

REMEMBER JOE

by

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1 INT. BARN - DAY - JULY 1932

1

NINE-YEAR-OLDS JOEY and CLAIRE sit on a hay bale playing airplane. Claire holds on to him for dear life.

JOEY

I'm the Red Baron. I'm the best pilot in the whole world!

He makes soaring sounds. Now machine gun sounds.

Eyes crunched shut.

CLAIRE

Do we have to shoot anybody?

JOEY

WE HAVE TO SHOOT EVERYBODY!

She stands up off the hay in protest. Arms crossed.

JOEY

I'm defending my country.

CLAIRE

You're not defending anybody. You're just playing pretend.

He stands up. Rushes to a loft ladder.

Climbing it.

JOEY

I'M JOE KELLY. AND I'M GONNA BE THE BEST PILOT IN THE WHOLE WORLD.

He races to the edge. Extends his arms. Jumps from the roof.

Claire screams.

2 INT. HANGAR - LATER

2

Joey's grandpa, PAPPY, inspects Joey's ankle.

CLAIRE

He was trying to fly.

JOEY

I WILL FLY.

PAPPY

That's right, Joey. But let's give it a few years and use a plane the next time.

To Claire hovering nearby. Pointing to a workbench.

PAPPY

Claire, Sweetie, there's a wrap on that bench over there. Grab it for me.

She runs to the workbench. She finds the wrap sitting underneath a wrench.

CLAIRE

This one under the spanner?

JOEY

It's called a wrench!

To Claire.

PAPPY

Yeah, that's it.

To Joey.

PAPPY

She's right. It is a spanner.

CLAIRE

I know a thing or two about airplanes.

Pappy smiles, eyes his pocket watch.

PAPPY

It's getting late Claire Daniels. Maybe you should be getting home to your folks.

CLAIRE

I just want to make sure Joey's gonna be...

JOEY

I'm fine! It don't hurt.

Pappy gives her a wink.

She starts to leave. She turns back.

CLAIRE

Joey, you are gonna be the best pilot in the whole world.

She leaves.

PAPPY

That's a real sweet kid.

Rolling his eyes.

JOEY
Pappy! She's a girl.

3 EXT. FISHING HOLE - DAY

3

Joey and Claire sit down on the dock.

Joey casts his line in the water. Claire swings her feet.

Bored.

CLAIRE
Every summer we come here and every
summer we never catch a thing. There's
no fish in this hole.

JOEY
There's fish out there. I've seen 'em.

She shakes her head.

We follow the line out and watch for a moment. Nothing.

We follow the line back to FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLDS JOEY AND
CLAIRE. - JULY 1937

CLAIRE
There's no fish in this hole.

JOEY
THERE IS! They're just REAL smart fish.

After a beat.

CLAIRE
Maggie Mae says she's your girl.

JOEY
MAGGIE MAE?!? Joe Kelly is gonna be the
best pilot in the whole world. He don't
have time for a girl.

Claire dips her head in disappointment.

JOEY
But if I did, I suppose it'd be you,
Claire Daniels.

Claire smiles and slowly rests her head on his shoulder.

He looks around to make sure no one's watching.

Pappy's truck pulls up to the fishing hole kicking up dust.
Yelling out the window of the old Ford.

PAPPY

Joey! It's your folks! There's been an accident.

4 EXT. CEMETARY - A FEW DAYS LATER

4

A SMALL CROWD gathers around two headstones.

The headstones read:

"Here lies beloved husband, Jack Kelly 1898-1937"

"Here lies Beloved Wife, Kathryn Kelly 1901-1937"

A choked up Pappy opens his well-worn Bible to Psalm 91.

PAPPY

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

Joey stares at the headstones in the ground.

Claire walks over. Joins him in silent support.

She goes to take his hand.

Pappy's speech slowly echoes off in the distance.

PAPPY (V.O.)

"Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge.."

5 EXT. CEMETARY 4 YEARS LATER - DAY - AUGUST 1941

5

CLAIRE'S HAND, NOW EIGHTEEN YEAR'S OLD, intertwines with JOEY'S HAND, NOW ALSO EIGHTEEN. The young adults stand at the graves of Joe's parents.

Joe is dressed in his Army Air Corps military uniform. He leans over and sets some flowers on his mother's grave.

He gives Claire a look, smiles, and nods for them to leave.

She smiles back.

6 EXT. FISHING HOLE - LATER

6

Claire stands at the dock with her arms crossed.

Joe huddles over a tackle box fastening something.

CLAIRE

My folks are throwing a party for you and
your men and you want to fish?

Joe smiles.

JOE

It's a new fishing pole!

CLAIRE

You may be the best pilot in the whole
world but you are the worst fisherman
I've ever known.

He winks.

JOE

I'm feeling lucky.

He casts. They sit.

CLAIRE

There's no fish in here. You really
think you're gonna catch something?

JOE

Pretty sure.

He stands to his feet and fights a whopper.

Claire stands in excitement. Can't believe it.

Slowly he reels in...nothing. Claire's confused.

Joe takes the end of the line and finds something shiny.

He dangles an engagement ring in front of her on the line.

She screams with excitement.

7 EXT. CHURCH - DAY - NOVEMBER 1941

7

Rice showers Claire and Joe from THE SMALL CROWD as they
descend the steps and climb into a waiting car.

Their car pulls away. Cans tied to the back. "Just Married"
on the rear window.

Some of Joe's flight crew call out.

WILLIS
Way to go, Buddy!

HALF PINT
Lucky dog!

DOUGHBOY
You only gotta week. Better enjoy it!

They turn and punch him in the arm.

DOUGHBOY
I'm just kidding.

Pappy puts his arms around the young men.

PAPPY
Which one of you is next?

They turn away quickly with a chorus of "NOT ME!" "NO WAY!"
"NOT THIS FLYBOY!"

8 INT. HOTEL BUNGALOW - NIGHT

8

Joe enters the door with Claire in his arms.

Their bags are already there.

He swings her to her feet. They kiss passionately.

JOE
I'm in love with you, Miss Daniels.

CLAIRE
Kelly! I'm Mrs. Joe Kelly.

They kiss again.

JOE
Wait one second.

He goes to his suitcase. Pulls out a silver box. Offers it to her.

Amazed.

CLAIRE
What's this?

JOE
A wedding present.

She opens a music box. "Beautiful Dreamer" begins to play.

CLAIRE

Oh, Joe, I love it.

He places the box on the mantle. Takes her hand to dance. They sway to the tinker of the music box.

After a moment he turns their hands inward.

CLAIRE

I like that.

JOEY

You're not just my girl now. You're my wife.

A big band version of "Beautiful Dreamer" takes over as they dance.

9 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - DAY - DECEMBER 1941 9

An old radio. Roosevelt blares over the airwaves.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT (V.O.)

Yesterday, December 7, 1941 - a date which will live in infamy - the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan.

Pappy and Joe listen. Joe's in uniform, holding a duffle bag. Roosevelt continues in the background.

PAPPY

The whole world's gone crazy now. Watch your back out there. Keep your eyes open.

They hug. Pappy pulls a piece of paper from his pocket.

PAPPY

This is the only thing I have to give you that has any real value. It's seen me through a lot of years. Take it. Teach it to your men. Let it be a source of strength. A source of hope. It'll bring you home to me.

10 INT. BARRACKS - ENGLAND - LATE NIGHT - JANUARY 1944 10

Joe's crew lay in their bunks. White tank-top tees. Dog tags. Eyes wide open. No one is sleeping.

JOE

Well, we've worked hard and we're ready. I'm proud of each of you. I've got the best crew in the entire 801st, hands down.

CREW

Thank you, Sir.

After a beat. Quietly.

JOE

"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty..."

One by one the rest of the crew join in with Psalm 91.

JOE & CREW

"...I will say of the LORD, "He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

JOE & CREW

"Surely he will save you from the fowler's snare and from the deadly pestilence. He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge..."

11 EXT. ENGLAND - TARMAC - EARLY MORNING

11

An eerie fog blankets the airfield. The tail section of a B-24 Liberator fuselage is barely visible.

All of Joe's crew, JOE, PETEY, HALF PINT, DOUGHBOY, WILLIS, CONNOR, AND FARLEY mull around the bomber in the gray haze.

Glowing cigarettes pierce the fog. The flame off a Zippo lighter dimly shows through. The faint images of men wait for the fog to lift.

HALF-PINT

What do you think, Skip?

JOE

Same ole drill. If it's red we stay, if it's green we go.

HALF-PINT

But what do you think? Is she gonna lift.

JOE
We'll know soon enough.

A green flare fills the sky with a ghostly glow.

WILLIS
She's green, Capt'n!

JOE
LET'S GO BOYS. LET'S GIVE 'EM HELL.

12 INT. COCKPIT - B-24 LIBERATOR BOMBER - NEXT DAY

12

Joe sits in the pilot's seat busy with last minute pre-flight details. Headset on, he turns to Petey, his copilot.

JOE
Okay, Petey, let's get this big bird in the air while we can.

PETEY
Yes sir, Lieutenant, that's the best place for it.

Checks his instrument panel.

PETEY
Trim tabs.

Joe turns three dials to 3 degrees right rudder.

JOE
Trimmed for take-off.

Petey checks to make sure all levers are set to auto-rich.

PETEY
Mixtures in auto-rich. Exercise propellers, turbo-superchargers, and flaps.

Joe sets all throttles to 1500 rpm.

Petey changes propeller governors from full high rpm to full low rpm, holding governor switches until propellers change all the way.

Joe advances superchargers slowly and retards them with the turn of a dial.

JOE
Turbo-superchargers exercised.

PETEY

Propellers and flaps exercised.

Checks gauges.

PETEY

Propellers in high rpm. Run up engines.

Joe advances the number four throttle, nods to Petey.

13 INT. FLIGHT DECK - SAME 13

Airman Farley straps himself into a jump seat next to a baby-faced radio operator, Connor.

Into his headset. To the tower.

CONNOR

Check, tower, 36-42016 ready to taxi into position. Ready when you are, skipper.

14 INT. COCKPIT - SAME 14

To headset.

JOE

Check, Connor.

To Petey.

JOE

Number one engine run up completed.

Joe advances the throttle to fully open position, holding it there with his right hand while he advances the supercharger control with his left hand.

JOE

Superchargers locked.

PETEY

Wing flaps twenty degrees. Flight controls?

Joe moves the controls to full forward and turns the wheel to the hard right, moving the right rudder. Then moves them to full back and turns the wheel to the left: left rudder.

JOE

Controls checked for full travel and free movement. Taxiing into position.

15 INT. FLIGHT DECK - SAME 15

HALF PINT
Clear for take-off, Lieutenant.

16 INT. COCKPIT - SAME 16

JOE
Willis, how's it look up there?

17 INT. TOP GUN TURRET - SAME 17

Top turret gunner, Willis, checks the runway from both directions.

WILLIS
No toys in the driveway, skip.

18 INT. COCKPIT - SAME 18

Joe gives the thumbs up to Petey.

JOE
Stand by for take-off.

PETEY
Booster pumps on. Auxiliary hydraulic pump and power unit, Doughboy?

Doughboy, navigator, chubby, responds.

DOUGHBOY
Auxiliary hydraulic pump and power unit off.

PETEY
Generators?

DOUGHBOY
Standing by.

Doughboy switches all four generators on while take-off power is being applied.

Joe releases the brakes. Slowly but steadily advances all throttles together with a smooth forward motion.

19 EXT. RUNWAY - SAME 19

All four engines roar as the B-24 taxis on the tarmac. Another one along side of it. Eight more down the line.

20 EXT. RUNWAY - MOMENTS LATER 20

The Liberator bombers take to the cloudy sky two at a time until the whole squadron is airborne. Bound for Germany.

21 INT. PAPPY'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 21

Pappy prays, Bible in hand.

Sounds of flight engines and gunfire begin to echo in the background.

22 INT. COCKPIT - B-24 LIBERATOR BOMBER - CONTINUOUS 22

Incoming German fighters!

HALF PINT
BANDITS AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK!

PETEY
WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT TO THOSE CLOUDS!

