

"AN OFFICER AND A GENTLEMAN"

by

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FINAL DRAFT

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FADE IN:

EXT. MANILA AIRPORT - FULL SHOT - DAY

A Philippine Airlines passenger plane is arriving and touching down.

ANGLE - THE PLANE

A 13-year old boy starts down the ramp, a suitcase in one hand, an old photo-strip in the other. He studies the strip closely as he searches the faces of the people greeting the passengers.

CLOSE - THE PHOTO STRIP

A handsome sailor is necking with his girl in each of the three shots.

CLOSE - THE BOY

looking around.

HIS EYES FALL ON A SAILOR

It's the same sailor from the photo strip, only about fifteen years older. If he was in his early twenties then, now he's in his mid-thirties. He's in the uniform of a 1st class Petty Officer. He searches the faces of the descending passengers, very uncertain and uncomfortable.

THE BOY AND THE SAILOR

come together very, very tentatively. The sailor, BYRON MAYO, extends a hand to young ZACK.

BYRON
You, Zack?

ZACK
Yes, Sir.

BYRON
I'm Byron. Nice to meet you.
(awkwardly)
C'mon. Let's go get your luggage.

They head off together.

EXT. THE AIRPORT PARKING LOT - DAY

Byron and Zack step aboard one of the colorful jeepneys that Manila is famous for. We MOVE WITH the jeepney as it leaves the airport and starts down the highway toward Olongapo.

The boy is frightened but he's also excited by the strange, super-chrome and ornately-decorated vehicle he's riding in.

They're not alone in the small bus. Ten or more Filipinos ride with them, some in suits and ties, others in the rougher attire of farmers. One old woman carries a big cage on her lap with a squawking fluttering chicken in it.

BYRON
Take that coat off. This is the
Philippines.

He helps Zack out of his coat.

BYRON
(making conversation)
How was the flight? They take care
of you okay? Long way from Norfolk,
isn't it?

ZACK
Yes, sir.

BYRON
Listen, kid, I was sorry to hear
about your mom. That's pretty rough.
I would've returned your call a lot
sooner but I was out at sea...

ZACK

I been calling for four months.

BYRON

Well, that's how long I've been out at sea.

EXT. THE ROAD TO OLONGAPO - DAY

The jeepney has only two passengers now, Byron and Zack. A roadside sign reads: "U.S. NAVAL FACILITY, SUBIC BAY ... 12 miles."

EXT. THE HONKY-TONK SAILOR TOWN OF OLONGAPO - DAY

Known throughout the Seventh Fleet as the armpit of the Orient, Olongapo is one, long rain-rutted street of gaudy bars and rattan-walled whorehouses.

Countless jeepneys careen past with their silly fringe awnings and chrome accoutrements, many filled with U.S. sailor boys and officers on liberty.

Zack and Byron's jeepney ENTERS SHOT and stops in front of the noisiest and rauchiest bar on the strip.

BYRON

This is it. This is where I live.

MOVING WITH ZACK AND BYRON

CAMERA FAVORS the boy as they head for the entrance of the bar, Zack taking in the kinky street activity: "Beenie boys," small boned Filipino boys dressed up as exquisite young girls, hustling tricks on the sidewalk while their sisters lounge in the doorway of places like "California Dreamin'" and "The Manhattan Club," in nipple-showing tank-tops, licking their lips.

INT. THE RAUCOUS BAR - DAY

CAMERA CONTINUES MOVING with Zack and Byron as they cross through the NOISY bar toward a stairwell at the back. Navy enlisted men are making out openly with bar girls and Zack even sees one little girl stick her hand right down the front 40 of a sailor boy's pants.

Byron glances at the boy, a little embarrassed by his digs.

Zack is staring at every girl he passes, nervous but a little excited by it all, too.

BYRON

If I were in port more, I'd rent a better place, but this works out okay.

They start up the stairs.

INT. BYRON'S ROOM - DAY

They walk in and find two semi-naked prostitutes lying on the bed. Zack's eyes are as big as silver dollars.

BYRON

I thought you girls were gonna do some shopping.
(gives them money)
Tiki, Maria... I want you to meet my son.

The girls giggle as they hurry into their clothes and leave.

Byron closes the door.

BYRON

This is it. This is where I live. I suppose you could bunk over there and you could go to school at the base.

ZACK

Great.

BYRON

I'm not finished. I'll only be in port one week a month and when I'm here you'd never catch me playing daddy with you 'cause it's not who I am. Like I told you on the phone, you'd be better off in that state school back in Virginia.

ZACK

I ain't never going back to that

school, sir.

BYRON

You got to kid. Let me spell it out for you. This is a whorehouse. And I happen to like my life the way it is and nobody's gonna make me change.

ZACK

I don't care about that. I just ain't going back. You don't want me? Okay. I'll find me another place.

He opens the door and walks out.

MOVING WITH ZACK DOWN THE STAIRWELL

Byron appears on the landing above.

BYRON

Hey, come back.

Zack keeps moving.

BYRON

Come back here, kid!

ZACK

(turns)

What for?

BYRON

(grudgingly)

Okay, okay. You win.

ZACK

(brightens)

Thank you, sir!

BYRON

Stop calling me 'sir! I ain't no officer. My name is Byron.

On the boy's happy expression we:

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BAR - SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

Zack sits on the stairs watching a crazy scene taking place on the long bar. A bunch of jet pilots off one of the carriers are in town and they're playing a game of "chicken". Each pilot must take a turn being pushed down the bar in a chair on rollers. The winner is the guy who flies the farthest without bailing out of his chair. The whores are rooting them on and gambling money is being waved in the air. As Tiki, one of Byron's girls, climbs the stairs, he catches her hand and gestures questioningly in the direction of the hotshot fliers.

TIKI

Hot shot jet jockeys. Maybe you grow up like that, fly mach five, no jive.

The boy laughs. Then Byron comes out of his room, his sea bag over his shoulder. He passes the kids some folding money.

BYRON

Here, kid. Put this in your shoe in case you need it.

Zack hides the money.

QUICK SHOT - TWO FILIPINO BOYS ABOUT ZACK'S AGE

They see him hide the money in his shoe.

ANGLE - BYRON AND ZACK

Byron kisses his two mama-sans goodbye, shakes Zack's hand and strides out of the bar.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE STREETS OF OLONGAPO - DAY

Zack is walking along the main drag, looking in the curio stores, when the two Filipino boys approach him, smiling innocently.

1ST FILIPINO BOY

Hey, palequero. You new in the P.I.?

ZACK

Yeah. I've been here a couple of weeks.

2ND FILIPINO BOY

Wanna see some nice things, guy? We could show you around. Nobody knows this shithole like us.

The two boys laugh and Zack laughs, too, trusting them.

ZACK

Sure. I guess it's okay.

They start off together but as they reach a narrow alleyway, the two boys shove Zack into it.

ZACK

Hey!

1ST FILIPINO BOY

Hey, big spender. Give us some money.

ZACK

I don't have any money.

1ST FILIPINO BOY

(furious)

Bullshit! Get it out!!

The first Filipino kicks Zack in the balls.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE FIGHT

Zack isn't a bad fighter but he's no match for either of the Filipinos, especially the leader, who has a way of fighting that is something to watch. He uses his feet. Waving the other Filipino aside, he destroys the American with spinning roundhouse kicks to his stomach and his face. Zack goes down from a kick to the groin. Another kick to the head and he loses consciousness. His two attackers bend over him to rifle his pockets.

Finding the five dollar bill he's hidden in his shoe, they run off down a dark alley, one of them nearly tripping over a dead dog.

TIGHTEN ON ZACK

He stirs. His eyes open. He sits up, wincing from busted ribs. Reality sits heavy on his youthful features.

DISSOLVE VERY SLOWLY TO:

EXT. THE NAVY HONKY-TONK AREA OF SEATTLE - DAY

A rough-looking young man rides his Triumph 750 Bonneville through a Navy honky-tonk area in Seattle, Washington: NOISY bars, a Seven Seas Locker Club, a credit jeweler, a pawn shop.

The boy who took his licks in the Filipino back alley is now a man in his mid-twenties. A long mane of jet-black hair. A scuzzy beard. The same cold blue eyes. He wears jeans and big, muddy boots. There's a tattoo of an eagle half-revealed under the sleeve of his T-shirt.

EXT. A FLEA-BAG HOTEL - DAY

Zack Mayo drives up and climbs an outside stairway to a second-story entrance.

INSIDE THE FLEA-BAG HOTEL - DAY

CAMERA MOVES WITH Zack down a dark corridor, past a succession of rooms. A door is open, affording him a quick glimpse of a woman and child, a sailor's uniform hanging on a chair nearby.

The sailor appears and closes the door in Zack's face. Zack consults an old postcard he takes from his pocket and pauses in front of a doorway. He knocks authoritatively and shouts:

ZACK
Shore Patrol! Shore Patrol! Open
up!!

A moment later the door opens and Byron stands there, fumbling to cover his nudity with a little kimono. A naked prostitute in her late teens watches from a rumped bed.

ZACK
Hi, Byron.

BYRON
Zack, you little shit! You haven't
changed a bit!

ZACK
Neither have you, pard!

They come together in a macho embrace like old whoring buddies.

BYRON

(to his girl)

Hey, honey, look at this! My son!
Isn't he beautiful?

(to Zack)

You should've called!

ZACK

You were out at sea! Hey, guess what?
I graduated. I got my degree.

BYRON

I thought you quit school. Last I
heard you were on your way to a
construction job or something down
in Brazil.

ZACK

Yeah, I made some money down there,
then I talked my way into another
college and I did it. I wasn't magna
cum laude but I did okay. You
should've seen me in my cap and gown.

BYRON

Why the fuck didn't you invite me? I
would've come.

Zack's expression sheds some doubt on that subject but Byron chooses to ignore it. He turns to the prostitute.

BYRON

Get on the phone, honey. Call up
your friend... Gloria... Gloria big
tits. We're gonna celebrate! You
hear that? My son's graduated from
college!

CUT TO:

INT. BYRON'S APARTMENT - LATER THAT NIGHT

It's an orgy, all right. Father and son style. Zack and his girl on the left half of the bed, Byron and his girl on the

right. Pumping away. Drinking and passing a wine bottle around.

Candles burning in dishes flickering against the seedy walls where the only decorations are monkeywood carvings Byron brought back from the Philippines.

1ST PROSTITUTE

Are you guys really father and son?
You're putting us on, right?

BYRON

Right. We're putting you on. What happened to that joint?

2ND PROSTITUTE

I think it went out.

BYRON

(pigeon English)
Ay, palequero.

ZACK

Ay, palequero. Never hochi in the P.I.

BYRON

(laughs)
Wha-chu-say, palequero? Short time, long time, only ten dolla.

