

Pensacola - Wings of Gold - "RAID ON OSIRAK"

BY CHARLES PROSER

TEASE

FADE IN:

EXT. AERIAL - U2 - BLACK SPYPLANE AT ALTITUDE - STOCK

EXT. TAMPA AFB -- DAY

SUPERIMPOSE -- CENTCOM -- US CENTRAL COMMAND HEADQUARTERS

INT. TAMPA - CENTCOM - INTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Spooks and analysts look at photo recon data. The CENTCOM COMMANDING OFFICER, GENERAL ZIMA, in Marine Fatigues is a gruff, no-nonsense fireplug. His deputy, ADMIRAL YEAGER is more polished, in Navy Khaki. The SPOOK, is in tweeds and hornrims. He points to a rounded dome on the pictures.

SPOOK

That's it. Osirak!

ADMIRAL YEAGER

Saddam's at it again. Unbelievable!

GENERAL ZIMA, steps up, nods for the briefing to begin.

SPOOK

Okay, I'm sure you all remember the Osirak nuclear reactor? Here... just north of Baghdad.

GENERAL ZIMA

The Israelis took it out in '81.

SPOOK

Yes Sir, but the Iraqis have secretly rebuilt it. Its a breeder reactor, takes low-grade uranium and turns it into bomb-grade plutonium. Once the fuel's in, it cannot be attacked without spreading a radioactive cloud. Where that cloud would drift, nobody knows... but it would make Chernobyl look like a bad day at Bubba's Barbecue. The decision has been made to take it out.

GENERAL ZIMA

Without a warning?

SPOOK

As a warning... To Iraq and to any others who think they can pull this stuff on us.

He hands him the closest angle. The General studies it.

SPOOK (CONT'D)

The Joint Chiefs want a mission. You guys better have a plan for them ...in 48 hours.

The General turns to his deputy, hands him the picture..

GENERAL ZIMA

What assets do we have in the area?

ADMIRAL YEAGER

Third Marines. Quick Reaction Force.

SPOOK

We have a short window. One good chance. You have a team ready?

GENERAL ZIMA

I have a man.

SPOOK

Is he good?

GENERAL ZIMA

Oh, yeah. A real hard-charger. Tim, get me Bill Kelly down at Pensacola.

FADE OUT:

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. PENSACOLA - BASE GOLF COURSE - SAME TIME

Kelly is on the phone while his enlisted personalman, CORPORAL RICARDO, waits, holding a golf club, taking practice swings.

KELLY

Yeah, cold in Maine? Oh it's rough down here, Prudence. About 73. When do you land? Ten-fifteen, flight 46? No, I'll send a cab. We'll have a great time, catch up on everything.

Hands the phone to Ricardo. Who hands him back a three wood.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Whew! Prudence. My sister's girl.

He hands Ricardo a picture.

INSERT

A young lady in conservative dress and hairstyle... Prudence.

ANGLE ON KELLY

Kelly lines up on the tee...listens to birds.

KELLY

Ah, peace at last. Quiet, even.  
(orders the birds)  
Quiet!

Miraculously, they shut up. He addresses the ball. Just as he's into his swing, his CELLPHONE HONKS. He shanks it into the clubhouse to the sound of BREAKING GLASS. Ricardo cocks his head, flips his pad open, writes.

CPL. RICARDO

I'll take care of that, sir.

Kelly is not amused. He punches the phone.

KELLY

Hammer, I thought I told you not to..  
Oh, hi, General, how are you? No...  
I was talking to somebody else.  
Why no, not busy at all. My time is your time. Yes sir. When do you want us?

(beat)

An hour ago. Right, Sir. On the way!

EXT. PENSACOLA - FLIGHTLINE MOMENTS LATER

Hammer catches up to Kelly, in flight suits, carrying helmets.

HAMMER

Hey, Skipper, what do we have?

KELLY

Let me brief you on what I know.  
Nothing.

Corporal Ricardo, runs to catch up to them. Kelly walks around kicking the tires and pre-flighting as he talks.

CPL. RICARDO

Sir, you're both going?

KELLY

OPSO's in charge until we get back.

CPL. RICARDO

Uh, sir, can you tell me when that might be?

KELLY

No, Corporal. You don't know where I went and I don't know when I'll return.

CPL. RICARDO

But sir, it's ...you know...Prudence.

KELLY

Oh, yeah... Okay. I want you to provide her with a responsible escort until I return.

INT. KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

As the ground crew straps him in, he keys the radio.

KELLY

Shooter One request taxi clearance. Shooter Two, you with me?

HAMMER (V.O.)

Roger, that. One.

KELLY

Okay, light 'em up! Let's go!

EXT. FLIGHTLINE - TWO HORNETS - DAY (STOCK)

They take off and climb out, headed for Tampa.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER

You worried, Raider, with us both gone?

INT. AERIAL - COCKPIT - KELLY - DAY

KELLY

Relax, Hammer. You gotta have faith in your people. Besides, it's only a few hundred men and several hundred million dollars of the Corp's aircraft. What can go wrong?

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS - DAY - (STOCK)

They roll and pull in formation, arcing away...

INT. READY ROOM - SAME TIME - DAY

Burner and Spoon check the boards.

SPOON

The CO and XO both gone? Ice and half the squad on DET... Geez. Let's get outta here.

BURNER

What's the problem?

SPOON

I don't like the look of this. They stick us with some extra duty...we can forget about the beach.

BURNER

No!

SPOON

...And the Tropical Lotion volleyball weekend. And all that means.

BURNER

Yeah, the free suntan lotion.

SPOON

Lots of it. Most... on babes. On the parts of beautiful buffed babes that bikinis don't cover. On hot semi-naked women. Like the ones I lined up. Come on, grab your gear...let's book it, before...!

INT. SQUADRON CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

Ricardo walks down the corridor conferring on the cell phone.

CPL. RICARDO

But, OPSO, it's the Colonel's personal detail. Sir? Who's on DET? Oh, they are... all of them? Well, there must be somebo...

He glances at the Ready Room, stops, backs up.

CPL. RICARDO (CONT'D)

Uh, OPSO...Hold on.

RICARDO'S P.O.V.

Burner and Spoon grabbing their charts and gear.

INT. READY ROOM

BURNER

Your date is Gloria. And she is! I mean they pick these models for their...their... Oh, no!

Ricardo steps in grinning. They fall silent as he gives them the enlisted evil eye.

CPL. RICARDO  
Gentlemen. Your detail...

SPOON  
No...

CPL. RICARDO  
...A Prudence Escort. The Colonel asked for you 'specially.

BURNER  
A what? What the heck's a prudence?

CPL. RICARDO  
Sirs, a Prudence is a Colonel's niece, your commanding officer's niece.

Ricardo hands them Prudence's picture.