The SOUNDS OF 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS and BULLETS STRIKING the B-24 fill the air.

DOUGHBOY
THEY'RE GOING OVER THE TOP! SETTING UP FOR ANOTHER PASS.

WILLIS
I SEE ONE OF THEM. HERE THEY COME!

DOUGHBOY
BALL TURRET OUT OF AMMO.

HALF PINT
TAIL GUN'S JAMMED!

The plane is riddled with bullets.

PETEY
JOE! NUMBER THREE IS ON FIRE!

WILLIS
HERE THEY COME!

Doughboy descends from the top turret.

The crew members prepare to bail out.

JOE
PETEY, HIT THE BAIL OUT BELL!

Petey hits the bell. Out of nowhere he takes a stray bullet in the chest. He bounces over onto Joe, accidentally stripping Joe's dog tags.

23 EXT. SKY - CONTINUOUS 23

The plane loses altitude as the German planes peel away.

The fire on the wing grows in intensity.

Chutes begin appearing as crew members bail out of the belly of the plane.

24 INT. B-24 - COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS 24

Joe fights for control of the plane. Looks down.

Blood spills from Petey's mouth.

Under his breath...

PETEY

"He is my refuge and my fortress..."

JOE

PETEY.

HALF PINT

JOE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU GUYS GOTTA GET OUT OF HERE.

JOE

PETEY'S HIT. I'M GONNA LAND HER. GET OUT OF HERE! THAT'S AN ORDER!

Half Pint jumps.

The cockpit shakes violently as the plane descends rapidly. Gauges bottom out. The plane and the wind roar.

From the air the men watch their B-24 and their leader go down in flames.

25 EXT. CLAIRE'S HOME - MAILBOX - DAY - FEBRUARY 1944 25

Claire opens the mail box and thumbs through some letters.

She stops as she gets to the dreaded letter. She covers her mouth in horror.

26 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - DAY 26

Pappy works on the engine of a biplane plane. He stops to dry his eyes. He begins to work again but after a moment he puts down the wrench. Pulls the letter from his pocket.

INSERT: ***"We regret to inform you that your grandson, Joe Kelly, is listed as MISSING IN ACTION"***

27 INT. EMPLOYMENT OFFICE - DAY ONE MONTH LATER 27

Claire fills out an employment application.

A YOUNG WOMAN sitting next to her does the same.

Softly.

YOUNG WOMAN

I'm engaged to be married in a week. Do I check married or single?

Tears well in Claire's eyes.

CLAIRE

Would you excuse me?

Claire stands. Leaves her application on the chair.

28 EXT. CLAIRE'S HOME - DUSK - MAY 1944 28

Pappy and Claire sit on the porch swing. Drinking lemonade.

CLAIRE

It's the waiting that's so hard.

PAPPY

Five months ain't much time at all. We can't give up hope.

She forces a smile.

29 EXT. FISHING HOLE - NEXT DAY 29

Claire stands on the dock staring out at the glistening pond.

30 INT. CLAIRE'S HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY - JUNE 1944 30

Claire places a tray of lemonade on a table.

The radio blares the latest news reel update on the war in Europe and D-Day.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This morning at O Six Hundred, our own American troops and our allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandie, France and took German ground...

Claire's hands begin to shake as she pours the tea.

Willis notices. Turns off the radio.

She hands glasses to Half Pint, Doughboy, and Willis.

Silence. Apprehensive and scared.

CLAIRE

So, what brings you boys all the way out here?

Half Pint takes a sip. Just as apprehensive.

HALF PINT

Mmmm. It's real good, Claire.

She waits for an answer.

She looks to Willis. Stiff upper lip.

CLAIRE

If you men have something to tell me, I'm ready to hear it.

WILLIS

Joe was a real hero. You'd have been proud.

HALF PINT

Petey was shot. Joe wanted to try and save him.

She looks at Willis with strength and dignity.

CLAIRE

It's been a year. You have something for me? Is Joe dead?

Willis sheds a tear as he pulls an envelope from his bag.

He hands her the letter.

WILLIS

I'm sorry Claire.

She holds the letter in her hand. She takes a deep breath of finality.

She stands.

CLAIRE

I want to thank you for coming down here in person. You'll never know how much it means to me.

DOUGHBOY

Claire if there's anything...

Cutting him off.

CLAIRE

I'll be fine. Gentlemen, if you don't mind I'd like to be alone.

The men show themselves to the door and leave.

31 EXT. CLAIRE'S HOME - A FEW DAYS LATER 31

Pappy opens the car door for Claire. She gets out. Black stockings. Black veil. Black dress. She clutches a folded flag. She looks up at the house. Takes a breath.

32 INT. CLAIRE'S HOME - NEXT DAY 32

Claire sits in her room. Shutters drawn. The phone rings. Rings again. And again. She doesn't move.

She's stares at the picture of Joe. She flips the photo over.

INSERT: *Claire, I love you with all my heart. Joe.*

Her tears flow again.

33 EXT. CEMETARY - NEXT DAY 33

Claire lays flowers at Joe's headstone near his parents. The headstone reads: "Joseph Kelly - Beloved Husband 1923 - 1944"

34 EXT. CLAIRE'S HOME - DUSK - THREE MONTHS LATER - SEPT. 1944 34

Pappy and Claire sit on the porch swing. More lemonade.

CLAIRE

Nice night.

PAPPY

You miss him and you know it.

She sips her drink.

CLAIRE

I was thinking maybe you could use some help down at the hangar.

PAPPY

You mind your business. Kelly's Airstrip is alive and well and I'm handling things just fine.

CLAIRE

You're in trouble and you know it.

Pappy takes a sip.

PAPPY

When can you start?

35 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - OFFICE - NEXT DAY

35

Claire walks into Pappy's office. Total disarray.

She picks up the phone.

PAPPY (O.S.)

It doesn't work.

Pappy enters. She hangs it up. She goes to turn on the radio.

PAPPY

Nope.

She gives him a look.

She flicks the switch to a desk fan. Nothing.

PAPPY

When it gets too hot I just go outside for a spell.

CLAIRE

Pappy, what happened?

PAPPY

After the war started, anyone who could fly went over seas. Work dried up. Bills piled up. Then they turned it all off.

CLAIRE

Why didn't you say something?

PAPPY

You had troubles of your own.

CLAIRE

They're our troubles, Pappy. Our troubles.

PAPPY

There's no business left here.

CLAIRE

Then we'll find it somewhere else and we'll bring it in.

36 EXT. CLAIRE'S HOME - DAY - SEPTEMBER 1944 36

She pounds a sign into the ground that reads "FOR RENT".

37 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - DAY 37

Pappy is under the car changing the oil.

He sees Claire's feet and two pieces of luggage.

PAPPY

You going somewhere?

CLAIRE

Right here.

She sets the bags down.

He sticks his head out.

PAPPY

We roommates now?

CLAIRE

We're more than roommates. We're partners!

38 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - MORNING - SEPTEMBER 1945 38

Pappy walks in to a clean and organized office.

Claire is on the phone. She points to a cup of coffee on the table.

Pappy takes it. Sips and smiles. Business as usual.

Scribbles some notes.

CLAIRE

Yes, Mr. Tanner. That sounds great. Bye-bye.

She hangs up.

CLAIRE

That was Mr. Tanner of Tanner Crop Dusting.

PAPPY

We tried him a year ago, there's no business there.

CLAIRE

That was year ago. But he's converted some of his planes into Barnstormers.

PAPPY

I hate that circus act.

CLAIRE

So do the Feds. That's why everyone of them has to pass a ten point inspection for a safety certificate to operate.

PAPPY

What's that run them?

CLAIRE

If they pass, it's ten bucks.

PAPPY

Who certifies them?

Claire pulls out a stack of certificates from a manila envelope. She ruffles them for Pappy.

CLAIRE

We do! And we're the only one's who do it within five hundred miles of Mooresville.

The radio blares.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

"And in just minutes, here on board the battleship USS Missouri, Emperor Hirohito with our own Supreme Allied Commander, General Douglas MacArthur, will formally sign a complete and total surrender of Japan.

Claire and Pappy stand and embrace. The war is over.

39 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - DAY - OCTOBER 1945 39

MONTAGE:

Barnstormers cue up for their safety inspections.

Pappy and Claire work tag team on different planes.

Both in overalls, Claire's ponytail pokes through the back of her baseball cap.

Slight grease on her face.

40 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - LATER 40

Pilots drink coffee and wait in the hangar as Claire exchanges certificates for cash, one by one.

More grease on her face and hands. Less make-up. She's looking a bit overworked.

The money drawer starts filling up.

As their little business takes flight, the long hours are starting to show on both of them.

41 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - MORNING - SEPTEMBER 1946 41

Claire looks at an engine with a customer. Her face is covered in grease from the day before.

As she talks with the customer she spits out the side of her mouth.

The customer takes a half step back.

She points back at the engine.

Pappy takes it all in.

42 INT. PAPPY'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT 42

Pappy dumps mashed potatoes on Claire's plate.

PAPPY

You almost hit him on the foot.

CLAIRE

I did not.

PAPPY

You're dressing like a ballplayer.
You're spitting like a ballplayer. It's
bad for business.

Perturbed.

CLAIRE

Bad for business!? Two years ago we had
nothing. I BUILT THIS BUSINESS!

PAPPY

No, you built a wall, and now you're
hiding behind it.

CLAIRE

What's that supposed to mean?

PAPPY

Why are you still wearing that ring?

CLAIRE

'Cause I'm married.

PAPPY

To who? Joe? I haven't seen him around
here in over two years. Have you?

Deflated.

CLAIRE

Why are you doing this?

PAPPY

'Cause I love you. There's a lot more to
life than fixing planes and having dinner
with an old man every night. Maggie
Mae's always calling with some fella for
you to meet.

CLAIRE

Pappy, I'm not ready.

PAPPY

No, Sweetheart. You're not willing.

43 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT 43

Claire stares at her grease-stained face in the mirror. Her eyes are tired. Her hair is filthy.

She takes a deep breath. Grabs the bar of soap.

44 INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 44

The music box plays "Beautiful Dreamer".

A drawer opens slowly. It's the folded flag.

Claire stands at the drawer in a robe. Her clean, wet hair falls on her shoulders.

With hesitation, she slowly removes her ring.

She places the ring on the flag in the drawer.

She takes the music box gently in her hands, closes the lid and stops the music.

CLAIRE

Goodbye, my love.

She places the box in the drawer. Slides the drawer closed.

45 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - OFFICE - MORNING 45

Pappy walks in to find Claire doing paperwork. Her hair is up. She's wears a nice dress and heels.

Facetious.

PAPPY

Oh, excuse me, ma'am. I was looking for my partner. I was wondering if...
Claire? Is that you?

Pappy smiles. Claire returns it.

CLAIRE

Be quiet, Pappy.

PAPPY

My word, Claire. You are one beautiful woman.

The phone rings.

PAPPY

Oh, and by the way, there's a good chance
Maggie Mae might be giving you a call
today.

Claire shoots him a look.

46 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - OFFICE - DAY - SEPT. 1947 46

Pappy and Claire sit in the office on a quiet day. Claire
does some paperwork. Pappy listens to the radio.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

"And it's official, the Brooklyn Dodgers
are going to the 1947 World series
against their cross town rivals, those
Bronx Bombers, the New York Yankees!"

The announcer rambles on as the urgent sounds of a plane
choking and sputtering brings them to their feet. They rush
outside.

47 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - CONTINUOUS 47

A small prop plane coughs smoke and teeters it's wings on a
fast descent. It lands harshly onto Kelly's Airstrip.

It taxis up to the hangar on its last leg. The engine
misfires. Shooting oil. Out of breath.

Pappy and Claire rush to the plane.

The rugged and handsome pilot, DR. DOUG RYAN, pops out of the
cockpit and lands to his feet on the tarmac in one fell
swoop.

PAPPY

She's not sounding too good.

Removing his goggles.

DOUG

She's been coughing and sputtering the
last twenty miles. You guys got a good
mechanic here?

PAPPY

Sure do.