Both men laugh and the girls start laughing, too.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BYRON'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT MORNING

Zack awakens and finds himself entangled in arms and legs and soiled sheets. He carefully slips free and rises to his feet on unsteady legs, his head pounding, his eyes blood-red.

As he's pulling on his shorts, his eyes suddenly take in the apartment and the lifestyle it represents: half-smoked joints and cigarettes cascading out of makeshift ashtrays; empty wine bottles; and three naked people, snoring, their bodies draped over one another.

A look of profound disgust comes over Zack's face and he turns away from the scene and heads into the bathroom.

INT. BYRON'S BATHROOM

Zack finds some aspirins and downs them with a glass of water.

Suddenly, Byron comes in, shoves him out of the way, and pukes in the toilet. Zack stares at him in an intense way, seeing more than the moment, seeing all the other times he's played out this scene with this man.

BYRON

What're you looking at? Hand me that towel.

Zack hands him the towel. Byron swigs some mouthwash, then turns to his son.

BYRON

Hey, that was pretty great wasn't it? Not as great as that night with the three stewardesses in Manila... but pretty fucking nice.

Zack says nothing but there's something on his mind.

BYRON

So what're you doing in Seattle?

ZACK

Get ready pard. This one's gonna blow you away.

BYRON

Zackie, nothing you do will ever surprise me, pard, not after some of the shit you've pulled.

ZACK

I joined the Navy.

Byron's face drops and Zack laughs.

BYRON

You... in the Navy?

ZACK

That's right. I'm on my way over to this officer school in Port Ranier.

BYRON

Why?

ZACK

To fly jets. To be the fastest motherfucker in the world. You gotta come and visit me. I'm only a couple hours away.

BYRON

Who gave you this idea?

ZACK

Nobody. It just came to me.

Byron starts to laugh and Zack reddens slightly.

BYRON

I don't believe this! You... in the Navy... an officer... that's like me saying I'm running for fucking president. Hey, man, look at you! Hey, officers don't have tattoos!

He laughs until he practically chokes.

ZACK

Look, I'll be seeing you, Pard.
Take care.

Zack leaves the bathroom and starts putting his clothes on.

BYRON

Don't be pissed. I'm on your side, Pard. I just don't want you to do something you'll regret. You gotta give six years to the Navy if you wanna fly... that's six years with the most uptight assholes God put on this earth. Officers aren't like you and me, man. It's another breed.

ZACK

You afraid you'll have to salute me, Chief?

BYRON

Fuck, no! Why would I care about something as dumb as that?

ZACK

I don't know. That's just how it sounded. Well, I'll see you.

He opens the door and walks out. Byron moves to the door.

BYRON

Hey, what did you want? A lot of fatherly bullshit? A big pat on the back?

ZACK

(turns, grins)

From you, pard? Never. Thanks for the graduation present.

BYRON

Hey, Zackie – don't go away mad.

EXT. AN AREA NEAR THE GATES OF PORT RANIER NAVAL AIR STATION -
DAY

Starting CLOSE on Zack's upper arm as he covers his eagle tattoo with a band-aid. WIDEN as he drives through the gates of the sprawling air station.

EXT. THE GATES OF THE AIR STATION - DAY

He drives through the gates and past the guard gate and disappears into a stand of tall trees.

A sign by the road reads: "THROUGH THESE GATES PASS THE FUTURE
OF NAVAL AVIATION."

EXT. AN AIRFIELD (2ND UNIT)

He motors past a line of aircraft.

EXT. AN INTERSECTION

He stops to let a class of candidates run past in their

fatigues. CAMERA PANS as he crosses the intersection, revealing a large parade ground where two classes of Aviation Officer Candidates are drilling with rifles.

EXT. THE BASE ADMIN. BUILDING

Zack parks his motorcycle near the F-14 "Tomcat" jet fighter plane that sits in front of the Admin. Building like a piece of sculpture, and is directed by a Navy lieutenant to wait with the other civilian types under a tree.

NEW ANGLE - THE ADMIN. BUILDING

A girl named CASEY SEEGER steps out of a rented car, kisses her parents goodbye and, carrying a small suitcase, approaches the same officer. She has the slim, athletic body of a runner and a naturally pretty face without even the slightest hint of makeup, and she finds most of the thirty boys under the tree ogling her as she approaches.

FAVORING ZACK

He flirts with Casey as she joins them under the tree, and she flirts back, taking a place near the five other girls.

Nearby, two other boys are eyeing Casey. The brain-looking kid is TOPPER DANIELS. The tall Okie is SID WORLEY.

TOPPER

Why would a girl who looks like that go into the military?

SID

Hey, this is the modern Navy.

STAFF SERGEANT EMIL FOLEY, USMC

strides smartly toward them and comes to a brisk, heel-clapping halt in front of them, a cane tucked under his arm like a swagger stick and the traditional "Smokey the Bear" hat of the drill instructor on his head.

FOLEY

Fall in! Form a line, you slimey worms! Heels on that chalk line! Attin-hut!

The thirty-six civilians shuffle into a single line, ill-

concealed looks passing between them as though to say, "Get a load of this character."

FOLEY

Now when I say "understand" I want the whole group to say, "Yes, sir!" Understand?

GROUP

(raggedly)
Yes, sir!

FOLEY

Louder!

GROUP

Yes, sir!!

FOLEY

I don't believe what I'm seeing!
Where've you been all your lives, at an orgy? Listening to Mick Jagger and bad mouthing your country, I'll bet.

He strolls menacingly down the ranks, probing them, plumbing them with his squinty little eyes. He pauses in front of Perryman.

FOLEY

Stop eyeballing me, boy! You are not worthy enough to look your superiors in the eye. Use your peripheral vision! Understand?!

GROUP

Yes, sir!

His voice shifts register, becoming almost human.

FOLEY

(a sudden grin)
I know why most of you are here. We're not stupid. But before you get to sell what we teach you over at United Airlines, you gotta give the Navy six years of your life, Sweet Pea. Lot of things can happen in six

year. Another war could come up in six years. If you're too peaceful a person to dump napalm on an enemy village where there might be women and children, I'm gonna find that out. Understand?

GROUP

Yes, sir!

He pauses in front of Sid, and smiles the friendliest of smiles.

FOLEY

Hi, son.

SID

How're you doing, Sarge?

Foley's eyes become instantly crazed.

FOLEY

What did you call me?

SID

(taken aback)

Pardon?

FOLEY

What did you call me, boy?

SID

I called you Sarge.

FOLEY

Before that.

SID

I didn't call you anything before that.

FOLEY

You said, 'How're you?' I am not a 'ewe,' boy! A ewe is a female sheep, boy! Is that what you think I am, boy?

SID

No.

FOLEY

No, sir!

SID

No, sir.

FOLEY

Lauder, Sweet Pea!

SID

No, sir!

FOLEY

Do you want to fuck me up the ass, boy? Is that why you called me a 'ewe'? Are you a queer?

SID

No, sir.

FOLEY

Where are you from, boy?

SID

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

FOLEY

Only two things come out of Oklahoma, steers and queers. Which one are you, boy? I don't see any horns so you must be a queer.

SID

No, sir.

FOLEY

Stop whispering, Sweet Pea, you're giving me a hard on!

Zack starts to chuckle and Foley eyeballs him hard.

FOLEY

Are you laughing at me, dick-brain?

ZACK

No, sir!

Foley pushes his face close to Zack's and tries to stare him down. Zack just stares back, totally unintimidated.

FOLEY

You'd better stop eyeballing me, boy, or I'll rip your eyes out and skull-fuck you to death!

Zack keeps a straight face.

FOLEY

What's your name, boy?

ZACK

Mayo, Zack Mayo, sir!

FOLEY

How did you slip into this program, Mayo? I didn't know the Navy was so hard up.

(noticing the band-aid)

You got an injury there, Mayo?

ZACK

Not exactly, sir.

Foley suddenly tears the Band-Air off his arm, revealing the eagle tattoo. Foley leans close to inspect it.

FOLEY

Where'd you get this, Mayo? This is really wonder work.

ZACK

Subic Bay, sir. In the Philippines.

FOLEY

I thought I recognized the work.

(stares him in the eye)

Be proud of those wings. They're the only ones you're gonna leave here with, Mayo-naise.

He moves on to one of the others, short, barrel-shaped DELLA-SERRA.

Foley glances at the roster, then at Della-Serra.

FOLEY

Hmmmm... Emiliano Santos Della-Serra.
You a college boy, Della-Serra?

DELLA-SERRA

(proudly)

Yes, sir! I graduated with honors
from Texas Tech, sir! Math major,
sir!

FOLEY

You don't say. See this cane, Della-
Serra? See these little notches near
the handle? There's a notch for every
college puke like you, Della-Serra,
who I got to D.O.R. – drop on request –
from this program. And the first one
I want to carve out of this class is
you, Emiliano.

Giving him an evil look, Foley turns away.

FOLEY

I expect to lose half of you before
I'm finished.

FOLEY

I will use every means at my disposal,
fair or unfair, to trip you up, expose
your weaknesses... as a potential
aviator... and as a human being. The
price at the other end is a flight
education worth one million dollars,
but first you have to get past me.

(shouts)

Lay your suitcases open for
inspection!

Zack and the others open their packs and suitcases on the
sidewalk. With his cane, Foley suddenly spears a pair of
lacy underwear in Casey Seeger's suitcase and dangles it
high in the air.

FOLEY

Seeger, are we going to have to watch

you run around in these for the next thirteen weeks?

She reaches for them but he teases her and dangles them out of reach.

FOLEY

Some girls will do almost anything to get laid. Are you one of those girls, Seeger? Did you put in for AOCS to get gang-banged, Seeger?

Casey reddens and stares daggers at the man.

CASEY

Sir, you can yell at me if that's what you're supposed to do, sir. But you have no right to insult me, sir.

Foley pushes his nose right up to hers and screams:

FOLEY

I'll call you a beaver sandwich, if I want to, until the day they commission you an officer and a gentleman and I have to call you 'sir'!

FOLEY

(beat)

My language offend you, Seeger? Well, maybe the Navy's not for you 'cause you'll hear far worse out in the fleet?

(in the same breath)

You've got five seconds to put your suitcases in order and prepare to move out. Time's up. Attin-shut! Left-humph! Fo-wud-harch!

The candidates fall all over themselves trying to follow his orders.

CUT ABRUPTLY TO:

EXT. A LARGE PAPER MILL - THAT SAME DAY

Minutes before quitting time.

INT. THE MILL - DAY

PAULA POKRIFKI and LYNETTE POMEROY, two twenty one year olds, are both looking at their watches as they wait for that magic moment. Two older women are assisting them in the job of stacking and tying brown paper bags, then returning the tied stacks to the conveyor.

LYNETTE

Come on, guys. It's five o'clock.

PAULA

One more minute.

The conveyor finally shuts down and the four women join the flow of workers heading for the exit.

