

"Witches" - Episode ONE (pilot)

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"For most of history, Anonymous was a woman."

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ACT ONE**EXT. FACTORY (NIGHT TIME)**

Beneath a guard tower, next to a dense and dark forest A YOUNG GERMAN SOLDIER in a Nazi uniform paces along a tall razor wired fence line. Braving the cold, a handful of soldiers patrol the grounds around him. In the background stands a dark industrial building marked "The Berlin Bacon Factory". Desperate scatters of dim green light sneak out through its mostly blackened windows and doors. The young soldier strikes a match and the orange bloom of the flame under-lights his face and sunken eyes, giving us a flash of his sickly, skeletal frame. A closer look at his hands reveals small red marks, one dotting each wrist. From above he hears the mechanical whirl of an airplane engine growing in the distance. Exhausted, he carefully extinguishes his cigarette, exhales the smoke from his lungs and looks again to the night sky in anticipation, . . . But the noise of the plane cuts out.

YOUNG SOLDIER

(He waits a beat and then becomes frantic)
Witches!

He calls up to the guard tower.

YOUNG SOLDIER (CONT'D)

Witches!

In the tower, an OLDER SOLDIER scouts the skies. The tension on his face tells us he knows what's coming. He closes his eyes and intently listens. Then he hears it, the whistling of air passing over a wing, and it's getting closer.

OLDER TOWER SOLDIER

(Calmly)

Sound the alarm . . . And keep your eyes on the skies.

They watch the younger soldier below as he hurries towards a foxhole near the tower. He anxiously swings his rifle from left to right, searching above the treetops as he runs. From overhead, a line of bullets shower the ground and tear across the soldier's chest and head, dropping him just feet from the hole. Back in the tower the young soldier dives to the floor.

OLDER TOWER SOLDIER (CONT'D)

(NOW ALARMED)

The alarm! Idiot!

As bullets shatter glass and strafe across the walls, the younger soldier reaches up and grabs the handset and shouts.

YOUNGER SOLDIER
Den Alarm ertönen lassen

The sirens sound. In a second tower, a guard swings around a large caliber anti-aircraft gun, tracking and shooting towards the silhouette of the plane as it passes overhead.

EXT. NIGHT SKY - CONTINUOUS

(POV from the open-air cockpit of a World War 1 era biplane)

Treetops whoosh by just a few feet below. The pilot, cracks off a second round, which shatters more glass from the tower, taking out another guard and sending the rest of the men diving for cover.

Back on the ground, more men try to escape but are cut down in their tracks.

OLDER TOWER SOLDIER
(Spotting the fire from the plane's guns)
West! Heading northwest, about ten thirty!

Another round of bullets rake across the front of the building.

OLDER TOWER SOLDIER (CONT'D)
(Under his breath)
The filthy crow is shitting all over us.

Before he can react, bullets again zero in on the tower and the plane WHOOSHES overhead. Both towers fire back wildly into the air. The pilot in the tiny craft, powers up the engine and quickly climbs to a higher position amongst a flurry of enemy gunfire. A shadow darts over the craft, and then another, rocking the plane and startling the pilot. As the pilot checks the skies above, bullets from below cut through the wing, and another through the body of the plane. A piece of the windshield shatters, smoke sputters from the engine and fluid splatters across the pilot's goggles. In a fight to see, the pilot pulls off the goggles and leather cap revealing long, flowing hair. Just below the clouds, she cuts the engine and barrels back towards the factory. As the tiny plane rolls, we see the painted silhouette of a Witch on the fuselage and notice small butterfly bombs tied to each wing.

The pilot pulls a wire and releases one of the bombs. We hear only the whoosh of the falling device as it speeds off towards its target. On the ground, soldiers scatter and shoot into the air amongst the chaos, as the bomb finds its mark. More cries of "Witches" ring out. Back inside the tower, the guard swings his gun around to track the plane. The older soldier ducks, just missing the gun.

OLDER TOWER SOLDIER (CONT'D)
(Shaking his head at the young gunmen)
Idiot! . . . Trying to kill me!?!

He's immediately riddled with gunfire from the plane outside and crumbles to the floor. The guard pulls the trigger and the muzzle flash illuminates the inside of the now blood-spattered tower. Nazi bullets shred into the wings and strike a second bomb. The device explodes taking most of the wing with it. The plane spins and drops from the night sky, out of view. Fixed on the stars, we hear the whistling of the falling plane, then the cracking of tree limbs and an explosion.

EXT. SKY (EARLY MORNING)

We pan down slowly from the night sky under the sounds of muffled gunfire;

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
I think one of the girls . . . Helen maybe, called these days, our new beginning.

(With a grin in her voice)

Its true, those first days together in Kent, our lives were still spectacular in so many ways. But, I know when each of us thought back on our own time . . . Before all of that, we each shared a feeling of uncertainty, a fairy tale, a ruse, and none of us were ready to look deeper into that "something" that was hidden away, just under the surface.

Sophie asked me once, What is it that the light of a new day brings to us? Is it the opportunity to leave things behind, to chase new things, or to just be rescued from darkness?

I'm not sure if I answered her, I knew I struggled enough to just keep a grip on the today. . . I hated the idea of new unknowns . . . Of new chances for us to fall apart. I fought hard to keep the safety of the today in my sights.

The chaos of explosions fade and the sounds of footsteps draw close.

EXT. FARM (EARLY MORNING)

It's early morning (just before dawn) on the old Texas farm. Under a dim and flickering barn light we see a freckled face man (Mr. Roland Brown) dressed in old flight leathers, slipping out of a wooden side door.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)(CONT.)

There was a time, that this weed sprung, and dust filled old place was where all my best memories lived. For a breath, our sun rose bright every day here . . . And we rose right beside her. I thought of it as a home I would have protected at all cost. A place that anchored us and fostered a child hood of sweet and enjoyable times or at the very least, agreeable times.

I just never really thought that it would only be the book ends of our braided story. . . . Or maybe that we would end up with any story at all.

The man checks the area around him and then secures the lock. With only one free arm (carrying two wool blankets in the other), he uses his teeth to pull on a pair of tattered gloves. We spot dime size scars, one on each wrist. He pulls down his leather flyer's cap over his strawberry blond hair and hurries across a dirt drive. Behind him, weathered barn doors, grey and sun-bleached, read "Brown's - Crop Dusting and Aviation Repair". Hand written in chalk, someone has added "and Daughters" to the name.

ROLAND/DAD

(Yelling back over his shoulder)

C'mon you coconuts! . . . We gotta get up there.

We hear the front screen door slam and turn to see two small girls (Just 10 and 8) frantically following.

NANS

(The older of the two, with strawberry blond hair like her father, pulled back tight.)

Why do we always have to do this in the dark?

LIZZY

You chicken shit Nans

At 8 years old, Lizzy's small and scrappy, with jet-black hair, freckles and bright cornflower blue eyes. Still dressed in her nightshirt, an old striped sweater pulled over the top . . . Lizzy hops as she tugs on one of her rubber boots. Just off the front porch, she steps (toes deep) into the mud with the other foot. Nans watches in disgust as Lizzy gives the foot a quick shake and then stuffs it into her boot.

NANS
What's wrong with you?

LIZZY
I don't know . . . All kinds of stuff, I guess.

Both girls carry oversized flight caps and a pair of goggles. Nans' goggles rest on her forehead, Lizzy's are down over her eyes; her finger tucked underneath, wiping the fog and dirt from the inside of the lens. As she walks, she squints, trying to focus on the dirty glass, bumping straight into the back of Nans.

NANS
Watch it, you nit!
Daddy!. . . I'm still in my pajamas . . .
Couldn't you wait for me to . . .

LIZZY
. . . For God sakes, give it a rest . . . You know
this is how we always do it. You afraid the Davis boys
are gonna see you? (Smooch, smooch) . . . Now hurry up
slowpoke, she'll be up soon!

DAD
C'mon girls!

NANS
I just needed 2 more minutes!

LIZZY
Really . . .
You do this every time . . .
(Under her breath)
Shit for brains.

NANS
(Offended, she stops dead)
Dad!

Lizzy again slams face first into Nans' back.

NANS (CONT'D)
Watch it!

DAD
(Smiling and rolling his eyes)
Lizzy, the language

LIZZY
W h a t ?

DAD
Little girls don't . . .

Lizzy mouths the words "shit for brains" to Nans

NANS
. . . Dad?!

Nans looks over at her father . . . Who looks exhausted.

NANS (CONT'D)
Daddy, did you sleep at all?

Dad doesn't answer her

NANS (CONT'D)
Daddy, did you see the new drawings I left for you?

DAD
I did.

NANS
I think, if we replace the oak with spruce, we won't have to widen the wings at all. I'm thinking same maneuverability, and maybe more airspeed.

DAD
Its brilliant Nans.

We'll try it out when I'm done with the barn project, okay?

NANS
Okay . . . Does she fly yet?

DAD
. . . Just a few details to work out still.

LIZZY
(In a whisper)
Details. . . That's where the devil lives.

DAD
Indeed . . . Now C'mon you two.

In the grass, just beyond the driveway sits an old 2-seater Sopwith Dragon. The tattered bi-plane (built in the late 1800's) sags from its years but shines with a fresh coat of green and red paint.

DAD (CONT'D)
(Throwing the blankets into the back seat.)
Lizzy, pull the blocks. Nans set the step, get your sister in, and pull the choke . . . And Lizzy, buckle up.
(MORE)

DAD (CONT'D)
 (Under his breath)
 Davis boys?

LIZZY
 (Quickly climbing up as her older sister steadies her.)
 I don't need any help. Daddy, can I fly her today!

DAD
 Next time out Lizzy, right now, your job is to get in
 your seat.

LIZZY
 I know, but . . .

NANS
 . . . Daddy! It's coming up!

DAD
 I see it.
 Lizzy, in!

LIZZY
 Yes, sir.

Lizzy reluctantly climbs in. Dad gives her a sweet "thank you" smile and throws Nans a quick thumbs up. Nans pulls the choke; taps on the gas gauge (the empty needle pops to full). She flips the engine switch and signals back. Dad pulls down on the prop and the engine fires up. Like a well-oiled machine, Nans slides out of the front seat and into the back with Lizzy, just as the plane starts to roll forward. Now smiling from ear to ear, the two girls buckle up and wrap themselves in the blankets as Dad jumps in and taxis the plane across the grass field. They take off just before the sun starts to break. He pulls back hard on the stick and the three climb into the sky. As they lose themselves in the low-lying clouds, the sisters ask their father to tell them "The Story". Breaking through the tops of the clouds, Dad closes his eyes and lets the new morning sun warm his face for just a second. He looks back and nods "Yes" to the girls and then puts the plane into a stall. As they float down, both girls reach up with their arms (barely clearing the bucket seat) like they're riding a rollercoaster for the first time.

DAD
 (Trying to talk over the plane's winding engine)
 I want to remind you both, that there was a day, . . .
 Not unlike this one, when the sun didn't rise . . .

Both girls mouth the words as their father tells the story.

DAD (CONT'D)

. . . It didn't light the sky nor warm any faces. And it's in that place, on that day, where a very brave girl, . . . a tiny girl, found the strength to lift the sun back into the sky.

NANS

She was fearless

LIZZY

(Cutting Nans off)
I know! I remember!

DAD

. . . She grew up without a mother nor a father. Her mother passing long before she could remember and her father, filled with wanderlust and sadness, left when she was just a tiny girl. But she always remembered; that a long time ago, he told her about a spot at the top of the world. A place where the sun rests at night and in the morning was lifted into the sky to wake the people and help the moon find its way home. So on that day, when the light was resigned, and refused to shine, she set out into the obscurity to find the sun. Through the dark forest, up and over the jagged cliffs to the tip of the mountain at the top of the world.

Dad banks and rolls the plane hard and continues with the story, still a bit muffled by the plane's engine.

DAD (CONT'D)

At the top of the world, at the end of her long journey, she found only a dim light. Cold, she stepped closer to the glow, opened her arms and let it warm her face and hands for just a moment. Being only steps away she could see inside to the center, and make out a silhouette of a man, withered and old, much too tired to lift the sun. "Who goes there?"

The old man cried out, startling the girl.

"I'm looking for the one who keeps the sun,"

She answered.

"You would guess it's not likely me", the old man answered back. "Only someone brave enough, strong enough and selfless enough could ever be so entrusted. How did you find this place!?" The man asked. The girl tells him, "A long time ago, my father told of a spot at the top of the world, a spot where every morning the sun is lifted back into the sky. Is this that place?" The man leans into the girl's voice as his light dims just a bit. "How did you brave the dark forest!?", He challenged. "My father told me, when passing through the darkness, to always be fearless and press-on until clear of the very last shadow.

(MORE)

DAD (CONT'D)

Father said that I was sure to be safe, only with the dark far behind. So I did.

Back in the plane, the two girls squeeze in together as they continue to listen.

LIZZY

(In a whisper as she smiles at Nans)
Bravest ever . . .

Lizzy then pokes Nans in the side, drops her blanket and (to show off) unbuckles her belt. "Don't", Nans nods, but Lizzy drops the ends of the belt to the floor anyway.

DAD

The man's shoulders waned and the light dimmed again, revealing more of his form. The girl covered herself from the growing cold and focuses on his vaguely familiar silhouette. "How did you scale the jagged cliffs my dear?" Asked the man.

Lizzy stands up on the seat, silhouetted by the rising sun, her arms in the air pretending to fly.

DAD (CONT'D)

(As Lizzy continues to mouth the words)
"My father told me, with all my strength to always reach for the top of the world and not to fade until the last jagged cliff was beneath my feet."

Dad, lost in his story, again turns the plane sharply. Lizzy loses her balance and tumbles over the plane's edge. Nans quickly reaches down over the lip, grabbing Lizzy's dress. The thin cloth tugs and starts to tear. Lizzy reaches back up and snatches Nans' hand and frantically pulls herself back into her seat.

NANS

(Whispers)
Idiot

LIZZY

(Whispering back, while still holding tight to Nans' arm)
"Chicken shit"

Nans can't help but smile as she quickly belts her in.

Dad, hearing the click of the belt, looks back at the girls just as the sun fully breaks.

DAD

. . . She was always the happiest out here, on the
wind . . .
. . . Now, I need to get you two home . . .

THE GIRLS

(Together)

Finish the story!

DAD

For another day, you'll both be late for school.

He turns and rolls the plane one last time. The girls
(still holding on to each other just in case) laugh
hysterically. The sun lights their faces and we look
into the glow of the early morning.