DOUG

That's swell.

Looking around.

DOUG
Where is he?

CLAIRE
You're looking at her.

He takes off his gloves. His smile is contagious.

DOUG
My apologies, Ma'am. I just wasn't
expecting...

CLAIRE
You have a problem with a woman working
on your bird?

DOUG
None whatsoever. To tell you the truth,
I don't know much about fixing planes.
I'm flying this one to New York as a
favor to a friend.

Painted on the rear of the fuselage: **"Property of Howard
Hughes"**

Pappy lifts his eyebrows.

48 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - OFFICE

48

Doug and Pappy wait for Claire's report.

DOUG
You gotta love Branca. Fifteen complete
games, twenty-one wins, and an ERA of
2.67.

PAPPY
I'm a Pee Wee Reese fan myself. Now
there's a power shortstop. Twelve home
runs, batting .284...

DOUG
...same homers as Jackie Robinson...

PAPPY
...and we got Spider at third.

DOUG
Heck, he hit .274 this year.

PAPPY
You think we got a shot at those Bronx
Bombers?

DOUG

It's payback time. They almost swept us
in the '41 World Series.

PAPPY

I know. I heard every pitch. Wow! A
fellow Dodger fan. I can't believe it.

Claire enters. Doug stands by reflex.

DOUG

The only one in my family. Everyone else
is for those darn Yankees.

He gives Claire a nod.

CLAIRE

Sounds like you found yourself a Dodger
fan.

PAPPY

Isn't it great!

CLAIRE

Well, good news. I got a hold of Mac
over at Mid-West. They got the part.
Says he can get it here in about three
hours.

PAPPY

That's just enough time for you two to
run into town, grab some lunch and bring
me back a piece of Angie's blueberry pie.

DOUG

I'm in. Claire?

CLAIRE

Sure.

She smiles. They head for the door.

Doug reaches the door. Stops. Looks back.

DOUG

Hey, Pappy.

Doug goes into his wind up.

Pappy stands with a pretend bat poised.

Doug throws a pretend pitch.

Pappy swings a rainmaker.

Doug follows it out of the park.

Pappy beams a proud grin.

49 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - TARMAC - LATER 49

Claire carries the pie in a bag. Doug walks beside her.

DOUG

That chicken fried steak was good, but I
could oil my plane with it.

CLAIRE

Don't say that to Pappy, it's his
favorite.

Pappy sees them walking up the tarmac. They look good
together.

50 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - LATER 50

Claire and Doug come in from the tarmac. Mosey over to
Doug's plane. Lean against it.

DOUG

So he was in the 801st?

CLAIRE

He was a B-24 squadron leader.

DOUG

He must have been a great pilot.

CLAIRE

He was the best pilot in the whole world.

DOUG

We lost a lot of great men over there.
I'm sorry, Claire.

CLAIRE

How 'bout you?

DOUG

I was working Stateside at a military
hospital. When the war was over they
sent me to a triage outside of Brussels.

CLAIRE

For what?

DOUG

Trauma. It was basically a psyche unit. Between the shell-shock and the encampment, a lot of our boys were pretty bad off.

CLAIRE

How so?

DOUG

Let's just say they were having trouble connecting the dots.

CLAIRE

That must have been tough on 'em.

DOUG

It was a lot tougher on the folks they came home to.

Claire ops for a lighter topic.

CLAIRE

Your package should be here by now.

DOUG

Sounds good.

51 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - OFFICE

51

Claire and Doug walk in. Pappy sits at the desk. Claire sets down the bag from Angie's.

CLAIRE

Here's your pie, Pappy. Where's that package from Mid-West?

PAPPY

Got a call right after you left. Won't be here 'til tomorrow.

DOUG

It's okay, I wasn't going to fly tonight anyway. I can wait 'till tomorrow. Can you recommend a place in town?

PAPPY

Don't be ridiculous. No teammate of mine's gonna waste money on a hotel while I'm around. We got a spare room at the house.

Doug turns to Claire.

DOUG
Well, if it's okay with Claire.

Pappy gives a prodding nod to convince.

CLAIRE
Well, yeah, if you don't mind.

PAPPY
Good. And that package from Mid-West
will be here first thing in the morning.
You'll be in the air before noon.
Claire, help him with his things. I'll
be right there.

DOUG
Thanks, Pappy, I appreciate it.

PAPPY
I wouldn't have it any other way.

Claire and Doug take off.

Pappy kicks a package under the desk. The package reads **Mid-West**.

52 INT. PAPPY'S DINING ROOM - LATER

52

Pappy clears the plates as Claire and Doug protest.

CLAIRE
Pappy, let me get those.

PAPPY
You stay right there. You know the deal.
You cook...I clean.

Claire gives in.

CLAIRE
I know, I know.

PAPPY
You just entertain our guest.

Pappy takes the stack of plates. Goes to the kitchen.

Doug sits back. Playful.

DOUG
You heard the man, entertain me.

Claire smiles.

CLAIRE

Well, I do know this one joke. But it's really dumb.

DOUG

Go ahead, try me. I promise I'll laugh.

CLAIRE

Okay. A skeleton walks into a bar. He orders a beer and a mop.

Doug waits. Claire waits.

CLAIRE

You're supposed to laugh now.

Doug gets it. He finally laughs.

DOUG

I like that. That's funny.

Claire smiles. Laughs herself.

CLAIRE

That one is dumb. I know another one. This one's actually funnier...

CRASH! The sound of breaking dishes is heard coming from the kitchen.

Claire and Doug jump from their chairs.

53 INT. PAPPY'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

53

Panic. Claire and Doug find Pappy on the floor woozy, groggy. Broken dishes everywhere.

Doug drops to his knees, rolls up his sleeves. Puts his head to Pappy's chest.

Claire watches in horror.

With authority.

DOUG

Claire, hurry. Inside the front door is my black bag. Bring it to me.

Claire bolts. Doug checks Pappy's vitals.

Claire returns with a black bag.

Doug takes the bag, opens it, pulls out a stethoscope.

Claire's face is filled with amazement.

Doug places the scope to his chest and back. Listens for breathing.

He gingerly props Pappy upright. Holds his wrist.

Checking the pulse against his watch.

CLAIRE

What's wrong?

DOUG

Heart attack. In my bag there's a bottle of aspirin. And get a glass of water.

Listens again to his breathing.

Claire hurries back in with the aspirin and a glass of water. Hands them to Doug.

He carefully feeds the aspirin and water to Pappy.

CLAIRE

Aspirin?

DOUG

Thins the blood, in theory. It's the best we can do for him.

DOUG

Get me a wet towel, please.

She races off. Hands him a wet towel.

CLAIRE

Is he gonna be okay?

DOUG

Let's get him upstairs.

Doug muscles Pappy into his arms.

He carries him up the stairs as Pappy groans.

Claire follows in awe.

54 INT. PAPPY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

54

Doug lays Pappy gently on the bed.

He places the towel on his forehead.

Pappy slurs incoherently.

It suddenly hits Claire. She covers her mouth in shock.

CLAIRE
Is he gonna be okay?

Laying him down gently.

DOUG
I'll do everything I can for him.

55 INT. PAPPY'S BEDROOM - 3 AM 55

Moonlight warms the floor. Claire enters wearing her robe, stands in the doorway.

Doug sleeps in a rocking chair next to Pappy.

Claire takes a blanket off the footboard. Places it over Doug.

56 INT. PAPPY'S BEDROOM - LATE MORNING 56

Claire and Doug sit by the bed. Doug still wears the stethoscope around his neck.

Pappy's eyes slowly open. He comes to.

Claire smiles. Joy fills her face.

DOUG
You gave us a bit of a scare there.

Claire gives Pappy a hug and a kiss. She wipes a tear.

Pappy, sleepy.

PAPPY
You're a Doctor?

DOUG
Yes, Sir.

PAPPY
Where were you last week when we needed a plumber?

Pappy shoots him a wink.

DOUG
I think he's gonna be fine.

PAPPY
We better fix your plane.

Pappy struggles to rise. Doug gently pushes him back down.

DOUG
Don't worry about my plane. If it's all
the same to you, I'll stay on a few days.
Make sure you're okay.

Claire likes that.

57 EXT. PAPPY'S PORCH - DAY

57

Pappy sits in a rocking chair. Sips his lemonade.

Claire and Doug come out to join him.

PAPPY
Doug, you like to fish?

DOUG
You bet.

PAPPY
It's a pretty day. Claire, why don't you
show him the pond?

58 EXT. FISHING HOLE - DAY

58

Doug casts a line into the water from the dock.

Claire sits. Stares out over the water.

CLAIRE
I hate to break it to you. There's no
fish in this pond.

DOUG
There's a fish in every pond. You just
got to be patient. It's all about
timing. Fish are smart.

He looks at Claire.

DOUG
And beautiful, too. Anybody can throw
out a line. I suppose a dumb fish would
bite at the first pretty thing that's
thrown at 'em.

He looks at his line, then back at her.

DOUG

The way I see it, you can't catch a smart fish until the fish is willing to be caught.

She glances up. He looks back over the water.

zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz... the line takes off.

Claire stands to her feet in disbelief.

Doug reels in a whopper.

59 INT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - SUNSET

59

Doug's plane. The propeller comes to a stop.

Claire gets up from the pilot's seat. Doug is already out, helps her down. They remove their goggles.

CLAIRE

She flies great.

DOUG

You fly her better than I do.

He pins her gently against the side of the plane.

DOUG

I've been thinking a lot about it, Claire. Come to New York with me. I want you to meet my family.

Claire smiles.

CLAIRE

Are you sure? It's only been two weeks, is this too soon?

DOUG

I've been waiting my whole life to meet someone like you. I don't want to leave without you.

CLAIRE

Are you throwing a line out?

DOUG

Yeah. Are you biting?

She smiles.

60 EXT. PORCH - NIGHT

60

DOUG

What do you have to lose? I've seen your town, now let me show you mine.

CLAIRE

I don't know. New York is so big.

DOUG

You'll be with me. It'll be fun. Great restaurants, carriage rides through Central Park, the Great White way...

CLAIRE

...Broadway plays?

DOUG

You bet. We'll even go to Radio City Music Hall.

CLAIRE

Wow, I'm gonna be in New York City.

DOUG

We'll paint the town red.

She throws her arms around him in an excited hug.

61 INT. LIVING ROOM - NEXT DAY

61

Doug's bag is by the door. Doug and Pappy wait for Claire.

PAPPY

You take good care of my girl out there.

DOUG

She's in good hands. We'll be back in a week.

Claire comes bounding down the stairs.

PAPPY

You all packed?

CLAIRE

Yep. But I can't find Vol-ney!

DOUG

Vol-ney?

She pulls a small book from high on a book shelf. Ruffles the pages.

CLAIRE

Only the greatest poet of all time.

An old photo falls to the floor.

Doug picks it up. It's Joe in uniform. Doug stares at the image. Shock.

DOUG

Where did you get this?

CLAIRE

That's Joe.

Doug looks up from the photograph. Grabs another photo off the bookcase. A younger photo of Joe.

PAPPY

I told you. That's my grandson.

CLAIRE

Doug, what is it?

Getting it.

DOUG

I thought I recognized this guy. I know him. I treated him when he arrived at the triage outside of Brussels. I was only brought in for few days, but I know this is the man I saw there. He was a POW.

Pappy takes a seat.

Claire takes half a step back. Speechless.

PAPPY

Are you sure?

DOUG

I've seen photos of this guy around here for two weeks. It's been gnawing at me. Now I get it.

CLAIRE

That was my husband. Are you saying he's still alive?

Doug throws his bag into the luggage compartment.

CLAIRE

If he's really out there, I've got to find him.

DOUG

Of course you do. I'll help any way I can. Remember, talk to Colonel Jack Pelton. He's in charge of the ward at Topeka. That's where the tough cases ended up.

CLAIRE

You're a beautiful man. Thank you.

She gives him a kiss on the cheek. He takes her by the shoulders. Straight in her eyes.

DOUG

If he's there, you may not like what you find.

63 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

63

Claire's old Ford screams down the highway toward Topeka.

