acute peritonitis...the telegram arrived this morning. I ah...well...I've kept him working around the clock to keep his mind off it, but... well, frankly sir, if you could see your way clear to overlook his attitude tonight...He's not like that, really. That man is the most respectful Marine in the service.

(X)

LARD

His wife...I'm sorry to hear that. Thanks for telling me, Boyington.

(X)

(X)

Greg nods and smiles.

GREG

What was it you wanted, sir?

LARD

I got a report that you flew a mission this morning with only fourteen planes, and that you lost one. That puts your squadron strength at thirteen.

GREG

You heard that, sir? Well, I can't blame you for coming out here. Actually, we're still flying fifteen.

CONTINUED

LARD

Flight regs state that once you fall below fifteen planes, you are no longer officially designated as a squadron. You and your men will be broken up and sent back to the pool.

Greg looks at Lard for a long moment.

GREG

No problem there, Colonel. We're still putting fifteen up.

LARD

Then you won't mind if I stay here till tomorrow and make sure.

GREG

Of course not.

Lard walks off, leaving Greg. Valarro comes back in the maintenance shed and looks at Greg.

(X)

VALARRO

That puts you outta business, 'cause there ain't no way you're gonna put up fifteen birds in the morning.

GREG

How many can we manage?

VALARRO

Fourteen, maybe. I ain't got the parts to fix the fifteenth.

Valarro points to a ship outside the maintenance area.

GREG

I don't care how you do it, but you get fifteen up. Use truck parts if you have to...I'll fly it.

VALARRO

I'll let you know in an hour.

Greg nods and heads out of the shed.

VALARRO

Hey....

Greg turns and looks at him.

CONTINUED

VALARRO

I was real sorry to hear my old
lady croaked...Patty something...?
from Des Moines...?

GREG

Yeah...you got my sympathies.

VALARRO

You wanna sweet talk the Colonel, it's
okay by me...but it's your funeral!

(X)

GREG

You put fifteen planes on that
flight line or it's gonna be
yours!

VALARRO

You ain't got the horsepower,
sonny!

Greg just laughs in his face and walks out of the tent as we:

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

83

EXT. GUTTERMAN'S TENT - NIGHT

83

He's lying on his bed, his hands behind his neck, staring into space. He hasn't cleaned his face from the fight. T.J. is also in the tent. He is getting ready for bed. He looks at Jim for a minute, then finally sits on the side of his bunk.

T.J.

Aren't you gonna turn in?

Guttermann says nothing.

T.J.

You oughta clean those cuts, Jim.

Guttermann looks over at him.

GUTTERMAN

Really, mommy?

T.J. looks at him for a minute then gets up, moves over to the foot locker, takes out a bottle, uncorks it, pours a couple of shots and looks at his tent mate. He hands him one of the canteens. Guttermann won't take it. T.J. sets it down nearby.

(X)

T.J.

In flight school, remember that aerobatics thing everybody had to take? Well, I knew when we got to that part of the training I was gonna die.

(X)

CONTINUED

ACT THREE

FADE IN

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T.J.

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(X)

(X)

CONTINUED

83 CONTINUED

83

T.J. (Cont'd)

A guy in the class ahead of me flew into a mountain. I knew it was gonna happen to me. I used to dream about it. I got into the cockpit every morning and my hands would shake....

Gutterman turns away from T.J. onto his side.

GUTTERMAN

Is this gonna take long, T.J.?

(X)

T.J.

But I couldn't quit, y'know. My buddies were all doing it, so I kept flying. Every morning my stomach was all acid.

Gutterman rolls back.

GUTTERMAN

Look, shut up, T.J. I don't wanna hear this! I ain't interested in your little flight school traumas. Just shut up!

T.J. leans forward and looks at Gutterman.

T.J.

Remember what we used to say in high school? It takes one to know one? You're scared, Jim. I know it. I've been there. I'm still there.