INT. BROWN HOUSE (LATER THAT MORNING)

The back screen door swings open and Nans stomps in.

NANS

(Yelling)

It's just me. Lizzy forgot her lunch
. . . And her math book
. . . And her homework
Daddy!?

In the kitchen Nans finds a handful of past-due notices
laid across a week-old issue of the Greenwood
Commonwealth out of Mississippi. She picks it up and
notices a small local article in the bottom corner
circled in red. The tiny caption reads "Father and all
5 sons of the JACKSON family slaughtered Saturday in
Leflore County. Whereabouts of the mother and daughter
are unknown." Nans hears voices in the living room and
tiptoes in. There she sees her father standing at the
front door finishing a conversation with a tall slender
man in a dark blue suit and hat. He's backlit by the
sun, so Nans can't quite make out his face.

DAD

I know, I promised. Tell them I need just a little more
time.

The papers wrestle in Nans hands and the man looks in
and spots her through the open screen.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT

How are the little ones doing Roland?
Must be tough without a mother?

Dad looks back over his shoulder at Nans and then squeezes the door closer to the jam.

DAD

Maybe just a few more months; a year at the most.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT
(As he walks away, eyeing Nans)
Beautiful.

Dad closes the door, and without a word about the visit, picks up Lizzy's lunch and textbook from the table and tucks them into Nans' backpack.

NANS

(Worried)

. . . Who, Um . . .

(Looking over the notices)

Was that?

That Mr. Mc . . Van, O, Patricks, from the bank?

Dad pulls the papers from Nans hands. He tucks the notices into a kitchen drawer and slides the newspaper into his back pocket.

DAD

Did you read the new lesson book I gave you?

Nans face drops as she looks to the floor.

NANS

I started to, but . .

DAD

(Now stern as he watches the car drive away)

Damn it . . . I need you to keep up Nans!

NANS

(Confused to Dad's sudden mood change)

Yes, sir.

Dad buttons Nans' pack . . .

NANS (CONT'D)

Can I take the Dragon up when I get home?

He spins her around and kisses her on the forehead.

DAD

(Nose to nose, he looks into her eyes)

You know you're just a 10-year-old little girl, right?

NANS

Just?

Dad shakes his head and shrugs his shoulders.

DAD
. . . She gassed?

NANS
Yes, sir!

Nans kisses him on the brow. He then spins her back around.

DAD
Sure, if you take your sister up.

He nudges her towards the door, sending her on her way.

NANS
But Daddy . . .

DAD
. . . Now hurry, or you'll be late.

Nans looks back over her shoulder and smiles.

NANS
See you here when I get home?

DAD
(Smiling back)
Course you will, where else would I be?

From the kitchen window Roland watches Nans run off. He pulls the paper from his back pocket and pushes it deep into the kitchen trash. We watch the dry Texas landscape as it lapses to golden hour, holds, and then fades to a dark and starry summer's night.

INT. BROWN HOUSE (NIGHT TIME)

From inside the Brown's kitchen we hear Lizzy chattering on while pulling and pounding on an old zenith updraft carburetor at the kitchen table.

NANS
Why is that where we eat?

LIZZY
(Looking at Nans through the open and closing valve)
Cuz, I think I can change the pressure? . . . If I can
make this little opening smaller,

NANS
 (Under her breath)
 As small as that brain of yours?

LIZZY
 Then, I'm pretty sure she'll suck up more gas and really
 take off.
 . . . Daddy?

. . . Dad looks over and smiles.

Lizzy uses both hands to pry out the old gasket. She
 leans in over her plate and (like a dog) wolfs down the
 last of her dinner.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
 (Her words muffled from the plate)
 So, I heard . . . Mr. Haggier . . . The new Pharmacist
 . . . Is some kind of an adventurer!

Dad and Nans put away the last of the dishes. Nans
 wipes down the kitchen basin and tightens the lid on a
 jar of plums.

NANS
 You're an idiot, what do you mean adventurer?
 Something snaps loose in Lizzy's hands

LIZZY
 Shit, Got it
 She sits inspecting the torn gasket.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
 . . . Yuck!
 She then drops the black rubber ring onto her plate,
 and the plate into Nans (just cleaned) sink.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
 I mean, the man's seen the world . . . France, The
 Pacific!
 . . . Even Africa!!
 Nans shakes her head and starts in again on the basin.

DAD
 Sounds like our new pharmacist was a soldier.
 (Under his breath)
 . . . Glory exulting over pain, . . . Beauty garlanded
 in hell.

NANS
What, Daddy?

DAD
Nothing Sweets

LIZZY
(Pulling and stabbing on the valve with a screwdriver)
All's I know is he got to see it!

. . . She pries off the choke and gas splashes onto
the table.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Crap!

Nans looks over and rolls her eyes

NANS
(As she wipes the table)
What do you mean "see it".
See what?

Lizzy gets up and puts the bottle of milk and her glass
into a lower cupboard (Instead of the icebox and sink)

LIZZY
The whole world, that's what.

She slams the cupboard shut as Dad watches (shaking his
head).

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Someday I'm gonna see it all, and get off this tiny
miserable old farm.
Just . . . Just fly away!

Nans looks over to see her father's face wilt.

NANS
You're an idiot

LIZZY
What?
Anyways, Cindy Poe, at school,
She says I musta gotten licked by the flames of
adventure . . .
licked and licked.

NANS
Explains the shiny complexion.

Lizzy looks over her handy work on the table and then
up to her dad.

LIZZY
Anyway . . .

DAD
(As he pulls out the bottle of milk and dirty glass)
Yeah, . . .
Maybe you should stay away from that Cindy Poe.
And Lizzy? . . .

LIZZY
Yes, Daddy?

He pauses, and then puts the milk into the icebox.

DAD
. Thanks for the help tonight.

Nans rolls her eyes and smiles.

LIZZY
(With a yawn)
You're welcome. Night.

DAD
Good night.

Lizzy walks off to bed rubbing her eyes as Nans checks the lock on the back door before switching off the porch light. On her way out of the room she stops and kisses her father on the cheek . . .

DAD (CONT'D)
Your studies?

Roland taps on a hand written textbook sitting open on the kitchen table.

DAD (CONT'D)
All caught up?

NANS
All caught up . . . It doesn't mean I understood any of
it . . .
Half-life?, Stars? . . . Fusion?

DAD
(Whispering to Nans, he smiles)
We'll talk about it tomorrow, OK?

NANS
OK

DAD
Night Nans.

NANS

Good Night Daddy . . . And by the way, I love our tiny
little farm.

. . . I don't ever want to leave.

Everything I ever needed is right here.

DAD

(Dad smiles and kisses her on the forehead)

Me too.

Out of sight of Nans, Roland's smile drops.

INT. ROLAND'S OFFICE (LATE NIGHT)

Like most nights before disappearing into the barn, Roland sits alone in his office. All around him floor-to-ceiling shelves can hardly contain his books and dozens more of the hand written lessons. Stacks of hand drawn designs cover chairs and end tables, while overhead, elaborate model aircraft hang from the ceiling. He puts the final touches to a design and stuffs it into a legal-size envelope marked "US Specials" that he knows he'll never send. He licks and pastes down the 9-cent stamp, unlocks and opens the bottom desk drawer and adds the mail to a carefully placed stack of the same.

DAD

(With a laugh in his voice)

Just one to the good guys

(Sad and chocking on the next words)

God . . . Just one.

Crammed in next to the pile, stands another bundle, filled with more letters from the bank; past due notices, foreclosure threats and property auction requests. He sets the pile on the desk and begins to thumb through them. Back in the drawer an old snapshot catches his eye. He reaches in past the mess and picks up the photo of a beautiful American Indian woman, dressed in feathers, war paint and a buckskin dress. A smile comes to his face.

DAD (CONT'D)

Hello Liddie

Next to the woman stands a young Roland in racing leathers and an awkward ten-gallon hat. A banner behind them reads "The Flying Browns' - Air Show". As he studies the photo, he rubs his thumbs on the corners, smiles and drifts into a dream-like state . .

EXT. AIRFIELD (EARLY EVENING)- FLASHBACK

Amongst the buzz of a small town air show, a young Roland stands on a makeshift podium strung with lights. Next to Roland stands an obese man in a bulging pin-striped suit. Sweat pours down his face as he steps to the microphone. Behind the obese man stands a taller gentlemen dressed in grey. Grey suit, grey shirt, hat and grey in complexion. A faded red sash that says, "Mayor" hangs across his chest. In front of the three, a crowd gathers.

OBESE MAN

(Into the microphone, with initial feedback as he fans himself)

Most honored ladies and distinguished gentleman
 (He looks back and nods) Mr. Mayor! . . . Out of all of
 the far-reaching places on God's green earth . . .
 History was made here today.
 Right before your very eyes!

The spectators cheer and shuffle towards the stage. In the front of the crowd a Drunken Heckler raises his bottle in celebration, as small handfuls of confetti rain down around them.

OBESE MAN (CONT'D)

You were the blessed witnesses of the most amazing and
 colossal event in all of human history...

DRUNKEN HECKLER

(Yelling from the audience and raising his bottle into
 the air)
 Go get 'em tiny!

The crowd laughs and cheers. The obese man stalls in the offense, but then continues. In the back of the crowd a small plane lands and rolls in, with a young dark-haired woman standing on the top brace. Roland's entire focus shifts to the woman and the events around him now seem muffled and distant.

OBESE MAN

(Looking at Roland)

Today, in the heavens above . . . This very man before
 us . . . (Slapping Roland on the back, knocking him a
 step forward) pushed mankind to the edge . . . The very
 precipice . . . And without a drop of fear, leaped off
 into the unknown. . Today this man spat in the face of
 death . . . He stretched the seams and boundaries of
 bravery and the abilities of man and machine beyond all
 reason . . .

DRUNKEN HECKLER

(Yells, holding bottle up and pulling on his waistband)
I think you're stretching some seams there yourself
boss!

Crowd again goes into a frenzy. The obese man glares down at the Heckler as he adjusts his trousers and dabs his forehead with a handkerchief before continuing.

OBESE MAN

Today, right here in the airways above beautiful Canton
. . .

The crowd erupts in laughter and the Mayor whispers into the obese mans ear.

OBESE MAN (CONT'D)

(Confused as he glances at the engraved award in his hand)
Well, of course I mean high above the beautiful people of Brownsville, Texas That's right, tell your friends and neighbors . . . That right here . . . In my favorite town . . . Today at the Great Northern American Air Show, on this day, you witnessed the amazing Mr. Roland Brown as he
(Under his breath) "Unofficially"
. . . Broke the world's air speed-record!

Again the crowd cheers for Roland. But Roland still only sees the woman. As the tiny craft rolls to a stop, she flips from the wing onto the ground. She removes her leather cap and shakes the dust from her long dark hair, revealing the beauty from the photo. Roland can just smile at her.

OBESE MAN (CONT'D)

Clocked in at over 280 miles per hour.

Roland points to the trophy still clinched in the obese mans hand, hoping to impress the woman but instead she looks past him with her bright cornflower blue eyes and walks from the grandstands. Roland's eyes follow as she makes her way through the crowd. The onlookers cheer as the obese man holds up the trophy that reads - World Air Speed Record - 1920

Suddenly, Roland yanks the trophy from the presenter, hops down from the stage and grabs the half empty bottle from the drunk.

OBESE MAN AND DRUNKEN HECKLER

Wait!?

OBESE MAN

. . .Where's he goin'

DRUNKEN HECKLER

Poor guy, he couldn't stand to hear you talk anymore
either.

Roland makes his way through the crowd, toward the woman, getting handshakes and slaps on the back but never taking his eyes off of the beauty.

The fading crowd looks on, now mostly quiet and confused.

OBESE MAN

(Fading into the background.)

Ladies and Gentlemen! Don't forget that you saw history made with us today . . . The Great North American Air show! Tell your friends and neighbors! And make sure to head over to the traveling museum of Airway Miracles, open Monday to Saturday 10 am to midnight . . . Only 2 cents for adults, . . . And your children go free the first Sunday of every month

ROLAND

(Now running towards the woman.)
Liddie!

But she doesn't even look back. Instead she hurries off towards a row of old picker-shacks. She unlocks one of the doors and disappears inside. Out of breath, Roland tiptoes up to the porch. He leans in, ear to the door, but hears nothing. Carefully, he reaches for the handle and slowly shoulders it open while knocking . . .

DAD/ROLAND

(In a whisper)

Liddie? . . . It's Roland . . .

No one answers back: Roland only hears the faint sound of a transistor radio grinding out "Ten Cents a Dance" through the opening. Inside, the room is mostly dark, so Roland fumbles for the switch. From behind the door someone grabs Roland's hand and jerks him inside. The door slams shut, knocking pictures from their rails. Roland's shoved into the wall, and the tiny room shakes. A lamp tumbles from the dresser onto the hardwood. Now face-to-face, he sees it's Liddie. She leans in and bites onto his bottom lip. Roland smiles with his eyes squinting from the pain.

LIDDIE

(Muffled, with her teeth clinched onto Roland she pulls the bottle from his hand)
Good to see you again Dr. Brown.

ROLAND

(Tugging back on her bite and dropping his trophy onto
the floor)

You too Liddie . . . It is you, right?

Roland reaches for the wall switch but Liddie swings
him around and pushes him towards the bed.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(His legs crash into the footboard in the mostly dark
room)

Yep . . . It's you.

Liddie steps in closer and rips open Roland's shirt.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(Looking down at his torn buttons)

Come on . . . This was my best one?

LIDDIE

(With smiling eyes)

Poor thing, sometimes life is just rotten for no reason
at all.

Liddie clears a pillow from the bed, pitching it across
the room. It lands on the cheap motel bureau, pushing
the mirror and the radio off the edge. Still plugged
in, the radio swings by the cord and the dim orange
light from the tubes dance across the tattered print of
the wallpaper, to the shindy of music and fading
stations as the mirror crashes to the ground. Roland
takes the bottle from Liddie's hand and grabs a timid
sip. Liddie pulls it back from his lips, steals the
last swig and then shatters the bottle on the far-side
wall. Roland shakes his head, smiles, and the two fall
onto the bed laughing.

Across the room we watch the old dangling radio slowly
spin. We hear Cole Porter's "Night and Day" playing,
the tussle of the sheets and the squeak of bedsprings .
. . Then another crash, and Liddie's laugh.