64 INT. COLONEL PELTON'S OFFICE - DAY

64

COLONEL PELTON sits across from Claire as he looks through some paperwork on his desk.

COLONEL PELTON

So you're a good friend of Dr. Ryan's?

CLAIRE

You could say that.

COLONEL PELTON

He's a brilliant doctor. He worked with a lot of the boys that ended up here. But it doesn't make sense that your husband would be here.

CLAIRE

Why?

COLONEL PELTON

You would have been notified.

CLAIRE

The Air Corps could have made a mistake.

Colonel Pelton looks up. Shoots her a look.

COLONEL PELTON
Not likely.

He looks back at his paperwork. Double take. He scratches his head.

COLONEL PELTON
Well this is interesting.

Claire sits up with hope.

COLONEL PELTON
A "J. Kelly" was admitted here in '44.

CLAIRE
Was? Where is he now?

Colonel Pelton looks up to Claire.

COLONEL PELTON
He's still here.

65 INT. PSYCHE WARD - LATER

65

Claire watches a roomful of men who wear pajamas, bathrobes, slippers and smoke cigarettes.

A GI sits in a wheelchair. Stares out the window.

A WOMAN sits on a couch and tries to communicate with her husband sitting next to her. She holds a photograph in her hands.

VOICE (O.S.)
I'm Jay Kelly.

Claire turns around. A large black man stands in a robe.

She stares blankly into his eyes.

JAY
You looking for me? Do I know you?

CLAIRE
No, no... I'm sorry. I...

A SCREAM breaks the silence.

The woman on the couch forces the photo into her husband's face.

Hysterical.

WOMAN
TIMOTHY WHALEN JUST LOOK AT IT! THIS IS
A PICTURE OF YOU! YOU'RE MY HUSBAND.
I'M YOUR WIFE!

She sobs as her husband curls into the fetal position.

No one else in the room seems to notice. Business as usual.

Claire covers her mouth.

She turns away. Bumps into DOC wearing a doctor's coat with a stethoscope around his neck.

DOC
Ma'am, are you okay?

Claire gathers her composure.

CLAIRE
I'm sorry, doctor. I came here looking
for my husband and I thought I might have
found him.

DOC
A lot of men come and go through here.
What was his name?

CLAIRE
Joe Kelly.

Doc reacts slightly to the name.

DOC
Actually, that name sounds familiar. Do
you have a picture?

Claire quickly pulls the photo of Joe from her purse.

She shows it to him with excitement.

He recognizes him.

DOC
I know this man.

Claire's face lights up.

CLAIRE
You do? Where? Where is he?

Doc whispers to her.

DOC
He's in Alaska.

Claire takes out a note pad. Writes it down.

CLAIRE
Alaska?

DOC
Uh-huh. Anchorage.

She writes it down furiously.

CLAIRE
Anchorage? How do you know this?

DOC
I had breakfast with him yesterday. We
have breakfast every morning. He loves
orange juice but I hate the way it tastes
after I brush my teeth.

TWO MALE NURSES take Doc by the arm and give him a gentle
tug.

NURSE 1
Come on, Doc. Time for your medication.

They cart him away leaving Claire in utter confusion.

Doc yells back.

DOC
It was nice meeting you. When I see him
tomorrow I'll tell him you said hello.

Claire hangs her head. She tears the note from her pad,
crumples it up and throws it in the trash.

66 INT. CORRIDOR - LATER

66

Claire walks down the hallway.

Passes a GI in uniform.

VOICE (O.S.)
CLAIRE?

Claire turns to see the GI.

WILLIS
Claire Kelly?

Confused.

CLAIRE
Willis? What are you doing here?

WILLIS
My wife works here.

CLAIRE
Willis, is my husband alive or not?

WILLIS
Joe, alive? No ma'am, he went down in the plane.

Louder.

CLAIRE
I have reason to believe he survived and possibly ended up in a psyche ward. Did you see the body?

WILLIS
No, the plane belly flopped into a ball of flames. I told you, he died.

CLAIRE
But could he have survived?! Is there any way?!

WILLIS
We all presumed he was dead.

Shouting.

CLAIRE
SO HE COULD HAVE SURVIVED.

WILLIS
I I guess so. I mean we all bailed out. There was smoke everywhere. The Gerries were shooting up at us!

CLAIRE
BUT NO ONE SAW HIS BODY. HE COULD HAVE ESCAPED.

WILLIS
I'M NOT SURE, MA'AM. I REALLY CAN'T SAY. I GUESS SO.

Brings it down a notch.

CLAIRE

Where did the POW's have their re-orientation?

WILLIS

Omaha. They sent all those guys through Omaha. Most of them ended up here.

CLAIRE

Most of them? Where else might they have ended up?

WILLIS

The ones who didn't come here ended up at Fort Wayne.

CLAIRE

Who was in charge?

Willis struggles to remember.

CLAIRE

THINK!

WILLIS

Ahh... Braxton! A Colonel Braxton.

67 EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

67

Claire's car speeds off to Fort Wayne.

68 INT. COLONEL BRAXTON'S DEN - DAY

68

COLONEL BRAXTON and Claire sit across a desk.

COLONEL BRAXTON

And your friend, Dr. Ryan, says he saw your husband after the war?

CLAIRE

Yes, Sir. Dr. Ryan was stationed outside of Brussels and dealt with the trauma patients before they came home.

COLONEL BRAXTON

I've checked the files. There's nothing on record of a Joe Kelly from our POW lists.

CLAIRE

Dr. Ryan described Joe as practically catatonic. Some of the guys I saw in Topeka didn't even know their names.

COLONEL BRAXTON

We'd have known by his dog tags.

CLAIRE

My husband crash landed a B-24 behind enemy lines. He was prisoner of war. God knows what might have happened to those stupid dog tags.

COLONEL BRAXTON

Mrs. Kelly, I'm afraid you're grasping at straws.

Claire pulls the photograph from her purse. Hands it to Colonel Braxton.

CLAIRE

This is Joe. Just look at the photo and tell me if you remember him.

Colonel Braxton looks at the photo for a moment.

He hands it back to her.

COLONEL BRAXTON

Mrs. Kelly, four thousand GIs came through reorientation. I'll be honest with you. They all looked like Joe Kelly.

Claire slowly places the photo in her purse. Gathers her things.

CLAIRE

You were my last hope.

COLONEL BRAXTON

I'm sorry, I'll walk you out.

CLAIRE

If you don't mind, I'll see myself out.

They both stand.

Claire makes her way to the door.

She turns back.

CLAIRE

If Joe did come through here, can you think of anyone who might recognize this photo.

He shakes his head.

She turns to grab the knob.

COLONEL BRAXTON (O.S.)

Nathey.

Claire turns back.

COLONEL BRAXTON

There was a Chaplain Nathey. He had a real heart for visiting the sick. He came from Stanton.

Claire writes it down.

CLAIRE

Nathey.

COLONEL BRAXTON

Never met him myself. You look him up. Show him the photo. If he's still around, maybe he'll remember Joe.

69 EXT. STANTON DAY - DAY 69

Claire in a phone booth, runs her finger down the page of a phone book.

70 INT. CHURCH - DAY 70

Claire and the CHURCH RECEPTIONIST, 40's, black, sweet, stand inside the sanctuary door.

RECEPTIONIST

You're lucky he's even in today. Pastor Nathey spends most of his time on the road these days.

Nervous, clutching her purse.

CLAIRE

Is that right?

RECEPTIONIST

Visitations are a big part of his ministry. You have a seat. He'll be right in.

CLAIRE

Thank you, Ma'am.

The receptionist leaves. Claire slowly walks the aisle toward the front of the pews.

She takes a seat, opens her purse. Takes out the photo.

She looks at Joe. Lifts her eyes to the cross on the wall.

CLAIRE

Father. Please help me. Let this man have seen him.

VOICE (O.S.)

Mrs. Kelly?

Holding the photo, Claire stands quickly to her feet and turns to the rear of the church.

CLAIRE

Yes?

PASTOR NATHEY, fifties, black, walks toward her. His red and white cane leads him down the aisle.

PASTOR NATHEY

I'm Pastor Nathey. Are you in the front?

Claire crumbles back into her pew.

Disheartened, she slips the photo back in her purse.

Answering.

CLAIRE

Yes.

Pastor Nathey arrives. Gently sits down next to her.

PASTOR NATHEY

Can I help you?

CLAIRE

I'm not sure if you can.

A tear streams down her cheek. A slight sniffle.

Pastor Nathey reaches in his pocket. Hands her his handkerchief.

PASTOR NATHEY

Here.

CLAIRE

Oh Pastor...

Her shoulders shake as her upset overtakes her tired body.

Slowly putting his arm around her.

PASTOR NATHEY

Now, now, there's no problem so big that the Lord can't help us. Why don't you just start at the beginning.

Trying to regain her composure.

CLAIRE

Well my husband went off to fight in the war and the Army Air Corps said he was shot down dead. But later a man told me he saw him in a triage outside of Brussels.

PASTOR NATHEY

He was a POW?

CLAIRE

Uh huh, and then they sent him stateside and I believe he came through Omaha and was sent to Fort Wayne.

PASTOR NATHEY

I did some ministry at a temp ward there.

CLAIRE

Nobody seems to remember him and now I don't know if he ever even made it home.

Another wave of emotion chokes her up.

PASTOR NATHEY

Well, Mrs. Kelly, why you don't you tell me a little bit about him.

Pressing on.

CLAIRE

He was a pilot. He attempted to crash land his B-24 to try and save another crew member.

PASTOR NATHEY

And you believe he's alive.

CLAIRE

Yes, but he's never called or written or done anything to reach me.

PASTOR NATHEY
I'm sure there's a reason.

CLAIRE
But what? Where would he be? I've tried everywhere and nobody's heard of him.

PASTOR NATHEY
You said he was a pilot?

CLAIRE
Yes, Pastor.

PASTOR NATHEY
You know the expression "birds of a feather...?"

CLAIRE
Yes. So?

PASTOR NATHEY
Well, I remember those GI's seemed to hang out according to their branch of the service. The ground troops stuck together, the flyboys stuck together.

CLAIRE
And?

PASTOR NATHEY
I'm not sure if this can help you any, but I remember there was one flyboy, he knew everybody's name. Was kinda like their ringleader.

CLAIRE
Who was he?

PASTOR NATHEY
Let me think...Martin...yes, Clay Martin was the guy's name. He was from Hazard, Nebraska, and proud of it.

CLAIRE
Hazard, Nebraska?

PASTOR NATHEY
Yep. He was a big dreamer. Had big plans. You might try and look him up there.

Pastor Nathey smiles in remembrance.

PASTOR NATHEY
He was a brash fellow.

CLAIRE
Brash?

PASTOR NATHEY
Arrogant. If you'll excuse me, "cocky".
But that was years ago. I'm sure he's
quieted down since then.

71 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - HAZARD, NE - DAY

71

CLAY MARTIN, slick, fast-talking, loud and arrogant stands on a soap box proclaiming his vision to a small gathering of the local press.

Flash bulbs explode as the press take his picture.

Clay eats it up.

CLAY
HOWARD WHO'S???

The press laugh. Take notes on their pads.

CLAY
You let that Tinsel Town millionaire fly around the world if he wants, but if he doesn't have the good sense to service the folks of Hazard Nebraska, then Clay Martin's LIBERATOR AIRWAYS will be the airline to do it. And that's a promise.

A reporter speaks out.

PRESS MAN #1
Clay, you said that last month. When are you gonna get that thing in the air?

CLAY
That THING as you call it, is a B-24 Bomber. She's being custom outfitted for public transportation. You can't rush these things.

PRESS MAN #2
So when's she gonna fly? Some folks are starting to doubt you'll ever put her in the air.

CLAY

Set backs. Minor set backs, that's all.
Every idea to sprout from the seed of
genius undergoes minor set backs.

PRESS MAN #1

Howard Hughes doesn't seem to be having
any set backs!

CLAY

I won't even respond to that as I take
offense to the idea that his name might
share the same space on the printed page
with the name Clay Martin. You can quote
me on that!