(X)

(a beat)

I'm trying to help you.

Gutterman gets to his feet, his eyes wide with anger.

GUTTERMAN

I don't want any help, you got that?!

T.J. stands up, nose to nose with Gutterman.

(X)

T.J.

You're my friend, Jim.

CONTINUED

83 CONTINUED - 2

83

T.J. (Cont'd)

I'm just trying to tell you that everybody goes through times when they're scared of something. I'm scared every day.

Gutterman turns and hits T.J. in the stomach and T.J. goes down. He sits on the end of the cot, holding his gut.

GUTTERMAN

I told ya, shut up. Lemme alone!

He turns and walks out of the tent.

84 EXT. TENT - NIGHT

84

as Gutterman stands several feet away and feels like shit. He starts to turn to go back inside, then turns away and walks off. After a moment, T.J. exits the tent and stands there for a long moment, holding his stomach.

85 GREG

85

some distance off, standing in the door of his tent. Hold on his worried look for a long moment.

GREG'S NARRATION

Ever since Boyle went down, we were all expecting the worst but nobody was talking about it. As the time passed, it became more and more unlikely that he was alive...and tempers were growing short. I wasn't sure whether that was Gutterman's problem...Maybe it was part of it...But I had a hunch it was something else....

DISSOLVE TO

86 INT. MECHANICS SHED - DAWN

86

as Greg is standing, looking at the fifteenth plane which is just getting the finishing touches from Valarro. He jumps down off the wing.

GREG

Well...?

CONTINUED

86 CONTINUED

86

Valarro says nothing, drops his wrench in a tool box.

(X)

(X)

GREG

Is it gonna fly?

VALARRO

I doubt it. It's got last year's carburetor in it...rebuilt. The plugs aren't gonna last, they're too thin for the horsepower. The trim tab is unfixable so you're gonna have to horse it up. I wouldn't trust the mags, the cylinder heads or the fuel pressure. You put a little white satin in there and you got a coffin, mister.

(X)

GREG

How's the cigarette lighter?

VALARRO

You won't need one. This whole thing's gonna be on fire before you hit the end of the strip.

He looks at Greg and Greg smiles.

GREG

Push it out on the flight line, sergeant.

VALARRO

Mister Guts Ball, huh?

GREG

I only got one question....

Valarro waits.

GREG

How does a guy with such a smart mouth keep all his teeth?

VALARRO

By being hard to hit.

CONTINUED

86 CONTINUED - 2

86

Greg laughs and starts to walk away, then turns with a shot to the guts and Valarro takes a staggering step back and sits on a mechanic's stool. (X)

GREG

Well, so much for that legend.

(a smile)

Keep your fingers crossed, sergeant.

I know you're gonna be rootin' for me.

He turns and walks out of the mechanics shed and:

CUT TO

87 EXT. RONDOVA - DAY - ESTABLISHING

87

as Major Harachi moves across the compound to the officers mess. (X)

88 INT. JAPANESE OFFICER MESS

88

The Pilots are sitting with their breakfasts as Harachi enters.

HARACHI

(in Japanese)

This morning we are going to fly extra tanks. When we meet Boyington, we'll be able to outlast them...we'll catch them when their tanks are dry. (X)

There is a murmur of approval from the pilots.

MATCH CUT

89 INT. SHEEP PEN - DAY

89

as the Black Sheep are having breakfast.

GREG

...two flights. The first one is seven planes. Engage Harachi but stay out of trouble. The idea is to get him to use his fuel. Then the second flight will take off thirty minutes later...jump him while his tanks are dry.

CONTINUED

89 CONTINUED

89

On that, the door to the sheep pen opens and Lard enters carrying his plate of eggs. He sits down.

LARD

As you were....

Since nobody stood up, the remark is slightly out of keeping. He starts to eat his eggs.

GREG

On the flight line in fifteen minutes. Gutterman will lead the A flight, I'll lead the B flight.