CPL. RICARDO (CONT'D)  
Think of her as a fragile porcelain doll to be handled with the greatest delicacy. Now, if the Colonel returns and there's one little finishing school hair out of place, it is my belief that both of you or your better nether parts will be deep fried in peanut oil and served up for the ladies auxilliary buffet. Do I make the Colonel's express wishes clear?

SPOON  
Corporal, what are we supposed to do with her?

CPL. RICARDO  
It's what you're not that's important.

BURNER  
Let me guess. We grab a dictionary, look up every verb in it and put a "don't" in front of it. That about cover it?

CPL. RICARDO  
Yes Sir! I do think you have the general drift. Meet her cab at the gate at 1100 hours, and deliver her to the Colonel on his return all nicely covered in bubble wrap.

ANGLE ON BURNER AND SPOON - THE CONDEMNED...

EXT./INT. TAMPA - CENTCOM FLIGHTLINE - DAY (STOCK)

Kelly and Hammer's Hornets land and taxi past hangers.

SUPERIMPOSE: US CENTRAL COMMAND HEADQUARTERS - TAMPA

INT. TAMPA - CENTCOM HQ - SHORT TIME LATER

A Marine Colonel sees Kelly walk in and greets him warmly.

SLIDER

Hey, Raider, how are you? What are you doing here?

Kelly walks right by him.

KELLY

Hi, Slider, I'm fine. And I'm not here.

Slider watches them disappear into the top security spaces.

EXT. PENSACOLA - BASE FRONT GATE - SAME TIME - DAY

Spoon and Burner stand near the gate waiting.

SPOON

Must be some kind of flap for the CO and the XO to both disappear.

BURNER

Well, also disappearing...our weekend.

SPOON

And the Tropical Lotion models... They're only here for forty-eight hours!

(a beat)

Look, no reason we should both lose out. How hard is it to handle one little girl...?

BURNER

I agree. You do it.

SPOON

Look, we switch off. Pick her up... some fast food, show her the beach, park her somewhere. Four hours on, - four hours off. I'll even take the first watch.

BURNER

I donno...if that's gonna work...

SPOON

It has to. It's the only way we can handle this mission and still salvage something of the weekend.

BURNER

I donno...

SPOON

Look you want to spend half the weekend on this detail and half with the Tropical models or all of it with...

A cab pulls up, a pretty, demure schoolgirl in conservative dress gets out and looks to them. Prudence. They smile.

BURNER

Oh, Geez. This is gonna be brutal.

SPOON

Smile like an officer and gentleman.

Burner tries on a grin. Doesn't quite make it. The girl looks confused. Looks behind them, looks around. They walk to her.

SPOON (CONT'D)

Hello. I'm Lt. Henry, this is Lt. Barnes. You must be Colonel Kelly's niece... Miss Atwater?

PRUDENCE

Yes. Hello. I'm Prudence.  
(looks around)  
Where's Uncle Bill?

SPOON

Uh, thing is.. we don't exactly know.

ANGLE ON PRUDENCE

She gives them a hard stare. Burner just grins like a loon.

INT. TAMPA - CENTCOM INTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

The Spook turns from a screen filled with an aerial of the Nuclear plant. Zima, Yeager, Kelly, Hammer and Intel Officers cluster around.

SPOOK

...and the fuel is somewhere in country...and on its way to the reactor. That's what we know for now. General?

He nods to Zima who steps up.

GENERAL ZIMA  
Look familiar, Bill?

KELLY  
Like a bad dream.

GENERAL ZIMA  
What I see in my sleep is a bunch of  
nuclear weapons we cannot control.

ANGLE ON KELLY

GENERAL ZIMA (CONT'D)  
You've been there, in Desert Storm.

KELLY  
Yeah. Was hoping we wouldn't have  
to go back.

The General looks to the Spook. He's a nerdy, academic type.

SPOOK  
Saddamn Insane has surrounded the  
target with his usual cast of camera-  
friendly civilians. This has to be  
a surgical strike, with a very sharp  
scalpel. Any collaterals are gonna  
be stars of the evening news.

Zima nods to his deputy.

ADMIRAL YEAGER  
They've ringed the reactor with SAM's.  
Their threat envelopes overlap. ZSU  
57's down low. SA8's and 10's here.

Zima turns to Kelly.

GENERAL ZIMA  
You've done the most recent work-up  
on the target in your War Fighting  
Lab. That's why you're here. You'll  
plan the mission.  
(a beat.)  
...and Hummer has the most ground  
attack experience. He'll lead.

Hammer quickly reacts, surprised and confused.

HAMMER  
Sir, Colonel Kelly is my CO.

GENERAL ZIMA  
I'm aware of that.  
(a beat)  
Colonel Kelly will be your CO again,  
after the mission.

HAMMER

Yessir.

He looks at Kelly. It goes down hard in front of the others.

KELLY

Whatever you say, General.

The others turn away to their tasks. Zima moves to Kelly.

GENERAL ZIMA

I knew you'd understand, Bill..  
Better go start working the books. I  
need a prelim plan by 1300 to take  
up the chain...

KELLY

Aye, Sir.

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. PENSACOLA - BASE - DAY - STOCK

INT. VMFAT 101 CORRIDOR OUTSIDE KELLY'S OFFICE

Prudence strides on, fuming. They hustle after her.

PRUDENCE

You mean he just... disappeared?

SPOOK

Not disappeared exactly, its just  
that, well, he's not exactly here.

PRUDENCE

And where exactly is he?

BURNER

We don't exactly know. If we did,  
we'd have to lie. This way makes it  
easier for everyone.

She stops, steams for a moment on that.

PRUDENCE

Well, I've come all the way from  
Colby, Maine. Who's supposed to  
take care of my vacation?

BURNER

We are.

She strides off again, to the CO's office.

PRUDENCE

You two.

BURNER

Uh, huh, ma'am. Us.

She stops at Kelly's door, disbelieving...

PRUDENCE

And my Uncle Bill isn't here?

SPOON

Well um, technically... no.

She steams for a beat. then...

PRUDENCE

Cool!

She walks right by them into Kelly's office, slams the door.

SPOON

Well we can forget about the beach.

BURNER

The beach! The volleyball weekend.  
Our dates... Everything.

SPOON

An entire beach full of women in  
very little and we're stuck escorting  
Prudence from Maine.

They ponder that for a moment.

BURNER

It'll be okay.

SPOON

Okay!!! When we could be out with  
top stuff. like... like...

Burner follows Spoon's eyes. He turns... A babe is walking  
toward them, dressed hot and punk, spiked green and blue  
hair, rings, studs, bare midrift halter and shorts...

GIRL

Hi, boys!

BURNER

Hi??!! Now, if we could just...  
Something...

He turns to the girl. She's looking at them.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Prudence?

PRUDENCE

Yup.

SPOON

What's up?

She hooks her arms in theirs.

PRUDENCE

Time's up. Uncle Bill promised me a good time. Let's Rock and Roll!