EXT. THE MILL PARKING LOT - DAY

As Paula and Lynette are leaving, Paula calls out to a woman just then getting into a beat-up old Toyota. In her youth easily as pretty as her daughter, ESTER POKRIFKI is now a tired, over-worked woman of 39, looking closer to 45.

PAULA

'Bye, Mom, see you later.

(beat)

C'mon, Lynette, before she asks when I'll be home.

The girls hurry toward Lynette's old Falcon, Ester watching with a mingling of emotions, from nostalgia to concern.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BASE BARBER SHOP - DAY

STARTING CLOSE ON shears as they cut a swath through a forest of hair. In a matter of seconds, Della-Serra is converted from a long-haired individualist into a cipher, balder than a baby's butt. He leaves and one of the female candidates sits down in the chair. Whack! Whack! The barber doesn't shave her but he cuts her long hair very short.

EXT. THE BASE BARBER SHOP - DAY

Foley collars Della-Serra and turns to the line of candidates

waiting to get inside.

FOLEY

Now this is my idea of an ass bandit.
Wait 'til some of our local girls
get a look at you, scrotum head.

The class cracks up laughing, especially big Sid, standing near the end of the line with Zack and Casey.

FOLEY

You think that's funny, Worley? Let me tell you something. Not all the obstacles that can trip you up are on this base.

(strolling down the line)

As long as there's been Navy base here there's been what you might as well call your Puget Sound Debs, poor girls who come across the sound on the ferry every weekend for only one reason, to marry themselves a Naval aviator.

Skeptical looks from the candidates.

CUT TO:

INT. LYNETTE'S FALCON - DAY

As they clear the gates of the National Paper Company Paula reaches into the back seat for her makeup kit, positions it on her lap, and adjusts the mirror. Off comes the scarf.

Out come the pin curls, one by one and she starts combing out her hair. Their disco dresses, satiny and suggestive even in their plastic cleaner's bags, are hanging from separate hooks in the back.

FOLEY (V.O.)

Now a Puget Deb will tell you, 'Honey, don't y'all worry 'bout no contraceptives. I got that all taken care of.' Well, don't you believe a word of it, Sweet Pea...

EXT. THE ROAD TO THE FERRY - DAY

Paula is fleetingly naked as she pulls her emerald green dress over her head.

FOLEY

...'cause a Puget Deb will do anything and say anything to trap you... and once she has you by the balls, child, you might just find yourself with a couple of income tax deductions you didn't have when you came here.

EXT. FERRY - STARTING ON THE FALCON - DAY

It appears to be moving, because the scenery is moving by.

Lynette and Paula have traded places and now Lynette sits in the passenger seat, pulling the pin curls out of her hair.

She finishes and quickly takes off her shirt and bra.

FOLEY

I know this all sounds silly to you, especially in this so-called modern age...

A guy in a car traveling alongside the Falcon is getting an eyeful. Lynette sees him and gives him a dirty look.

FOLEY

...but you scuzzy college pukes had better watch out, 'cause they're out there. And you, Sweet Pea, are the answer to their dreams.

We PULL BACK to reveal that the two cars are not on the highway, but aboard an open ferry crossing the Puget Sound.

CUT TO:

INT. THE UNIFORM SUPPLY ROOM - DAY

CAMERA MOVES AHEAD of Zack, Sid and Casey. Navy enlisted men behind the counter are handing out "Poopie Suits," "Chrome Domes" and "Boonies" to the candidates as Foley looks on. All the boys are bald. The girls have suffered a military haircut as well, but have been mercifully allowed to keep a few inches of coverage.

FOLEY

How do you like my Poopie Factory, Seeger? You enter these doors and individual with a look that's all yours, a style, a way about you, a personality... and you come out a Poopie! That's sort of like what happens to food. It goes in looking all fancy and pretty.

Seeger grimaces.

SID

I knew those commercials were full of shit.

CAMERA HOLDS on a recruiting poster on the wall.

INT. THE INDOC BARRACKS - DAY

The new Poopies come running in, carrying their suitcases and uniform issue, Foley herding them like cattle up the stairs.

FOLEY

This is where you live, children!
This is Poopie-ville! Girl Poopies
to the left, boy Poopies to the right!

INT. THE UPSTAIRS OF THE BARRACKS - QUICK SHOTS - DAY

The Poopies find their assigned room, the five girls in a wing to the left of the stairwell, the thirty-one boys in the wing to the right.

INT. ZACK'S ROOM - DAY

The names on the door are: "PERRYMAN, MAYO, WORLEY and DANIELS." Zack is the first one through the door and he grabs the upper bunk by the window. His roommates come in and share a look as they see what he's done. LOUIS PERRYMAN is a no-nonsense black, a few years older than the other, like Zack.

PERRYMAN

How do you figure that's your bunk?

ZACK

He said it's up to us and I got here first, didn't I?

SID

Whatever you say, Mayonnaise.

FOLEY (O.S.)

Fall out on the lawn in five minutes, in your Poopie suits!

Perryman and Topper select lower bunks and start stowing their gear in their lockers. Sid takes the other top bunk.

ANGLE - THE LOCKERS

Perryman immediately tapes a photo of his family on the door of his locker, wife and two young children, one a baby in diapers.

TOPPER

You're a married man, huh, Perryman?

Perryman touches the photo affectionately.

PERRYMAN

Yeah. They're the main reason I'm here.

TOPPER

(shakes his head)

I still can't believe I did this. A three-point-eight average from Amhearst and I signed up for this?

Perryman laughs. Both Zack and Sid are stowing their lockers expertly. Zack glances questioningly at the big Okie.

SID

(in reply to his look)

I'm a service brat, pal. Same as you.

Zack takes five new packs of cards from his suitcase and hides them in his locker under his skivvies. Sid notices him do it.

SID

Someday you'll have to tell me about

Subic.

Zack says nothing. Both boys start changing into their sloppy-fitting Poopie suits.

SID

That Foley looks like he's been through a war or two.

ZACK

I've seen better.

FOLEY

Fall out! Fall out!!

Zack, Sid and their roommates push out in their Poopie suits.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BARRACKS BUILDING - DAY

The candidates line up outside, in their Poopie uniforms. Sid lines up between Zack and Casey. For the moment, Foley is nowhere to be seen, but a Navy lieutenant is talking to a Navy captain in SHOT b.g.

SID

Think there's any truth to what he was saying about those girls? Is that still going on?

ZACK

Sure it is, Sweet Pea, but he should've warned you 'scuzzy' female types about the 'Puget Dudes.' They'll tell you they're wearing a rubber but they've bit a little hole in the end.

CASEY

You're pretty funny, Mayo.

ZACK

Maybe we'll be roommates, Seeger, and you'll find out how funny I really am...

Foley suddenly appears.

FOLEY

Seeger, Mayo and Worley – hit the deck and give me fifty push-ups. On the double!

The trio drops to the ground and starts doing push-ups.

ACROSS THE STREET - DAY

Lynette's Falcon drives up and the two girls start across the street, carrying boxes of LP's.

ON SID, ZACK AND CASEY

They're about ten, eleven push-ups along when Casey starts to fade. Foley's polished shoes ENTER SHOT and she looks up at him sheepishly.

FOLEY

Looks like you need a little work on your upper body strength, Seeger.

He leads her off to where the other candidates stand at attention, leaving Zack and Sid alone, doing push-ups. They eye Lynette and Paula as they walk past.

EXT. THE STEPS OF A NEARBY BUILDING - DAY

NELLIE RUFFERWALL, 50, the base social director, is chatting with a young Naval officer as the two girls approach in their sexy disco dresses. The officer flirts with both girls as he walks off.

NELLIE

Paula, honey, Lynette... I hope you didn't call all this way just to bring me these nice records.

LYNETTE

(eyeing the retreating officer)

No, ma'am. We planned on stopping at the 'O' Club tonight, one way or the other.

ANGLE - SID AND ZACK

About 30 push-ups in. Both are in terrific shape and have no problem at all with the push-ups. They watch Paula and Lynette talking with the matronly social director across the street.

SID

(whispers)

Look at that hot little blonde!

Zack is staring at Paula.

ANGLE - PAULA AND LYNETTE

They leave Nellie with the boxes of records and start down the steps.

NELLIE

'Bye girls, and thank you again.
Blue Angels be in next month. You
want me to line you up with one,
just let me know.

The girls start back across the street, in the direction of the Officers' Club.

LYNETTE

Far fucking out! I've been wanting
to meet one of the Blue Angels since
I can remember.

PAULA

Lynette, watch your mouth! Somebody
might overhear.

LYNETTE

Paula, look at the new Poopies.

PAULA

Yeah, I saw 'em. Poor guys.

LYNETTE

(calling to them)

See you in a month when you get
liberty!

PAULA

(calls)

Don't worry. It grows out about an
inch by them.

Laughing, they start into the Officers' Club.

NEW ANGLE - THE OFFICERS' CLUB ENTRANCE

A handsome young pilot named DONNY TARLTON, 29, is walking out just as the girls are entering.

LYNETTE

(flirty)

Hi, Donny.

DONNY

Oh, hi, Lynette. Hey, Paula, haven't seen you for a while. When're we gonna go out?

PAULA

I already told you. I don't go out with guys who've been dating a good friend. See ya.

The girls go inside.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE LAWN IN FRONT OF THE CHOW HALL - DAY

Thirty-six chrome dome helmets fly into the air and land on the lawn and then thirty-six starving Poopies rush into line in front of the mess hall, at close-order attention, nose touching the back of the head of the Poopie ahead of them in line.

FOLEY

Count off!

They start the count off. When it gets to Perryman he screws up and gives the wrong number. Foley descends on him.

FOLEY

Daydreaming about your wife and kids, Perryman? You want to join 'em now?

PERRYMAN

No, sir!

FOLEY

Count off!! From the top.

This time somebody else fucks up.

INT. THE MESS HALL - VARIOUS SHOTS - DAY

The candidates wait in line with their trays held in both hands directly in front of their faces, STOMACHS GROWLING so loudly we can hear them. Sid whispers to Zack.

SID
(softly)
I'm so hungry I could die.

They go through the food line, staring longingly at the shit on a shingle they're being served. Drooling.

They stand at attention at their table. Foley putting them through a silly drill of slapping their arms together and sinking, as a unit, slowly into their seats. Each time they fail to do it together, Foley makes them start again. Steam rises up from their trays, teasing them cruelly.

Finally, they get it right.

FOLEY
Okay! You got thirty-five seconds to get that garbage in your belly, bus your dishes, and get your asses out of here.

They go at it like animals, stuffing their faces as fast as they can, Zack the fastest eater of all. He finishes in no time at all and busses his tray. He smiles smugly as he passes Foley and the D.I. reacts.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROSS-COUNTRY COURSE - THE FIRST - DAY

Foley runs the candidates over the cross-country course with rifles raised overhead. Sunlight filters through the dense trees that overhang the narrow trail.