He moves past the rest of the pilots and out. Lard watches him go. Turns back to his breakfast, takes a bite.

LARD

These eggs are burned.

CUT TO

90 EXT. RONDOVA - FLIGHT LINE - DAY
as the zeros take off and go up.

90

MATCH CUT TO

91 EXT. VELLA LA CAVA AIR STRIP - DAY
as A flight, with Gutterman in the lead, formes up.

91

92 ANGLE - DAY - GUTTERMAN IN COCKPIT

92

He is sweating. His hands shake. He closes his cockpit and firewalls it. One by one the Black Sheep take off... seven planes.

93 ANGLE - LARD

93

counting the planes.

94 ANGLE - GREG

94

He looks at his watch. It is six o'clock in the morning.

DISSOLVE TO

95 CLOSE SHOT - GREG'S WATCH - PULL BACK 95
It says 6:30. And one by one six more Corsairs take off.
The last plane is Greg's patched-up bird.

96 ON GREG'S CORSAIR 96
as the propellers turn and turn and turn. Intercut with
Lard watching. This is the fifteenth plane and it isn't
getting started.

97 ANGLE - GREG 97
Hutch is standing on the wing, his fingers crossed. Finally
the plane coughs to life. He revs it, checks the mags, then
nods to Hutch.

GREG
As soon as I get off, try and get
Lard outta here. 'Cause I might
be back sooner than you think.

HUTCH
He'll probably leave. He hates
this rock. Carlson burned his
eggs this morning.

GREG
Carlson burned everybody's eggs.

HUTCH
Good luck, Greg.

GREG
Thanks.

Hutch jumps off the wing.

98 ANGLE - DAY - GREG'S CORSAIR 98
as it starts down the runway. It goes and goes, obviously
short on power. Finally it barely lifts off the field.
Intercut with Lard, Valarro and Hutch as they watch the
plane finally sore off the end of the field, pull its wheels
up and bank after the rest of the Corsairs who are forming
up over the ocean.

99 ON VALARRO 99
He can't help but respect Greg's guts.

CONTINUED

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99 CONTINUED

99

VALARRO
(a grunt)
Mister guts ball.

CUT TO

100 EXT. A FLIGHT - DAY

100

It is over the Slot and Gutterman is in charge.

GREG'S NARRATION
But it didn't go the way I had it
planned. Harachi had another
variation on the gas theme and,
I had to admit his was more effective
than mine. In my own defense, I
would have used wing tanks too,
but I hadn't seen one in over two
months and you can't use what you
don't have.

101 ANGLE - FRENCH

101

He's in Gutterman's flight, as he looks over the side.

FRENCH
Bandits at twelve o'clock.

GUTTERMAN
Okay, let's lead these guys around
in circles for a while. Till Greg
gets here.

FRENCH
Hey Jim, they got extra fuel tanks.

(X)

GUTTERMAN
Huh?

102
and
103 OMITTED

102
and
103
(X)

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104 EXT. SKY - DAY 104
as Gutterman and the Black Sheep start to engage.

105 ANGLE - GUTTERMAN 105
He pulls up.

GUTTERMAN
We're pulling out...everybody turn out!

106 ANGLE - T.J. 106
looks at Gutterman.

GUTTERMAN
I told you guys, turn out. Right now. We're outnumbered and Pappy is gonna get creamed. Everybody turn out, head for home...that's an order!

CUT TO

107 ANGLE - THE A FLIGHT 107
as they turn and make a run for it.

GREG'S NARRATION
I heard it all on the radio and as soon as I did, I turned my flight around and landed about five minutes ahead of Gutterman. Given the circumstances, Jim did exactly the right thing. We were going to be caught in a situation where we were outnumbered two against one with no fuel or ammo advantage. The smart thing was to turn tail and wait for tomorrow. Only one thing bothered me: in the ten months I'd known Gutterman, he'd never done the smart thing. He was a hot rock, with an itch for trouble. Something had changed him. And I was afraid I knew what it was.