EXT. TAMPA - CENTCOM - EVENING (STOCK)

INT. CENTCOM - INTEL ROOM - SAME TIME

The planners cluster around a console. Maps, Sat imagery and targeting data are projected on the table and on wall screens.

KELLY

Okay, the reactor's on a plateau. A valley leads up to it. It's the only way in, under the radar and the SAM and triple-A threat.

The Spook and Intel Officers... are uneasy.

SPOOK

They know. They'll be waiting in the valley.

INSERT - TOPOGRAPHICAL MAP - INTERCUT

KELLY

We'll ingress, in this valley to the east. They'll know we're coming but they'll be looking here. And for a while, that's where they'll see us.

CU MAP DETAIL

KELLY (CONT'D)

Right here there's a break in the ridges. We'll pop over, let down in the western valley, and drive straight in.

He looks up at them. They are silent for a beat.

GENERAL ZIMA

You sure there's a pass there?

KELLY

Last time I looked.

ADMIRAL YEAGER

We can't pick it out on the topo's.

KELLY

It's small. Just room enough for a Hornet. We'll pull inverted over it and down, hugging these hills. If we don't pop up too high, they'll never see us.

GENERAL ZIMA

Inverted, with a full bomb load?

KELLY

That'll help. We gotta get down fast, while this ridge masks us from the radar. We'll be in shadow. Morning sun in their eyes. They may hear us but by the time they do, we'll be long gone.

GENERAL ZIMA

Hell of a plan, Raider. Think you can do it?

KELLY

Wouldn't plan something I couldn't fly, General. This'll work.

A beat. They all look at each other. The spook steps up.

SPOOK

General. Excuse me. F18's...? I thought we had Tomahawks. Cruise missiles don't risk a pilot... being shot down, killed, taken prisoner... paraded before the world press.

Hammer's angry. He steps up to him...intimidating.

HAMMER

You said we have one shot. This is how we'll do it.

Kelly's more restrained. He calmly explains.

KELLY

The situation's too fluid. Missiles can't adapt.

GENERAL ZIMA

We wouldn't be in control. For this mission we need not only smart bombs, but our best weapon, smart Pilots.

(MORE)

GENERAL ZIMA (CONT'D)

(turns to Kelly)

You boys start running mirror missions on the practice range. I'll push it by the brass.

(a beat)

Bill, yours and mine are on the line on this. Everyone'll be looking our way.

KELLY

The ones I'm concerned with are the ones with guns, Sir.

INT. INTEL SPACES - MOMENTS LATER

Hammer studies the threat reports. Kelly walks up.

HAMMER

You should be leading the strike, Skipper.

KELLY

If the General thinks you're the man for the job, you're it. I've seen your scores. You are the best. We both gotta just put all this out of our minds. Just focus on the mission. I'm not worried about you.

HAMMER

What are your concerns?

KELLY

This stuff, it's what we've trained for. I know we can do it.

(beat, he lightens up)

You know what worries me? Prudence. She's been looking forward to her visit for months. Now, I bail out again and can't even tell her what the deal is.

HAMMER

She knows what you do...

KELLY

Yeah. I just hope she's not too disappointed at being pawned off on some Marines.

EXT. PENSACOLA - SPOON'S CORVETTE - TRAVELING

Burner. Spoon in front, Prudence jammed in back. MUSIC UP!  
They pull up in front of Kelly's quarters.

PRUDENCE

What's this?

SPOON

Where your uncle lives.

PRUDENCE

I didn't come all the way from the freakin' frozen north to wind up at a freakin' Marine base.

A moment between Burner and Spoon.

SPOON

Um... where do you want to go?

PRUDENCE

Is there a beach?

SPOON

Well... yeah.

PRUDENCE

Well? ....

They look at each other, then at her. They turn for the beach.

EXT. THE BEACH - MOMENTS LATER

They pull up. She looks at the beach, the waves, the studs. She hops out.

BURNER

Um...Spoon here's got the first duty. He's gonna be with you.

PRUDENCE

What? Yeah yeah. fine..fine fine.

She whips off her shorts and top...beneath...only a thong bikini. The boys' eyes bug...

SPOON

Um, listen, you're our CO's niece. If anything happens...well... We could get in trouble...

PRUDENCE

Boys...

They turn, look. She's hot. Real hot.

PRUDENCE (CONT'D)

You are in trouble.

She runs off down the beach.

SPOON

This has all the makings...of a real  
bad idea.

EXT. AERIAL - FALLON - BOMBING RANGE DAY (STOCK)

Two Hornets, low level and hot, rocketing up the valley, 150  
feet and 420 knots. Hammer's in the lead, calling IP's.

SUPERIMPOSE: AERIAL BOMBING RANGE - FALLON, NEVADA

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

Hammer's voice is clipped, tense, his stick movements, rapid.

HAMMER

Raider, rising terrain! Watch the  
shadows, pick up your scan.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

(laconic)  
Easy, Hammer. I've done this before.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER

I lost a guy, doing this...  
(a beat)  
... Sir.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

We're too high. Letting down.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS LOW LEVEL - (STOCK)

They drop lower, a hundred feet off the undulating terrain.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER

You might want to ease into that,  
Raider, IP at 2, come left 10. Call  
the IP, check weapons armed.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

Weapons armed. Laser on. The turn?

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS LOW LEVEL - DAY - (STOCK)

HAMMER (V.O.)

IP half mile. Wide on the turn, pull.

They hit burners, rocket up at 45 degrees...

HAMMER (CONT'D)  
 This is where they'll paint us...  
 Countermeasures, smooth. Pull to  
 five G's, rolling in.

They roll inverted and pull through, nose on the target.

INT. /EXT. HAMMER'S POV THROUGH HUD - CONTINUOUS

The target slides into his bombing pip on the HUD.

HAMMER (V.O.)  
 Target acquired, rolling out.

He rolls wings-level, lasing. The target rotates in his POV.

HAMMER (CONT'D)  
 Pickle.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET HARD MOUNTS - DAY - (STOCK)

Practice bombs release.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER  
 Hammer's off!

He yanks the stick to the side and pulls.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET - DAY - (STOCK)

It wings-over and pulls away...off target...

EXT. GROUND TARGET DAY (STOCK)

The bombs EXPLODE in the inner target ring, a good shot.

INT./EXT. AERIAL - KELLY'S POV THROUGH HUD DAY

The inverted target swings toward the bombing aiming pip.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

MOVE IN: CLOSE ON KELLY intense concentration...

KELLY  
 Raider's in hot. Lasing. Pickle.

INT. AERIAL - HORNET HARD MOUNTS - DAY

Practice bombs release.

EXT. GROUND TARGET - DAY - (STOCK)

The bombs sail over the target, hit long, EXPLODE in the outer rings.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Raider's off!