Clay strikes a pose. A flash explodes.

CLAY

I've got my production staff working
round the clock...

Clay eyes his secretary, RACHEL, twenties, pretty for Hazard,
as she bites her fingernails.

CLAY

...they're working tirelessly to make our
deadlines. But don't you worry, Clay
Martin is as good as his word. LIBERATOR
AIRWAYS WILL BE OPEN FOR BUSINESS. SOON!

The press demand and answer.

PRESS CORPS

WHEN? YEAH, WHEN?!

Clay takes a deep breath. Stares at Rachel.

Blurts it out.

CLAY

TWO WEEKS!

Flash bulbs explode!

Clay smiles with pride.

Rachel's eyes widen as her hand goes to her forehead.

As the press file out of the hangar, Clay quickly makes his
way to his office.

Rachel grabs him by the arm.

RACHEL

Two weeks? You might as well have said tomorrow.

CLAY

Two weeks had a better ring to it.

Clay brushes by her. Disappears into his office.

72 INT. CLAY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

72

He shuts the door, locks it and leans against the door.

He exhales as if by a narrow escape.

VOICE (O.S.)

Two weeks?

Clay turns around in surprise. EDDIE, a thick Mafioso type in a black suit, leans against the wall tearing at a piece of fried chicken.

EDDIE

Can I quote you on that?

CLAY

Eddie, what are you doing here?

EDDIE

The boss man is a little concerned. He sent me down here to check in on his investments. Gosh, this chicken's good.

Eddie stands. Takes another bite.

Clay eyes him carefully.

EDDIE

Can't get chicken like this in Chicago.

Eddie makes his way toward Clay.

EDDIE

We'll shoot 'em. We'll pluck 'em. We'll skin 'em. We'll cut 'em. We'll boil 'em. We'll even deep fry 'em.

He licks his finger. Gets in Clay's face.

EDDIE

But they never taste quite this good.

Sweating profusely.

CLAY

It'll be in the air in two weeks. I
promise.

Eddie unlocks the door.

EDDIE

It better be. For your sake.

He pushes his way past Clay. The door closes. Clay locks
it. Sinks to the floor. Takes a long deep breath. And
waits.

He hears something.

A knock.

Hesitation. Cautious.

CLAY

Who is it?

A woman's voice.

RACHEL (O.S.)

It's Rachel. Open the door, Clay.

Clay opens the door.

Rachel enters. Squares off with him.

RACHEL

Two weeks? They're all gonna be back
here in two weeks to see that thing fly.
You know that's impossible!

CLAY

You're right. We'll need a test flight
first.

Clay sits. Pulls a bottle from the drawer. Pours a shot
into a paper cup.

RACHEL

That means we have to put a rush on those
parts we just ordered.

CLAY

Fine, make it happen.

RACHEL

CLAY! WE HAVEN'T PAID FOR THE LAST
ORDER.

CLAY

Tell'em the check's in the mail. Just get me those parts.

Pounds the shot.

RACHEL

Tommy's a great mechanic, but he can't do this alone. We're gonna have to get him some help.

Clay looks up from his desk.

CLAY

Then we'll get him some help.

RACHEL

Where?

73 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY 73

Claire's car rushes past a sign that reads: "**Hazard - 60 miles.**"

74 EXT. ALLEY - DOOR - DAY 74

Clay stares at a BOUNCER guarding a door leading into a dull gray building.

75 INT. SMALL SMOKEY ROOM - DAY 75

A make-shift craps table sits in the middle of the room. A single light hangs over it.

The room is filled with smoke. Tough guys in suits.

Clay makes his way through A SMALL CROWD OF MEN looking to make some easy money the hard way.

He takes his place at the table. THE CROUPIER, wily, pushes the dice his way.

CROUPIER

NEW SHOOTER COMING OUT!

Clay places down a small stack of bills.

He snatches up the dice.

He throws 'em into the homemade wooden box with numbers.

CLAY

Yo Eleven!

The crowd erupts. Clay smiles

CROUPIER
ELEVEN! WINNER!

Money is paid to the winners by THE TABLE HANDS.

Clay lays his winnings on the line.

The dice are given back to him. He shakes them in his hands.

He rolls again.

The dice settle.

CROUPIER
FOUR! THE POINT IS FOUR!

Clay takes up the dice. Shakes them hard.

CLAY
Come on four!

He tosses them out.

CROUPIER
BOX CARS!

More men cheer. The dice are given back to Clay.

Clay pulls a large stack of money from his coat pocket. He looks at the croupier.

CLAY
I'm backing up the four.

The men at the table quiet down. It's a lot of money.

The croupier looks to BIG FRANK who is in charge of the game. He looks at the stack.

BIG FRANK
That's a bit of cash, Mr. Martin.

The croupier counts it quickly.

To Big Frank.

CROUPIER
There's a thousand dollars here.

CLAY
I feel lucky.

Big Frank looks at the croupier and nods.

The croupier places the stack of cash on the table.

CROUPIER
COMING OUT!

Clay shakes the dice. Let's 'em fly.

The men press in.

CROUPIER
SEVEN! LINE AWAY!

The crowd freezes. The money gets swept off the table. Clay falls back into the darkness.

76 EXT. RUBY'S DINER - DAY 76

Claire pulls her car into the parking lot.

77 INT. RUBY'S DINER - MOMENTS LATER 77

Claire plops in a booth. Tired. Opens a map of Nebraska.

Rachel fixes her face in a compact at a nearby booth.

RUBY, late thirties, dishwater blonde, thin and all-knowing, arrives with a cup of coffee and a flyswatter. Name tag reads: **I'M RUBY.**

To Claire.

RUBY
How 'bout a cup to help you with your troubles.

CLAIRE
That'd be great. Thanks.

RUBY
You look like you've put some hard miles behind you. What brings you to Hazard?

CLAIRE
I'm trying to find someone, but I don't want to take up your time.

RUBY
Don't you worry about Ruby, I can do two things at once.

A fly on the vinyl booth is too slow for Ruby's swatter.

Without looking, SWAT! The fly drops dead.

Claire looks over the map.

CLAIRE
This is Hazard, right?

Ruby brushes the fly into a napkin.

RUBY
Was for this critter. Who you looking
for?

CLAIRE
My husband. I was told he died in the
war. But now I have reason to believe he
may still be alive.

Ruby takes a seat.

RUBY
You poor dear.

CLAIRE
No one seems to remember him. But it
turns out there may be a man in this town
who might have seen him after the war.

RUBY
Could be. Got a name?

Fumbles for a piece of paper.

CLAIRE
Mr. Clay Martin.

Ruby laughs.

RUBY
Well that makes sense.

CLAIRE
You know him?

RUBY
Clay Martin's an icon in this town. Owns
a little air strip about five miles up
the road. He knows everybody.

Claire's face fills with hope. She folds up the map.
Searches for some change.

RUBY

Don't you worry about that coffee, first cup's on the house.

CLAIRE

Thank you, Ruby.

She gathers her things.

RUBY

How long's he been missing?

CLAIRE

Three years.

RUBY

I hope you find him, Sweetheart.

Claire smiles. Makes her way to the door.

RUBY

Do let me know how it all turns out!

CLAIRE.

You bet!

78 INT. CLAY'S OFFICE - LATER

78

Clay's on the phone.

CLAY

I told you I'd have her in the air in two weeks and I will. If you guys would quit bugging me maybe I'd get some work done.

He waits. No answer.

A ray of panic.

CLAY

Hello?

Their gone. He hangs up.

A knock on the door.

CLAY

Who is it?

VOICE (O.S.)

I'm looking for a Clay Martin.

Clay opens the door a crack. Eyes Claire.

CLAY
Who wants to know?

Startled.

CLAIRE
My name is Claire Kelly. May I have a
moment of your time.

CLAY
Not now, lady, I'm really busy.

He tries to shut the door. Claire wedges in her foot.

Pleading.

CLAIRE
Please, just for a minute.

She pulls the photo from her purse.

Clay pushes against the door while she holds the photo up.

Clay sees the photo. Freezes.

CLAIRE
This is my husband. Just tell me if you
knew him.

He stares at the photo.

79 INT. CLAY'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

79

Clay holds the photo.

Claire sits across from him.

CLAY
When they brought him into the POW camp
he was half dead. His uniform was
shredded and charred. No ID. No tags.
No nothin'.

CLAIRE
They say he crash landed his B-24.

CLAY
Worse than just a crash. Like he'd seen
the kind of thing that changes a man from
the inside. He had that look...that
vacant stare. A lot of our boys came
home with that look.

CLAIRE

I saw that look in Topeka.

CLAY

Then you know what I'm talking about.

Claire shifts uneasily.

CLAY

Are you sure you want to hear this?

CLAIRE

Please, go on. I need to know what really happened.

Clay obliges reluctantly.

CLAY

For six months at that POW camp I never heard him say a word. We were all trained to give our name, rank and serial number. But your boy never said a thing. They beat him pretty good for it.

Claire wipes away a tear.

CLAY

Maybe we should stop.

CLAIRE

If you lost someone in the war, and you thought he still might be alive, wouldn't you want to know?

CLAY

I understand. You want to put this all behind you. There were a lot of good men who didn't make it home. I'm afraid your husband was one of them.

CLAIRE

What?

Clay stands. Goes to the window. Stares out.

Remembering.

CLAY

He went through hell. Didn't get the medical attention he really needed. He was weak.

Claire covers her mouth.

CLAY

Then he got amoebic dysentery. He died a few weeks later before ever getting home. They buried him with the other GIs with similar conditions. I'm real sorry.

He hands the photo back to her.

CLAY

I suppose you'll be headed back. Is there anything else I can do?

Claire stands.

CLAIRE

No. You've told me what I need know.

He shows her to the door.

80 INT. RUBY'S DINER - MOMENTS LATER

80

Claire is on the phone to Pappy. Her eyes are red from crying.

CLAIRE

No... he didn't make it. Yes, I'm sure. I should be home in a few days. I love you too, Pappy. Bye.

She hangs up the wall phone. Returns to her booth to finish her coffee. Rachel sits nearby.

RUBY (O.S.)

Was Clay able to help?

Looking over. Takes a breath. Tries to be brave.

CLAIRE

Yeah. He said he didn't make it.

Behind the counter. Soft touch.

RUBY

Tough thing about war. There's a time to remember, and a time to forget. Don't know which one's harder.

Claire places some change on the table.

Keeps her eyes to herself.

CLAIRE

Thank you, Ruby. I guess my journey's over. I can move on now.

Claire stands to exit.

The door opens to the diner.

Claire looks up.

Standing before Claire is Joe Kelly. Baseball cap, dirty jeans and a greasy flannel shirt. He stares right at her. He opens his arms.

JOE

Hey, Doll-face.

Claire stands there dumbfounded. She stares at Joe, hand over her mouth. She tries to move toward him.

Rachel brushes by her and throws her arms around him. She kisses him on the cheek.

RACHEL

How's my Tommy?

They make their way back to Rachel's table.

To Joe.

RUBY

Hey, Tommy!

JOE

Hey, Ruby. I'll have the usual.

Always amused.

RUBY

Same ol' Tommy.

Joe and Rachel walk right past Claire. Joe tips his cap.

JOE

Ma'am.

Claire watches him.

Joe and Rachel slide into their booth.

Claire begins walking towards them. Her eyes never leave Joe.

She steadies herself against the counter top and knocks over a napkin holder.

Ruby sets it upright.

Whispering.

RUBY

Are you okay? You look like you've seen a ghost.

Claire stops. Fixated.

Whispers back

CLAIRE

Ruby... that's my husband.

RUBY

No, Sweetie, that can't be. That's Tommy Warner. I've known him for years.

Still eyeing Joe/Tommy.

CLAIRE

How many years?

RUBY

Just after the war. That was about three years ago. He showed up with Clay to start a new business.

Eyeing Tommy, Claire reaches into her purse. Gives the photo to Ruby.

Ruby's eyes pop.

RUBY

You mean that's not Tommy Warner?

Claire shakes her head.

RUBY

What are you going to do?