INT. PICKERS SHACK (MORNING)- FLASHBACK

In the early morning, Liddie awakes to a still dimly
lit room, sweaty from the Texas heat, but content.
Roland's sleeping face looks happier than he's ever
been before. An exposed Liddie, rolls over, straddles
Roland and taps her finger on his forehead. Her hands
are clean but her nails are broken and dirty, like a
mechanic's.

LIDDIE
Suns coming up

Roland (continuing to smile) closes his eyes tighter and tries to fall back to sleep. With just the light from the bathroom we see Liddie's silhouette reach out for a small bottle wrapped in a brown paper bag. She twists the cap off and pours a glug into the cup at the top of Roland's trophy sitting on the nightstand. She lifts it to her mouth and takes a drink, and then another before setting it back down. Roland now watches her through one squinted eye. She positions and repositions the trophy just right, nudging the corner and shining the placard with the bed sheet while marveling at the prize.

LIDDIE (CONT'D)
. . . It really is a cute little trophy.

With that, she reaches down to the floor and picks up her own award. Twice the size and reading - 1st prize Wing Walker competition - 1920 - Brownsville, Texas. She uses the wooden base to slowly push Roland's award half-way off the table. It squeaks as it slides across. She looks over to gauge his reaction before pushing it over the edge, crashing to the floor.

ROLAND
(Smiling and shaking his head)
Never leave me.

LIDDIE
And miss out on all of this!?

They look around the room to see the ruins. The shattered lamp and pictures, a broken chair and turned over table. A torn pillow, with spewing down-feathers, covers the floor.

ROLAND
(Pointing at the feathers)
I don't remember any of that?

The two laugh. Liddie stands on the bed, whipping the top sheet around her artfully, leaving Roland exposed, and vulnerable. But he doesn't mind. He seems somehow at home. Liddie walks to the window and pulls open the curtains and reveals the dark purple glow of the early morning sky. The lilac tint paints the room.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
(Covering his head with a pillow)
For God sakes, it's still night time?

LIDDIE
No.

ROLAND
Well, I sure don't see a crack of daylight!

LIDDIE
(Now standing next to the bed)
Cuz it's not day or night . . .
(Running her hand over Roland's chest)
It's that little sliver of time between the two . . .
(She holds onto one of Roland's chest hairs and smiles)
It's that one perfect moment . . .

ROLAND
(Anticipating the pain to come)
Wait!

LIDDIE
. . . That tiny, CLICK!
(She pulls out the hair)

ROLAND
Damn it!

LIDDIE
. . . Where the night discovers the day
(Now lost in her head)
I think sometimes I can see them tangle . . .

ROLAND
My mother would say,
Das Mondlicht brennt in der Dunkelheit
. . . Something . . . Something?

Liddie cocks her head and throws him a questioning stare.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
Sorry, my German is a bit rusty. It's something like,
The light of the moon burns in the darkness; and even
the darkness can't put it out.

She looks down at Roland and again smiles.

LIDDIE
You know, sometimes I think without the sun, the moon
would never find its way home . . .

Roland gives her a patronizing smile. Liddie shakes her head and drops the sheet to the floor and raises a brow at Roland as she crosses the room.

LIDDIE (CONT'D)

. . . Don't you believe in anything?

ROLAND

(Covering himself with the fallen sheet)

No, . . . Not really.

LIDDIE

Sad.

Liddie smiles, shakes her head, and flips on the light switch. The bright flash shakes Roland to the core and he quickly covers his eyes. (Flash) A bright green pulse pulls him down, somewhere deep and dark into his subconscious. Confused, he stares at his now bleeding wrists as he falls further down, Liddie and the room fade away. Another pulse jerks his limbs, and through the blinding glare he sees cold metal tables, falling rain and floating grey ash that makes him cry out. Next to him, captives with clinched fists and pointed toes are being branded across their collarbones, while a faceless man in a red rubber apron, tightens their straps. At the far end of the room a naked man scratches at blackened walls and windows before orderlies wrestle him to the ground. Tables filled with tins of sarin, benzene and ether spill open. Next to the tins, syringes sit filled with silver nitrate. Shocks of bright green lights, the sounds of winding machines, and screaming men overwhelm Roland's senses. In a cramped corner, behind dark glass, float shards of metal, somehow defying gravity. They hover and slowly spin in front of a man's face. His terror is reflected in each of the scraps. Nearby, in a tiny room (like a set from a TV show), we see a family of 5, vigilantly watching a bulky television set as more dream-like grey ash falls from above. Nestled onto the comfy sofa, they are laughing along with the broadcast. We pan down to see their arms and legs are strapped down. Thick steel-rods anchor their hands and feet to the concrete floors.

A VOICE ON THE TV

(Shouts)

Vivisektion!

And the family (along with the laugh track) again laughs out loud.

With another flash, we see two twin boys huddled together. They appear to have been cut open and then sewn back together. Blue surgical threads bind their faces, necks and chests. Their wounds and stitches pull and stretch as the two fight to free themselves from the horror.

Looking past his own hands (now swelling and blistering), Roland's feet (like the family of 5) are tightly bound.

ROLAND
No, No !!

He feels the pain of wires and metal rods tearing at his limbs as they're forced beneath his skin In the background a woman's silhouette watches, then hurries away. Roland pulls a hand free and wrestles the rods out of his arms and legs. His bare feet make their way across the wet and ash-covered floor. Back at the glass, the lights flicker on, and Roland sees (reflected in the glass) a flash of himself holding the nitrate syringe and wearing the red rubber apron . . . Through another burst, we see a second man, his face disfigured, burnt and scarred. The man reaches out for a heavy metal switch.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
(Screams out)
NOOOOO!

The man pulls the switch and the floating shards rocket at the man's head, piercing his skull and spattering the wall behind him.

Back in the shack, Roland screams out and Liddie rushes across the room. Still clawing at his wrists, he kicks the last of the sheets from his feet and legs. Liddie tries to nudge him awake but Roland flails his arms, hitting her in the jaw and knocking her to the ground. As she hits the floor, the pile of feathers explodes under her, filling the room. She pulls herself up and kneels beside the bed, wiping the blood from her mouth and again trying to calm Roland. She places her hands on his forehead and then (out of desperation) his mouth, to muffle his screams. As quickly as it started, it stops. . . . Roland slowly opens his eyes. Confused, the ash from his nightmare turns to down feathers and Liddie rests her head on his heart as he settles. Her hands squeeze Roland's fingers, still fidgeting and tearing at his arms. She reaches out to touch the scars on his wrists but he quickly pulls away.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
Don't!

LIDDIE
How'd you get these?

ROLAND

(Looking down and rubbing the tiny scars)
. . . I don't know . . . I don't remember . . .
I guess I've just . . . Always had em?

Liddie again rests her head back on Roland's chest as the sun breaks and fills the room. Tiny feathers still raining down, covering the pair.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(His voice quivering)

. . . You know, I do believe in something, . . . I
believe that sometimes . . . When I'm still half asleep,
I can hear their voices calling my name

INT. BROWN HOUSE (NIGHT TIME)

With a quiet gasp, Roland wakes. Back in his office, confused, he holds the scars on his wrists. He quietly breaks down. Shaking, he clears the pile of drawings and mail from the desk, onto the floor and replaces them with the photo of Liddie.

ROLAND

(Looking down at the photo and wiping his eyes)
. . . I don't know how much longer I can keep them away
Liddie.

Nans (up to get a drink of water) watches from the doorway. She starts to speak, but instead tiptoes back to bed.

ACT TWO**INT. DIRECTORATE OF FORTIFICATIONS AND WORKS - DAY**

The slap of Nan's bare feet turns to the click of shoes on the purposeful gait, that belongs to William "Mitty" Mitfield, American officer (of sorts) in the OSS, a well-groomed and confident man in his early 30's. He stops at the desk of a young SECRETARY in her early 20's. He's all smiles and charm.

MITTY

Well, Good morning, beautiful,
William Mitfield, . . . But you should call me Mitty.
The Major's expecting me.

She smiles at him. His good looks and charms are not lost on her.

As he starts to walk in . . .

SECRETARY

(Stepping in front of him, with a charming English
accent)
Just a moment . . . I don't have you on his calendar,
Mister . . . Mitfield is it?

MITTY

Just buzz me in, dear. I'd never forgive myself if you
got in trouble over a little clerical mistake.

She crosses the office to check another calendar; Mitty admires her body as she saunters off. She checks the book and turns back to find Mitty heading for the Major's door again.

SECRETARY

Sir! I'm sorry . . . Please! . . . You can't just. . .

The office door swings open and we see a British Major in his mid 50's

MAJOR

He's fine Miss Wayne, Thank you.

SECRETARY

(Under her breath)
Fat-head

MAJOR

Still enjoying your boyhood, are you?

MITTY

I don't want to repeat my innocence, Jim.
Like Fitzgerald said, I just want the pleasure of losing
it again.

Mitty gives the secretary a wink as he and the Major
cross the office and enter a locked stairway; Mitty
slowly starts to close the door behind him.

SECRETARY

(Under her breath)
Wanker.

**INT. STAIRWAY - DIRECTORATE OF FORTIFICATIONS AND WORKS -
DAY.**

MAJOR

I gotta warn you, Mitty, she's about as cooperative as a
feral cat.

Mitty still looking at the secretary through the sliver
in the door.

MITTY

Really? She seems so tame? . . . I mean, I'm sure I'm
gonna find a wild streak in there somewhere but

The Major pushes the door closed.

MAJOR

(Cutting him off)
The pilot, . . . Downstairs.

Mitty straightens his demeanor.

MITTY

So sorry Jimbo, of course.

INT. BASEMENT - DIRECTORATE OF FORTIFICATIONS AND WORKS - DAY

The Major shows Mitty into a dimly lit and mostly empty
office, and Mitty enters alone. A WOMAN in her early
30's, sits at a table pushed into the center of the
room, interrogation style. Her face, all but the area
around her eyes is sun and wind burnt, like she lives
in a pair of goggles. She's visibly exhausted, but she
tries her best to hide it, sitting up right as Mitty
enters the room. Mitty pulls a pack of cigarettes from
his jacket and slides them over to her before he sits
down.

MITTY

You're from St. Petersburg?

She pulls out a cigarette and places the pack down, just in front of her.

YANA

Leningrad. Now, when do I go back?

MITTY

If it were up to me, you'd already be back in the fight

YANA

Fight?

MITTY

. . . But you know the English. They take pride in their bureaucracy. God sakes, they built an empire on it.

He holds out a lighter and strikes a flame, trying to be a gentleman but she's having none of it.

MITTY (CONT'D)

(Holding out the flame)

I was in Leningrad before the purge. Beautiful city.

(Now nervously looking at the lighter)

I'd hate to see the Wehrmacht marching down Nevsky Avenue.

She stares down the flame, waiting for it to get hot enough to burn Mitty. He flinches from the heat and the lighter goes out. She pulls a wooden match from her shirt pocket, strikes it on the sole of her boot, and lights her cigarette. With a tiny smile, she studies it for a beat.

YANA

They'll never make it past the Daugava.

MITTY

Who's gonna stop the Luftwaffe?

She takes a long drag on the cigarette. Staring intensely back at Mitty.

MITTY (CONT'D)

. . . Do you believe in Witches Mrs. Yanayev?
Ved'my?

YANA

(She's caught by surprise and coughs out a smoky breath, but quickly gains her composure)
Like the old Folktales? . . . For children?

MITTY

It had to be hundreds of kilometers from the nearest
Russian airfield where we found you.

YANA

. . . And?

. . . For this you believe in witches?

(Chain lighting the next cigarette)

Are you desperately missing the stories your mommy told
you when you were little boy?

MITTY

. . . You told the Major you were lost.

YANA

(Taking another long drag from her cigarette, she grabs
for her breast and exhales as she continues to taunt

Mitty)

. . . Next, you'll want to suckle?

Mitty pulls a coin from his pocket and flips it once
into the air.

MITTY

I don't believe you were lost at all

. . . And I bet you could do it again?

YANA

. . . Little man, I have nothing for you.

MITTY

. . . You could, couldn't you?

Get in behind enemy lines . . . Find that place again?

YANA

Me? (Hiding a wry smile) Come on, I'm just a woman . . .
A farmer.

Potatoes . . . And beets.

(She again exhales a breath of smoke and stares at the
wall with another slight smile)

. . . But, why do you ask all of this?

Mitty flips the coin again, then reaches out and sets
it on the pack of cigarettes just in front of the
woman.

MITTY

You'll have to assume that it's because I believe in
old Folktales.

She looks down at the coin (with its winged woman). It
catches her attention and a surprised, painful and sad
look covers her face.

YANA
 (Letting her guard down for the first time)
 What do you want from me?

MITTY
 I want you to help me win this war.

Mitty rises and carefully slides his chair back under the table.

MITTY (CONT'D)
 Enjoy the cigarettes Mrs. Yanayev. And keep the coin as a keepsake from the US government. It belonged to a dear friend of my mother's.

She looks over the coin, rubbing her thumb on a strange, WINGED INSIGNIA. Her eyes go to Mitty as he exits.

**INT. HALLWAY - DIRECTORATE OF FORTIFICATIONS AND WORKS - DAY
 (CONT.)**

Outside the room, Mitty meets the Major and the two make their way back down the long hallway.

MITTY
 What'll they do with her?

MAJOR
 Not sure how much longer we can hold her. At some point, they'll figure out who has her . . . So, is it her?

MITTY
 It's her.

MAJOR
 Did you learn anything useful?

MITTY
 Nothing concrete, but she definitely knows what's out there, and I promise you . . . Between you and I?
 She can find her way back.
 Plus . . . I think she may have a little crush on me.

MAJOR
 Of course she does.
 (Changing the subject)
 So, now we only need to find the other 7?

MITTY
 The right 7 . . . And we need them all Jim.
 It won't work without every last one of them.

MAJOR

. . . Out of 100+ possibilities?

MITTY

(With a smile on his face and a wink)

Piece a cake, right?

(Mitty's face becomes pained and serious)

And Jim, . . . I can only give up the necessary info.

I need you to understand.

Remember what we're fighting for.

MAJOR

Makes our job harder.

You know my friends here in London and your pals in DC
aren't too interested in chasing ghosts and rumors
around the globe.

MITTY

They might be, if it means beating the Germans to em'.

MAJOR

And Mitty . . .

MITTY

Yeah Jimmy boy.

MAJOR

(With an endearing smile and a head shake)

In front of this next crowd, it's Sir or Major, got it?

You've got one shot at this, so muster up a little
respect, OK?

MITTY

(With a smirk and a "thank you" in his eyes, he a
solutes)

Yes, Major.