He slams the stick over and pulls.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS LOW LEVEL - DAY - (STOCK)

Kelly nearly scrapes a mountain getting out.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER  
You missed the IP, turned late, you were high and steep, barely in the cone. That's why you dropped long.  
(a beat, realizes)  
... Sir.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Cut that sir crap, Hammer. If I miss the IP you call me a dork like you would any screwup. If I can't fly my own damn plan, I am one.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER  
You're just a little rusty, Raider.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Let's go again. Go til we get it right.

EXT. AERIAL - FALLON - BOMBING RANGE - (STOCK)

Two Hornets, low level, streak up the valley, hit burners, rocket up, roll inverted, pull through, nose on target.

HAMMER  
Target acquired, rolling out.

He rolls wings level, lasing.

INT./EXT. HAMMER'S POV THROUGH HUD

The target appears in the pip.

HAMMER

Pickle.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET HARD MOUNTS (STOCK)

Practice bombs release.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT DAY

He yanks the stick over, and pulls, swinging away.

HAMMER

Hammer's off!

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET - STOCK DAY

It rolls and pulls off target and streaks away.

EXT - BOMBING RANGE - GROUND

The bombs EXPLODE in the inner target ring, a good hit.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

Raider's in hot. Lasing. Pickle.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET HARD MOUNTS - (STOCK)

The practice bombs release.

EXT. - BOMBING RANGE - GROUND - (STOCK)

They drop on target. BIG EXPLOSIONS!!!

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT DAY

HAMMER

Raider, you nailed it! I take back almost everything I was thinking.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

(relief)

Yeah, Hammer... So do I...

EXT. PENSACOLA BEACH DAY

Prudence in bikini splashes in the water, soaking up sun, flirting with anything that moves. The boys trudge after.

BURNER

Prudence, maybe you wanna cover some of that up. You know, sunburn!

She just looks at him like he's from mars. She runs right past some studs, plunges into the waves, drawing every eye on the beach. Spoon is positive.

SPOON

It'll be alright. It's a simple babysitting thing.

A couple of STUDS, get up, start for her.

BURNER

It's like dancing with a hand grenade. Well, showtime! Gotta pick up the girls. Good luck, Buddy!

He walks off. Spoon sees some beach studs approaching. He leads her away, deflecting the studs' interest.

SPOON

Sun-poisoning... Pay no attention.

BEACH STUD

Who the hell do you think you are?

SPOON

I'm the Man From Uncle. Gotta get her back to Headquarters.

But Prudence is revved up, ready to go...

PRUDENCE

I need a beer. And some loud music. And some teQUILA! Where's the bar?.

She takes off down the beach in the skimpy bikini, turning waves of heads in her wake.

SPOON

Who told her about the bar?

He takes off after her.

EXT. AERIAL - FALLON - LOW LEVEL DAY - (STOCK)

Two Hornets rocketing across the desert.

EXT. AERIAL - THEIR POV

A sheer rock cliff looms dead ahead...CLOSER...CLOSER...

HAMMER

Man, don't know if this is gonna happen!

EXT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

We gotta stay low, under the radar  
or it's all for nothing.

EXT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER

Bombs, fuel... We're heavy to go  
inverted this low.

EXT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

Quarter mile. Pull Hammer, Pull!

EXT. HORNETS LOW LEVEL - DAY - (STOCK)

They pull, roll inverted, skim over the ridge upside down...  
They swing around an outcrop, level off in a steep dive.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - OS HAMMER AND INSTRUMENTS

The nose points at the ground, the HUD shows "boxes" high...

HAMMER (V.O.)

You're low, Raider, you're low, missed  
the gate. Pull, Raider, Pull...

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

Kelly cranks the stick back into his chest, grunts with G's.

INT. FALLON - KELLY'S QUARTERS - SHORT TIME LATER

Kelly empties his briefcase. A picture of his daughter falls  
out. He pulls out a video camera, sets it up, turns it on  
himself. He smooths down his hair, clears his throat...

KELLY

Um... Honey... I guess if you see  
this it means I'm not coming back.  
I just wanted you to remember me,  
and remember what I believe in. I I  
just want you to know... that... I  
love you. Always have, from the  
first time I ever saw you. That  
won't change no matter what happens...  
You'll always be my little girl.  
The love of my life. I know I haven't  
been the best father and it's always  
been hard for me to say it, but... I  
do love you. Always have... always  
will. All I ask is that you, maybe...  
forgive me for when I failed.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

And remember... remember the good  
times.. I do. Bye, Honey. Adios.

He reaches out, turns it off.

FADE OUT:

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. AERIAL - PERSIAN GULF - USS. JOHN F. KENNEDY - (STOCK)

Two Hornets into the break; Raider and Hammer.

SUPERIMPOSE - PERSIAN GULF - USS. JOHN F. KENNEDY

EXT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

Shooter one and two, into the break.

EXT. /EXT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S POV THROUGH HUD DAY

The Deck looms up in a "controlled crash"...a carrier landing.

EXT. CARRIER DECK - DAY - (STOCK)

Raider and Hammer drop onto the deck and catch the wire.

EXT. AERIAL POV - THE CARRIER - MOMENTS LATER - (STOCK)

The Carrier on final approach.

INT. CARRIER ONBOARD DELIVERY (COD) AIRCRAFT

The spook pulls every strap he has tighter.

SPOOK

Omygod, that's the carrier? That  
little thing?

EXT. THE DECK - (STOCK)

The COD slams stopped.

ANGLE ON COD - HATCH

Sailors help the Spook out. He's green.

SPOOK

Jesus. Is it always like that?!

SAILOR

Like what?

INT. CARRIER - MOMENTS LATER

The spook staggers in. Hammer and Kelly grin.

HAMMER

I love the smell of Carriers....

KELLY

Yeah, me too. Smells like fuel oil.  
AND BILGE WATER.

HAMMER

Yeah, that too!

The Spook turns greener, groans, staggers off.

KELLY

Think he'll be okay?

HAMMER

Fine. He doesn't have to fly the mission. I wonder if these intel guys really understand...

KELLY

They don't fly combat. They can't. But it's our job to take what they know and make it happen.

HAMMER

Yeah. Our butts are wired to what that little man knows.

KELLY

He's a professional. So he dresses funny. You get to do that when you're smart.

(beat)

What's bothering you?

HAMMER

Just the unknown... The X factor. It always crops up.

KELLY

We're trained to deal with that. Don't sweat it.

HAMMER

Don't you worry? Don't you sweat it?

KELLY

As much as I possibly can. Then, at some point, you've worried all you can.

(MORE)

KELLY (CONT'D)

You put yourself in God's hands...  
and just go with it.

(beat)

Coffee?

HAMMER

Yeah...sure.

They walk off toward the Officer's Mess.

INT. CARRIER - CORRIDOR - LATER

The Spook wanders, looking around.

SPOOK

Where the heck's the CIC? It all  
looks the same?