81 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - LATER

81

Claire slams the photo of Joe on the table in front of Clay.

CLAIRE

You're a liar. You're a despicable man and I hate you. My husband is alive and living right here in Hazard.

CLAY

Your husband? Your Joe Kelly died in a POW camp in Germany. If I hadn't been there to intercept him, he would have been brought back to the States with no name, no past and no future. He'd be staring out a window at the ward in Topeka. I didn't want that to happen.

Incredulous.

CLAIRE

What, do you want me to thank you?!

CLAY

I gave him a name. I gave him a past. One he could remember. One he could wrap his mind around. To his credit he was one of the few who could start over. I tried to reach some of the other fly boys with similar conditions, but it was no good. I went to visit them in Fort Wayne for awhile, but there's a point when you just have to let'em go and call it quits. And that's what you should do!

She swipes the photo from the table.

CLAIRE

I'm not leaving here 'til I show him this photo. He'll remember everything, then we can go home.

She places the photo into her purse. Heads for the door.

CLAY (O.S.)

Go ahead. Go show him the photo. See what happens.

Claire stops at the door.

Lowering his voice. Claire takes it in.

CLAY (O.S.)

You've been to Topeka. You've seen those zombies. Is that what you want? You wanna turn him into a cantaloupe? Tommy Warner has a life here. A job. New friends. New memories.

Turns to Clay.

CLAIRE

He's my husband. I love him. I want him back.

CLAY

Think you can just play God and flip a switch? Shy of a miracle, he'll NEVER be forced into remembering you or anything else. Joe Kelly is gone. I told you he was dead to spare you the agony.

Claire wells up with tears.

CLAY

If you really love him you'll leave him alone. He can't handle the past. And he's just getting good at handling the present.

Claire opens the door. Slips out.

82 INT. RUBY'S DINER - EVENING

82

Ruby and Claire sit in a booth after hours.

Claire holds the photo of Joe.

RUBY

He has a point.

CLAIRE

I know.

Silence.

RUBY

Look, you ain't gonna solve anything tonight. In the meantime you can stay with me 'til we can figure out what happens next.

Claire looks into Ruby's eyes.

CLAIRE

Ruby, why are you doing this for me?

RUBY

You remind me a little of myself. About a hundred years ago.

CLAIRE

Stop, Ruby. You're beautiful.

She pushes her hair up from behind.

RUBY

There was a day. But I'll tell you, I've made some sacrifices in my life. Sometimes I wonder if they were worth it.

CLAIRE

Sacrifices?

RUBY

I've put a lot of sweat into this little diner.

Ruby looks around the place.

RUBY

Some folks say I'm married to this place. Closest I've ever come to marriage, I suppose.

She sucks it up. Takes a proud breath. Struggles.

RUBY

But you know what? I own it. It's all mine. No man owns it. For better or for worse. And that's something for a woman to say in this day and age.

83 INT. SMALL SMOKEY ROOM - NIGHT

83

A crowd gathers around the small craps table. Clay's back at it.

He lays down another stack of money.

The croupier looks to Big Frank.

BIG FRANK

It's his money.

The croupier shoves the dice to Clay.

CROUPIER

NEW SHOOTER COMING OUT!

He throws the dice.

CLAY

YO ELEVEN!

The dice land. Three.

CROUPIER
CRAP DICE!

Clay watches his money being swept from the table. His head sinks.

84 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - LATER 84

Clay walks past Tommy sitting on a crate box.

CLAY
Did you get those parts installed yet?

JOE
What parts? Rachel needs to talk to you.

85 INT. CLAY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 85

Rachel watches as Clay paces the floor.

CLAY
What do you mean our credit line is no good?!

RACHEL
It works like this. If you don't pay your bills, you lose your credit.

CLAY
Look, I don't need you riding me!

RACHEL
Clay, it's time to face the music. You want that thing in the air in ten days?

She points out toward the tarmac where the B-24 lays dormant.

CLAY
We HAVE to have it in the air in ten days!

RACHEL
Then help us. You're bouncing checks. We're not getting parts. We're not getting paid.

Tommy stands in the doorway.

JOE
She's right. I haven't been paid in a month.

RACHEL
We're falling further behind.

Trying to reassure.

CLAY
When we get that bird...

RACHEL
"... *in the air, we're all gonna be rich*".

JOE
We've heard it before.

RACHEL
I've heard you say it my whole life.

Rachel pulls out a red ledger book and drops it on the table.

CLAY
Where'd you get that?

RACHEL
What happened to all the money?

Silence.

JOE
You said you gave it up.

Clay hangs his head.

JOE
Look, I'm a mechanic, not a magician. I need parts. And I need some help.

Tommy and Rachel stand to leave.

To Clay. Intense.

JOE
I'll see you later.

On their way out.

RACHEL
What's happened to you, Clay? You're not building an airline. You're building a junk yard.

86 EXT. CLAY'S HANGAR - CONTINUOUS 86

Tommy opens the car door for Rachel. Helps her in.

Claire, slouched in her car, watches Tommy and Rachel drive away.

87 INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 87

Ruby picks up their plates from the table. Blows out some candles. Claire tries to help.

RUBY

You go on upstairs and get some sleep.
I'll take care of this.

CLAIRE

Ruby, thank you for everything.

Ruby smiles. Heads to the kitchen.

Claire makes her way up the stairs.

There's a soft knock at the front door.

Ruby gets the door. Opens it. Tommy holds Clay by the scruff of his jacket.

RUBY

Hey, fellas. What can I do for ya?

JOE

Tell her, Clay, tell her.

Sheepish.

CLAY

We're in trouble.

Ruby sizes them up. Wipes her hands on an apron.

RUBY

Come on in.

88 INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 88

Ruby, Tommy and Clay sit around the table.

RUBY

You lost all of it?

Clay hangs his head.

RUBY

What happened to it?

Tommy looks at Clay. He's pathetic.

Bailing him out.

JOE

Let's just say we hit some snags.

RUBY

How much do you need?

Clay looks up.

CLAY

Five-thousand. But its just a floater.
We're only gonna need it for a couple of
weeks.

RUBY

Five-thousand dollars? I don't have that
kind of money.

He struggles to even say it.

CLAY

Well, there's the diner.

Claire, listening on the stairs, covers her mouth.

Silence.

JOE

We need cash flow to finish that plane.

CLAY

I promise you'll get it back. You have
my word.

Ruby rolls her eyes.

JOE

You have MY word.

Ruby mulls it over.

RUBY

I need more than that.

CLAY

Plus interest.

RUBY
More.

CLAY
How much interest?

RUBY
Fifty-percent.

CLAY
Fifty-percent on a two week loan?

RUBY
Fifty-percent of the business.

Claire smiles on the stairs.

CLAY
I've got over twenty grand in this thing
and you want fifty-percent of the
business?

JOE
Without her you got no business.

RUBY
Take it or leave it.

Silence. Ruby extends her hand to Clay.

RUBY
Deal?

Reluctant.

CLAY
Deal.

89 INT CLAY'S OFFICE - DAY

89

Rachel and Tommy wait.

RACHEL
Where is he?

JOE
Ruby was getting the money this morning.
He said he was coming straight here.

90 EXT. BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

90

Clay counts a stack of bills in the front seat of his car.

He steps out of the car. He gives a look to the bouncer standing at the door.

91 INT. SMALL SMOKEY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 91

Clay enters the room. A crowd of men gather around the craps table.

The croupier eyes Clay. Shoots a look to Big Frank.

Big Frank nods his head.

Clay steps up to the table. Pulls the money from his coat pocket. He holds it tightly.

The croupier pushes the dice toward Clay.

Clay looks up. Hesitates. Freezes.

CROUPIER

You playing or are you just taking up space?

Clay lays the entire stack of cash on the table.

CROUPIER

NEW SHOOTER COMING OUT!

Clay picks up the dice. He looks upward.

He shakes the dice and throws them out onto the table. Six.

CROUPIER

SIX! PLACE YOUR BETS, GENTLEMEN!

The croupier slides the dice to Clay. He picks up the dice. Gives them a shake.

Under his breath.

CLAY

One time. Just one time.

He throws out the dice.

CLAY

C'MON SIX!

The dice roll out.

The gang engulfs the poorman's craps table. Shouting.

The dice settle.

The crowd is silenced.

CROUPIER
SEVEN! LINE AWAY!

Clay watches Ruby's money being swept from the table.

92 EXT. BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

92

Clay steps out into the sunshine. His eyes squint into the brightness. His eyes adjust in time to see Tommy's fist flying into his face.

Clay drops to the ground. Tommy, furious, stands over his semi-conscious body.

JOE
Tell me you didn't! TELL ME YOU DIDN'T.

Before passing out.

CLAY
I'm sorry.

His head hits the ground.

Tommy kicks the dirt.

He picks Clay up, throws him over his shoulder fireman style. Walks off.

93 INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM TABLE - LATER

93

Tommy, Clay, Ruby and Claire sit at the table. Clay shows signs of a shiner.

Losing it.

RUBY
ALL OF IT?

CLAY
All of it.

RUBY
ALL OF IT?

CLAY
Yep, all of it.

She gives him a good slap across the face.

JOE

Ruby, I'm sorry. I'm sorry I let this happen. I don't know how, but I'll get it back for you. I promise I will.

Tommy hangs his head. Claire burns with compassion.

Breaking the silence.

CLAIRE

I might have an idea.

94 EXT. CLAY'S HANGAR - NEXT DAY

94

TWO MID-WEST AIR DELIVERY GUYS walk parts and supplies into Clay's hangar. Tommy and Rachel help the cause.

Clay shakes Claire's hand. Ruby stands nearby.

Defeated.

CLAY

Yeah, yeah, yeah... its a deal.

He turns and walks away.

Ruby gives Claire a squeeze.

RUBY

You and me partners. Who'd of thunk it!

95 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

95

Claire's on the wall phone near the stack of fresh boxes.

CLAIRE

Thanks, Pappy, they just arrived.

Tommy approaches Claire.

To Claire.

JOE

Is that him? Let me thank him. What's his name?

In the phone.

CLAIRE

Hold on a second.

Claire looks at Tommy.

CLAIRE

I don't know if that's a good idea.

JOE

C'mon, Claire, the man deserves a lot of credit. I'll just be a minute.

Claire ponders the consequences.

In the phone.

CLAIRE

Someone wants to say "hi".

Hands the phone to Tommy.

JOE

What's his name?

Reticent but eager all at once.

CLAIRE

"Pappy".

JOE

Mr. Pappy, I just wanted to personally thank you for bailing us out. Claire's quite a gal and I know she can help us turn this thing around, but we couldn't have done it without your help. Here's Claire.

Tommy smiles. Hands the phone back to Claire.

He hustles back to the boxes.

Claire back into the phone.

CLAIRE

Pappy, I'll explain it all later. I gotta go. I love you.

She hangs up the phone. Takes a deep breath.

96 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER

96

Ruby greets Claire as she comes out of the office.

RUBY

You're incredible. I'm mean really incredible.

Tommy puts his arm around Rachel.

JOE
I'll say. It looks like we're finally
gonna get this airline off the ground.

Rachel squeezes Tommy with excitement.

Claire looks away, too difficult.

MONTAGE:

Tommy and Claire carry a propeller crate across the hangar.

Tommy and Claire open another crate with hammers. Rachel comes over with a clipboard, asks them a question, goes back to the office writing something down.

Tommy and Claire pull a passenger seat out.

Tommy and Claire share a pencil on some blueprints.

Tommy and Claire test some small cabin lights.

Tommy looks down a push-rod to see if its straight. Claire looks up the other side. They nod in agreement.

Ruby arrives with a bag of lunch. Hands it off to Claire. Tommy and Claire wave goodbye.

Tommy and Claire eat a sandwich. Laughing over stories.

End of the day. Rachel comes out of the office, nods to the car. Tommy drops everything, wipes his hands, fires a quick salute to Claire, and rushes after Rachel. They jump in the car.

Claire looks on with teary eyes.

97 INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

97

Ruby and Claire sit at the table.

Claire stirs her tea.