**INT. SCREENING ROOM - DIRECTORATE OF FORTIFICATIONS AND WORKS
- DAY**

Mitty and the Major make their way into a smoke filled, makeshift-screening room. In the front row next to a mountain of books and papers, a grey thin-haired Lieutenant Colonel looks down through a pair of GI issue glasses, flipping through a thickset stack of forms and photos while talking on the phone. The call looks important as he seems to be sitting at attention. Spotting the Colonel, the two men snap into soldier mode.

COLONEL

(With the phone pinched between his shoulder and chin)
 Yes Ma'am, it's happening now.
 You have my word.

The Colonel hangs up and hands the phone to his assistant.

MISS DAVERSON (THE ASSISTANT)

(Close to the Colonel's ear)

Sir, Major Pimentel and Captain Mitfield are here.

COLONEL

(Without looking up)

At ease, men.

(Loudly into the air, as Miss Daverson is leaving the room.)

And Milly! Ant-acid, . . . And another coffee, two
 sugars . . . No, three.

The Colonel still doesn't look at the men. Instead he cranes his neck to see that Miss Daverson has left the room. As soon as the coast is clear, he fires up a cigar.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

Sit, Jimbo!

MITTY

(Shrugging his shoulders and whispering)

Jimbo?

The Major shakes his head a quick "No".

MAJOR

(To the Colonel)

Sorry we're late Cal.

Captain Mitfield needed time with the downed pilot.

The Major and Mitty take their seats.

COLONEL

(Looking at a photo of Mrs. Yanayev / Yana)

Like wild animals, these damn Russians.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

(Leaning in from the row behind the two men, taking them
 by surprise)

Barbarians if you ask me,

(The "B" in "Barbarians" spits onto Mitty's cheek)

The whole lot.

MITTY

Excuse me?

Mitty takes a handkerchief from his pocket and wipes the spit from his face.

MITTY (CONT'D)
 . . . Captain is it?

MAJOR
 (Leaning in and whispering to Mitty)
 Play nice.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
 (Taking his seat)
 Who lets their women do their fighting for them?

Mitty spins around in his chair and faces the Captain.
 The Major smiles and shakes his head.

MITTY
 (Now sparring)
 They're not barbarians Captain . . .

MAJOR
 (To himself)
 Well, that didn't take long.

MITTY
 . . . They're just not willing to let good manners and decorum get in the way of saving lives and winning this war.

The Major puts his hand on Mitty's shoulder and lowers him back into his chair.

MAJOR
 (Trying to contain his smirk, while whispering to Mitty)
 . . . a little respect, remember.
 (To the room)
 Colonel, we'd like the Russian released to Captain Mitfield.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
 Absurd!

COLONEL
 (Still pouring over his papers.)
 What makes you think she's willing to follow your orders Captain?

MITTY
 (Quickly standing)
 Sir, I'd say that woman doesn't actually take orders from anyone, but I need her.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
You need her?

MITTY
Same cause.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
I'd bet that woman's an enemy the second we wrap up this
campaign.
God Sakes, how did you get to be a Captain anyway?

MITTY
Old Money.

A Private steps in and whispers to Mitty.

PRIVATE
It's ready Sir.

MITTY
(Looking to the Colonel)
May I proceed Sir?

The Colonel raises his hand and waves a finger, and Mitty continues. He signals the Private to dim the lights and we hear the chatter of a super-8 projector. Mitty stands (partially blocking the screen) covered with projected images of waving swastikas, his irreverent and smart-ass demeanor is suddenly nowhere to be seen in his composure, voice, or face. Instead he's serious, and on point.

MITTY (CONT'D)
Gentlemen, . . . Colonel.

I know we're all painfully aware of what's going on here in Europe . . .

The screen shows a map of Europe in blues and greens, Germany is the only country in red.

MITTY (CONT'D)
. . . In a few short weeks . . . And I'm told with mostly brute force, the Germans have captured Poland.

Poland fades to red and a circle of crimson starts to push outward across the continent.

MITTY (CONT'D)
They now seem to have their sights set on Czechoslovakia, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg and Denmark. . . After that, I would guess Yugoslavia and probably Norway will easily fall. . .
(MORE)

MITTY (CONT'D)

. . . And if our intelligence is correct, even France
and Great Britain are in harm's way.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

Britain?

This is Ridiculous!

Back on the screen, the red pauses for a beat before continuing on. We see giant armies marching and the red face of Hitler addressing 10's of thousands of cheering Germans. Red now covers most of Europe; a swastika fades in, snapping in the breeze.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN (CONT'D)

Alarmist ranting! . . .

This is a waste of time,

The Colonel's already well briefed on the strategies of
war, Captain.

Honestly, we can't afford the distraction, I don't know
what your little plan entails, but we need to stay
focused on the tasks at hand.

MITTY

Focus? . . .

Good lord Captain! The Nazis seem to be the only ones
with any focus.

This thing is still growing, like some demonic snowball
rushing down the Alps taking out everything in its path.

Back on the screen, cheering German crowds fill the
streets.

MITTY (CONT'D)

You know they started all this with just 60 members
. . . 60!

'The fatherland party' they called themselves, sounds
nice, right?

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

Idealistic, barbarians.

On the word "barbarians" Mitty winces and guards his
face.

MITTY

Absolutely, Captain.

In my opinion, just a handful of opportunists and
racists, with fear on their side. The plan is to build
numbers by promising to systematically erase the
outsiders and those deemed inferior. And gentlemen, it's
working!

In the background a figure creeps in and hands the
Colonel another stack of papers.

As the Colonel's attention shifts to the documents he notices it's Miss Daverson. She snatches the cigar from his lips and thrusts a full glass of buttermilk into his hand.

COLONEL

(Out loud to his assistant)

Thanks Milly!

(In disgust, to himself, as he eyes the glass)

Miss Daverson, you're going to drown me in God damn buttermilk!

As she walks away he reaches down and sets the glass on the floor near his feet. In front of him, images of cheering German crowds fill the screen.

MITTY

(Noticing that the Colonel doesn't seem to be paying any attention.)

As of this year, their tiny 'fatherland' club stands 5.3 million strong . . . That's 81% of the population of Germany. But our real concern Sir, with all of these new-found resources, Chancellor Hitler now seems to fancy himself a visionary . . .

Images of failed German technologies and misguided weapons fill the screen. Rockets exploding on take-off and jet packs leaving just charred remains of their testers. A twisted pile of metal burns, as a man is extracted from the wreckage. From a building, a handful of soldiers calmly march in formation, seemingly unaware that they and the building are both totally engulfed in flames.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

A visionary? My God . . . Looks more like a sadistic dreamer.

The room laughs and the Major reaches up from his chair and gives Mitty a nudge. Mitty winks and nods back at the Major.

MITTY

Right again Captain.

(Looking to get some kind of reaction from the Colonel)
Most of the Nazis approaches to war are indeed CRAZY, Like Hitler's Occultists. Imagine hypnotists and palm readers employed to brainwash the world through a ridiculous invention called the "Television" . . . Imagine one of these boxes in your living room, turning your brain to mush, and making you believe whatever the leaders want you to.

The Germans think they can put one in every home. Another failed attempt to control the masses I'm sure?

(MORE)

MITTY (CONT'D)

Or the Sonnengewehr,
 (He points to the screen) the "Sun Gun" in English.
 Originated by famed rocket scientist Hermann Oberth,
 it's a plan to build a giant mirror, more than a mile
 wide, that would orbit above the Earth. With this, The
 Nazis hope to control the skies.
 It's boil the seas and burn cities to the ground kinda
 stuff.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

Cut to the chase Captain Mitfield, you know for most of
 the world, there's a God damned war out there!?
 (Leaning back in his chair and locking his fingers
 behind his head)
 . . . Ridiculous.

MITTY

I wish it were . . .
 (Pointing to the screen)
 And while I doubt the possibility of THAT ONE ever
 working, I . . . We, see the lengths to which this
 devil, and his crony-yes-men, are willing to go . . .
 And for every 10 failures, one of these makes it to the
 battlefield, pushing the unthinkable to the conceivable.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

You mean to the Impractical?
 Now Please!
 (Standing with an arrogant, bored, swagger he motions to
 the door)
 Well, thank you Captain Mitfield for coming in
 (Under his breath)
 And wasting our time . . .

The Colonel stands, still looking over his papers and
 patting down his pockets for another cigar. The room
 snaps to attention.

COLONEL

(Dismissive, but still not paying the room any real
 attention)
 Thank you, Gentlemen.

MITTY

Wait Sir! We think we know the one that will very likely
 make it to the battlefield.
 The next 1 out of ten.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

This is all obviously a joke, right, well,
 I'm sorry we waisted your time Colonel.

The Colonel starts to leave the room and Mitty's face
 drops along with his confidence.

MAJOR

(Stepping in to rescue Mitty)

Wait, Cal, please, this is no joke.

This Furher is not our run of the mill madman. We know of another area of "research and development" that the Third Reich is actively pursuing: On the surface, unbelievable, and yes, maybe even comical.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

(Trying to usher the Colonel out of the room)

. . . And another enormous waste of time, energy and resources?

MAJOR

Not a waste of time Captain, because we don't think this one ends here, the Nazis aren't going back to failed intentions and brute force alone.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

So, what then?

MAJOR

(Following the Colonel towards the door)

We've learned that some months ago they started recruiting . . . Or I would say, collecting, scientists . . . He's building a team.

A team of brilliant minds to invent, design, and build a new kind of machine.

(Pointing at the screen)

Cal, this is their new super weapon.

The Colonel stops at the door and turns back towards the front of the room.

MAJOR (CONT'D)

Our sources continue to funnel in intel and just a few weeks ago they came across this.

Looking up, the reflected images again flash and light up the Colonel's face and we catch distorted glimpses in his glasses (but nothing clear). For the first time, he looks concerned.

MITTY

And when we dug even deeper, we found these . . .

Mitty hands the Colonel a folder with more photos.

MITTY (CONT'D)

(Pointing back to the screen)

. . . Colonel we think this might be their Masterpiece.

The screen flashes and the Colonel slowly sits back down.

COLONEL
(Focused on the screen)
Sweet Jesus.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
(Under his breath)
That thing can't be real? . . . The Devil's work.

The Colonel's shoulders drop and he tosses the folder onto the chair next to him. The photos spill out and we get a quick glimpse of a faded image of 9 scientists and a nurse, all dressed in lab coats. Handwritten in the corner, the word "Freya"

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN (CONT'D)
(Frantically shuffling through pages in this notebook)
I don't understand? We don't have any Intel for any of this!
. . . How did you . . . ?

MITTY
(Holding up a telegram to the Colonel)
Sir, this is a wire we just received.

The Colonel nods his head and Mitty proceeds.

MITTY (CONT'D)
Thank you Sir.
The recovery of a lost or hidden program has been communicated to me in manuscript. As I understand it, I find it very possible that this enterprise could provide vast amounts of power and technology, the likes we've never seen.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
(Looking up from his book and interrupting)
So why not just have our boys find it . . .
or better yet, find it and destroy it?

MITTY
(Continuing with the telegram)
. . . I fear that in the hands of the very darkest side of human nature, it seems inevitable that this new and extremely volatile phenomenon would also lead to the construction of weapons of mass destruction and if not given great care, the possibility of an unstoppable chain reaction.

Captain Ackermen stands, fidgeting and thumbing through open pages, trying to find a way back into the conversation.

MAJOR
 (Before ACKERMEN can speak)
 Sir, let us start by recruiting the Russian.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
 (Interrupting)
 Major, Sir, she can't be conscripted!
 Here in Britain, as per the . . .

MAJOR
 (Irritated but trying to ignore him)
 Please Captain!
 (Under his breath)
 Can you give it a rest.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
 (Losing to his impertinence)
 Major!
 The "Uniform Code of British Military Justice"
 jurisprudence clearly states throughout . . .

MAJOR
 (Turning to the captain)
 Captain ACKERMEN!

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
 (Still reading from his manual, raising his voice just a
 bit)
 Only male citizens, ages 18 to 23, may be compelled . .
 .

The Major stands.

MAJOR
 (His face becoming flush)
 Are you about done CAPTAIN?

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
 (Raising his voice again to be heard over the major,
 while pointing and tapping in the book)
 . . . Or voluntarily, join the branches of our military.
 Unlike you Yanks, No other . . .

The room seems to be unraveling.

MAJOR
 (Like a great white in attack, he steps towards the
 irritant)
 I've had enough, you jobs-worth little bastard.

He snatches the book from Captain Ackermen's hand and
 Ackermen cautiously takes a step back.

MAJOR (CONT'D)

(Thumbing through the pages)

Where in this little book does it say you get to be an
ass.

The room comes undone.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

(Pale faced, but still talking)

You cannot speak to me like that. I'm an officer. I
have the rights ,as per the "Uniform Code of Military
Justice" article 17.

The super 8 blasts images of bombs and mushroom clouds,
giant tanks roll over fences . . .

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN (CONT'D)

(Louder again)

All officers shall govern and advise . . .

MITTY

(Stepping between them)

Captain ACKERMEN, I don't recommend . . .

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

Threats to officers, even by other officers, must be
reported . . .

MITTY

(Stepping out of the way)

Okay, then.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

. . . Whereas an investigation by, the Branch Office of
the Judge Advocate General . . .

Back on the screen, blasts of more gunfire in the
streets . . . And polish civilians being marched at gun
point.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN (CONT'D)

. . . Such investigation must be implemented in a timely
fashion.

Projected images of firing squads and giant cannons contrast
the silhouette of Mitty as he stands alone at the front of
the room.

MITTY

Wait, wait, wait! Captain.

Let's just Relax here for a second . . . Step down.

Jim . . . Jim?!

The Major's caught up in the fight and doesn't hear a
word.

Mitty looks to the Colonel, who has somehow, in the confusion and darkness, managed to slip another hidden stogie out of his pocket and now taps it unconsciously on his knee, savoring the moment.

With a last-ditch effort to control the room, Mitty snatches one of the books from the Colonel stack, he lifts the book over his head, takes a breath and let's go. The book falls from his hands, slaps the floor and the room's stunned into silence.

COLONEL
(Startled and setting down his cigar)
Dam it, son!

Mitty moves in on the Colonel and snatches the cigar, and in turn, captures the Colonel's attention.

COLONEL (CONT'D)
What the hell!

Like a dog salivating for a table scrap the Colonel sits up in his chair.

MITTY
(Pointing at the cigar in his hand)
Colonel, imagine the first puff,
(He waves the cigar under his nose and draws in the sniff)
. . . a Cuban beauty, right?
The Colonel nervously nods.