108
thru OMITTED
110

108
thru
110
(X)

110-A EXT. END OF RUNWAY - DAY

110-A
(X)

Gutterman is sitting on an old, wrecked Corsair as Greg walks up behind him. Gutterman senses him and spins around. Greg flips out a cigarette and hands one to Gutterman, who takes it. Greg lights up.

GREG

Okay, we're gonna talk about it.

(X)

GUTTERMAN

Look, if you don't like the way I been doing things, then why don't you just transfer me out!

GREG

Maybe later...but now, I wanna talk to you.

Gutterman looks at him for a long moment.

GUTTERMAN

Because I turned that flight around today? You gonna tell me that it was the wrong thing to do?

(X)

CONTINUED

110-A CONTINUED

110-A

GREG

No. You did the right thing. But
a week ago, you wouldn't have.

(beat)

I've got to deal with what I see,
Jim. You've been prowling around
the camp like a rabid animal.
Something's changed in you, and I
wanna know what it is.

(X)

Guttermann turns away from Greg and looks out to sea. He is
really distressed, unable to speak. Finally, he turns back
to Greg.

GUTTERMAN

(softly)

Y'see...what I...all I can do is....

He stops and looks at Greg for a long moment, unable to find
the words.

GUTTERMAN

I'm scared. I'm so scared, my
hands shake. I get into that
cockpit and I sweat.

(a long beat)

Help me, Greg.

It is such a plea, it sticks in his throat. He turns away.

GREG

Fear is a lot of things, Jim. I
don't claim to understand it...but
I know it can be constructive or
destructive. There's nothing wrong
with being afraid.

(a beat)

There're guys in this squadron who
fly every day with a lump in their
throats. Your own wing man, T.J.
I respect him for it.

CONTINUED

110-A CONTINUED - 2

110-7

GUTTERMAN

All my life I've been able to count on one thing and that's my nerve. I've never punked out on anything before.

(a beat)

It's not just flying.

(a beat)

It's him. I know I can't beat him.

Greg looks at Gutterman who has turned so he won't have to look Greg in the eye.

GREG

Harachi?

GUTTERMAN

The man's a devil, Greg. I know that's crazy, but I've tried... I've been on him two against one and flown back with a hundred rounds in my tail. I never seen anything like it. I know if I go up against him, he's gonna kill me.

(X)

GREG

Yesterday, when you went down, it was the first time for you, right?

Gutterman nods.

GREG

It's hard to come to grips with the idea that precious, irreplaceable Jim Gutterman might end up sitting in his own blood with the canopy jammed and heading to the bottom of the ocean.

(a beat)

That possibility has always been there, Jim. You just never chose to accept it.

Gutterman looks at Greg.

GUTTERMAN

It's not just dying. It's Harachi. The man's....

GREG

A devil?...

CONTINUED

110 CONTINUED - 3

110

GREG (Cont'd)

(a beat)

No he's not, Jim. He's just a
fired-up rice ball on a hot streak.

(a beat)

Don't make him any more than that.

Guttermann doesn't say anything. Finally Greg turns to walk
away, pauses and turns back.

GREG

I guess you know I gotta ground
you.

(X)

Guttermann nods.

GREG

You know what your flaw has always
been? You're such a hot rock, you
don't think about anything but mix-
ing it up. You put this fear in
perspective and it could be the
best thing that ever happened.

He turns and walks away, leaving Guttermann alone.
He sits down and, as he does, we:

(X)

DISSOLVE TO

111 OMITTED

111
(X)

112 INT. GREG'S TENT - NIGHT

112

Valarro moves over to Greg's cot and kicks under the cot.
Greg grunts and rolls over, opens one eye.

GREG

Yeah?

VALARRO

Get these college boys outta bed
and send 'em down to the pits.