RUBY
How was it at the hangar this week?

CLAIRE
Fine, I guess.

More stirring.

RUBY
You watching over our investment?

Claire stares into her tea while her fingers stir away.

RUBY

You churn that thing much longer you're gonna make butter.

Claire comes clean.

CLAIRE

It's been five days and he has no idea who I am.

RUBY

Takes time, Sweetheart.

CLAIRE

I want to show him the photo.

RUBY

You know you can't do that.

Snaps.

CLAIRE

WHY?! WHY CAN'T I?! Why can't I show him the photo? Why can't I show him the ring? Why can't I play him the music box? Why can't I tell him he's Joe Kelly?

She throws her napkin down.

CLAIRE

HOW'S HE SUPPOSED TO REMEMBER WHO HE IS IF EVERYONE AROUND HERE KEEPS TELLING HIM HE'S "TOMMY"?

RUBY

'Cause everyone around here knows he's Tommy. Like everyone around here knows you're Claire.

Claire breaks down.

Ruby takes her hand.

CLAIRE

I just want to show him the photo. Maybe he'll remember.

RUBY

Sweetheart, if he believes he's Tommy Warner, it might backfire on you.

A knock at the door.

RUBY

Now go dry your eyes, our company's here.

CLAIRE

Great.

98 INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - LATER

98

Tommy, Rachel, Claire and Ruby sit around the table eating. Claire picks at her food.

RACHEL

So what about you, Claire? How come you're not married?

Ruby chews a little slower.

Looking at Tommy.

CLAIRE

I was married. He was a pilot.

Ruby looks on with caution.

CLAIRE

His plane went down in the war.

RACHEL

Oh, that's terrible. I'm so sorry.

JOE

A pilot? I flew in the war, maybe I knew him.

Ruby stops chewing.

JOE

What was his name?

Claire hesitates. Looks to Ruby.

Ruby subtly shakes her head no.

RACHEL

Sweetie, if this is too hard for you...

Claire looks at her plate.

Blurts it out.

CLAIRE
Joe Kelly.

She looks up to Tommy, not knowing what to expect.

CLAIRE
His name was Joe Kelly.

Tommy looks down at his plate. Stops mid-chew. Silence.

Claire looks to Ruby.

Ruby returns a look, unsure.

Claire waits for his response.

JOE (O.S.)
Nope!

Tommy cuts and chews.

JOE
Sorry, Claire, never knew a Joe Kelly.

Off Claire's look.

99 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - NEXT DAY - NIGHT

99

Tommy and Claire work on an engine hoisted up on a block.

Tightening down a new head, she looks at Tommy with a careful eye.

CLAIRE
So, have you always wanted to be a pilot?

Without hesitation.

JOE
Long as I can remember. Do me a favor
can you hand me that wrench?

She snatches up the wrench. Hands it to him slowly. Their fingers touch.

CLAIRE
I think it's called a spanner.

He looks at her. For a moment, their eyes lock.

RACHEL (O.S.)

Tommy Warner! What are you still doing
in those rags?!

Rachel stands next to her car in a beautiful '40's swing-dancing dress. Tommy pulls away from Claire. Goes to give Rachel a hug.

He whistles as Rachel pulls the fabric of her dress off her thighs and twirls.

He comes in close.

Throwing her hands up.

RACHEL

Don't you come near me with all that
grease.

She carefully leans in and lets him kiss her on the cheek.

Clay walks in.

To Tommy.

CLAY

What are you going as?

JOE

Test flight's day after tomorrow. We're
close, but she still needs more work.

RACHEL

You can take two hours out for a dance.
Claire can stay and work on it.

Claire looks on.

JOE

It's more of two man job.

Claire smiles.

JOE

You and Clay go on ahead. We'll finish
up here and we'll meet you there in a
little while.

Clay smiles. Offers his arm to Rachel.

CLAY

You heard the Captain.

She takes his arm as he leads her out.

Looking back.

RACHEL

Tommy, I'll be saving a dance for you.

JOE

You better.

Tommy comes back to the engine on the block with a pep in his step. Claire eyes him as they work, looking for any signs of recognition.

He catches her.

JOE

What?!

Claire freezes. Returning her attention to her work.

100 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - LATER

100

Claire hands Tommy a soda.

CLAIRE

You know we're never gonna make that dance.

JOE

Yeah, but we'll get that bird in the air.

She sees a radio.

CLAIRE

How 'bout a little music?

Tommy smiles.

JOE

Couldn't hurt.

She turns on the radio. "Beautiful Dreamer" is playing. She thinks better of it. Turns the dial.

JOE

No, go back. I like that song.

Claire spins back the dial. "Beautiful Dreamer" fills the hangar.

She walks back to Tommy.

He stops working. Listens to the music.

CLAIRE
You know this song?

JOE
It's my favorite.

She gives a small smile.

CLAIRE
Mine, too.

After a beat he extends his hand.

JOE
You know, we don't have to miss the
dance.

Claire looks down at her greasy overalls, pinches the fabric off her thighs. Gives a twirl, a la Rachel.

Tommy smiles.

Their hands clasp. They dance.

Claire takes in a deep breath and smiles. Heart pounding. After a beat she takes a risk. Forces their hands inward.

She waits for Tommy's response.

JOE
What's that?

Slowly she puts their hands back the normal way.

Discouraged.

CLAIRE
Nothing.

The song ends.

They look into each other's eyes. A long moment.

RACHEL (O.S.)
Fixing a plane looks a lot like dancing.

Tommy whips around.

JOE
We were just taking a break.

RACHEL
I can't believe you.

She turns. Hurries out.

Tommy chases after her.

Calling out.

JOE
IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK. IT WAS JUST
CLAIRE. WHERE ARE YOU GOING? IT WAS
ONLY CLAIRE. IT WAS NOTHING!

101 INT. RUBY'S DINER - NEXT DAY

101

Clay and Ruby sit in the empty diner having a heart to heart.

CLAY
And if Liberator Airways isn't a viable
business four days from now, Eddie says
he's gonna come back here and...

Clay dips his head. Runs his fingers through his hair.

Ruby takes a deep breath.

RUBY
Clay Martin, what were you thinking?!
It's your life you're gamblin' with this
time.

CLAY
I know, Ruby. I know.

RUBY
Well, Claire says that test flight's
tomorrow. We gonna be ready for that?

CLAY
Joe says things are a go.

Ruby lifts an eyebrow.

RUBY
Joe?

Clay gives her a blank stare.

Leaning in.

RUBY

Level with me, Clay. When you found him at that POW camp, did you know he was a mechanic? Did you know he was a pilot?

CLAY

What are you saying?

RUBY

He belongs to her. That girl doesn't deserve this. What made you think... did you just bring him back here to start an airline?

CLAY

It ain't that simple, Ruby.

RUBY

Didn't you ever figure one day someone might come looking for him?

CLAY

I ain't real good at planning ahead. I never meant to hurt anybody.

102 EXT. CLAY'S HANGAR - DAY

102

MONTAGE:

Tommy teaches Claire the pre-flight sequence to fire up the B-24. He points at gauges. They check the flaps. Push the rudder pedals. He guides her hands on the throttles. He gives the thumbs up. She fires it back. The engines of the B-24 sputter to life.

103 INT. CLAY'S OFFICE - LATER

103

Claire sits in the office staring at the photo of Joe.

After a beat she hears Tommy and Rachel enter the hangar.

Claire quickly stuffs the photo into her purse. Sets it down.

Rachel and Tommy enter.

JOE

We couldn't have done this without you, Claire. You got us back on schedule.

Rachel reaches over and takes Tommy's hand.

Claire takes it in.

RACHEL

It's everything we've dreamed of for the last year. Are you gonna be okay flying that thing?

Claire stands to her feet. Holds back a tear.

CLAIRE

Of course he will be. He's the best pilot in the whole world.

She chokes up. Makes her way out of the office.

104 INT. CLAY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

104

Tommy is on the phone.

JOE

I love you too, Sweetheart. How'd your hair turn out? That's swell. I'll talk to you later.

He hangs up the phone. Stands to leave.

He glances down.

Claire's purse.

105 INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

105

Claire looks behind the couch. Checks under the cushions. Lifts the pillows. Stands upright.

CLAIRE.

Think, you idiot.

Goes to the dining room. Pulls out the chairs one by one. Looking for it.

CLAIRE

Shoot.

Knock on the door.

Claire scurries to open it.

Tommy stands outside holding up her purse.

JOE

Been looking for this?

CLAIRE

Oh my gosh!

Claire snatches it for his own safety a little too quickly.

CLAIRE

You're a life saver. Thank you so much.

JOE

Are you okay?

CLAIRE

I'm sorry, I just have some valuables in it.

Calming herself.

CLAIRE

Would you like to come in? I can make some tea.

JOE

Sure, why not.

106 INT. RUBY'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

106

They sit at the table letting their tea simmer.

CLAIRE

Penny for your thoughts?

Struggling.

JOE

I gotta ask you something, Claire, but I don't know, its kinda embarrassing.

CLAIRE

What is it?

JOE

This is gonna come out of left field, but I gotta find out.

Claire leans in expectantly.

JOE

Rachel has this crazy idea that maybe you might be in love with me.

Claire leans back.

CLAIRE

What would make her think that?

JOE

That's what I said. But she said she's
seen you looking at me.

He looks to Claire for help.

She waits.

JOE

You know, looking at me.

Trying to cover.

CLAIRE

We work together. We're partners. We
have to look at each other sometimes.

Relieved.

JOE

Right. Exactly.

CLAIRE

She said that, huh? Do you think she's
jealous.

Smiling.

JOE

Well, maybe a little.

Claire smiles a little.

JOE

And believe me, the last thing in the
world I need is some dramatic love
triangle between my business partner and
my wife.

Claire's eyes widen.

CLAIRE

You're wife?

JOE

Yeah. Rachel and I are getting married.

CLAIRE

Married?!

Claire stands. Paces the floor.

CLAIRE
But you can't marry her!

JOE
Claire, what's the matter?

CLAIRE
You just can't marry her.

JOE
Why not?

CLAIRE
Because...

Claire bites her nail.

JOE
Because why?!

She turns to him. She grabs her purse. Sits down at the table inches from his face.

CLAIRE
Because you're already married!

JOE
What are you talking about?

CLAIRE
You're married to me! You're not Tommy Warner.

JOE
Claire, you're scaring me.

Pleading.

CLAIRE
JOE, JOE IT'S ME. IT'S ME, CLAIRE.

She pulls the ring from her purse.

CLAIRE
Do you remember this? You gave me this ring. You tied it to a hook and pulled it from your fishing hole.

Tommy stands. Walks from the table.

He stops when he hears some music.

He turns to back to the table.

The music box plays "Beautiful Dreamer".

Holding it up.

CLAIRE

You gave me this on our wedding night.

She sets it down. Goes to him. Takes his hands in a dance.

CLAIRE

You taught me to dance like this.

She forces his hand inward. He pulls his hand away.

Confused.

JOEY

Lady, you're crazy.

He goes to the door.

CLAIRE

You're Joe Kelly. You're from
Mooresville.

He turns back. Struggling. Reeling.

JOE

I'm Tommy Warner. I'm from Hazard,
Nebraska.

CLAIRE

Clay told you that. Your plane went down
and he brought you back here. And I
found you. I'm Claire Kelly. I'm your
wife and I want you to come home with me.

She begins crying as she runs to him.

Her purse spills onto the floor. The photo slides out.

Tommy's stiff as a board as Claire rushes to him. She holds
on for dear life.

CLAIRE

I LOVE YOU, JOE. PLEASE. PLEASE
REMEMBER ME. I'M YOUR WIFE. I'M YOUR
WIFE.

Tommy looks on the ground. Pushes her away.

He slowly goes to the photo.

He picks it up. He begins to shake.

Turning to Claire.

JOE

Where did you get this?

Through tears.

CLAIRE

It's you. You gave it to me. You signed
it on the back.

Tommy turns it over. Can't believe his eyes.

INSERT: *Claire, I love you with all my heart. Joe.*

CLAIRE

It's your writing, isn't it?!