MITTY (CONT'D)
(His voice calming and slow)
Ahh, my God, the smell of those brandy-soaked tips filling your head as you lift the lid of that fresh, glorious, wooden box. Mmm. Nothing finer really. It comes to you like an old friend, or maybe a lover . . . To share a beautiful, intimate moment. An afternoon or late-night tryst? You long for her, anticipating the feel of her on your lips, the taste of her in your mouth, her fragrance.
So intimate. Rhythmic. Enveloped.
(To the room)
Oh Yes, they are THAT good.

Mitty gets a chuckle from the room and then a brief quiet as he hands the cigar back to the Colonel.

The Colonel swallows hard, groping the cigar in his hand as he awkwardly stairs back at Mitty.

ACKERMEN
(scoffs)

MITTY

(Changing suddenly he points to the screen)
But this one smokes different . . .

The Colonel looks over his cigar

MITTY (CONT'D)

Imagine sir, an encounter with the scorned devil herself. Sure, it starts with the same sweet anticipation, her smoke fills your mouth with that nectarous taste.

But from there it creeps, it creeps down your throat, and you can't stop it. At best there's just enough time to close your mouth in reaction to the burn. A kind of chemical hell, it evaporates your lungs and then burns your eyes. You try to cough it up but it forces its way down and pulls the breath from you.

This is no lover, this is a smokeless, invisible defiler and there's no time to resist her onslaught.

Lungs burst, heart pounds and fists clench.

You try to scream but your voice does not come.

Your eyes bulge as she slowly strangles you.

It won't be long sir, but it'll be costly and painful.

At this point, the warm smoke of a good Cuban does not even cross your mind, only the hope of one more impossible breath.

(Looking to ACKERMEN)

This letter's a warning. A warning that the dire nature of this situation . . . This possible hell, absolutely calls for watchfulness and quick action on our part.

Ackermen swallows a nervous gulp.

MITTY (CONT'D)

(Back to the telegram)

It now appears almost certain that if this has truly been recovered that this chain of events will most likely be achieved.

And it's signed . . . Yours very truly, Albert Einstein

The room's still, like the breath has been sucked from it.

MITTY (CONT'D)

And, there's more, Sir.

(Looking to the Major)

MAJOR

We've recently learned that on completion, the first target could be US soil. New York to be exact.

MITTY

So, we can gamble that none of this is true, or we can
make efforts to get ahead of this, stop it from ever
seeing the light of war.

All eyes are locked on the Colonel.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

We need more time and more intel on this thing.

COLONEL (O.S.)

Looks like time's the one thing we don't have.

The Colonel motions the Private to bring up the lights.

COLONEL (CONT'D)

(With a pause and a long breath before he speaks)
Damn it, if we tell upstairs that we're going to be
clobbered by that

(He points to the screen)

. . . On our own dirt, without real proof. . . Brass is
going to think we're Bat shit!

MITTY

At the very least, let us get out ahead of it,
While your folks collect more intel.

COLONEL

(Shaking his head as he contemplates the images on the
screen)

Tell me what you've got planned, son.

MITTY

Sir, the plan is to circle back, back to the team of
scientists and engineers that dreamed up these horrors.

MAJOR

The clock's ticking and with what little time we have
left,
We think it's the only way.

COLONEL

And you can find these men?

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

This is insane!

(Reading from a British military handbook)

Article 24, section 19 clearly states that . . .

The Major shoots Ackermen a look and he quiets.

MITTY
Yes Colonel,
(Smirking at Captain Ackermen)
I mean, most. It's a small team, just 9 or 10.

MAJOR
Unfortunately, we think the Nazis may already have 2,
maybe 3.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
(Looking over at the photos)
Colonel, most of these men are sympathizers, traitors!

MITTY
Sir, I promise these men started with a wildly different
ideology.
All exceptional men, dedicated to a greater good.
But if that's true, and they are all traitors, then even
more reason to find them, don't you think?

COLONEL
And where are they now?

MAJOR
I guess the short answer is: in hiding, scattered across
the world.

COLONEL
Any leads Jim?

MAJOR
Yes Cal, and we're closing in. The tricky part is
getting there before the bad guys do. . And without any
real resources . . .

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
(In a low tone to the Colonel)
Colonel, I'm afraid we don't have any men to spare.

COLONEL
He's right.

MITTY
We can still get to them and turn this all around. I
just need your permission to assemble my own tactical
team. Sir, I'm targeting recruits that have access and
resources that respectfully, none of your men have
anyway.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
It's clearly stated,
(His finger reads along the page)
(MORE)

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN (CONT'D)

No special teams, or projects, without Command Central's approval. We have to first, according to regulations, petition the. . .

COLONEL AND THE MAJOR
ACKERMEN!!

Ackermen stops.

COLONEL

(Wryly smiling)

Seems the more authority I have, the more I'm told what to do . . .

(Turning his chair away from Captain Ackermen)
Tell me about the squad.

MITTY

Sir, earlier you compared our downed pilot to a wild animal, and I don't totally disagree. But that woman has fighter instincts and . .

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

. . . Oh, good lord, you can't mean?
She's not even a real soldier.

MITTY

She's got more training than most of the men in this room. And she's not the only one. I have at least another fifty like her on board. Skilled soldiers . . .

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
Soldiers?

MITTY

. . . With impossible access to our plan . . .
all of them eager to offer their service.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

Girls that can fight like MEN?
You should be ashamed of the very thought!

MITTY

Let me be frank. These aren't . . . 'LADIES'. This isn't the gal you dream of coming home to. These are misfits . . . Refugees . . . And all maybe a bit damaged for it all.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN
Abused, Stocking dressed, Savages?

MITTY

Listen, whatever losses or abuses they've endured, it's only made them more bulletproof.

(MORE)

MITTY (CONT'D)

Most of them fear nothing . . . Or at least very little.
And most of them have very little to lose.

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

All of this is based on a vague letter and old film?
You're going to get them all killed.
Like the Colonel said . . . Bat shit.

COLONEL

We're way beyond Bat shit now.
. . . The Captains right. Do you have any real proof of
any of this?
Something concrete?

The Major looks over to Mitty, hoping he'll give the Colonel more.

MITTY

(Pauses, looking to the Major)
. . . No, sorry Sir

The major's shoulders drop.

COLONEL

If word of this EVER got out and they thought I had
anything to do with this mess, they'd have my bars.

MITTY

To date, no one knows anything about the plan, and on
your word, if need be, we'll shut it all down. It'll
disappear without a trace.
I'll take care of it myself.
Colonel, I have complete confidence in the plan, but if
things do go upside-down . . .
(Looking over at the Major)
. . . No one's going to miss a group of misfit women
during war time. . .
(Looking to Ackermen)
Right?

CAPTAIN ACKERMEN

(Confused)
Without a trace?

MITTY

Not one hair pin or false eyelash.
(With his hand on ACKERMEN's back)
They're not even real soldiers, right?

Mitty turns back to the Colonel.

MITTY (CONT'D)

I just need the green light, and we'll hit the ground
running.
(MORE)

MITTY (CONT'D)

Cigar)

And with all due respect, I'd get the hell out of their way too. . . (Looking over at the Major and raising a brow and then back to the Colonel with a solute) Sir.

As the Colonel and the other officers file out of the room, Mitty and the Major gather their things. With an "I told you so" smile, Mitty shuffles a stack of papers, eyeing the Major.

MITTY (CONT'D)

Next time, let's remember, a little respect.

MAJOR

(Looking to see the room is cleared and doing his best ACKERMEN)

The Colonel is well briefed on Alarmist rantings, Captain!

The two break up laughing.

Just outside the door, the Colonel chugs out a few quick puffs from his cigar. Examining the drift of smoke, a concerned look fills his eyes and he flicks it away.

COLONEL

Damn it !

INT. BROWN HOUSE (LATE MORNING)

Back at the Brown farm we look over a photo of two girls (in their teens) dressed in dusty flight leathers. The frame is engraved with the words.

Jr. Barnstorming Championship, Brownville, Texas, 1937

In the snap-shot, the older girl holds a trophy high overhead that reads "First Place". Next to her stands a sour faced, dark-haired teen clutching an award for second. In the kitchen we see Roland standing at the window looking out. The door slams closed and a girl's voice (faint) yells from outside.

A GIRL'S VOICE

See you here when I get home?

DAD/ROLAND

(Sounding tired)

Course, you will, where else would I be!

In the yard, laundry hangs on the line and a small gathering of tiny grey birds cover the fluttering clothes.

ROLAND

(To himself, shaking his head, with a muffled delivery)
Rampant, impetuous birds.

At the kitchen sink he turns the tap and begins to fill an old jelly jar (a few small envelopes clinched between his teeth). He hears a loud knock at the front door. The birds scatter from the line and the pipes shudder, rust and dirt cloud the glass.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(To the sink)
Come On!?

(Fumbling with the water glass)

We get our first good look at Roland, worn and run down. His red hair is light with age and his skin peppered with sunspots and wrinkles marking the years. With the sink still running he steps to the living room.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(Still Muffled from the envelopes in his mouth)
Hello? . . . Just a sec . . .

He spits out the papers onto the edge of the couch and splashes some of the murky water across the pine floor.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Damnit.

Without looking outside, He sets down his glass and reaches out for the screen door . . .

ROLAND (CONT'D)

What can I do for . . .

Roland's eyes widen suddenly. On the porch stands the man in the dark blue suit and hat.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT

One becomes two, and two becomes ten,
(He nods)

Good to see you again Roland.
. . . Nice I caught you at home.

The man pulls back the screen door and for the first time we see his face, scarred and burnt (like the man in Roland's nightmares).

Roland keeps eye contact with the man while he frantically reaches into a drawer near the front door (just out of sight).

ROLAND

(Seeming almost confused)

Funny, . . . My daughters think you're from the bank.

He pulls out a tattered envelope. His arm stretches out for the pile of mail on the couch and he sets the letter (face down) on top of the stack, just as the man steps in and reaches out for Roland's hand.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT

Didn't Washington say . . .

You may delay, but time will not.

ROLAND

(Under his breath)

. . . Franklin.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT

Excuse me?

ROLAND

It was Ben Franklin.

(Lost in his head)

. . . . And time is what we want most, but what we use worst.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT

William Penn?

ROLAND

(a fond smile drifting over his face)

There might be hope for you after all.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT

No, I don't think so . . . That ship has sailed . . .

Now, I'm sorry but we had a deal Roland,

(Putting out his hand)

Remember?

Roland nods and reluctantly takes the man's hand.

The man squeezes on tight and Roland starts to panic. With a small gasp, he tries to pull away, but the man taps on the small round scar on the back of his wrist. With a flash of green his eyes roll back in his head. They snap open and he tries to answer back.

ROLAND

(Turning towards the man)

I remember.

But the man's gone.

Roland looks up to see a familiar grey ash drifting from the ceiling, blanketing the furniture and floor. In the soot a pair of barefoot faint prints lead from the front door and disappear down the hallway towards the back rooms.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
(Calling out, confused)
Girls ?!
. . . Liddie ?

Alone in the room, Roland's compelled to follow the prints. With another spark of green his mind snaps and the hallway in front of him stretches out.

Through open doors he sees bodies strapped to metal tables and the men in red rubber aprons cutting and pulling. Each room is filled with its own rhythm of screaming and yelling of episodic torture. Through all of this the ash continues to fall and the prints start to fade. He stands motionless, but knowing he needs to hurry if he wants to catch them.

Roland turns to see a familiar silhouette (like an angel) watching over him, she urges him to push on, and then fades away. Further down, the hall fills with lines of mindless storm-troopers and the sound of marching feet and snapping heels, all getting louder and louder . . . Deafening. Roland pushes his way through the crowd, he stops and covers his ears to muffle the sounds. He squints to see what's left of the path. There's fear all around, but for the first time it's outside of him, not nestled in his throat or turning his gut. This time he's just a spectator.

In the confusion of marching footsteps, Roland spots the last of the fading prints just ahead. At the end of the hallway they slip through a heavy metal door. Partly ajar, it begins to swing shut. The squeak of an old wooden floor jolts Roland's thinking away. He finds himself back in the picker shack. Staring up at the tattered print of the wallpaper, sun bleached and tobacco stained. . . The print fades to deep brown skin, past the lines of a soft belly, over bare breasts and up to an out stretched neck and the vision of Liddie's smiling face. Now back in their room. Liddie awakes and stares into Roland's eyes.

LIDDIE
(With an angelic smile)
Dr. Brown?

We hear a slamming screen door and from the window an excited Roland sees his two little girls laughing as they run across the front yard of the old farm. But now, like the girls, it's young and fresh. Cows, goats and rolling hills, a beautiful creek and a half-built tree house fill the window. In the freshly painted barn the front end of a new bi-plane sticks out the unlocked and open doors.

LIDDIE (CONT'D)
(Pointing to the girls)
It's time to go

Roland kisses Liddie and rushes to the front door, smiling from ear to ear. As he rushes through, the house flashes again and the ash (along with his grin) begin to fall. Looking back, he sees his own footprints trailing in the ash, leading back to an empty (freshly made) bed, Liddies gone. In the front yard the girls continue to run, but now from something. Half-dressed, (a fit) younger Roland rushes to the front room, which flashes back and forth to the warehouse, the pickers shack and then back to the farm house. Out the living room window he spots a huge disk of twisted metal, burning in the yard, as a screaming man is being extracted from the wreckage. Through the chaos Roland can hear voices.

LIZZY AND NANS
It's time to go!

LIDDIE
Dr. Brown!

A MAN'S VOICE
Dr. Brown!

He grabs the handle of the front door and pulls for his life.

LIZZY AND NANS
Time to go!

The door swings open and on the other side stands The Man in the Dark Blue Suit, stopping Roland dead in his tracks! The man, still holding on to Roland's hand, taps his wrists again and Roland's eyes snap open.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT
Dr. Brown? It's time to go.

Roland stands confused, back in the relative safety of his entryway.

THE MAN IN THE DARK BLUE SUIT (CONT'D)
Do you have all you need?

ROLAND
(Nodding yes)
I guess its time I finish what I've started.

EXT. BROWN HOUSE (MINUTES LATER)

As the man's car idles outside, Roland stands quiet for a moment in the doorway, a small night bag clutched in his hands. The man in the dark blue suit rushes outside to open the car door for him. At the end of the porch, Roland takes a moment to stare back at the old farmhouse.

ROLAND
(Whispers to himself)
A man who dares to waste one hour of time has not
discovered the value of life.