Greg pauses, finally rolls out of bed and puts his feet on
the floor.

CONTINUED

112 CONTINUED

112

GREG

I've let you run around giving out orders like a two star general because I figure you're trying to walk off a bad childhood. But I gotta tell you, Valarro, you're beginning to wear thin.

VALARRO

What you been doing to those airplanes is punishable in all forty-eight states. I'm supposed to come in here and, in two days, put this unit back together. Ain't no way pal! Now, you want fifteen planes flying tomorrow? You got only one way to do it and that's to get this bunch a alter boys outta the sack and send 'em down to the pit. Otherwise you guys are only gonna be puttin' ten planes up in the morning.

GREG

Ten? Whatta you been doing to them?

VALARRO

Ain't that just like a crummy fly-boy officer?! Blame it on the mechanics. I'm tellin' you, bub, we got at least half a night's work on those planes and if I was you, I'd put a new carburetor in that coffin of yours. I managed to scrounge one up, but I ain't got the time to install it...your move.

He turns and walks out of the tent, leaving Greg sitting there. Finally Greg kicks at his mae west which is on the floor, unfortunately draped over a case of scotch. His toe hits the crate and he sucks in his breath, grabs his foot, mutters a curse as we:

CUT TO

113 OMITTED

113

(X)

113-A EXT. MECHANICS SHED - NIGHT

113-A
(X)

as the pilots move belligerently down toward the pits en masse. T.J., French, Bragg, everybody but Gutterman. Greg is leading them. Nobody is happy.

BRAGG

Greg, why don't you just tell this guy Valarro to drop dead!

CASEY

Yeah, Greg, why don't you? He's been treatin' all of us like we was workin' for him. He's workin' for us! We're officers...he's a sergeant!

(X)

GREG

We'll see.

FRENCH

Come on, Pappy. I'd love to see you pop that guy!

GREG

He took Gutterman bad, huh?

FRENCH

Pulverized him.

GREG

(getting worried)

A lucky punch probably.

FRENCH

Nothing lucky about it. Wore him down and dropped him in the dirt.

CONTINUED

113 CONTINUED - 2

113

GREG

Yeah? Well we'll see. First
let's get the engines fixed so we
can go flying tomorrow.

(X)

114 INT. MECHANICS SHED - NIGHT

114

as they enter and the mechanics are all up working on the
planes. The pilots stand around, looking very unhappy.

VALARRO

Okay, you college boys. Get to
your airplanes and the mechanics
there will tell you what to do.

(X)

(X)

The pilots disperse and move over to their planes and roll
up their sleeves or take off their shirts.

BRAGG

I was thinkin' about goin' into
the navy. I shoulda done it. Navy
pilots don't have to work on their
own planes.

FRENCH

That's right, but they have to
salute.

BRAGG

I guess nothing's perfect, huh?

FRENCH

This sure ain't.

He picks up a wrench.

FRENCH

(to Mechanic)

Anything you say, dear.

EDDIE

You better get the fuel screens out,
sir.

(X)

DISSOLVE TO

115 INT. MECHANICS SHED - NIGHT 115

as Greg is working on his plane putting in a new carburator. He looks at the entrance of the shed as Gutterman enters.

116 ANGLE - GUTTERMAN 116

He looks around...moves slowly over to his plane and looks at the engine. Hutch is working on the plane next door.

GUTTERMAN

How is it?

HUTCH

Not good. But Greg said Farrel was gonna fly it tomorrow.

GUTTERMAN

I know what he said...but it don't mean I can't work on my bird.

Hutch looks over at Greg, who nods at him.

CUT TO

117 INT. SHED - NIGHT - ON GUTTERMAN 117

as he rolls up his sleeve and starts to work on his engine.