FOLEY
(jody-calling)
Flying low and feeling mean. Spot a family by a stream. Pickle a pear

and hear'em scream. 'Cause napalm sticks to kids.

EXT. CROSS-COUNTRY COURSE - NEAR THE LIGHTHOUSE - DAY

Foley runs his Poopies through the surf, past the old lighthouse, CAMERA MOVING with Sid, Zack and Casey, near the end of the group.

FOLEY

Eighteen kids in a free fire zone.
Books under arms, just walking on home. Last kid walks home alone.
'Cause napalm sticks to kids.

Sid glances over his shoulder at Casey, running tiredly behind him.

SID

Hey, Seeger, what're you doing in this program?

CASEY

(testy)

What's the matter, Worley? Am I threatening you?

Zack runs behind Seeger.

ZACK

Hey, baby, you could get sent to war, get your ass shot down.

CASEY

Don't lose any sleep over it. I wouldn't mind being the first woman to fly a jet fighter in combat.

ZACK

Great. You can go in my place.

SID

(to Casey)

Are you really going for jets?

CASEY

Uh-huh. All the way.

SID
How about you, Mayo?

ZACK
Jets.

SID
I hate to tell you guys, but only two out of every class make it into jets. Which one of you is going with me?

EXT. CROSS-COUNTRY COURSE - THE GUN EMPLACEMENTS - DAY

Foley stands at the entrance to a dark tunnel, watching the candidates run past.

FOLEY
Here's my favorite one now. See if it ain't your favorite, too.
(resuming)
Family of gooks sittin' in a ditch,
Baby sucking on her mama's tit. Dow
Chemical don't give a shit, that
napalm sticks to kids.

CAMERA PANS the last of the candidates through the tunnel.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TUNNEL

There's a huge, three-story gun emplacement bunker built in 1895, that now serves as a torture chamber for aviation officer candidates.

The other D.I.'s from the program stand at different places on the time-weathered stairs, waiting to assist Foley, their canes propped behind them, truly cruel expressions on their faces.

On cue from Foley, they begin to P.T. Zack's class into the ground, running them up and down the stairs, shouting in their tender ears until some members of the class actually start passing out.

An ambulance is there with two enlisted attendants to carry away the casualties.

Zack, Sid, Casey, Perryman and Topper are starting to show

the wear of the arduous "C" course, like the rest of their class.

As they pass the "finish line" where Foley stands, they all fall on their faces, and lie there, gasping for breath.

Suddenly, they're distracted by a disquieting sight.

EXT. OBSTACLE COURSE - DAY

An advanced class of officer candidates comes running past the exhausted Poopies in smart-looking blue warm-up suits with an insignia and the name "THRAXTON'S COBRAS" on the front and nicknames on the back like: "HOOSIER FACE," "THE BARBER," "ANIMAL HOUSE," "CHOW HOG," "BABY HUEY," AND "THE PROFESSOR."

CAMERA PANS them to the obstacle course where Thraxton's Cobras start eating up the course like child's play.

ANGLE - FOLEY AND HIS CLASS

Foley sneers down at his exhausted Poopies.

FOLEY

That's you in thirteen weeks, those of you who survive. Don't you dare look at them! You're not worthy enough to look at them! Della-Serra, I saw you eyeballing them!

Zack and the others can't take their eyes off the advanced class. It's literally impossible to imagine ever being that well-conditioned.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ZACK'S BARRACKS ROOM - NIGHT

CAMERA MOVES AROUND the room, past Perryman's snoring face, past Sid, tossing fitfully, so exhausted he keeps mumbling, "Yes, sir," over and over in his sleep... finally HOLDING ON Zack, sleeping so lightly that the SOUND OF HISSING near at hand causes his eyes to open, then harden with disgust at what he's seeing.

Topper stands at the sink, peeing.

ZACK

What the fuck're you doing, Topper?

TOPPER

(mortified)

I'm afraid to go out there, Zack. I know he'll catch me. He sleeps in the head, you know.

ZACK

He doesn't sleep in the head, man. He just says those things. Shit! I just cleaned that sink this morning!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS - DAY (SEVERAL WEEKS LATER)

Zack comes out of the head, Candidates Della-Serra and Marcus on his heels. Zack wears a white T-shirt and the khaki pants of the uniform they've been issued after "Poopie Week". His shoes are spit-shined to perfection, his belt brassoed to a lustrous shine, and his hair is now about an inch long. He pats it back with his hands, primping.

DELLA-SERRA

Another week or two, you'll have that ducktail back, Mayo.

He rubs Zack's head and Zack pulls away.

ZACK

Hey! I worked on it for thirty minutes!

Zack snaps Della-Serra with his towel, spots a couple of female candidates leaving the woman's head, looks around to see if any's watching, and crosses by the stairwell toward Seeger's room.

INT. SEEGER'S ROOM - DAY

Zack pushes the door open and stands there, grinning, as Gonzales rushes into her uniform. Seeger just sits there on her bunk, in her khaki pants and a bra, spit-shining her boonies.

ZACK

Good morning, girls.

CASEY

Ever heard of knocking, mayo?

ZACK

Hey, did you hear? Sands and
Kantrowitz DORed last night.

(His killer grim)

Survival of the fittest.

CASEY

The whole world's a jungle, huh,
Mayo? Dog eat dog down to the last
one, right?

ZACK

You got it, Sweet Pea.

(eyeing her breasts)

Nice boonies, Seeger.

Casey smiles easily and Zack pushes off down the corridor.

ZACK WALKS INTO HIS ROOM

and finds his roommates rushing around in a frenzy, trying
to get squared away. Sid is working like a fool on his boots.

Perryman is brassoing his belt buckle, and Topper is folding
his underwear and T-shirts and then measuring them with a
ruler to be certain he has the correct dimensions, before
placing them in his locker.

TOPPER

Inspection's in five minutes, Mayo!

Give 'em to me.

ZACK

Where's your money?

Topper gives him a fiver. Totally unrushed, Zack gets up on
his bunk and starts prying a piece of fiberboard loose from
the ceiling.

PERRYMAN

You'd better hope Foley never finds
out about that, Mayo.

Zack pulls the piece of fiberboard free and reaches inside.

Slaving over his boonies, Sid looks up and sees Zack remove from his stash a perfectly spitshined pair of boonies and hand them down to Topper. Laboring over his belt buckle, Perryman practically drools as he sees the glistening buckle Zack suddenly holds up for him to see.

ZACK

Two bucks a buckle, Perryman. Look at that shine! Boonies'll cost you five.

PERRYMAN

Who's got two bucks? It's costing me every penny they pay us just to keep my old Lady and my kids in that motel.

SID

Who you got doing all that for you, man? Some enlisted guy?

Not one to give away his secrets, Zack just smiles, and replaces the boots and buckle in his stash.

PERRYMAN

Hey, man, is the piss-ass money you're making off this worth the risk of getting us all kicked out of here on an honor violation?

ZACK

I don't notice anyone else complaining.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE OBSTACLE COURSE - DAY

Foley is timing the class over the killer "o" course. While most of his classmates are struggling to complete the course, Zack is breezing through it. As he finished, he moves off by himself, aloof, confident. Foley watches him closely. He's the only one not rooting for his classmates.

ANGLE - THE TEN-FOOT WALL

Casey is having a terrible time getting over the wall. She

doesn't have the upper-body strength for it. Foley saunters up and watches her futile efforts with a cockeyed little smile.

FOLEY

I can tell you right now you're not gonna make it, Seeger. First, I can't graduate you unless you make it over that wall. You gotta have muscles, Seeger, if you want to fly my jets.

CASEY

I'll make it over the wall, sir!

FOLEY

Do you want to be a man, Seeger? Is that why you're here?

CASEY

Sir, if it means getting all the respect a man gets, then yes! I was told I could find that in the modern Navy, sir!

She takes another run at the wall but fails once more to scale it. She sinks to the ground and bites her lip to keep from crying. Still, tears well up in her eyes.

FOLEY

That's it! That's exactly what'll beat you, Seeger... your mental attitude as a person of the female persuasion. Under all your bullshit, you still think like a second class citizen, Seeger. You could never give orders to men.

INT. THE AERODYNAMICS CLASSROOM - DAY

Zack struggles to comprehend the mumbo-jumbo of higher physics being demonstrated on the blackboard by the instructor, a Navy Lieutenant. All the candidates are using slide rules to work out the difficult problems.

QUICK CLOSE SHOTS reveal that most of the candidates have a pretty fair facility with the slide rule, but Zack looks like he's never had one in his hand until now.

EXT. THE BARRACKS - NIGHT

STARTING CLOSE ON a row of shined boots and a row of shined buckles WE WIDEN to reveal an enlisted sailor and Zack, scrutinizing the boots and buckles spread out on a Navy issue blanket. Zack nods his satisfaction, hands over a wad of currency, and carefully starts folding the edges of the blanket around his booty as the sailor disappears into the darkness. Then, as Zack lifts his Santa's sack of goodies over his shoulder, and turns around to go, he stops suddenly.

INCLUDE SID

He stands there in the darkness, a big grin on his face.

SID

So that's how you do it.

Zack looks like a thief caught in the act.

ZACK

Hey, you gonna tell anybody about this?

SID

(kidding him)

Not if you make it worth my while. How about free boonies for the duration?

Zack smiles, realizing his roommate is putting him on.

ZACK

How about you kiss my ass?

Sid laughs. Together, they head back toward the barracks entrance.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE OFFICERS CLUB - REGIMENTAL BALL - NIGHT

Zack and Sid are part of the line of stubble-haired AOCs in dress white uniforms, watching the door like eagles as a parade of Puget Debs come into the club, wearing satiny formals and hopeful smiles.

Perryman walks past with his attractive black wife.

Casey enters in uniform, hand-in-hand with a handsome young Lieutenant JG, her shortened hair brushed back nicely on the sides. She smiles at Zack and he smiles back.

Topper approaches one of the girls coming through the door, a short, dumpy little girl with jugs the size of watermelons, and escorts her toward the ballroom.

Then Sid and Zack spot Paula and Lynette coming through the door in clingy little formals, milky-white bosoms pushed up high and little gold crosses dangling in the valley between.

SID

Look, Zack. It's them. Holy shit.
Look at that bodacious set of tatas.

They approach the girls where they've stopped to chat with Nellie Rufferwell.

SID

Mrs. Rufferwell, ma'am, think you could introduce us to these attractive young ladies...?

Sid immediately fixes his eyes on Lynette. Zack and Paula size each other up as Nellie makes the introductions.

NELLIE

Officer Candidate Sid Worley, may I present Miss Lynette Pomeroy. Miss Paula Pokrifki, Officer Candidate Zackary Mayo.

(beat)

Well, I hope you have a good time.

She slips off, leaving the foursome along.

ZACK

(rubbing his head)

You told us it would grow out an inch.

SID

(aside, to Zack)

It's grown out more than an inch, sweetheart.