He drops the photo.

CLAIRE

Joe? Joe!

He storms past her. Bolts out the door.

Off her tears.

107 INT. B-24 COCKPIT - TEST FLIGHT - NEXT DAY

107

Tommy sits in the pilot seat, headset on, checks the gauges.

Claire climbs cautiously into the copilot seat next to Tommy.
She puts her headset on.

Strapping in.

CLAIRE.

I'm sorry about last night.

Cuts her off.

JOE

Skip it. Let's get this bird in the air
where she belongs.

Claire gathers herself quickly. Checks her instrument panel.

CLAIRE

Trim tabs.

Tommy turns three dials to 3 degrees right rudder.

JOE

Trimmed for take-off.

Claire checks to make sure all levers are set to Auto-rich.

CLAIRE

Mixtures in auto-rich. Exercise
propellers, turbo-superchargers, and
flaps.

Tommy sets all throttles to 1500 rpm.

Claire changes propeller governors from full high rpm to full low rpm, holding governor switches until propellers change all the way.

Tommy advances superchargers slowly and retards them with the turn of a dial.

JOE

Turbo-superchargers exercised.

CLAIRE

Propellers and flaps exercised.

Checks gauges.

CLAIRE

Propellers in high rpm. Run up engines.

Tommy advances the number four throttle, nods to Claire.

JOE

Number one engine run up completed.

Tommy advances the throttle to fully open position, holding it there with his right hand while he advances the supercharger control with his left hand.

JOE

Superchargers locked.

CLAIRE

Wing flaps twenty degrees. Flight
controls?

Tommy moves the controls to full forward and turns the wheel to the hard right, moving the right rudder. Then moves them to full back and turns the wheel to the left: left rudder.

JOE

Controls checked for full travel and
free movement.

Tommy starts to hear voices. Sees flashbacks.

WILLIS (V.O.)
No toys in the driveway, skip.

HALF PINT (V.O.)
BANDITS AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK.

Shouting it out in the cockpit.

JOE
BANDITS AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK!

Claire looks at Tommy.

CLAIRE.
What?

108 Tommy sees Petey instead of Claire.

108

PETEY
WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT TO THOSE CLOUDS!

Defiant.

JOE
WE HAVE TO MAKE IT TO THOSE CLOUDS!

109 He hears the SOUNDS OF 50 CALIBER MACHINE GUNS and BULLETS STRIKING the B-24. 109

Worried.

CLAIRE.
What are you talking about?

Reliving it.

JOE
THEY'RE GOING OVER THE TOP! SETTING UP
FOR ANOTHER PASS. HERE THEY COME!

The intercom.

CLAY (O.S.)
What's going on up there?

CLAIRE.
I don't know, Clay, something's wrong!

JOE
TAIL GUN'S JAMMED! NUMBER THREE IS ON
FIRE! PETEY, HIT THE BAIL OUT BELL!

Tommy quickly unstraps his harness.

Screaming.

JOE
I SAID BAIL OUT, THAT'S AN ORDER!

He bangs his head hard on the roof of the plane. Knocks himself out cold.

Claire unbuckles herself. Rushes down. Holds him in her arms.

Tears fall from her face.

CLAIRE
JOE? JOE CAN YOU HEAR ME? JOEY?

110 INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - CORRIDOR - DAY

110

Claire stares through a glass window into a room.

An official ARMY AIR CORPS CLERK, in uniform, stands next to her. He reads from a clipboard.

Claire never takes her eyes off of what she is staring at through the window.

OFFICIAL AIR CORPS CLERK (O.S.)
Mrs. Kelly, the Army Air Corps extends its deepest apologies. We pride ourselves on keeping track of our GIs but on occasion, such as your husband, circumstances beyond our control arise and we make mistakes. He was listed as K.I.A. when in actual fact he was M.I.A..

A tear wells up. Falls down Claire's face.

Through the glass, Tommy sits in a wheelchair, staring blankly out the window.

He's surrounded by other patients milling about in walkers and wheelchairs.

Claire stares riveted.

OFFICIAL AIR CORPS CLERK (O.S.)
Of course the Air Corps will assume all responsibility for his transport back to the military ward in Topeka, and your insurance plan will be re-issued to cover all medical bills incurred from here on.

I just need you to sign here and you can go home.

He offers her a pen and a clip board.

She opens a door to the room and enters.

OFFICIAL AIR CORPS CLERK
Mrs. Kelly? Mrs. Kelly?

111 INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - ROOM - MOMENTS LATER 111

Claire kneels next to Tommy's wheelchair. He stares blankly out the window.

She looks into his eyes. Nothing.

CLAIRE
Joe? I just wanted to say...

Tears stream.

No reaction from Tommy. Nothing.

CLAIRE
Goodbye.

Claire stands to leave.

112 INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 112

Claire enters the waiting room and stops.

Ruby, Clay and Rachel stand there. There's nothing to say.

Claire makes her way to the door to leave.

RACHEL (O.S.)
Claire!

Claire stops at the door. She doesn't turn back.

RACHEL
If it was me...I would have done the same thing.

Claire pushes the door open. Leaves without saying good-bye.

113 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - DUSK 113

In the distance, Claire gets out of her car on the tarmac.

Pappy is there to greet her with a hug.

He holds her for the longest time. Claire's body shakes with the sobs.

114 INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - ROOM - NEXT MORNING 114

Tommy sits in the middle of a crowd of convalescents gathered for a Sunday service.

The door opens. A red and white cane scrapes the linoleum. A NURSE guides Pastor Nathey to a portable podium.

PASTOR NATHEY
Thank you kindly, ma'am.

NURSE
Of course, pastor.

She steps aside.

To the small crowd.

PASTOR NATHEY
People everywhere I go seem to ask me what my favorite Psalm is. I tell'em I like 'em all. But one of my favorites would certainly have to be....

115 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - CONTINUOUS 115

Clay addresses a swarm of press corps guys with cameras and note pads from a soapbox near the B-24.

CLAY
Gentleman, I'm sorry to disappoint you today, but its still a great story for your readers. Liberator Airways is in business. That bomber is 100% transformed into a passenger plane and she's ready to fly.

PRESS MAN #1
Then put her in the air!

PRESS MEN TOGETHER
Yeah, fire her up!

CLAY
I'd be happy to fellas, but I need your help.

PRESS MAN #2
Sure, Clay, whaddaya need?

CLAY
Anybody know how to fly a B-24?

116 INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - ROOM - CONTINUOUS 116

PASTOR NATHEY
"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most
High will rest in the shadow of the
Almighty..."

Tommy's eyes blink slowly.

Flashback of Petey bleeding in his arms saying the Psalm in
unison with the Pastor.

PETEY & PASTOR NATHEY
"...I will say of the LORD, "He is my
refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I
trust."

117 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - CONTINUOUS 117

CLAY
My job was gunning 'em down. But I don't
know the first thing about how to fly'em.

Clay laughs at himself trying to lighten the crowd.

118 INT. CONVALESCENT HOME - ROOM - CONTINUOUS 118

Tommy has another flashback. His crew in the barracks recite
the Psalm with the Pastor.

CREW & PASTOR NATHEY
"Surely he will save you from the
fowler's snare and from the deadly
pestilence."

The pastor continues as Tommy's head jerks with another
flashback.

It's Pappy. Reading at the funeral for Joe's parents. In
unison with the pastor. Claire joins little Joe.

PAPPY & PASTOR NATHEY
"He will cover you with his feathers, and
under his wings you will find refuge; his
faithfulness will be your shield and
rampart."

Joe takes over. Mumbles along with the Pastor from memory.
A memory that had been long forgotten.

JOE & PASTOR NATHEY

"You will not fear the terror of night,
nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the
pestilence that stalks in the darkness,
nor the plague that destroys at midday."

Joe snaps to the present. Stands to his feet. Recites in unison. Building in volume.

JOE & PASTOR NATHEY

"A thousand may fall at your side, ten
thousand at your right hand, but it will
not come near you."

Joe breaks through.

JOE

I'M JOE KELLY.

He proclaims it loudly to all the old folks who watch him with wide eyes.

JOE

I'M JOE KELLY. AND I'M GOING HOME!

Joe makes a beeline for the door in his pajamas, bathrobe, and slippers.

119 INT. CLAY'S HANGAR - DAY

119

Winding up his monologue to the Press Corps.

CLAY

And that's why Liberator Airways will be
the greatest airline the world has ever
known!

He steps down off his soapbox in a hurry.

The press demand answers.

PRESS MEN

When, Clay? When?

CLAY

SOON! You have my word.

As he runs through the crowd.

CLAY

And a promise is a promise!

Clay runs off.

120 EXT. BACK OF THE HANGAR - MOMENTS LATER 120

Clay hightails it to his car, suitcase in hand.

121 EXT. CONVALESCENT HOME - GROUNDS OUTSIDE - CONTINUOUS 121

Joe runs through the yard and jumps a fence.

122 EXT. A FIELD - SAME 122

Joe runs through a field on his way to Clay's Hangar.

Screaming.

JOE
I'M COMING HOME, CLAIRE!

123 INT. CLAY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 123

Clay throws the suitcase in the front seat and climbs in.

VOICE (O.S.)
Nice day for a drive.

Clay whips around. Eddie sticks a luger to Clay's head.

124 EXT. CLAY'S HANGAR - CONTINUOUS 124

Joe scrambles across the tarmac toward the B-24.

125 INT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS 125

Joe buckles in and fires up the engines.

126 EXT. CLAY'S HANGAR - CONTINUOUS 126

The press corps stop. Look back to see the B-24 propellers roar to life.

127 EXT. ROADSIDE - CLAY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 127

Clay is gagged and bound. One eye is swollen shut.

Eddie hoists him into the open trunk.

EDDIE
It's time to cash out!

Eddie looks at his watch.

EDDIE

The way I see it, I've got about another
sixty seconds to see that thing in the
air or your airline days are over.

128 EXT. CLAY'S HANGAR - CONTINUOUS 128

The B-24 soars over the press corps as they quickly start
shooting off pictures.

PRESS MAN #1

That Clay Martin! He's one heck of a
flyboy!

129 EXT. ROADSIDE - CLAY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS 129

Pointing the gun at Clay.

Clay's eyes widen.

Eddie cocks the lugar.

Clay shuts his eyes. His hands break free of the rope. He
plugs his ears.

EDDIE

Say your prayers!

The sound of the giant bird causes Clay to open his eyes.

The B-24 soars over their heads.

Eddie gives Clay a little grin.

130 EXT. ROADSIDE - MOMENTS LATER 130

Clay's car speeds away as Clay stands in the wake of its
dust.

When the car is well out of earshot.

CLAY

MY WORD IS MY BOND!

To himself.

CLAY

Nobody ever believes me.

131 INT. COCKPIT - CONTINUOUS 131

Intercom.

RACHEL (O.S.)
Liberator One, this is home base, do you read?

JOE
This is Liberator One, I read you loud and clear. Hello, Rachel.

132 INT. CLAY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 132

Rachel pushes the TALK button on the microphone.

RACHEL
Go get her, Joe!

133 EXT. BLUE SKYS - DAY 133

The B-24 soars through the sky at top speed.

134 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - DUSK 134

Claire and Pappy sit outside the hangar.

In the distance they see an aircraft approaching.

Claire stands to her feet.

Under her breath.

CLAIRE
Joe?

She starts to run toward the tarmac.

135 EXT. HANGAR - KELLY'S AIRSTRIP - SAME 135

The B-24 touches down with grace.

Joe jumps down to the tarmac.

He sees Claire and Pappy. Takes off in full speed. His bathrobe flies in the wind.

JOE
CLAIRE KELLY, YOU'RE MY WIFE AND I LOVE YOU!

Claire takes off. Runs to meet him.

PAPPY
Well I'll be.

Claire shouts at the top of her lungs.

CLAIRE
I LOVE YOU TOO, JOE KELLY. AND YOU'RE
THE BEST PILOT IN THE WHOLE WORLD!

They run into each other's arms and twirl and twirl and
twirl.

AS WE

FADE TO BLACK.