He finds a doorway, "Combat Information Center," opens it.

INT. COMBAT INFORMATION CENTER (CIC)

Officers are gathered over intel. The spook stumbles in,  
slumps at a computer, pulls out discs, loads up.

SPOOK

Sorry I'm late, Sirs....

HAMMER

What's this?

SPOOK

New targeting data.

HAMMER

New!!?

SPOOK

As in just in... You can see the  
direct ingress route.

INSERT - COMPUTER SCREEN

A topographical rendering, like a flight-sim game. Wire  
frame cones and hemispheres indicate threats. The Spook  
grabs a joystick and "flies" through them.

SPOOK (CONT'D)

Okay, here's the western valley after  
you cross the mountain, here. We put  
in the sun at 0514 and indicated the  
shadows. Here's what we know now.  
SAM, SAM...Quad 57's here, here and...  
here. Your path looks like this.

He keys... wire frame threat cones appear, filling the valley.

ANGLE - HAMMER, KELLY AND THE SPOOK

HAMMER

Why didn't you give us these before...  
when we planned the mission?

SPOOK

We didn't know..

HAMMER

According to you, yesterday, it was  
a clear ingress.

SPOOK

Yesterday it was. Today it's not.  
Maybe they moved stuff in.

KELLY

Is this the latest?

SPOOK

Yes, as of 6 hours ago...the last  
time we could get a U2 on it.

HAMMER

You mean it could have changed again.

SPOOK

Yeah. Things change. This is the  
latest. You wanna know it or not?

HAMMER

Yeah, I'd like to know it in time to  
do something about it.

SPOOK

That's why we programmed it into  
this flight-simulator. You can  
practice flying against them.

Kelly moves up, sits at computer. He takes the joystick and  
"flies" through the valley. Ahead, wire-frame threat  
envelopes appear and blink as he enters them.

KELLY

These are the old turn points...

Hammer leans over as Kelly flies into a SAM18 envelope...

INSERT - SCREEN - FLIGHT-SIMULATION

The flight-Sim shoots him down...CRASH.

ANGLE ON HAMMER AND KELLY

HAMMER

Guess I'll have to figure some new ones.

KELLY

I'd highly recommend it.

He turns and grins at Hammer. Hammer grabs his charts and leaves. Spook just looks at Kelly.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Anything else?

The Spook looks around for help. The Admiral steps up...

ADMIRAL YEAGER

The reactor's closer to being fueled than they thought. We're steaming flank speed toward the launch point. You may have to go sooner than we thought.

They all look at Kelly.

KELLY

We'll deal with it.

ADMIRAL YEAGER

Hammer... Is he alright?

KELLY

Yeah, sure. He'll be fine.

INT. CARRIER - INTEL SPACES

Hammer is busy with charts, protractors, calculators. Kelly comes in, sits on the side of the desk...hands him a coffee.

KELLY

We've both flown combat missions. We've been in some tight spots before.

Hammer looks up at him...takes the coffee.

HAMMER

Yeah...

(salutes with the cup)

Thanks.

KELLY

You were kind of tough on him.

HAMMER

They screw up the intel, its kind of tough on us.

KELLY

Is that what happened?

HAMMER

What's that supposed to mean?

KELLY

Is this personal?

HAMMER

Anytime they're trying to kill you,  
yeah.

KELLY

It's more than that.

Hammer turns to him.

HAMMER

Okay, what do you think you know?

KELLY

I know you were a POW.

He turns back, looks out at the sea.

HAMMER

Me and a bunch of guys. Intel didn't  
tell us about a SAM box they had.  
Flew right into it.

KELLY

Is this gonna affect the mission?

HAMMER

Don't worry about it.

KELLY

I have to.

HAMMER

It's all in the past.

KELLY

You gotta be free of it so you can  
think clearly.

HAMMER

When I'm not thinking clearly, you'll  
be the first to know.

KELLY

I will. I hope it's not when we're  
downtown and it's too late. If there's  
anything. It would never be said...  
No one would think...

HAMMER

I'd think it. Probably say it too.

KELLY

It's a tough mission. Maybe too tough. If you need to stand down...

HAMMER

No! You wouldn't! Neither will I.

KELLY

I wouldn't. Unless it was for the success of the mission. And then I would. In a heartbeat.

INT. PENSACOLA - THE BUCKET - NIGHT

Burner enters, finds Spoon at the bar drowning his sorrow.

SPOON

Where're the girls?

BURNER

Any minute. Where's the problem?

He indicates Prudence having a great time holding court, surrounded by aviators, playing crud.

BURNER (CONT'D)

What do you suppose they do up in those Maine woods? Hibernate and save all their energy?

SPOON

Maybe this is how they keep warm.

BURNER

She's raised Fungus' temperature.

She dances over, puts her empty mug on the bar.

PRUDENCE

Lighten up, boys. All those guys are up for some fun.

BURNER

Their flying careers aren't hostage to hot hormones!

PRUDENCE

Aw, you're sweet.

She suddenly plants a kiss on him. He's shocked, then more shocked.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR

Two GORGEOUS BABES stand there, bursting out of their bikinis, staring at Burner and Prudence...and at the embrace.

BURNER

Um, hi! It's not what you think.

GORGEOUS ONE

Oh?!

She stares at Prudence, who gives attitude back.

PRUDENCE

Hi.

GORGEOUS ONE

Hi?!!

She has her arms around Burner...rubs into him..

PRUDENCE

Yeah, it's like...Government work.

GORGEOUS ONE

(a beat)

Bye.

She turns, walks out. Gorgeous Two gives Spoon a dirty look.

SPOON

It's actually...his turn with her.  
I'm actually... free.

She turns, walks out.

SPOON (CONT'D)

That didn't come out right.

Spoon puts his head in his hands. Burner breaks free of Prudence, runs out after them.

BURNER

Hey, wait! I can explain....

Spoon turns to Prudence. She puts her arms around him.

PRUDENCE

Your hot dates?

SPOON

Not any more.

PRUDENCE

Sorry. Didn't mean to screw up your weekend.

SPOON

Oh that's okay. We'll get another one. In a few months or so....

PRUDENCE

Look, don't worry about me. You go have fun. I can handle myself.

SPOON

Yeah, sure.

SFX from OUTSIDE. Some CRASHING. Burner comes in. Spoon goes to him, looks outside at the disappearing girls.

SPOON (CONT'D)

Did you explain?

BURNER

Yup.

SPOON

Do any good?

BURNER

Nope.

SPOON

What'd she say?

BURNER

Well, in the middle there were a lot of dirty words. But it started with jail. And ended with bait.

From the other side of the bar, an off-key chorus. Prudence is nowhere in sight. They turn to each other.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Porcelain doll. Por...celain doll.

SPOON

You know, dentistry is a good field.  
(his ears perk)  
Uh... oh!