Zack stifles a chuckle.

PAULA
That was you guys, huh?

LYNETTE
Come on. Let's go dance.

Sid offers her his arm and she takes it with a little smile.

Zack offers Paula his arm and she takes it, meeting his eyes for an instant.

INT. THE OFFICERS CLUB - NIGHT

As they cross the dance floor. A shitty local band is PLAYING embarrassingly loud.

LYNETTE
Is this you boys first night of liberty since you got here?

SID
Yes, ma'am. Four long, hard weeks of sacrifice for my country... for my people... for you. But I survived.

ANGLE - THE REFRESHMENT TABLE

As Sid and Lynette dance, Zack and Paula have some punch at the refreshment table.

ZACK
Hey, what kind of name is Pokrifki?

PAULA
Polish. What kind of name is Mayo?

ZACK
Italian. My mom was Irish. I got her ears. But the rest is all wop.

PAULA
Where are you from, Mayo the Wop?

ZACK
Everywhere and nowhere, Paula the

Polack.

PAULA
Seriously.

ZACK
(straight-faced)
My father is a Rear Admiral in the
Seventh Fleet.

PAULA
Really?

ZACK
Yeah. We've lived all over the world.
Katmandu, Moscow, Nairobi.

PAULA
(impressed)
Really? I've never been out of
Washington except once when I visited
this aunt of mine over to Portland.
I mean, over at Portland. Ain't it
pathetic the way folks talk around
here?

She suddenly blushes.

PAULA
You're putting me on, aren't you? We
don't got no Navy bases in Moscow.

Zack just smiles.

PAULA
(returns his smile)
You got a girl?

ZACK
No, and I'm not looking for one
either.

Paula meets his eyes and flirts brazenly.

PAULA
Yeah, what are you looking for?

Zack just grins.

ZACK

I hear most of the girls who come to these things are looking for a husband.

PAULA

Not me.

ZACK

Yeah? Why're you here?

PAULA

To meet interesting people, improve myself. You wouldn't believe the losers we got over in Port Angeles.

ZACK

Do you go to school?

PAULA

No. I work for National Paper. It's a good job. I make eight-twenty-three an hour.

(beat)

When I get enough money saved, I plan to go on to college.

The band surges into a slower ballad.

ANGLE - SID AND LYNETTE

As they dance to the slow music, they waste no time with formalities and soon are pushing their bodies together and rubbing in all the best places.

LYNETTE

You been through the Dilbert Dunker yet?

SID

Cake walk. Both my dad and my brother went through it and made it, so I know I can.

LYNETTE

Is your brother a flyer?

SID
He was. He died.

LYNETTE
Vietnam?

SID
Yeah.

LYNETTE
I had a big brother who died over there, too. He wasn't no flyer though. He was just your basic Marine Corps type. I was only twelve when it happened, so I don't remember much about him.

SID
(somberly)
I sure remember Tommy.
(beat)
Mind if we talked about something else?

LYNETTE
(seductively)
We don't have to talk at all.

VARIOUS SHOTS - AROUND THE DANCE FLOOR

The horny AOCs from Zack's class are grinding and pushing and falling into the gentle traps being set by the crafty debs.

Topper buries his nose into the ample cleavage of his deb.

Della-Serra nibbles on the ear of his gangly partner. Casey and her pilot twirl around the floor.

ANGLE - PAULA AND ZACK

As they move onto the dance floor, the handsome pilot, Donny approaches PAULA.

DONNY
Hey, PAULA. How about a dance later on.

PAULA

Well... I'm kinda with someone.

She continues on with Zack.

NEW ANGLE - PAULA AND ZACK

Paula puts her arms tight around his neck and nestles her lips close to his ear.

PAULA

Think you'll make it all the way to getting your wings?

ZACK

Who knows? Guys a lot smarter than me are dropping out like flies.

PAULA

Just think 'I'm gonna do it!' Program yourself. See yourself making it. It'll happen. I know 'cause I just read this article in Cosmo, and it was about that very thing.

ZACK

You're a very pretty girl, Paula.

He kisses her once but as he starts to pull away she won't let him and they french shamelessly for a long moment before PAULA pulls away from him, breathing raggedly, her green eyes flashing.

PAULA

Let's flee this pit stop, what do you say?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE LIGHTHOUSE - NIGHT

The beacon sweeps past the empty Falcon and over the sandy landscape as we hear:

SID (V.O.)

Something tells me you've been here before.

LYNETTE (V.O.)

Now what on earth would give you an idea like that?

START CLOSE ON LYNETTE'S BUTTONS

Sid's fingers pop a button in their urgency. Lynette's fingers push his away and she undoes the buttons with ease.

SID

You're sure it's okay?

LYNETTE

Don't worry. I'll respect you afterwards.

The dress disappears, leaving her torso uncovered. Sid's face PUSHES INTO SHOT as he kisses his way down her neck toward her tight little breasts.

SID

You're crazy, girl. You'll respect me. That's great. But what I meant...

Lynette's face PUSHES INTO SHOT and she kisses him almost roughly.

LYNETTE

I told you. I'm on the pill. Don't worry, Sid. Just do it.

She pulls him down on top of her.

THE LIGHT FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE

sweeps past Zack and PAULA, already making love a distance down the beach.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS HEAD - NIGHT

The two friends crow about their conquests while they brush their teeth in front of the long mirror.

SID

Could you believe those girls!

ZACK
'Nellie's Nymphos!'

SID
Jesus, that Lynette! I rode her hard
and put her up wet.

Zack shadowboxes with his reflection in the mirror.

ZACK
(clowning)
Look out, Foley! I'm ready to take
you on for another week!

They both laugh.

CUT TO:

INT. LYNETTE'S CAR - NIGHT

Lynette has the accelerator mashed to the floorboard. Paula
looks at her wristwatch.

PAULA
Hurry, Lynette. It's almost midnight.

LYNETTE
I got my foot on the floor.

EXT. THE FERRY PORT - NIGHT

The midnight ferry to Port Angeles is just about to pull out
when the Falcon comes SCREAMING around the corner and races
aboard.

EXT. FERRY - LONG SHOT - NIGHT

crossing the Sound.

INT. THE WHEELHOUSE OF THE FERRY - NIGHT

The two girls look out across the water. A curious little
smile crosses Paula's face and Lynette sees it.

LYNETTE
Well, it you're not gonna ask, then
I will. How was it?

PAULA

Great.

LYNETTE

Details, Pokrif. From what I saw he had an incredible body.

PAULA

Yeah... Mmmm...

LYNETTE

What did he do? Did he do anything that was different?

PAULA

Everything was different.

LYNETTE

But in what ways?

Paula looks at her friend as if acknowledging her presence for the first time. A sense of privacy comes over her suddenly.

LYNETTE

Did you... come?

Paula smiles. Lynette could die of envy. You sense she's never known that pleasure.

PAULA

How did it go with you guys?

LYNETTE

Big Sid came in about two and a half seconds, then had the nerve to ask, 'Did you make it, too, sweetheart?'

Said with a certain affection, albeit slightly jaded. Paula laughs.

LYNETTE

(resuming softer)

...but I really like him, Paula. And I know he's going to make it. He comes from a family of pilots.

EXT. THE PORT ANGELES FERRY TERMINAL - NIGHT

The Falcon drives off and proceeds past a local hangout called "Tim's" with a number of motorcycles parked out front. A cluster of good old boys in jeans and T-shirts, lounging in front of "Tim's," see the Falcon and WHISTLE at the girls.

Lynette gives them the finger.

INT. THE FALCON - NIGHT

Both Paula and Lynette respond to the whistles with looks of disgust. Cinderella said it first: the worst part of being a deb is the ride home.

PAULA

He ask you out for next weekend?

LYNETTE

No, but I told him I'd be at the Town Tavern next Saturday night, and he sounded like he might come.

PAULA

I told Zack about Saturday night, too. The fifth week's supposed to be the roughest. Come Wednesday, he'll be wishing he took my number.

LYNETTE

You hope.

PAULA

He'll show. I'd bet my paycheck on it.

EXT. PAULA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A lower-middle class clapboard house sitting on blocks like all the others on the crammed little street.

Built during the war as cheap housing for servicemen, the box-like dwellings now serve Port Angeles' industrial blue collar families, like Paula's.

The Falcon drives up and Paula gets out.

LYNETTE

See you at church in the morning.

Paula nods distractedly, her face reflecting genuine fear of what awaits her inside the darkened house.

INT. PAULA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Her key turns in the lock and the door opens. She tiptoes across the small living room, but as she is passing a door left slightly ajar, a voice inside the room calls out to her, making her jump.

JOE (O.S.)

Paula, come in here, please.

INT. JOE AND ESTHER'S BEDROOM

JOE POKRIFKI is a tough, barely-literate Polack with enough hair on his chest to compete with some apes. Ester lies in bed beside him. Paula enters the darkened room and Joe suddenly snaps on the light, bathing them all in its harsh, almost police-room glare.

JOE

Come over here. I want to look at you.

Paula stays near the door, scared.

PAULA

I know I'm late and I'm sorry, but Mrs. Rufferwell asked us to help with the cleanup and...

JOE

I said, come here!

She slowly approaches him, stopping about halfway.

PAULA

Daddy, I don't want to get into anything with you tonight. I'm tired and I...

JOE

What are you tired from?

ESTHER

Joe!

JOE

Come over here where I can see you.

She steps up to the bed and her father looks over her clothing.

JOE

Look at the sand! Enough sand to
start your own beach!

(seeing something)

What's that wet place on your dress?

Paula is so mortified she could scream. Tears of rage flood her eyes.

INT. AN ADJOINING BEDROOM

Paula's two sisters, ages 14 and 10, are awake in their bunks and listening to the confrontation in the next room. The empty lower bunk in the over-crammed room belongs to Paula. There's a stack of Cosmopolitan magazines beside the bed and fan magazine photos of John Travolta taped to the wall above her pillow.

PAULA (O.S.)

I don't know what it is. It could be anything.

JOE (O.S.)

But you knew right off what I was talking about, didn't you, Paula!
Did you let that boy –

INT. JOE AND ESTER'S BEDROOM

Paula interrupts her father, enraged by his insinuations. Her mother looks on, haunted by memories of her own.

PAULA

Don't you dare ask me that question.
I'm an adult and you got no right to push your nose into my affairs like that!

JOE

Well, as long as you live in this house, young lady, you live by my

rules! You should be dating local boys.

PAULA

Uh-uh! Not a chance! There's nobody in this town doing anything with his life, except what his father did, which is nothing. If I can't have more out of life than that, I'd rather be dead!

JOE

Do you honestly think you'll find a boy in that... that officer's school who's serious about marriage?

PAULA

Yes I do!

JOE

Then you're dumber than I thought! All you'll get from their kind is pregnant!

For an instant, Esther's eyes and her husband's lock in unresolved combat.