118 CLOSER - THE ENGINE 118

as Gutterman reaches in and snaps out the master fuse, then removes the sticks in his pockets. He does this so nobody sees. Move in on him as he looks over his shoulder, then continues his work as we: (X)

DISSOLVE TO

119 EXT. FLIGHT LINE - DAY 119

as Greg and the rest of the pilots stand around, some still with wrenches in their hands, when all of a sudden a whoop comes up from somewhere in the direction of the radio shack, and Casey comes running toward them.

CASEY

Air Sea Rescue coming in, they got Boyle!

An L-5 pulls over the end of the field and sets down, taxis up. Bob Boyle with a two-day growth (X)

CONTINUED

119

CONTINUED

119

beard and looking like he could use some sleep, gets out of the plane and the pilots stand looking at him all grinning ear to ear.

FRENCH

Who let this bum back in the war?

CASEY

Does that mean we gotta put his
scotch back in the tent?

Greg moves up and gives Boyle a hug, then knocks him playfully in the head.

GREG

Old Harachi knocked you down while
he was turning away from me...It
was almost an afterthought.

(a grin)

Now how did he manage that?

BOYLE

I guess because I had my head up
and locked.

(X)

GREG

You need a plexiglass belly...you guess!

(X)

Boyle grins and all of the Black Sheep surround him and pound him on the back.

BOYLE

You guys...you wouldn't believe the
little island I found. The native
girls don't wear anything. The
Navy found me three days ago, it took
them seventy-two hours to catch me.

(X)

The rest of the Black Sheep let up a cheer and Boyle grins.

GREG

Let's mount up and get out of here.

There is a moment of backslapping and then the Black Sheep get into their planes. One of the pilots gets into Gutterman's plane and as he turns the prop blade, the engine won't start. Valarro comes over and looks at it, turns to Hutch.

VALARRO

What's wrong with this one?

CONTINUED

119 CONTINUED - 2 119

HUTCH
Don't know. It should be okay.

The engine won't start and after a moment, the pilot jumps down out of the cockpit and two-by-two the Black Sheep take off streaking out over the ocean and forming up.

120 ANGLE - GUTTERMAN'S PLANE - DAY 120

as Boyle looks over at it.

BOYLE
(to Hutch)
Where's Jim?

HUTCH
He ain't flying, Bob...Pappy grounded him.

121 ANGLE ON BOYLE 121

on his expression.

BOYLE
Pappy what...???

Hold for a beat and....

CUT TO

122 EXT. BLACK SHEEP IN FLIGHT - DAY 122

as they head out toward the slot.

GREG'S NARRATION
Even though we were heading back into the slot and we knew that Harachi would be there, there was a looseness again in the squadron. Getting Bob back seemed to snap the tension...some of the old jokes started crackling through my headset.

CASEY
Anybody looking for a pool this morning?

FRENCH
Even if you spot this guy, you couldn't hit him, Casey.

CONTINUED

122 CONTINUED

122

CASEY

We don't need to hit him French.
All you gotta do is crack your
cockpit and foul the air...Zeeks
can't fly in stink.

FRENCH

You wanna pool Larry or you wanna
do bad Berle jokes?

CASEY

Five bucks.

GREG

You guys are on.

FRENCH

Good. 'Cause there they are at
six o'clock. We got the altitude
this time.

GREG

Stay tight...and leave Harachi to
me.

123 ANGLE - GREG'S COCKPIT

123

as he switches momentarily to another frequency. Intercut
Harachi.

GREG

You're going down, Tommy.

HARACHI

I'm looking for you. Where you
hiding?

GREG

I'm on your starboard wing, dummy.

Greg lets go and Harachi dives over as Greg streaks in on him.

124 SERIES OF SHOTS - DOGFIGHT - DAY

124

The planes wheel over the sky, their fifty-calibres clattering.

125 EXT. VELLA LA CAVA FIELD - DAY

125

as Gutterman moves over to his plane which is standing off
the side of the flight line. Hutch is there with the cowlings
off. Gutterman has the main fuse.

(X)

CONTINUED

125 CONTINUED

125

HUTCH

You pulled the main fuse out.