BURNER

What what what? What is it?

SPOON

That noise.

BURNER

What noise?

SFX - BURNER'S HARLEY CRANKING UP!

BURNER (CONT'D)

What?!

EXT. THE BEACH - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Burner and Spoon run outside...charging up the beach toward..

ANGLE - PRUDENCE

She roars out on Burner's Cycle, throwing a roostertail of sand in his face. They take off after it.

BURNER

Hey! Prudence!...

The cycle ROARS away. They give up the chase, panting.

SPOON

I lost sight of her for a second...

BURNER

My career! My future... Hell, my motorcycle!

INT. CARRIER - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Kelly walks up to Hammer and the Spook, shuffling paper.

KELLY

Let me guess, more updates?

SPOOK

Its not my fault. Saddam's doing it just to make me look bad.

KELLY

How bad?

SPOOK

SAM 20's in the valley. Sorry.

Kelly takes the papers, the Spook walks off. Hammer is tense.

HAMMER

SAM 20's...Damn. That breaks it!

SPOOK

We didn't know they were deployed.

ADMIRAL YEAGER

That's full coverage?

KELLY

They're lethal to 4000 feet. Don't know if there's any way in, now! Or out.

HAMMER

This is too hairy! Can't fly it.  
Not with this bombload. We're gonna  
have to rethink this.

KELLY

This is the plan. This is the best  
way to get in there.

HAMMER

It's not possible.

KELLY

It's possible. The only question is  
whether we can fly it.

HAMMER

I can fly it.

KELLY

Don't worry about me.

HAMMER

(a beat)

Aye, sir.

He salutes and walks out.

EXT. CARRIER - VULTURE'S ROW - SHORT TIME LATER

Hammer is standing, overlooking the deck, checking his weapon,  
a 357 pistol. Kelly nods toward the piece...a question...

HAMMER

I'm not going to get captured.

KELLY

It happens...

HAMMER

It's not going to. Not again.

KELLY

A SAM-20?

HAMMER

Triple A. Basra. 11:36 AM 19 March,  
1991. I'm in my chute, they're  
waiting. Never had a chance to evade,  
let alone escape. I was... Their  
prisoner for 16 days. Unpleasant  
ones...

Hammer gives Kelly a letter.

HAMMER (CONT'D)

No parents, just an aunt. Nobody really close... Not close enough. Just my aunt, Jessie. She raised me. She'd want to know. This is for her. Just in case...

Kelly gives Hammer the videotape of his own.

KELLY

To my daughter... Just in case...

They look at each other. A beat.

HAMMER

Hell! That's no good. What if we both go down?

KELLY

There's always Federal Express.

A beat. Suddenly they laugh... a tension releaser. They sense someone, turn. The Spook is there... and the Admiral.

EXT. PENSACOLA - BEACHFRONT STREET - NIGHT - LATER

Burner and Spoon rush down the street, searching. They pass a TATTOO PARLOR glance in, stop in their tracks.

ANGLE - BURNER'S HARLEY

It's parked outside the tattoo parlor.

BURNER

Oh no! Please, God!

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - THEIR POV

A blond is face down on the couch, getting tattooed in a strategic area under the artistry of one "Humungus, Hal" a bearded, potbellied biker turned artiste. He looks up, takes a slug of beer, turns back to his work. A naked leg, a nice one... all the way up to the... tattoo.

INT. TATTOO PARLOR - REVERSE

They're at the door, afraid. Burner enters, squats down to look at the face covered with hair. Her eyes pop open.

PRUDENCE

Hi, boys!

SPOON

A tattoo?! He'll kill us, we're good as dead.

BURNER

Lots of kids get tattoos today.  
Depends on what it says...

They look at each other.

SPOON

You look.

BURNER

Can't.

SPOON

Why not?

BURNER

My life's busy flashing before my  
eyes.

Burner gingerly lifts a towel covering the artistry. .

SPOON

Well?

BURNER

Not so good. "Born..."

SPOON

Born?

BURNER

Born to...

SPOON

Born to what?

He drops the cover back.

BURNER

I'd rather not say.

They grab her and are suddenly face to face with Humungus.  
He's 6'3, 270. He's got a tattoo drill in his fleshy paw.

HUMUNGUS

I'm not... finished.

BURNER

Thing is, we gotta get her back to  
the convent.

He starts edging Prudence out of there. He hands her off to  
Spoon, steps up to cover their retreat as other Hell's Angels  
types appear and move toward Burner.

EXT. ANGLE - THE STREET

Spoon spirits a half-dressed Prudence away. A CRASH. Burner is propelled out the door. He scurries to catch up, mumbling.

BURNER

... man had a... totally misplaced  
artistic temperament.

She stumbles on, hanging on to them, half-dressed but very friendly. She stumbles into Burner's Cycle.

SPOON

You're the antichrist. Is that it?

PRUDENCE

I thought pilots were fun!

SPOON

We used to be pilots. It was fun.

She stops, looks at them...softens...

PRUDENCE

Look, I'm sorry. Don't worry boys, I  
can handle Uncle Bill. What do you  
say, a deal? I promise. No trouble.  
Clean slate with Uncle Bill.

SPOON

For what?

PRUDENCE

Ride on the motorcycle. Please...

She turns and smiles at Burner. He smiles back.

SPOON

Okay, but whatever you do... Don't  
let her out of your sight!

EXT. BEACH - TRAVELING - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Back of the cycle. She hugs Burner tight, smiles to herself.

BURNER

You awake, Prudence? You okay?

PRUDENCE

Honey, I'm fine... just fine.

BURNER

That's good. Cause you've been  
acting...kind of funny.

PRUDENCE

Yeah. I know... the things a girl's  
gotta do..to get a guy's attention...

They zoom past waves breaking in the moonlight...which  
becomes...

EXT. CARRIER BOW WAVE - PERSION GULF - NIGHT - (STOCK)

INT. CIC

They cluster around a mess of intel reports, swigging coffee..

KELLY

Well, Mr. Bad News.

SPOOK

The fuel rods have been spotted.  
Less than four hours away. If...  
you're gonna go, you gotta go. Now...

HAMMER

Maybe you're right...Maybe I'm  
thinking too much. Maybe... you  
ought to lead.

KELLY

That what you really think?

HAMMER

... No.

KELLY

Good. We planned this. It's no time  
for second thoughts. I want a man  
who understands what he's up against  
...and does it anyway. You lead.

ADMIRAL

Broad daylight. No shadows in the  
valley to hide in. There'll be ground  
fire. And SAM 20's. Things have  
changed, Bill. Maybe we should re-  
think this. ... It's your call.

They look at each other. There is no hesitation.

KELLY/HAMMER

Go.

FADE OUT:

ACT FOUR - FADE IN:

INT. PENSACOLA BEACH COTTAGE - WILD-HAIR SUR MER - DAY

The boys are sitting, scheming.