Through the screen we see a lifetime of family photos hugging the walls. A breeze blows across the yard, and lifts the laundry. The wind through the open front door pushes the envelopes off the sofa; one nestles behind the seat cushion as the rest tumble to the hardwood; spilling their contents across the floor. In the kitchen, the water, still running, slowly fills the sink. We hear the car door slam and then the sound of a revving engine. The wheels pull away down the gravel drive.

ACT THREE**INT. BROWN HOUSE (LATE AFTERNOON)**

We watch the morning laps. Shadows fall and stretch out into the late afternoon. Just after 4 o'clock the two sisters bound in through the front door, trailing in the day's dirt. Out of breath the two sing/shout.

LIZZY

She has eyes that folks adore so . . .

NANS

And a torso even more so . . .
Lydia, oh! Lydia, that En-cyclo-pedia

LIZZY

(In her best opera voice)
Lydia, the tattooed lady!!

Lizzy just bows. And the screen door slams behind her and hits her in the backside.

NANS

(Laughing)
You're an idiot

LIZZY

(At full volume)
Dad, we're home!
(Staring at her sister)
At least the crows didn't screech at us this time.

Now 17-years-old, Lizzy's freckles have spread across her nose and cheeks, and her eyes are now a deeper ocean blue. She scatters her books near the front door and picks up the water filled jelly jar left by her father.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

(Under her breath while looking into the glass)
When her muscles start relaxin'.
Up the hill comes Andrew Jackson.
Lydia, the tattooed lady!!
(Again, at full Lizzy volume)
Hey Dad, you're not going to believe how amazing I was today!! . . . Daddy!?

The bottom of the glass is filled with a red and brown sludge from the old pipes. Lizzy gives the jar a twirl and the sediment erupts from the bottom and clouds the glass like a storm.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
Gross!

Nans (now a worn 20) rolls her eyes at her sister as she steps around her. She sets down an arm full of brown grocery bags and begins to pick up the mail strewn across the living room floor.

NANS
Hey Dad? . . . We're home!?

As she gathers letters closer and closer to the kitchen she notices the paper and the floor are dripping wet. Peering into the kitchen she sees the sink (still running) is cascading water down the front of the lower cabinets, flooding the red and black marmolium floors with an inch or two of water.

LIZZY AND NANS
Dad?!

The Girls splash their way into the kitchen. Nans shuts off the water and pulls out the rubber stopper, while Lizzy grabs a stack of clean towels and a few folded shirts and tosses them onto the floor.

LIZZY
That should do the trick.

They float on the top of the water for a second, the folds loosen from the wet, and then drift to the floor.

NANS
What the hell?!

LIZZY
(Watching the last of the clothes darken from the water.)
Oh shit, Were those yours? . . .

Nans opens the back door and sweeps the water out onto the porch and down the stone pathway to the gravel drive where Dad's truck still sits. Beyond the drive we see the old barn, its doors (almost always locked tight) wide open.

NANS
He must be outback?

LIZZY
(Again, yelling out)
Daddy?!

Just then the phone rings and Nans tip toes through the mess to answer it. Lizzy stands close, her head leaned over to listen in on the call.

NANS
Hello?

THE VOICE
Afternoon . . . Mrs. Brown is it? . . . It's Mr. Grantpatricks, from Mid-West . . . Mid-West Bank. We were hoping to speak to your husband today?
. . . Is he at home?

NANS
(To Lizzy, in a whisper)
Scoot over
(Back to the phone)
My Husband? . . . No sir, He's my . . .

LIZZY
(Cutting off Nans)
HUSBAND? Creepy! Hang up. It's Brian Davis I'll bet . .

NANS
(Back to the voice on the phone)
. . . I mean he's not, I mean, I'm not sure Sir.

THE VOICE
Strange, He never came by the office today . . I believe we had an appointment at 3:00?

LIZZY
(Whispering back to Nans)
Who is it?
(Yelling and laughing into the phone)
Her husband ain't here, ya perv!

NANS
(To Lizzy)
Stop!
(Back to the phone)
Sorry Mr. Grantpatricks

LIZZY
Mr. Grant-Perv-Tricks!!!

NANS
(Rolling her eyes at Lizzy)
Clever.

(SLOWLY AND FIRMLY through gritted teeth as she digs her nails into Lizzy's arm, and tries to cover the phone with her shoulder)
Now, one more . . . And you die!

Lizzy pulls away

LIZZY

(Rubbing her arm and whispering back to Nans)
Kill joy.

NANS

(Back to the phone)

No, not you Mr. Grantpatricks . . . 3:00? . . I'm not
sure . . He didn't say anything . . .

THE VOICE

Well, please have him give us a call as soon as
possible.

Listen Mrs. Brown, the state of things . . . I really
need him to give us that call.

NANS

(Whispers to Lizzy)

Go to the barn and get Dad, Hurry.
A frightened Lizzy disappears

THE VOICE

Listen, we're all in hard times here, and we've already
made some serious allowances for your family, . . .
We're just in a tough place . . . Even after we
liquidate all of your agricultural assets . . .

NANS

(Not really listening)

Right, but, Mr. Grantpatricks, if you can just give me a
minute . . .

THE VOICE

(With no regard for Nans)

The problem is, you people are still going to have a
negative equity and no equipment to continue working the
farm to pay this debt . . .

NANS

I don't really understand . . .

He must be out in the barn, or maybe the back fields.

The voice mumbles something to Nans

NANS (CONT'D)

I'm sure he's here . . . At least I think
I've sent my sister to find him.

THE VOICE

To be frank Mrs. Brown, I just don't see how you can
continue . . . Our opinion here at Mid-West is that
foreclosure may be our only option.

(MORE)

THE VOICE (CONT'D)

Now, immediately, we'll need to begin the sale of all
entailed equipment and machinery.

NANS

Wait, what ? . . No, that's not possible, my father takes
care of . . .

Lizzy walks into the house from the back porch with a
strange look on her face. She sits down at the kitchen
table and quietly stairs off . . . Nans pulls the phone
from her ear.

NANS (CONT'D)

Well? . . . Lizzy!?

THE VOICE

We can give you another 60 . . . Or maybe even 90 days .
. . But after that?

Listen, I'll call at the end of the month and we can
talk about scheduling the first auction?

NANS

. . . Lizzy?!

LIZZY

He's not there . . . And the barn . . . Nans, its empty.

THE VOICE

That should give your husband a little more time to
settle his affairs.

NANS

(Whispering)

What do you mean empty? You mean he's not there.

LIZZY

Empty . . . "Bupkis". . . Nothing.

THE VOICE

Do you understand Mrs. Brown?

LIZZY

Did you hear what
I said Nans?

NANS

(To Lizzy and the bank)

No . . . I don't understand.

(Unconsciously, Nans hangs up the phone with the voice
on the other end still blabbing on)

. . . What the hell do you mean.

(Now panicked)

It can't be empty!

Lizzy sits, silent.

Nans storms out of the house . . . Lizzy jumps up from her chair and chases after her.

LIZZY

Nans, wait for me, Nans!?

NANS

(As she runs to the barn)
All the tiptoeing . . . The mysteries!
This shit ends today . . . Right now!
I can't take it anymore.

LIZZY

What should we do . . . Should we call someone?

NANS

No, damn it Just . . . Give me a second.

LIZZY

You said "Damnit"? . . . Wait, dam it nothing, did you
just say shit?
Murder!

Int. Brown Barn (continued)

Nans storms in through the huge main doors of the barn and finds (true to Lizzy's word) nothing there. All of her father's projects and gadgets are gone, and the work bench is cleared and turned over. Only a few remaining tools hang from the walls. The dirt floor is riddled with drag marks and tire tracks. Lizzy walks up on Nans, out of breath.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

See!, . . . Nothing!
. . I don't understand?
What the hell happened here?

NANS

Watch the language.

LIZZY

But you just . . .?

NANS

(In a quiet voice)
God Daddy, where are you?
What have you done?
(In a regular voice to Lizzy)
This can't be . . .

Nans snaps around, almost knocking Lizzy over and runs from the barn.

LIZZY

(To herself)

Jeez, make up your mind? . . . Where now!?

Int. Brown house (continued)

Back in the house, Nans stands in the doorway, panting from the dash, scouting the living room.

NANS

The office . . .

She stomps across the front room to the office with Lizzy still in tow.

NANS (CONT'D)

No more secrets!

In the office Nans sits down at her father's desk. Lizzy stands in the doorway, not wanting to cross the threshold.

LIZZY

I don't think this is going to go over when he gets home?

Nans ignores her sister and starts frantically pulling open the drawers, unfolds books and ledgers and shakes them over the desk. A few old photos and a dollar or two fall from the pages, but nothing that looks important. As she gets more and more manic, she starts to shout at her dad, tears streaming down her face.

NANS

(Shouts)

Damn it!!!

Lizzy, concerned for her sister, slowly steps in to the office.

LIZZY

Nans, you've blown a gasket . . . You're scaring me . .

Let's just wait . . . Dad'll be home soon.

(Now in a soothing, lower voice)

Nans, it's okay.

It's okay. You need to stop. He'll be back soon . . .

You can't.

Interrupting Lizzy, Nans screams and pounds the desktop, frustrated. She takes a pause and rests her head on the leather top of the old secretary.

Looking down she eyes the bottom drawer, the only one with a latch. She tugs on the handle but the lock is tight and the drawer doesn't budge.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

(With tears)

. . . Nans, please, don't.

NANS

No! I'm not goin' to stop!!!!

Today we find out what is going on around this shit farm.

LIZZY

Oh boy, there's that word again.

Nans grabs and jerks at the handle frantically. Lizzy reaches out for Nans' arm to stop her.

NANS

(Pushing Lizzy away and screaming at the drawer)

Little bastard, do you really think you can stop me from this?

Today's the day you give it all up.

She grabs a (propeller shaped) letter opener from the bookcase and tries to pry it open.

NANS (CONT'D)

(To the drawer)

Today's the day you die!

(Back to Lizzy with tears in her eyes)

We spent our lives telling him everything . . . He tells us nothing!

Nans pulls back on the brass letter opener and the blade snaps, knocking her to the floor, defeated.

LIZZY

(With quick delivery, like a secret finally outed)

. . . I can open it!

NANS

What? How?

LIZZY

The . . . Key?

Lizzy hurries to the far side of the room and reaches above the door jam.

NANS

Wait, you knew where the key was the whole time?

Why the hell did you watch me go through all of that?

LIZZY

I don't know . . . You where holding that knife . . .
It looked sharp and you looked a bit crazed.

She pulls down a tiny brass key and tosses it to Nans.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

I watched him hide it here one day. He didn't know I was
there . . .
or, I don't know, maybe he did . . .

Nans puts in the key and pops the lock. She smiles at Lizzy through the tears and shakes her head and Lizzy smiles back.

In the front of the drawer sits a bulging stack from First Farmers Mortgage and Loan, The John Deere Company, Lester Flight and Aeronautics and Mid-West Bank, all stamped with a red "Pass Due". Nans pulls them from the drawer, sets them on the desk and halfheartedly thumbs through them.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

Why would he hide all these?

NANS

The bank has been trying to get a hold of Daddy for
months.

(Pouring over the notices)

I don't think this is the only thing he's hiding.

Lizzy picks up part of the stack and the two continue to search the letters for some kind of a clue.

LIZZY

Maybe he was just protecting us.

NANS

Lizzy, we have to stop pretending that this is all OK.

Nans unfolds a document and holds it in front of Lizzy's face.

NANS (CONT'D)

All of these letters,

(She pushes them across the desk)

They're all marked past due, every one of them. We've
paid nothing for more than a year . . . Maybe more.

LIZZY

This one here says we were supposed to leave the farm
last July.

In the back of the drawer Lizzy spots a wooden cigar box. She reaches in, grabs it and sets it on the desk. Nans opens the lid to find a small bundle of photos wrapped in red ribbon.

The first image is her father near a small, strange silver aircraft, (the plane from Dad's flash back). The back of the photo reads, Roland Brown, Braun NA94 concept aircraft, 1922. Under that is the photo of Mom dressed in her buckskin dress and Dad in racing leathers. Nans sets down the photo of Mom and Dad, and looks through the rest of the bundle, spreading them out on the corner of the desk. Lizzy picks up the photo and taps on her mother's face.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

I don't remember her Nans.

. . . I don't even really know how she died.

And now . . . Well . . .

I can't loose him too.

Holding back the flood of tears Nans picks up an old school photo of the two standing with a grade school teacher.

NANS

(Trying to change the subject.

Remember this?

Mrs. Lane . . . 3rd grade . . She said I was a diamond in the rough.

Lizzy snorts as she laughs.

NANS (CONT'D)

What?

LIZZY

You're the diamond in the rough? . . .

NANS

Yeah, so?

LIZZY

She called me the eternal rock heading towards a window.

The two laugh with tears streaming down their faces as they look over the mess. Neither girl can seem to make heads or tails of any of it. Lizzy picks up another old photo of a strange wooden contraption and shows it to Nans.

NANS

I definitely remember that one.

LIZZY

It's the flying machine Dad built me!

NANS

I was so jealous.

LIZZY
Of me?

NANS
He told you, you could fly it to the moon and back.
. . . And I believed him.

LIZZY
. . . He said I was the only one who could fly it.

NANS
I remember, it was so small I couldn't even get my legs
in.

LIZZY
. . . I remember every control.

Nans pulls out the last bundle from the bottom of the drawer, three overstuffed brown envelopes, marked US special unit. She begins to pour out the contents of the first envelope onto the desk. Along with a seemingly endless pile of Dad's drawings and plans of engines and machines. They find old faded military documents (US and German), from what looks like World War 1.

NANS
(Defeated)
Nothing!?

LIZZY
What are we looking for?

NANS
I'm not really sure?

Lizzy rips open the second envelope and spills out the contents.

NANS (CONT'D)
(Looking suddenly towards the pile as it hits the desk)
What?, I don't get it?!

LIZZY
(Quickly covering her eyes)
I don't wanna know!

NANS
They look like travel papers.

LIZZY
(Peeking through her fingers)
I told you I didn't wanna know!

NANS

(Spreading out the pile)

I don't want to know either sister, but I don't not want
to know even more!

What is all of this mess?

Peeking into the last envelope, she turns it over and 3
passports fall from inside, and then 3 more.

LIZZY

(Pulling her hand from her face and picking up the
documents)

Passports, why Passports?

NANS

No idea.

LIZZY

None of these are U.S.

(Pointing at the photos)

And Nans, these two, it's us.