(X)

GUTTERMAN

Put it back. I'm taking off in
five minutes.

(X)

HUTCH

Pappy doesn't want you flying.

GUTTERMAN

Is that a fact, Hutch? You gonna
put it in or am I?

(X)

Hutch takes the fuse and reaches into the engine.

(X)

CUT TO

126 EXT. DOGFIGHT - DAY

126

as the Black Sheep are in desperate trouble and outnumbered
by the Zeroes, they wheel around the sky with their guns
clattering.

(X)

CUT TO

127 EXT. VELLA LA CAVA - DAY

127

as Gutterman takes off and climbs up into the sky pulling
his wheels into his belly.

128 INT. GUTTERMAN'S COCKPIT - DAY

128

His hands are shaking. His face is sweating. He wipes his
hand over his face and it comes away wet. He grimaces and
switches his radio to the right frequency.

FRENCH'S VOICE

(mixed with gunfire)

Gimme some cover here, Anderson!

ANDERSON

I'm coming down.

CONTINUED

128 CONTINUED

128

CASEY'S VOICE

On your right...on your right!

GREG

Somebody cover Stover he's going in.

CASEY

Bail out, Dink...bail out!

(X)

BRAGG

He's out.

Over this begin a long dissolve through to the appropriate action and half-way through hold so that we can see the fight over the image of Gutterman listening on the radio. His expression will be stoney, his face wet with sweat, but he's flying in.

GREG

Here comes Harachi. Stay outta my way.

FRENCH

You got him.

COMPLETE DISSOLVE TO

129 EXT. DOGFIGHT - DAY

129

as Greg and Harachi mix it up. Series of shots intercutting with the cockpit as these two aces whirl around, first Greg has the advantage then Tomio. Greg's cockpit gets stuck then Harachi's. This should truly be a contest to remember. Finally Greg rolls out of trouble and Harachi breaks right getting ready to execute a maneuver that will put him on Greg's tail.

130 INT. T.J.'S COCKPIT - DAY

130

He rolls right to escape another Zero and finds himself looking right at Harachi's tail.

T.J.

(can't believe it)

I'm on his tail!

He hits the button and with one short, lucky burst, he flames the twenty-five-kill Japanese ace.

131 INTERCUT - BLACK SHEEP - FEATURING T.J.

131

T.J.

(unrestrained joy
and disbelief)I got him! I got him! Look at
that...I got Harachi!

ct	#46216	60	
132	ANGLE - THE JAP PLANE		132
	as it peels off trailing smoke and crashes into the water.		
133	ANGLE - GUTTERMAN		133
	He is still flying alone, heading toward the combat zone over the Slot. He hears this and his expression doesn't change.		
	<p style="text-align: center;">T.J.'S VOICE I got him...can you guys believe that I got Harachi?</p>		
			SMASH CUT
134	EXT. DOGFIGHT - DAY		134
	as the Zeroes peel off and make a run for it without their leader. They are demoralized in the middle of their fight... they tangled with a hornet.		
135	ANGLE - JIM GUTTERMAN - DAY		135
	as he dives in on five Zeroes and flames one and then spinning over on his back and gets another.		
136	INTERCUT - BLACK SHEEP		136
	as they see him.		
	<p style="text-align: center;">CASEY That's gotta be Jim down there!</p>		
	<p style="text-align: center;">T.J. What's he think he's doing?</p>		
137	ANGLE - GUTTERMAN		137
	He single-handedly turns the flight of the Zeroes and pushes them back toward the Black Sheep, who fall on them. They begin to knock these Zeroes down...one first, then another, then a third...and finally a fourth.		
138	NEW ANGLE - THE SKY - DAY		138
	as ten remaining Zeroes turn off and streak for home low over the water.		
139	EXT. VELLA LA CAVA - DAY		139
	as one by one the Black Sheep land and get out of their planes.		