PAULA

Nothing like that's ever gonna happen.

To keep from sobbing in front of them, she turns and runs out.

A terrible silence fills the room, the silence of two miserable human beings condemned to live unhappily ever after... because of one little mistake.

JOE

Esther, do you think she's using...
(has trouble saying
it)
...birth control?

ESTHER

Yes, Joe.

JOE

When did this happen?

ESTHER
A long time ago.

INT. PAULA'S BEDROOM

She changes into her pajamas and crawls into bed. She'd like to cry but there isn't the privacy for it, so she holds it all in. CAMERA PANS the faces of her sisters, both awake.

CUT TO:

EXT. CATHOLIC CHURCH IN PORT ANGELES - DAY

Joe Pokrifki parks his big, old Olds Cutlass and the four Pokrifki women follow him toward the church in their prim Sunday dresses.

Lynette and her three brothers climb down from the back of a dented and primed pickup truck. Lynette's pained skeleton of a mother gets out from behind the wheel and ushers her brood toward the church. There's a shocking difference between the debs who go over to the base on weekends and these primly-dressed, almost tomboyishly unmade-up young girls.

As the two girls see each other, they exchange supportive smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. THE OLD BLIMP HANGAR - DAY

Zack and his classmates look around apprehensively as they enter the cavernous old hangar and take seats, along with several other classes from the program, around a raised mat.

Suddenly, shockingly, a bank of lights directly over the mat go on to illuminate Foley, dressed in a worn and faded pair of black silk pajamas, legs akimbo and arms crossed at the chest.

Zack elbows Sid.

ZACK
Look at Foley! Can you believe it!

SID
(frightened)

Shhhh...

Zack looks around and the faces of the others are similarly disquieted by the sight. How do you describe the presence of death in a room? But it's there. Foley brought it in with him.

FOLEY

I'm the base martial arts instructor, so those of you in on-eight must desist in thinking of me as their drill instructor for the next sixty minutes.

(grins evilly)

Just think of me as... the enemy. Incidentally, children, I am wearing the uniform of a Viet Cong foot soldier I killed in hand-to-hand combat in Plei Me, Viet Nam... when I was about your age. Maybe a little younger.

(in the same breath)

May I please have a volunteer? How 'bout you, Daniels?

Topper rises to his feet, terrified, and Sid pats him on the back.

SID

Go put him in the hospital, kid.

TOPPER

He can't touch me. That's the law.

Foley grins sadistically as he watches Topper climb up onto the mat.

FOLEY

Hello, pussy. How bad do you want to survive?

Topper stares at him, then stammers:

TOPPER

Sir, this Officer Candidate doesn't understand what you're asking, sir.

FOLEY

Let me see if I can improve your comprehension.

He leaps on Topper like a cat, grabbing the boy's throat between his thumb and forefinger, seemingly intent upon killing him but, in reality, scaring him more than actually hurting him that much.

FOLEY

Do you want to survive bad enough to stop me, pussy? Or are you relying on my generosity, my love of humanity, to stop me from killing you?!

Topper's eyes bug in horror.

TOPPER

Please... no... I can't breathe...

Foley just laughs.

SID AND PERRYMAN

jump to their feet to protest, but events are moving too fast for them. Zack just sits there, almost amused.

TOPPER

finally starts fighting back. Convinced this maniac means to kill him to make his point, he finally summons enough survival instinct to wrestle Foley's hand from his throat. He sinks to the floor of the ring and struggles to catch his breath.

TOPPER

You... had... no right! You can't... touch... us! It's the... law!

This makes Foley laugh all the harder.

FOLEY

(mimicking him)

'Sir, this Officer Candidate doesn't understand what you mean by survival.'
Now do you understand a little better, pussy? Get out of my sight!

Topper hurries to comply, while Foley swaggers to the edge of the mat, sits down and starts putting foam safety-kick

pads on his feet, really getting off on this.

FOLEY

You think I'm a little harsh on your classmate? Wait 'til you get shot down behind enemy lines and the only thing between you and a POW camp is what you assholes learned from me!

(beat)

Okay, worms. Now that I've got your attention, we can begin.

FOLEY

demonstrates the basic karate kicks. Beyond black belt, he has moves that ought to bear his name. Leaping, spinning crescent kicks are his specialty, and he executes them like a ballet master, awing everyone in the dank old hangar. Almost everyone. Zack, cool. Zack, is unimpressed.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE TOWN TAVERN - NIGHT

Zack and Sid sit in their white liberty uniforms at the long bar, nursing beers, Sid anxiously watching the door for Lynette, Zack busy flirting with an attractive WAITRESS. The Town Tavern is a local hangout and there's a sense that a number of the townies are watching the boys in white with resentment.

ZACK

(to the Waitress)

Hey, baby... c'mere...

She slides up, smiling, giggling.

WAITRESS

Nice haircut.

ZACK

Kiss it, baby. Make it grow.

She laughs and kisses the top of his head.

ZACK

So, when do you get off?

She's about to reply when a burly BARTENDER approaches with fresh beers for the boys. He gives the boys a surly look.

BARTENDER

Take care of the customers, Doreen.

Doreen gives Zack her best smile and grudgingly moves off toward the locals around the pool table. The bartender puts fresh beers in front of Sid and Zack.

BARTENDER

(surly)

That'll be two dollars.

The boys pay up and the bartender moves off.

SID

(facetiously)

Nice, hospitable folks they get around here.

(glances at door)

I hope she comes.

ZACK

She'll come, pard. A rich socialite Oakie like you oughta be a big catch around these parts.

SID

Get off my case, Mayo. I didn't grow up rich.

SEXY ENOUGH TO LIGHT FIRES, PAULA AND LYNETTE

cut a path like Sherman's army through the gawking local losers clustered inside the door of the tavern, then glide into Zack and Sid's arms and kiss them gluttonously for half a minute. Some of the local boys watch it all with ill-concealed jealousy.

ZACK

I think we're making some of the locals jealous.

PAULA

Who cares?

(frenching him)

Mmmm. Now I remember. Mayo the Wop.

Gee, I'm glad you're here. I've been looking forward to this all week.

ZACK
Me, too.

They kiss again.

SID
What would you girls like to do?
Want to stick around here for a little
or... or could I suggest another
plan...?

LYNETTE
Like pick up some booze and go to a
motel?

SID
Or we could do that yeah.

PAULA
I vote for the motel.

ZACK
My kinda group!

They start for the door, all four linking arms.

NEAR THE DOOR

One of the boys who was watching them, TROY, 25, jostles into Zack, then pretends it was the other way around.

TROY
Hey, make way for the warmongers.

Zack and Sid spin around, surprised. Troy's a big, kid, a dockworker probably, and he seems to tower over Zack.

ZACK
What did you call us?

TROY
I called you a warmonger. Ain't that
what you are?

Zack looks more amused by it all than threatened. He shakes

his head and starts out the door with his friends. Troy and some of the other locals share a look, and follow.

EXT. "THE TOWN TAVERN" - NIGHT

Troy jobs out of the place and plants himself in front of Zack.

TROY
Hey, let me ask you something.

ZACK
Yeah, what do you want to know?

SID
Let's get out of here Zack.

A circle is forming around Zack and Troy. Paula looks frightened. Lynette looks turned on.

TROY
You come here for a couple of months – you rich college boys – struttin' around in your ice cream suits like you own the goddamn place – fucking our best women... Hey, who do you think gets left holding the bag after you're off flying around the world?

ZACK
Hey, pard, why don't you go back inside and cool off.

He turns away from Troy and pushes out of the circle.

TROY
Hey, I'm not finished talking to you, sailor boy!

He charges after Zack, and knocks his cap off.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE FIGHT

If you can call it a fight. Zack turns around and hits Troy in the face with two very fast punches, a left and a right.

Before his assailant can recover, Zack delivers a strange, roundhouse kind of kick that seems to come out of him in

slow motion, then gathers incredible speed, until it's slamming with the force of a mule-kick into Troy's face. Troy goes down gushing blood from flattened nostrils.

ZACK

looks around the other locals who clustered earlier around their champion, but they're all staring at him, afraid.

Taking Paula by the hand, he leads the foursome away.

MOVING WITH ZACK, PAULA, LYNETTE AND SID

Zack stares straight ahead, lost in the world of his adolescence. Paula just watches him, sensitive to the place he's in.

LYNETTE

God! I've never seen anything like that in my whole life! Did you see that guy's nose?

ZACK

(snaps)

Lynette, just keep your mouth shut until we get to the motel. Will you do that for me, please.

LYNETTE

Well, excuse me for livin'!

Sid pushes her into the car.

CUT TO:

INT. ZACK'S ROOM AT THE TIDES INN MOTEL - NIGHT

Zack lies on the bed, aloof, brooding, and doing some serious drinking from a pint bottle of rum. Paula watches from a chair.

PAULA

Want a back rub? Might make you feel better.

She climbs onto the bed and tries to position herself to rub his back, but he pulls away.

ZACK

I shouldn't have done that. I
should've walked.

PAULA

He didn't give you much choice.

ZACK

There's always a choice.

PAULA

Where'd you learn to fight like that?

ZACK

(snaps)

I don't feel like talking, if you
don't mind.

PAULA

(angry)

Opening up just a little wouldn't
kill you, ya know.

She starts for the door. Zack barely even looks up.

ZACK

You want me to fuck you? Is that it?
Okay, come here. Take your clothes
off. Get into bed.

PAULA

(turns, angry)

Where's that coming from? I wouldn't
fuck now if my life depended on it!

ZACK

Forget it. Just get out of here.

Paula starts to leave, then turns back, furious.

PAULA

(explodes)

I don't know who you think you're
talking to! I ain't some whore you
brought here! I've been trying to be
your friend and you treat me like
shit!

ZACK
Be a friend. Leave.

PAULA
You got no manners and you never
tell the truth! You're nothin'
special. And if you ask me, you got
no chance at all of being an officer!

Zack rises from the bed and very slowly approaches her. Paula almost flinches as he stops a few feet away. Then he leans forward and kisses her as gently as he knows how. Very tentatively, she responds.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE TIDES INN - NIGHT

Lynette leaves her room and knocks on Paula's door. Paula comes out, zipping up her dress.

LYNETTE
(smiles)
A definite improvement.

They drive off.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ZACK'S ROOM AT THE TIDES INN - DAY

He wakes up and slowly focuses on Paula, cooking eggs and bacon in the kitchenette.

ZACK
You stayed after all.

PAULA
Wrong. I've driven a hundred and
twenty miles, told a hundred and
twenty lies, and said a hundred and
twenty Hail Mary's since I saw you.
Hungry?

ZACK
I'm starving.

He jumps out of bed, pulls on some boxer shorts and sits

down at a small rickety table she has beautified with wildflowers stuffed in a glass. Paula puts his steaming breakfast before him and stands back to watch him attack it. He looks up at her and finds her staring at him almost wistfully.