BURNER

The tropic girls'll be here any minute. And it's your turn with you-know-who.

SPOON

How'd you convince them to give us another chance?

BURNER

Nothing. Three hours of begging. But there's still the Prudence thing. How do we explain?

SPOON

EX-plain... that's not the problem. How do we CON-tain...?

BURNER

Handcuffs, how about handcuffs?

SPOON

She'd probably like that.

BURNER

It's been 36 hours, non-stop. I need a break.

SFX: KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

ANGLE ON THE DOOR

The two GORGEOUS BABES walk in.

GORGEOUS ONE

Hi, Guys! Finally free of your mission? The niece... You ready?

BURNER

Um, well actually...

GORGEOUS ONE

Give me a sec. The girl's room?...

She walks right by them toward the back of the cottage.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

The first babe opens the door. There, nearly naked and also gorgeous, hair up, painting her toes: Prudence.

GORGEOUS ONE

Oh?!

PRUDENCE

Hi.

GORGEOUS ONE

Hi?!!

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENT LATER

Gorgeous One grabs Two and slams out.

BURNER

Hey, wait! I can explain....

He glances at Prudence, holding a towel up to her naked body.

BURNER (CONT'D)

No. I can't really explain. It's more like a force of nature. One of those...catastrophes.

SPOON

I thought you had this covered.

BURNER

How long you think they could keep the CO? I mean...without a declaration of war?

SPOON

Well, however long it is... You stay with her. You're joined at the hip, get it...

He looks at Burner, at Prudence. She smiles. He grabs his stuff and runs out the door.

EXT. PERSIAN GULF - CARRIER - FLIGHT DECK - DAWN - (STOCK)

Hornets launch.

EXT. AERIAL - TWO HORNETS - DAY - (STOCK)

Hammer and Raider join up.

HAMMER (V.O.)

Shooter, Two, lead, weather's iffy, ground fog... but it's a go.

EXT. AERIAL - AWACS - DAY - (STOCK) - CONTINUOUS

AWACS

Shooter Lead, this is Sea Lord. Check you Emcon on Standby.

EXT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER (V.O.)

Sea Lord, Shooter Lead. Gadgets are strangled. Any aliens out there?

INT. AERIAL - AWACS - (STOCK)

O.S the controller at his radar scopes...

AWACS  
Numerous bandits in sector Mike.

Your signal is Sawgrass, Shooter, Repeat, Sawgrass.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER  
Copy that. Fence check, Raider.  
Check air to air mode, Master Arm  
on. Check countermeasures.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Fence check complete. All go.

HAMMER (V.O.)  
Show time!.. Lets take 'em on down.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS - (STOCK)

They dive toward the sea and level off, skimming the surface.

They roar in over the coast whipping the palm trees. They  
snake up valley, the rising sun streaking ground fog.

HAMMER  
Approaching IP into the west valley.  
Can't pick it up.

INT./EXT. RAIDER'S (KELLY'S) POV THROUGH HUD

All mountains and peaks, overlapping in steep ridges.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS LOW LEVEL - (STOCK)

They rocket across the desert toward the sheer cliff face.

INT./EXT. RAIDER'S (KELLY'S) POV THROUGH HUD

The rock cliff, dead ahead.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER  
Quarter mile. Pull Raider, Pull!

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Hold it. Hold it. Now!

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS - DAY - (STOCK)

They pull, roll inverted, skim the ridge, break high, up into radar coverage. They swing around an outcrop, wings 90 degrees to the ground. They level in a steep dive.

INT./EXT. HAMMER'S POV THROUGH HUD - CONTINUOUS

HAMMER

Top gate. Raider, high. Push it down. Gate two, in the gate. Too much, catch it. You're low.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

He cranks the stick back, grunts with G's.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET - LOW LEVEL - DAY - (STOCK)

The Hornet pulls out, skimming the brush, snaking away.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

Raider's spiked!

INSERT CRT

A SAM spike. RHAW gear BUZZES...trying to lock.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

No Lock.

HAMMER (V.O.)

They know we're here.

KELLY

Yep, every peasant with an AK...  
Real exciting. I'm go!

EXT. QUIET VALLEY -DAWN

Ukbad and the boys are up, leaning on their guns. They yawn, scratch... Stumble out of their tent. Ukbad stops, cocks his head. The world EXPLODES into a HORNET, right over their heads, the SHOCKWAVE BLOWS their tent away and half their clothes off. They're on the ground, hands over ears, hair standing up straight, their turbans sailing with the wind.

EXT. GROUND ELSEWHERE - QUAD 57'S FIRING - STOCK

EXT. DESERT FLOOR - HORNETS BOOKING IT - DAY - (STOCK)

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET - CLOSE ON AIRFRAME - DAY - (STOCK)

A RAGGED HOLE appears. It's hit!

EXT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

Hammer, is flipping switches madly.

HAMMER (V.O.)  
I'm hit. Warning light. Fuel.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Abort, Hammer. Break off!

EXT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER (V.O.)  
Negative, Raider. Negative.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
You're streaming fuel. That's an  
abort. You're gonna run outta gas.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

He stops flipping switches. He settles in...

HAMMER  
I'm lead, Raider. Press.

INT. AERIAL - HORNETS - DAY - (STOCK)

They hit the IP, turn on target. SFX RATTLESNAKE WARNINGS.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

Kelly's working it hard, his bucket is filling up...

KELLY  
IP 2 miles. Got a SAM at 9.

INSERT - CRT - RADAR

A SAM spike appears in the outer threat circle.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER (V.O.)  
Heads up Raider, rising terrain!

KELLY

Easy Hammer. Done this before.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

Hammer's voice is rising...speaking fast and clipped.

HAMMER

Come left 20. Keep your nose up,  
Call the IP, check weapons.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

Kelly...calm, like a day at the beach...

KELLY

IP inbound. Master arm switch, hot.  
Laser on. Lasing.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER

Pop point, half mile. Countermeasures.  
Action, Now!

INT. AERIAL - HORNETS - DAY - (STOCK)

They pop up in burners, roll inverted, pull through.

INT./EXT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S POV THROUGH HUD

His nose drops on target, the laser pip slides onto the dome.

SAM WARNING! FLASHING INDICATOR IN HUD!

HAMMER (V.O.)

Target acquired, rolling out. SAM  
launch, 12 o'clock!

Rolls level, lasing. A SAM straight at him! swerves... away.

HAMMER (CONT'D)

He missed! Pickle.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET HARD MOUNTS - DAY - (STOCK)

Bombs release.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

He slams the stick over and pulls hard.

HAMMER

Hammer's off!

EXT. NUCLEAR POWERPLANT - DAY

The bombs EXPLODE directly on the dome, blowing a hole, spewing debris and a BIG CLOUD OF SMOKE.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Raider's in hot. Lasing.

HAMMER  
Let it go, Raider.