NANS

The rest are Dads.

Austrian, French, British.

LIZZY

What the hell? Why would we need these, we've never been
anywhere?

NANS

(Grabbing the passports from her sister and looking them
over.)

Look, I think this one is German?

LIZZY

What on earth, are you sure?

How do you know? You don't speak German.

Nans points over at the swastika.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

I knew we should have waited for Daddy to get home.

(Silence) . . .

LIZZY (CONT'D)

Nans? What do we do now?

NANS

I don't know.

But, we can't say anything to anyone until we figure it
all out or Dad gets home, understand?

Lizzy nods her head "Yes", leans in and hugs her sister.

NANS (CONT'D)

We need to sit tight. We've got to be here when he comes back.

(More Silence) . . .

LIZZY

Is he really coming back, Nans?

But Nans doesn't answer her, instead, like her father; she kisses Lizzy on the forehead.

. . . FADE OUT

Ext. Brown farm (Late Day - One year later)

From the far fields we watch over the farm, it's a dry and dusty late summer afternoon and the Brown house sits mostly quiet. As we move closer, we see one of the front shutters hanging just a bit catawampus. The wind picks up and it struggles a bit to hang on. We look to see sun filling the still empty barn. Near-by, the tall grass tries to pull down an old broken tractor, the engine cover opened and its inside scavenged for parts. As we reach the front door we hear a single voice finishing the "birthday song".

Int. Brown Kitchen (continued)

Inside, Lizzy sits on the edge of the dining room table looking out the big kitchen window, silhouetted by the 4 o'clock sun. Nans stands nearby, singing.

NANS

(Holding up A HUGE, mess of a cake)
Happy Birthday to you!

It drips frosting across the kitchen table and floor. On the top she's rendered a FACE with a tie and bulging eyes. Lizzy uses her finger to wipe up a spatter of frosting from the back of the chair and stuffs it into her mouth.

LIZZY

(With a mouth full of frosting)
I'm going to take the Dragon up before it gets dark.

NANS

Is she all-ready?

LIZZY

Yeah, I pulled the rest of the parts from the tractor
this morning.

NANS

Gas's topped off?

LIZZY

(A bit distracted)

Sure.

NANS

I think that's the last of the fuel? . . . You checked
that loose flap?

LIZZY

(Not listening to Nans)

What?, Yes !!!

Of course, now stop! . . .

Nans sets down the cake, Lizzy raises a brow in
approval and then blows out the blaze from the 18
candles.

Lizzy (CONT'D)

(Pointing at the face on the cake)

Disturbing

NANS

(Laughing)

Gary Cooper.

LIZZY

(Chuckling)

Not Bela Lugosi?

NANS

Who?

LIZZY

The Frankenstein guy.

Man, you need to get out more.

NANS

Well, anyways, it's your favorites, raspberries,
blueberries, and licorice for lips.

LIZZY

We can't afford any of this.

NANS

We're loaded, plus most of the berries I borrowed from
the bushes in the Anderson's yard.

(She pauses for a second)

(MORE)

NANS (CONT'D)

Lizzy . . . After this and the weeks groceries we have
about 19 dollars left.

From under the table Nans reaches for a bulky newspaper
wrapped package.

NANS (CONT'D)

(With a proud smile on her face)
I have something for you.

Not hearing Nans, Lizzy points outside

LIZZY

Dust!

Nans turns suddenly and they both stare out the window. A
dirt cloud pours in from the distance and then stops and
spreads out in front of the gravel drive way, revealing an
old red pick-up.

NANS

(A bit disappointed and tucking the package back under
the table)

. . . That's not the Mail truck.

LIZZY

Makes sense, the mail stopped coming months ago.
. . . So, it's not a letter from Dad?

NANS

Lizzy, don't!

LIZZY

. . . That was my wish.

NANS

(Faked, calm optimism)
Could be anything . . .

LIZZY

It's probably someone delivering the plague.

The truck door slams and the driver quickly drives off.

NANS

Well, let's go see what it is?

LIZZY

Race ya.

The two pause and then race out the door.

NANS

Maybe it's from Gary Cooper?

LIZZY
You mean Bela Lugosi?

Ext. Brown mailbox (continued)

In the distance we see the two racing towards the box. Lizzy speeds just ahead of Nans. Just short of the post Nans shoves Lizzy and she slides past the target. Nans slaps the mailbox in victory.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
(Smiling. Almost proud of her sister)
Didn't think you had it in you.

Nans (out of breath) starts to open the box. Lizzy stops her dead and turns towards her sister.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
(Very seriously)
Nans. Wait.

NANS
I'm sure it's nothing.

Nans reaches in and pulls out a single manila envelope.

LIZZY
What is it?

NANS
Something from the . . . War Department?

LIZZY
War Department? For who?

NANS
Us, I guess.

Lizzy and Nans both stare at the envelope. Lizzy grabs it out of Nans hands. She inhales, opens the flap and starts to read. She finishes and looks to Nans confused.

LIZZY
(Checking the back of the paper)
I don't get it, . . . Captain? . . . I don't get it?

Lizzy hands it to Nans and Nans reads it out loud.

NANS
DEAR MISS BROWN AND MISS BROWN,
THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP
REGRET THAT YOUR FATHER CAPTAIN ROLAND BROWN HAS BEEN
REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION SINCE 16 AUGUST OVER GERMANY.
(MORE)

NANS (CONT'D)
 IF FURTHER DETAILS OR OTHER INFORMATION ARE RECEIVED YOU
 WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED.
 S.A. LONG, ABJ.GEN.

The two fall into silence, bewildered.

LIZZY
 (Still breathing hard and clenching her fists)
 What does this mean?

NANS
 (Still looking at the letter)
 I think . . . It means, he . . . might not be coming
 back?

LIZZY
 Just like that?
 No, it doesn't. It can't!

Lizzy runs off towards the house.

NANS
 Lizzy, now hold on!
 (Now in chase)
 . . . Damn it!

LIZZY
 (As the two run up the drive Lizzy turns towards the
 barn)
 Look around you Nans!

She opens her arms and spins around once as she runs
 through, showing Nans the empty room.

NANS
 Yelling back)
 What?! I don't see anything.

LIZZY
 Exactly, there is nothing left to hold on to!
 Outside of the barn, Lizzy b-lines to the tiny plane.
 She reaches in and pulls the choke.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
 (Looking at Nans, she hurries to the front of the craft)
 He's really gone . . . It's all gone.
 . . . And I'm never getting out of here.

NANS
 Where are you going?

With all of her strength she pulls down on the
 propeller and the Dragon fires up and starts to roll
 forward. Lizzy stops solidly and the plane creeps by.

LIZZY

I don't know, anywhere!

She grabs the cross brace as it passes and swings herself up into the seat.

NANS

Damn it Lizzy, wait!

Nans dashes for the plane. She leaps onto the wing and calmly walks her way to the back seat and buckles herself in as Lizzy throttles up and pulls hard on the stick. They lift off and the wheels clip the tops of the corn fields before the tiny plane climbs into the sky. Nans sits trying to think of something to say to comfort her sister, but nothing comes out. She looks down over the edge at the farm, and her eyes fill with tears. Just as they climb to the low line clouds the plane bumps and pulls to the right. Lizzy steadies the craft. She looks back to Nans and gives her a thumbs up just as the engine sputters and the plane bumps and pulls again.

LIZZY

Crap!

NANS

What is it?

LIZZY

It, a . . . Might be that right flap?

NANS

The one you said you fixed.

LIZZY

Yeah, That's the one.

NANS

Lizzy?!

The wings shutter and Lizzy eases up on the engine and the plane starts a gentle descent. The girls both watch the flap, anxiously.

LIZZY

(Fingers crossed)

It'll hold

Another hard shake and the flap shutters and starts to tear away from the wing.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

(As she climbs out of her seat)

Take her, I'll get it.

In the sky the two girls work together like poetry. Lizzy pulls her hair into a pony tail and straps on a pair of goggles, she climbs out of her seat and moves out along the wing. Nans, in one motion slides out of her spot and into the front pilot's seat and grabs the stick. She tries to keep their altitude but the plane sputters again, bouncing around and dipping, startling Lizzy.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

Damnit, what are you doing, keep her steady.

Nans buckles herself in and fights to keep control. Out of habit she taps the fuel gauge, expecting the fuel to go from empty to full . . . But nothing happens. Again, she taps on the gauge, and again, nothing.

NANS

(To herself)
Damn it, Lizzy

LIZZY

What the hell?
(Pointing down to the ground from the wing)
More visitors.

As Nans looks down at the car pulling into the drive the plane shakes, sputters and the engine cuts out.

NANS

(Shouting to Lizzy over the wind)
Lizzy, we're going in quiet!

On the ground a large sedan pulls in and parks just outside the house. A small figure stands outside of the car, staring up at the girls.

NANS (CONT'D)

(To herself)
Please God, no more today.
Lizzy!, HOLD ON!

Lizzy walks across the wing as the plane gets tossed in the updrafts, still trying to get to the flap. Nans fights hard but the plane now flies pitched to the right. Another drop, and Lizzy loses her footing. Dangling, she swings from the wing cables. Closer to the ground she pulls herself back on, just as the right-wing is about to tear through the tree tops.

NANS (CONT'D)

Going over!!!

Lizzy holds on for dear life

LIZZY
REALLY?

Nans turns hard and the plane rolls over, just missing the tree tops. She manages to maneuver it down, skirting the fields, jerking it straight and dropping it into the dirt. The wheels hit and the plane bounces down hard on the tiny runway at full speed, almost knocking Lizzy off the wing. Just short of the car, Nans pivots the craft and they spin to a stop.

EXT. BROWN FARM (LATE AFTERNOON - BACK ON THE GROUND)

The two argue as they coast in.

LIZZY
(Spotting the man in the driveway.)
Who's that?

NANS
(With a "what now?" voice)
I don't know.

LIZZY
Is he from the bank?

NANS
No briefcase

LIZZY
And he's not fat . . . or bald.

NANS
(Giving Lizzy a forgiving laugh and shaking her head)
Well, I think we've had all we can stand today, wouldn't you say.

Lizzy nods, Yes

NANS (CONT'D)
(Quietly to Lizzy)
Grab daddy's gun from behind the back seat.

The man (excited) approaches from the driveway. Lizzy crawls across the wing and reaches in for the weapon as the two climb down from the plane.

MITTY
(Yelling out ahead of himself a few steps from the car)
THAT was amazing . . . Just amazing girls!
My god. Incredible. I can't believe what I just saw!

Lizzy pulls out the gun and waves it into the air. He flops to the ground and crawls back to the safety of the car.

NANS

No bank business here today.

MITTY

(Waving a handkerchief and taking a few reluctant steps closer to the girls)

Wait, wait, wait! . . . You don't understand, my name's Mitfield, William Mitfield. I'm not from the . . .

Lizzy shoots into the air. Nans shutters (surprised), as Mitty, rolls back and shields himself behind the car door.

NANS

(Whispering to Lizzy)

What the hell's wrong with you?

(Back to the man)

. . . . The banks not taking our farm today.

MITTY

Like I said, I'm not from the . . .

Lizzy shoots again into the air and he drops to the ground.

NANS

(Cracking a smile and whispering to Lizzy)

Enough.

MITTY

(Slowly standing up and dusting off his pants and shirt)
May I approach . . Maybe talk . . . Without the gun I mean?

I tend to speak more clearly when I'm not about to soil myself.

The girls both try to hold back the laughter.

MITTY (CONT'D)

. . . My name's Mitfield, William Mitfield.

The sisters give an odd look to each other. Lizzy lowers the gun and the man raises up his head.

LIZZY

Mitfield?

MITTY

Yes, ma'am

NANS
W. Mitfield?

MITTY
You can call me Mitty; From the Office of Strategic
Services.

With his chin down, he waves the white handkerchief
just above the open car door, peeking through the
glass. He rolls down the window to speak to the girls.

MITTY (CONT'D)
. . . The O.S.S.
I'm recruiting for a special unit of the allied air.
. . . I'm looking for pilots.

He steps out from behind the car, never lowering the
handkerchief.

MITTY (CONT'D)
I've come a long way to find this place. To find you
two.

LIZZY
This place? . . .
Why in the hell would anyone want to find this place?

MITTY
Because, I've been all over the world and rumor has it,
you two are some of the best.

Lizzy tosses the gun to Nans and rushes over to greet
the man. Nans walks away towards the house without a
word. As she reaches the front door she sees a bank
notice pinned to the screen; she rips it off the door
and goes inside. Lizzy knows Nans won't approve but she
invites Mitty in anyway.

Int. Brown Living room (Cont.)

Just inside the front door Mitty spots their father's
office. Its filled with the wonderful clutter of
ceiling to floor shelves jammed with stacks of books,
paper and model aircraft.

Lizzy walks Mitty into the living room and invites him
to sit. She parks herself on a small footstool just in
front of him. Staring at him with a look of half prison
warden and half love-sick teenager. From the kitchen
Nans (reluctantly) offers him something to drink.

NANS
Coffee, Mr. Mitfield?

MITTY

(Raising his voice so Nans can hear him from the
kitchen)

Thank you, yes, very nice of you.

She puts the kettle on and looks on as she crosses back into the room. We see a bashful spark in her eyes. Mitty politely smiles back doing his best to hide the fact that he's itching to get inside of the office.

MITTY (CONT'D)

Is your father here, girls?
The two go quiet.

LIZZY

It's been almost a year.

MITTY

(Concerned)

Since you've heard from him, at all?

The sisters exchange a quick glance. Nans shakes her head a quick "no", but Lizzy nods "yes" and hands Mitty the letter anyway.

LIZZY

Nothing, until today.

Nans stops Lizzy and snatches the letter from Mitty's hand.

NANS

(Over her shoulder as she walks back to the kitchen)
Why are you here Mr. Mitfield?

He answers Nans like a radio pitchman.

MITTY

Actually, its Captain Mitfield. . . . And I'm here to offer up some real adventure, and a chance to show your true talents.

It's a chance to help out the old red, white and blue.

Lost in every word, Lizzy smiles from ear to ear.

MITTY (CONT'D)

I want to offer you two a place on my new team, . . . It's mostly transport to start, but you'll get to fly.

Nans cuts him off, from the kitchen, she's having none of it.

NANS

The answer's no.

LIZZY

Nans, stop, . . . Don't listen to her, tell us more
Captain Mitfield.

Exactly, how far away would we get from here?

MITTY

The unit would be stationed near where, I think your
father might be.