ZACK

Paula, I never try to fool anybody about who I am, what I want... so if even in the back of your –

PAULA

I know who you are and what you want.

ZACK

What do you want, Paula? What do you really want?

PAULA

To have a good time with you until you have to go.

ZACK

That's it?

She nods and turns away, so he can't see her eyes and know how much she's lying. Zack finishes off his eggs and bacon, downs his coffee. As she comes over to refill his cup, he unbuttons her blouse and starts playing with her nipples.

ZACK

Mmmm. Last night was fantastic.

She watches him with womanly eyes, aware of her own power.

PAULA

Zack, am I your fantasy?

Zack laughs.

PAULA

Zack, I dare you not to fall in love with me. I ain't gonna get serious with you, no way. But how can you resist me? I'm like candy.

ZACK

You're better than candy.

PAULA

I'm serious. It's gonna be hard to get enough.

He starts tickling her and she can't sustain her vamp role any longer.

ZACK

Getting cocky, aren't you? Huh, you little Polack? Getting feisty on me, huh?

He takes her in his arms and they kiss. The moment turns suddenly real and Zack finds himself pulling away, afraid of the feelings that are churning his guts. Paula studies him a moment.

PAULA

Zack, when you're through with a girl, what do you do? Do you say something or do you just... disappear?

ZACK

I've never had a girl.

Their eyes stay together for a long time.

ZACK

I forgot to thank you for breakfast.

PAULA

Any time, sailor.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LARGE INDOOR POOL ON THE BASE - DAY

Our CAMERA is the first to ride the Dilbert Dunker, and we are suddenly shooting at high speed down a steep incline inside a cage-like contraption, painted red. Wham! We hit water at neck-wrenching speed and go under in a swirl of bubbles!

Wait! What's happening? The goddamn cage is turning somersaults! Which way is up? Which is way up?? A strange looking alien in a wet suit and mask knifes TOWARD US. His hands work to extricate us. We rush toward the promise of

light and air at the surface. We can hear our own tortured breathing. Will we make it?

CANDIDATE DELLA-SERRA REACHES THE SURFACE

gasping for air. The DILBERT DUNKER INSTRUCTOR stands off to the side, giving him a thumb's down.

INSTRUCTOR

Back in line. That was totally unsat,
Della-Serra!

Della-Serra clings to the side of the pool and vomits. He's grateful to be alive.

ZACK WATCHES THEM RAISE THE DILBERT DUNKER

It finally comes to a rest high in the rafters of the building, where he is to be the next to take the ride. Sid and Seeger are right behind him, followed by Topper. He steps into the cage and the Instructor makes sure he's buckled snugly into the harness. Then Zack's eyes fall on:

FOLEY, STANDING POOL SIDE ZACK LOOKS AWAY FROM HIM AND GIVES HIS THUMBS UP

and the Dunker takes him on its crazy ride, plummeting down the tracks, blasting into the water, somersaulting...

UNDERWATER - ZACK

waits until the turning has stopped, studies the direction his air bubbles are taking as he unfastens his harness, and pulls himself down and out of the Dunker.

BACK ON THE SURFACE - ZACK

gets a thumbs up from the Instructor and grins. As he's climbing out, he watches Sid take the big ride.

UNDERWATER - SID

almost loses his composure when the harness at first defies his efforts to get it open. Then, he's free and surface-bound.

AS ZACK HELPS HIM

out of the pool, Sid's efforts at a cocky grin fails to hide

from his friend the fear he felt under there.

ZACK
You okay?

SID
Sure.

They turn to watch Casey.

STAY ON CASEY'S EXHILARATED FACE AS SHE PLUNGES

and watch her extricate herself as easily as Zack.

AS ZACK AND SID HELP HER OUT OF THE WATER

her eyes are wild with excitement.

CASEY
Think they'll let us do that again?
God, that was fun!

TOPPER CLIMBS INTO THE DILBERT DUNKER

He looks down at the pool far below. His three friends, standing pool side, give him a thumbs up for encouragement, but Topper is too frightened to acknowledge them. He turns to the Instructor helping to fasten him inside the contraption.

TOPPER
(scared shitless)
Does this thing hit with the same
impact as an actual plane?

INSTRUCTOR
This is nothing compared to a plane.
(beat)
Don't forget to watch the bubbles.

Topper nods and gives a thumbs up.

IN A PERCH ABOVE THE RAISED DUNKER

a young seaman apprentice flicks a switch and the Dunker lurches down the tracks.

TOPPER SUCKS IN HIS BREATH, TERRIFIED

The impact of hitting the water is so jolting, it knocks his wind out in a rush and he goes under already screaming that silent little scream of the mind that drowning people hear.

Underwater, the Dunker turns him over and over, leaving him upside-down. The silent scream is louder. Panic rides its frequency as Topper tears at the lever that would release him from the harness. He gets it open and pushes out of the opening in the Dunker with all his might. He has forgotten to watch for his air bubbles. Top is bottom and bottom is top.

He smashes violently into the tiled floor of the pool, freaks out, and swims straight up and into the jaws of the Dunker again.

ZACK, SID, CASEY AND FOLEY

watch from pool side, concerned, as the diver goes down for Topper.

UNDERWATER

The instant the diver is within grasp of the totally unstrung boy, Topper grabs him in a dying man's grip that even the brawny frogman is unable to break.

The diver hits him once, twice, but Topper clings to him even tighter and, as they wrestle, the harness further snares them both. The scream now becomes the scream of two drowning men.

INTERCUT THE FACES OF THE ONLOOKERS

Seconds are ticking by, and it reflects on all the faces in the huge room.

SUDDENLY FOLEY DIVES, FULLY CLOTHED, INTO THE POOL

His Smokey the Bear hat and cane stay at the surface as he knifes down through the water toward the churning humanity below.

UNDERWATER - FOLEY REACHES TOPPER AND THE DIVER

Both men are so hopelessly entangled in the parachute harness and so close to losing consciousness that Foley has to move

very fast. His presence of mind is so total it's frightening.

With no wasted moves, he frees both men and pulls them toward the surface.

AT THE SURFACE

The Instructor helps Foley get them laid out by the side of the pool and while Foley works mouth-to-mouth on Topper, he works on the diver. The diver is easily revived but Topper required everything Foley has to offer. He might have died in less expert hands but Foley is slowly pulling him through.

INTERCUT - ZACK, SID, PERRYMAN, SEEGER AND OTHERS

watching Foley's efforts to revive their compatriot.

FINALLY, FOLEY STEPS AWAY FROM TOPPER

and nods to the room of onlookers that he'll be all right.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS ROOM - DAY

CAMERA MOVES DOWN the row of lockers. Sid's is a study in neatness, every pair of skivvies folded identically and measured with a ruler, which is exactly what he's doing at the moment. Perryman's problem is his belt buckle, which he is frantically trying to shine before Foley gets there. Zack stands casually by his locker, buffing his fingernails, his shoes and buckle shined to perfection, as always.

CAMERA HOLDS on the fourth locker, the one that belonged to Topper Daniels. The door to the locker is open and it's empty.

PERRYMAN

I'll never get it polished in time.
Give me a buckle, Zack.

ZACK

I can't risk it.

PERRYMAN

You'd make it. He's just getting to the girls. Come on, Zack. I gotta see my family, man. I couldn't take it if he keeps me here over the

weekend.

ZACK

Sorry, pard. Wouldn't want you to get an honor violation.

Sid gives him a dirty look but Zack ignores it. The SOUND OF HARSH FOOTSTEPS approaching and the three candidates snap to rigid attention by their lockers.

Foley walks in and starts inspecting Perryman. Sweat runs down the black's face in rivers. Foley moves on to Sid, checks out his locker, then turns to Zack.

FOLEY

In every class there's a guy who thinks he's smarter than me. In this class, it's you, isn't it, Mayonnaise?

He brings his cane up suddenly, like a majorette's baton, and with one poke knocks the piece of fiberboard out of its place in the ceiling, allowing two pairs of shined boonies, a half-dozen freshly-brassoed belt buckles, and a little black book recording the monies owed him, to rain down.

FOLEY

Report to my office in five minutes!

Foley turns and strides out. Zack meets his roommates' eyes for an instant, knowing he's finished. Perryman doesn't look too sad about it. He whispers in Zack's ear as he walks past, enroute to the door.

PERRYMAN

Couldn't happen to a nicer guy.

Zack stares daggers at him.

INT. FOLEY'S OFFICE IN THE BARRACKS - DAY

Foley is doing paperwork at his desk as Zack approaches and knocks on the door.

FOLEY

Come in, Mayo.

Zack enters and stands at attention in front of Foley's desk.

He knows it's all over.

FOLEY
I want your D.O.R.

ZACK
No, sir. You can kick me out, but
I'm not quitting.

FOLEY
Get into your fatigues, Mayo. Before
the weekend's out, you'll quit.

Zack salutes, makes a smart turn, and marches out.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BEACH - DAY

Foley is putting Zack through hell. With his heavy rifle raised overhead and a full pack on his back, he runs through the wet sand at the beach, to the cadence of his D.I.'s jody call. Foley runs with him a vulture waiting for the inevitable.

FOLEY
(jody-calling)
Casey Jones was a son of a bitch.
Drove his train in a thirty-foot
ditch. Came on out with his dick in
his hand. Said, 'Listen, ladies, I'm
one helluva man. I went to his room
and lined up a hundred. Swore up and
down he'd
(beat)
Having fun, Mayonnaise?

Zack is dying under his heavy helmet, but he says nothing.

EXT. THE GUN EMPLACEMENTS - LATER THAT DAY (NOON)

Foley is running him up and down the weathered old steps, the hot sun beating down on him like a firey fist.

FOLEY
Look over there, Mayo. She stayed to
do that instead of going on liberty.

Zack follows his gaze to the Obstacle Course where Seeger is struggling to pull herself over the ten-foot wall, with the same results as last time.

FOLEY

She may not make it through the program, but she's got more heart and more character than you'll ever have. I've seen your college record. I've never heard of most of those schools. Tell me something, Mayo. Did you buy that degree?

ZACK

No, sir! It was the hardest thing I ever did, sir! Until this.

FOLEY

That's a lie, Mayo. You've gone through a lot worse, haven't you?

Zack shoots him a quick look, wondering how much he knows.

FOLEY

Stop eyeballing me, mister! I've looked through your file and done a little checking, and I know it all. I know about your mother. I know your old man's an alcoholic and a whore chaser.

(beat)

Life sure has dealt you some shitty cards! Hasn't it, Mayo?

ZACK

I'm doing okay, sir.

FOLEY

No you're not. You're failing the big one, baby, and I don't just mean in here. I mean in life. I've watched you, Mayo, and you don't mesh. You grab-ass and joke around but you don't make friends, not the way the others do.

Zack says nothing but Foley's getting to him in ways nobody has in years, if ever.