INT./EXT. AERIAL - KELLY'S POV THROUGH HUD

The target is obscured by SMOKE and FLAMES.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

Kelly is almost motionless, calm, determined.

KELLY  
Too much smoke. Gotta make sure.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

Hammer's head's on a swivel, checking all points...

HAMMER  
SAM launch! SAM launch! Get out!

INT./EXT. AERIAL - KELLY'S - POV THROUGH HUD

The debris cloud...CLOSER CLOSER... RHAW gear SCREAM'S A SAM WARNING. He holds it, driving in. The target clears, the hole is visible. He swings his laser on it. SAM's are rising!

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Hold it...hold it... Pickle.

INT. AERIAL - HORNET HARD MOUNTS - DAY - (STOCK)

Bombs release.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

Back to reality, and guys shooting at him! He cranks hard.

KELLY  
Raider's off.

EXT. NUCLEAR POWERPLANT

The bombs sail toward the target, slip right through Hammer's hole, a beat as the plane rockets past... then... nothing.

Then an ENORMOUS EXPLOSION within the containment. The SHOCK WAVE, blows everything in sight to hell!

EXT. AERIAL - KELLY'S POV - DAY - (STOCK)

A SAM comes rocketing up.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

He holds it, CLOSER, CLOSER. He pulls, nose low, cranks hard.

EXT. SAM - DAY - (STOCK)

The SAM can't pull the turn. It flies on by... KABOOOOM!

EXT. HORNET - LOW LEVEL - DAY - (STOCK)

Kelly scrapes the ground, gun-jinks out of there.

HAMMER (V.O.)  
Bullseye, Raider. You got 'em

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

Jubilation... and relief!

KELLY  
We got 'em, Hammer, We... got 'em!

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

Warning lights, HORN. Hammer rapid scans...

INSERT - FUEL GAGE - BLINKING

BITCHIN' BETTY  
FUEL... FUEL...

HAMMER (O.S.)  
Warning lights. Fuel!

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Can you make it home, Hammer?

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

Flipping switches frantically... then stops...

HAMMER  
Negative Raider. I'm at 800 pounds.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
We'll hit the tanker.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER

Not with the MiGs. He'd be meat.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET - DAY - (STOCK)

Hammer streams fuel... a white vapor trail...

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

Get out of there, Hammer. We'll go east and find a place to eject.

PENNZOIL (V.O.)

Shooter, this is Pennzoil, you guys talking about me?

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

Where are you, Pennzoil?

EXT. AERIAL - TANKER - PENNZOIL (STOCK)

PENNZOIL

Geez. Musta got lost. Ten miles at your 020, Angels 15.

INT. CARRIER - CIC

They crowd over the radar screens and data links.

AIR OPS

Where'd he go? Get the MigCaps in!

EXT. AWACS - DAY - (STOCK)

AWACS

Shooter Two, Sea Lord! Two bandits bearing 090, 10 miles, Angels two zero.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY

You're with Pennzoil, Hammer. I'll engage.

INT. AERIAL - HAMMER'S COCKPIT - DAY

HAMMER

There's two of them, Raider.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
No problem, I got two missiles.

EXT. AERIAL - HORNETS BREAK - DAY - (STOCK)

As Hammer turns for the Tanker, Raider turns toward the MiGs.

INT. EXT. COCKPIT - KELLY'S POV THROUGH HUD

A BANDIT ICON appears, Kelly manuevers it into the ring.

KELLY  
Come on...turn baby...turn. Fox One!

EXT. AERIAL - HORNET -DAY - (STOCK)

The Sparrow comes off the rails. Flies straight and true.

EXT. AERIAL - MIGS - DAY - (STOCK)

MIG One EXPLODES in a FIREBALL, his wingman comes off high.

INT. AERIAL - KELLY'S COCKPIT - DAY

KELLY  
Wingman's bugging. Bugging for home.

EXT. CARRIER - SHORT TIME LATER - DAY - (STOCK)

They trap on the carrier, taxi to cheers and high fives.

EXT. DECK - CLOSE ON KELLY

He hops down, takes high fives, salutes, grabs Hammer.

HAMMER  
We made it. I don't believe it!

KELLY  
Guess the Marines made their point.

INT. PENSACOLA - FLIGHTLINE - DAYS LATER

The troops cheering as Hammer and Kelly to land and roll in.

ANGLE ON BURNER AND SPOON

They quake as Raider deplanes to salutes and backslapping.

SPOON  
I left her with you. I trusted you.  
How'd you let her disappear?

BURNER

Simple, one moment she was there  
...then...well, you know women...

SPOON

We lost the Colonel's niece! What  
do we do?

BURNER

Deny it. Deny you ever heard of her.

ANGLE ON KELLY

KELLY

Hi boys, where's Prudence?

ANGLE ON BURNER AND SPOON

SPOON

Um... Sir... well... she... uh...!

PRUDENCE

Hi, everyone!

They turn, prepared for the worst.

ANGLE ON PRUDENCE

Dressed New England demure. Like nothing happened...all a  
bad dream. Spoon's stunned. Kelly and Pru embrace as Burner  
discreetly pulls Pru's sleeve down over her tattoo.

KELLY

Prudence, honey, I'm sorry..

PRUDENCE

It's okay, Uncle Bill, it's great to  
see you. At last... Too bad I've got  
to get back to class.

KELLY

Have a good time?

PRUDENCE

Did I! It was lovely. Thanks so much.

SPOON

Bye, Prudence. Had a wonderful time.  
(leans in, whispers)  
If you ever tell him anything...

PRUDENCE

About what?

Spoon glances at Kelly who looks intently at him. Pru smiles  
sweetly, just doesn't seem to have the foggiest. Kelly turns.  
Hammer is standing, grinning. It reminds Kelly...

KELLY

Oh, yeah... Why don't you keep this.

He hands Hammer's goodbye letter back to him.

HAMMER

And why don't you keep this.

He hands Kelly's videotape back to him. Kelly smiles

KELLY

Yeah. It's a deal.

A new bond between them...He turns back to Pru and the others.

PRUDENCE

Had a wonderful time...

SPOON

Yeah, we'll do it again, real soon.

PRUDENCE

You got that right!

SPOON

Uh. What do you mean?

PRUDENCE

We're on trimester. It's over in eight weeks. Just think... We'll have the whole summer! Oh, gee, my plane. Gotta run!

As they watch her hustle off, Burner and Spoon are mumbling...

SPOON

Just think... We could transfer to the fleet...

BURNER

We could run off, join the circus.

SPOON

Do the Israelis need pilots?

... when, mercifully, they are drowned out by the ROAR of Hornets rocketing down the runway.

ANGLE ON KELLY AND HAMMER

...as they watch the Hornets streak into the sky...

FADE OUT:

Charles Proser DRAFT 3 PENSACOLA, -JULY 20, 1998