Nans looks confused.

NANS

(Abruptly)

We didn't say where our father was.

LIZZY

Damnit', stop interrupting.

. . . Go on.

MITTY

Listen, I've done my homework.

You're Nancy Frey Brown and Elizabeth Grace Brown,
right? Daughters of Liddie Awena Brown and Dr. Roland
Brown, the same Roland Brown that broke the world speed
record in 1922? . . . Anyone who flies, knows who Roland
Brown is. I was just a boy but my mom and I watched him
race that day.

LIZZY

You fly?

MITTY

Well, no . . .

(Trying to shift the subject)

. . . You know, I used to have a photo of your father,
from race day.

. . . From the newspaper, terrible photo. I could hardly
make out his face.

NANS

(Low voice, sternly)

How do you know all of this Mr. Mitfield?

About my father . . . And why are you so interested?

(Suddenly on guard)

You need to start making sense real quick here.

MITTY

Miss Brown, everyone knows your father, the aero-genius.
His inventions . . . His designs.

LIZZY

He's famous?

MITTY

I've just recently learned all about you two, and
I guess, . . . Like they say, I was hoping to take you
away from all of this.

NANS

Again, how did you know our father was gone?

LIZZY

Never mind her.

Lizzy stands up and waves the Captain to the office and
pulls out a photo album. Mitty follows but stops at the
door.

MITTY

(Looking around the room)

Are you sure it's OK . . . if I ?

Lizzy waves him in and he immediately starts scanning
the room.

MITTY (CONT'D)

So, where do you think he's now?

LIZZY

Missing.

He was called up to help with the . . .

Nans walks into the room, startling Mitty and cutting
off Lizzy.

NANS

. . . We don't really know.

Now, It might be time for you to go Mr. Mitfield

LIZZY

(Mouthing the words)

STOP!

Lizzy cuts back in, showing Mitty a current photo of
her father. As he listens, Mitty paces around the room,
scanning the items on the shelf and marveling at the
models. His eyes linger on a familiar WINGED INSIGNIA
on a leather-bound notebook. The word "ROUNDER"
scratched into its binding. He starts to pull the book
from the shelf but is surprised by Lizzy's voice.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

(Her eyes start to tear)

This is a few months before he . . .

Mitty saves her, pointing at a much older newspaper clipping sitting on the bookcase (Dad in his 20's on race day)

MITTY

That's the one, from the paper . . . He was fearless that day.

Mitty eyes something on the other side of the room and walks over to an old bookcase. On the shelf stands a small bronze statue of a beautiful woman with outstretched arms. The base reads "the Goddess Freya". Mitty rests his hand on the head of the figure.

MITTY (CONT'D)

(With Lizzy mouthing along)
To see all things at all times.

LIZZY

That's what my Dad says. . . (Confused) or he used to.

MITTY

. . . They said she was a Norse goddess I think.
. . . They worshiped her prosperity and motherhood.
. . . And they admired her power of health.

LIZZY

(For the first time a bit skeptical)
Who's they?

Mitty at the office window and Nans from the doorway both chant the same words . . .

MITTY AND NANS

"The ones who were tasked with saving the world."

Mitty and Nans make awkward eye contact and the room falls quiet. Lizzy has no idea what they're talking about, but she is still hanging on every word as Mitty speaks. The kettle whistles and Nans rushes out of the room. As she leaves, the Captain scans the office. He eyes the sketchbook marked "Rounder". He hurries across and quickly stuffs it into his bag. Lizzy sees the whole thing. He gives her a wink before Nans returns; She says nothing, not wanting to blow her chance of getting out of Brownsville. Nans returns and hands Mitty his cup and we again see the shy spark in Nans eyes.

NANS

Sorry it's instant.

Listen Captain, sorry you came all this way, but NO thank you, we have too much to do here at home to get killed in any war.

LIZZY

I'm happy to get killed in the war . . . If it means I
don't have to die here.

MITTY

(Smiling at Lizzy)

I guess it's really a choice of hanging on or letting go
isn't it.

LIZZY

See, to me, it sounds like a choice between pure
adventure and
. . . Pure boredom.

MITTY

(Like a carnival barker)

She's right, pure adventure.

In fact, I'm offering the adventure of a lifetime . . .
And a chance to really prove yourself . . . Nans?

LIZZY

Sign us up!

NANS

Sorry Captain, but the answer's still "NO".

MITTY

(Standing and making his way to the door)

Well, I understand, . . . Thanks for your time.

LIZZY

(To Nans)

What the hell have you done!

Mitty makes his way through the front door and onto the
porch and Lizzy goes after him.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

(Just out of earshot of Nans)

Please, Take me with you. I gotta get out of here.

MITTY

I'm sorry, I came here for the pair of you.

It's kind of an all or nothing.

It's my last two spots on the team.

(Kind of to himself, playing Lizzy)

. . . But I think there are a couple of cousins in
Johnson City that could do in a pinch?

If there was a way to get your sister to . . .

But, I don't know . . . You heard her.

LIZZY

Just wait here, Please!

Lizzy runs back into the house.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

He says he'll help us look for Dad.

(She lies)

. . . And Nans, he offered me a spot, I'm going
. . . Please, come with me.

NANS

(Looking out at Mitty)

We'll be needed here . . . When Daddy comes home.

(Desperate to Lizzy, her eyes dotted with tears)

We have to stay and keep the place together.

LIZZY

(In a sad tone)

Nans . . . No.

NANS

(Pleading)

Lizzy listen, we can't go. It's dusting season.
And if we can do all of the north side farms, get the
Anderson's on board and sweet talk the Davis boys?

LIZZY

(Under her breath)

Like the Davis boys would be a problem.

NANS

(Her eyes now let go and the tears stream down her face)

. . . We can make it through the winter no problem, I
know we can . . . And then next season . . .

LIZZY

(Cutting her off)

Nans Stop, there's nothing here for us anymore.
The banks going to take it. I don't know how we've held
on this long.

The Captain now stands at the front door, listening to
the girls.

MITTY

(From outside the screen)

What if I could help you hold on to the place,
buy you some time until . . . Until after?

The 3 stand silent.

NANS

(To Mitty)

I have something for you.

MITTY

I'm sorry?

Mitty opens the screen and reluctantly steps in. Nans reaches into her pocket and pulls out an envelope.

NANS

We found it a few weeks after my father left . . .

LIZZY

. . . Stuffed in the couch.

As Nans hands it to Mitty, we read "W. F. Mitfield".

NANS

It's my father's writing

Mitty looks it over, smiles and slips it into his bag.

MITTY

And you didn't open it?

LIZZY

I would of, but Nans wouldn't.

NANS

It's not ours?

Plus, . . . We always thought he'd come home . . . But now.

LIZZY

You're not going to open it?

Seriously, no bodies going to open that damn thing?

MITTY

I'll make sure it gets to where it needs to go. Thanks.

The girls both look confused. Mitty turns and heads for the door.

NANS

(Drying her tears)

And You'll help us find our father?

MITTY

(Stopping at the screen door and turning back)

I'll make it a priority.

Lizzy's eyes widen (hopeful).

NANS

. . . And we could come back . . . After?

LIZZY

For God sakes Nans, why would we wanna come back here,
there's a whole world out there.

NANS

. . . And we could come back,
Captain?

Mitty raises a brow and nods "Yes", Nans reluctantly
nods back.

NANS (CONT'D)

(Looking around the room and then to Lizzy)
I'm only going so I can protect you.

LIZZY

(Screaming!)

YES!!!!

- FADE OUT

INT. THE BROWN'S HOUSE (EARLY MORNING)

In the office the statue of the Freya sits on the edge
of dad's desk near a forgotten and open window, a red
ribbon tied around its base. The curtains blow in the
breeze and the room floods with light.

SNAP-

In the kitchen the faucet drips.

SNAP-

In the front room, the shadow of a tree branch and wind
chimes swing across the walls.

SNAP-

Back in Dad's office the usual chaos strung out across
the desk, chairs, and floor is gone. The desk is tidy,
with neatly stacked piles of paper. The desk mats
squared, pen holder filled to the top and the letter
opener neatly placed.

SNAP-

On a half wall in the bedroom, a cork bulletin board
holds onto a couple of old-family-drawings by Lizzy and
Nans as children.

SNAP-

INT. THE BROWN'S BEDROOM (16 YEARS AGO)

Beneath the drawings, a 4-year-old Nans, and Lizzy (at just 2) wrestle with their Mom on the bed. The girls are tucked in together and smiling. **SNAP, SNAP, SNAP** from face to face of the young family . . . Dad sneaks into the room holding his best monster pose . . .

SNAP-

**INT. THE BROWN'S (EARLY MORNING - BACK TO CURRENT TIME)
(CONT.)**

Into the now empty hallway, through the vacant house, room to room, the laughter of Nans and Lizzy rings out and then fades. The old place stands at the ready, cleaned and cared for, eagerly waiting for the family to return. In the girls rooms, drawers are open and empty. Nans bed is made tight, a small cross is hung over her headboard and a photo of her mother and father on the night stand. On Lizzy's side, the blankets and sheets are crumpled on the floor next to her bed. A picture of herself in flight leathers sits on the side table. Next to the photo, a small table clock ticks away . . .

SNAP-

NANS (O.S.)
(Like a prayer)
When we pass through the darkness . . .

INT. HALLWAY GLOWING IN WHITE LIGHT (EARLY MORNING)

Down the center of a long hallway, a man's hard sole dress shoes click across the tile. Replacing the sound of the clock, they march towards a heavy wooden door. A pair of worn and beaten white Spalding tennis shoes shuffle and squeak along to his left and a pair of long legs and worn out conservative low heels follow a step behind to the right. A framed American Flag hangs the only color in the space. Bright overhead lights wash out the reflection in the floors.

SNAP-

NANS (O.S.)
We'll be fearless and press-on until clear of the very
last shadow.

INT. HALLWAY GLOWING IN GREEN LIGHT (EARLY MORNING)

Up from the bright white of the shiny floors stretches out a long hallway bathed in a muddy green glow. The echoey click-clack of trained, sharpened steps ring out. Down the corridor, the backs of polished military knee-highs flank a withered red-haired man in brown dusty work boots. His worn brogans barely shuffle, tiredly tripping, dragging as much as walking. The three men cross under small pools of light from tiny fixtures that rattle from the ceiling. The beaten face of Roland Brown flashes. His swollen eyes are barely conscious, only held open by the sounds of jarring German commands.

SNAP-

NANS (O.S.)

With all our strength we'll reach for the top of the world . . .

INT. THE BROWN'S BEDROOM (16 YEARS AGO) (CONT.)

Dad stands, claws in the air. The two young girls still lay together, lit by the flickering fire light, their feet tangled together, their eyes fixed on only their mother . . . Roland realizes he's not the center of attention. He lowers his arms, and watches over the three. His face lights up, taking in the moment . . .

. . . Then he raises his arms into the air and gives his best growl. Nans leaps from the bed and runs to the hallway trying to escape . . . but Dad's arm scoops her up and pulls her in close. With her face buried in her father's neck, Nans squeals with laughter.

SNAP-

INT. HALLWAY GLOWING IN WHITE LIGHT (EARLY MORNING) (CONT.)

Back in the hallway, the white Spaldings squeak and grab on the polished floor and a foot spills from one of the shoes. Lizzy leans down and quickly pops her foot back in, and skips to catch up to Nans and Mitty. The girls carry over packed leather suitcases . . . Both working a bit to keep up.

LIZZY

(Looking around)

It looks like It's just us.

Mitty smiles, looking at Lizzy and Nans from the corner of his eye. He keeps up his pace, pretending to be blind to their struggle as they head towards the big wood door at the end of the hall.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

Don't you understand, we're the elite.
(Looking to Nans behind Mitty's back)
The whole world, and he picked just us.

Nans shakes her head "no", trying to get Lizzy to stop.

LIZZY (CONT'D)

(In a voice loud enough to echo the halls)
Just us, to save the damn day.

SNAP-

INT. HALLWAY GLOWING IN GREEN LIGHT (EARLY MORNING) (CONT.)

ROLAND

(Drifting in and out)

You boys seem like you're working out some anger issues.

Roland's eyes close, he drifts unconscious but the steps continue. His captives shake his head into a second of clarity and continue to haul him away mercilessly.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

No more for me thanks. I'm driving.

He starts to show signs of a fight against the arms that carry him. A big steel door draws closer and his eyes widen.

SNAP-

INT. HALLWAY GLOWING IN WHITE LIGHT (EARLY MORNING) (CONT.)

A few more steps and the big wooden door in front of them creaks open. On the other side Yana (the Russian pilot) stands guard.

YANA

(To Mitty)
The last two?

Mitty nods, Yes.

Yana swings the door open and the girls see inside. The room is filled with a hundred or so women.

Lizzy suddenly realizes that they are not the only two. She looks confused and a bit defeated as she leans to see.

YANA (CONT'D)
 Thank you Captain
 (To the girls)
 You won't need any of that.
 (Pointing at their suitcases)
 Leave them.

Down a tight hallway to their right, an enormous pile of cases and duffels cover the floor.

NANS
 (To Lizzy)
 So many?

YANA
 (Directly to Lizzy)
 And we're all here to save the damn day too.

Inside, the room turns to see the girls. Nans and Lizzy stand in the doorway dumbfounded.

NANS
 (Under her breath)
 We'll never fade until the last jagged cliff is beneath
 our feet.
 . . . Through the obscurity.

YANA
 (Interrupting, confused)
 What's that?

NANS AND LIZZY
 (To each other)
 Through the obscurity and into the darkness . . .
 (The two girls grin confident smiles as they step into
 the room)

NANS AND LIZZY (CONT'D)
 . . . Up and over jagged cliffs.

Behind the girls we see Yana (more confused) mouthing the words as the girls speak.

NANS AND LIZZY (CONT'D)
 (along with a spattering of girls inside the room)
 . . . To the tip of the mountain at the top of the
 world.

In the background the big wood door starts to close.

SNAP-

INT. THE BROWN'S LIVINGROOM (16 YEARS AGO) (CONT.)

Back in the front room its quiet, the fire is now just embers. Mom's fingers walk across Nans young face, from chin to brow as she whispers.

MOM

(As the girls fade)

You'll find your way, up and over jagged cliffs to the tip of the mountain at the top of the world.

SNAP-

INT. HALLWAY GLOWING IN GREEN LIGHT (EARLY MORNING) (CONT.)

The heavy metal door slams closed and a man's voice screams out.

NOOOOOOOO!

END (EPISODE ONE)