CONTINUED

139 CONTINUED

139

As soon as T.J. is out they boost him on their shoulders and carry him into the Sheep Pen.

140 ANGLE - GUTTERMAN AND GREG

140

They are a beat behind.

GREG

Welcome back, Jim.

Gutterman holds his hand out. They're steady. He smiles and nods his head.

GUTTERMAN

(softly)

Yeah...

(a beat)

Look, Greg...I...about yesterday....

GREG

Shut up, will ya?! If you're not gonna send flowers...just shut up!

He laughs and cuffs Gutterman on the back of the neck.

GREG

That new sergeant took you good, huh?

GUTTERMAN

No contest. If I was you, I'd give that guy plenty of room.

(a beat)

I may want to try him on again, but not until I've worked a little on my stamina.

GREG

Let's go help T.J. celebrate.

They walk off toward the Sheep Pen and as they do, Greg's eye catches Valarro looking at one of the planes. He motions for Gutterman to go ahead and veers off, approaching Valarro.

GREG

We got Harachi...T.J. got him.

VALARRO

That's the guy who flies with his mixture too rich...Mr. Foul-the-Plugs, right?

(X)

GREG

(a smile)

Worst pilot in the unit.

(pause)

Listen, why don't you come into the Sheep Pen and have a drink, Sarge? Get to know the guys....

CONTINUED

140

CONTINUED

140

VALARRO

I don't want to know the guys. I
gotta fix these birds.

(a beat)

I'm an enlisted man. I ain't goin'
in no Officers Club.

GREG

It's not an Officers Club. Come
on, I'll buy you one.

Valarro looks at him with complete disgust.

VALARRO

I could take you. Just like your
exec...blow you away....

GREG

I don't think so. But why don't
you come have a drink and we'll
talk about it.

VALARRO

Well, I ain't drinkin' with no
officers...so get lost.

Greg looks at him and smiles.

GREG

One of these days we'll have to
find out.

VALARRO

I'll be here.

Greg smiles and walks off.

141

INT SHEEP PEN

141

as Greg and Gutterman enter, catching T.J. in mid-sentence.

T.J.

(gesturing with hands)

...under him, but he was good, y'know?
I mean, not great but good. I knew
I was gonna have to do a pivot split
S if I was gonna get him.

T.J. stops when he sees Gutterman.

CONTINUED

141 CONTINUED

141

GUTTERMAN

Go on, T.J. I can't wait to hear the rest.

T.J.

(wide smile)

So I rolled under him and blew him away. Me...T.J. Wiley! The new champion and Devil in the Slot!

Valarro is still standing in the door, listening. This is as close as he's going to get. Move in on him.

VALARRO

(disbusted)

College boys!

CUT TO

142 ANGLE - VELLA LA CAVA AIRFIELD - DAWN

142

as the propellers spin and the mechanics pull the chock blocks out from under the wheels. The Black Sheep climb into their cockpits.

CUT TO

143 EXT. RONDOVA AIRFIELD - DAY

143

as the Japanese climb into theirs.

144 INTERCUT - TAKEOFFS

144

Black Sheep and Japanese as they head out to mix it up over the Slot.

GREG'S NARRATION

For the next two weeks we kept up the morning missions over the Slot. With the loss of Tomio Harachi, the Japanese pilots seemed demoralized. At least that's the way the high command was calling it. The news correspondents picked it up. They called it a victory. We were looking at it from a little different point of view. I guess all I could really say was we were holding our own up there, which was better than it had been before.

CONTINUED

144 CONTINUED

144

GREG'S NARRATION (Cont'd)

(a beat)

Somebody once said politics makes
strange bed fellows...and I guess
it's true with war as well. After
all, I was sleeping with a bull
terrier. And T.J.? Well...

(a long beat)

...he made the cover of Time.

Hold for a long beat, and on a shot of the squadron against
the sky.

FADE OUT

THE END