FOLEY

Want to know why I'm not an officer, Mayo? Because I have a servile mentality from growing up poor... from always being the kid on the windy side of the baker's window. That's your problem, Mayo. That's why you don't mesh. Because deep down in that bitter little heart of yours, you know these other boys and girls are better than you.

EXT. THE LIGHTHOUSE - NIGHT

Foley is putting Mayo through his rifle drills, in the sweeping light from the old tower. Zack's jaw is set with determination but Foley won't let up.

FOLEY

Shoulder arms! Port arms! Parade rest!
(Etc. Etc.)

EXT. THE GUN EMPLACEMENT - THE NEXT DAY

Zack lies prone at the top of the bunker, his feet about six inches off the ground, Foley standing over him, smiling.

FOLEY

Hey, what do you say we call off this little charade of yours over a couple of beers at Trader Jon's...? Come on, man. You're about as close to being officer material as me.

ZACK

Sir, this candidate believes he'll make a good officer, sir!

FOLEY

No way, Mayo. You don't give a shit about anybody but yourself and every single one of your classmates knows it. Think they'd trust you behind the controls of a plane they have to fly in? Hey, man, I figure you for the kind of guy who'd zip off one

day in my F-14 and sell it to the Cubans.

ZACK

Sir, that's not true! I love my country!

FOLEY

(laughs)

Sell it to the Air Force, Mayo!

Foley puts his lips close to Zack's ear and whispers:

FOLEY

Let's get down to it. Why would a slick little hustler like you sign up for this kind of abuse?

Zack's legs are shaking wildly with the effort to keep them aloft.

ZACK

I want to fly, sir!

FOLEY

That's no reason. Everybody wants to fly. My grandmother wants to fly. You going after a job with one of the airlines?

ZACK

I want to fly jets, sir!

FOLEY

Why? Because you can do it alone?

ZACK

No, sir!

FOLEY

What is it, the kicks? Is that it?

ZACK

I don't want to do something anybody can do.

FOLEY

Pity you don't have the character.

ZACK

That's not true, sir! I've changed a lot since I've been here! And I'm gonna make it, sir!

FOLEY

Not a fucking chance, asshole!

Zack bolts up suddenly, meeting his eyes.

ZACK

(defiantly)

I got nothing else to fall back on. Sir! This is it for me... and I'm gonna do it!

Foley studies him with squinty eyes.

FOLEY

All right, Mayo. Get on your feet.

Both men get up and start walking back toward the base.

MOVING WITH THEM

Suddenly they both see a sailboat tacking past, no more than fifty yards off shore.

THEIR POV - THE SAILBOAT

There are three people in the boat, two girls and a boy wearing a sack over his head. All three wave in their direction. On cue, they turn around, drop their drawers, and give a three-way B.A. They pull their pants back up and turn around to yell at Zack. The girls are obviously Paula and Lynette. The boy with the sack over his head just has to be Sid.

SID

(disguising his voice)

Don't give up the ship, Mayo!

PAULA

Hang in there, Zack!

LYNETTE

Damn the torpedoes and remember the

Tides Inn Motel!

They're all three laughing so hard they nearly capsize.

ANGLE - ZACK AND FOLEY

The drill instructor is amused but trying not to show it.

FOLEY

Mayo, are those your friends?

ZACK

Yes, sir!

FOLEY

Maybe there's hope for you yet.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS - DAY

Zack is on his hands and knees, scrubbing the floor, when Sid, Perryman and some of the others return from liberty.

PERRYMAN

(still angry)

I see you didn't DOR, Mayo.

ZACK

Hey, Sid, thanks.

PERRYMAN WALKS INTO THEIR ROOM

and stops as he sees the peace offering on his bed: his boots, shined to perfection, and two gleaming belt buckles. Sid comes in a second later and they share a look.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS ROOM - THAT NIGHT

All three candidates lie awake in their bunks.

ZACK

Hey, you guys still awake?

SID

Yeah.

A grunt from Perryman.

ZACK

Hey, do you guys ever... feel like you don't belong here...?

PERRYMAN

Yeah. All week long.

SID

What's the matter, Sweet Pea. Foley finally starting to get to you?

ZACK

Naw.

PERRYMAN

You know what he was running on me all last week? He told me I wasn't officer material because I think black and I'd never get comfortable giving orders to whites.

SID

Yeah? He's been telling me I'm not officer material because I'm not inner-directed. He thinks I'm here for my folks... and for my brother.

ZACK

That isn't true, is it?

SID

A little.

Zack shakes his head, impressed.

ZACK

How about that prick! He told me he wasn't officer material because he grew up poor like me.

PERRYMAN

He said he grew up poor?

ZACK

The kid on the windy side of the

baker's window. That's how he put it.

PERRYMAN

Foley's not poor. Buddy of mine in oh-four told me he's the son of a rich doctor down in Louisiana.

SID

Oh yeah? Friend of mine in oh-two told me he comes from a long line of Baptist ministers from Georgia.

All three candidates crack up.

ZACK

How about that prick!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ZACK AND PAULA'S ROOM AT THE TIDES INN - DAY

They are making love. When it's over, they lie there for a long time in one another's arms, flagrantly satisfied, and still joined.

ZACK

That was great.

PAULA

It sure was.

They share a little smile of satisfaction. They chuckle. The longer they stay together, like that, the more painfully intimate the moment becomes.

PAULA

Want me to get a towel?

ZACK

I'll get it if you want.

PAULA

I don't want you to move.

ZACK

I don't want to move. But somebody has to move sometime. Eventually.

PAULA

They found them like that, shriveled
up from weeks without food or water...

Zack laughs and the connection is nearly broken. Suddenly,
Zack just takes her face in his hands and kisses her in a
most loving way.

ZACK

All week I kept thinking about you
guys in that sailboat.

He laughs.

PAULA

We were pretty drunk.

Paula takes his officer-style cap and puts it on.

PAULA

You know, sometimes I wish I was one
of those girls they're letting in
the flight program these days. God,
I'd love to fly.

ZACK

What's stopping you?

Paula seems to consider it for a moment, then she shakes her
head. It's a fantasy, that's all, far removed from the
realities of her life.

PAULA

I don't care what the magazines say...
it's just not as easy being a girl,
especially from a Catholic family.
You don't know the junk I grew up
listening to, 'bout the way women
are supposed to think and act.

ZACK

That's no excuse for not going after
what you want.

PAULA

Who says I'm not going after what I
want? My mother's thirty-nine years

old and she still works in that factory. Every time I see her, I know exactly what I don't want.

They share a stretch of silence, Zack retreating into himself, his eyes somehow far away.

ZACK

(after a silence)

My old lady swallowed a bottle of pills one day while I was at school.

PAULA

God.

ZACK

The thing that really got to me... she didn't leave a note. Nothing. I've always hated her for that.

PAULA

Does it still hurt?

ZACK

Naw. You're alone in this world no matter what kinda folks or background you had. Nothing hurts, pard, once you got that one down.

Paula studies him a long moment.

PAULA

I bet most people believe you when you feed 'em that line.

He looks at her and smiles, then she kisses him.

EXT. THE AIR SHOW - DAY

Six jets fly DIRECTLY AT US, jolting our senses.

ON INTERCOM

The program consists of six aircraft performing a sequence of maneuvers in one of three different components: a diamond of four aircraft, two solo aircraft that oppose each other along the line of flight, and all six aircraft in a delta formation.

CAMERA PANS ZACK AND PAULA

as they enter and move toward the bleachers where Sid and Lynette are already seated. Zack suddenly stops and scans the bleachers, looking for somebody.

ZACK

I'm sorry. I can't sit with you.

PAULA

I understand. Maybe we'll see each other after the show...

ANGLE - BYRON MAYO

He sits in the bleachers about ten rows higher than Lynette, Sid and Paula. Zack slides into the seat beside him.

ZACK

How're you doing, pard?

Byron's eyes are on Paula.

BYRON

Who's that?

ZACK

Nobody. Just a girl I've been making it with the last couple of weekends.

BYRON

Great ass.

ZACK

Yeah, I sort of thought so myself.

BYRON

Better watch out for that kind, Zackie. You know what they call 'em, don't ya?

ZACK

Yeah, I know.

BYRON

Back east in Newport, Rhode Island, they call 'em the Fall River Debs.

In Pensacola, the Mobile Debs. In
Norfolk –

ZACK

That what she was... a Norfolk Deb?

BYRON

Who?

(realizing)

Aw shit, Zackie, let's not get off
on your mother again, please.

ZACK

(testy)

What if I want to talk about her,
pard? What then? You know, that's
all I've ever heard from you, since
I was a kid... you never want to
talk about that, man, and it's
important.

BYRON

There's nothing to talk about. Two
goddamn times I made it with your
old lady. We barely even talked.

The JETS ROAR close overhead and Zack has to raise his voice
to be heard.

ZACK

That's not how she told it. She said
you wrote her every week you were
away.

BYRON

I wrote. Not every week...

ZACK

She said you told her in every letter
how much you loved her, how you wanted
to marry her, have children with
her...

BYRON

I never said any of that!

ZACK

I found them, pard, and read them

myself, right after she did it!

BYRON

(beat)

Okay, I wrote those things... and yeah, I had big thoughts of getting together with your mom... but when she hit me with being pregnant, I saw who she was. I'd had quiff lay that shit on me before!

ZACK

(suddenly livid)

What did you call her? What did I hear you call her, you son of a bitch?

Both men rise angrily to their feet, but a split second later the Angels are making another pass over the stands and everyone is standing and applauding, making their argument less public.

ZACK

(screaming above the noise)

She loved you, you bastard! And she believed you when you said you loved her! She never gave up thinking you'd come back

(beat)

Don't you ever talk about her like that again or I'll kill you, Byron!

Zack pushes toward the exit, shaking with anger.

ANGLE - PAULA

watching him and suddenly rising to follow.

EXT. THE PARKING LOT AT THE AIR SHOW - DAY

Zack is halfway to his parked motorcycle when Paula suddenly appears, running after him.

PAULA

Zack, wait.

He keeps walking but she overtakes him.

PAULA
What's the matter?

ZACK
Nothing. Go back to the show, Paula.

PAULA
I've seen all that a hundred times.

ZACK
(snaps)
Hey, will you just leave me alone?

Paula stops, hurt. Zack keeps on walking toward his bike.

PAULA
(angrily)
Yeah, I'll leave you alone! How about forever? That long enough for you?

She stomps off in the opposite direction.

MOVING WITH PAULA

She fights her tears but they well up in her eyes anyway. The SOUND of Zack STARTING HIS MOTORCYCLE, then he comes rumbling up beside her, smiling apologetically. Paula won't even look at him. She just keeps walking. So he motors around in front of her again, blocking her path. She tries to go around him but again he cuts her off.

ZACK
(suddenly)
Hey, isn't it about time you had me over for Sunday dinner?

Paula looks at him like he's crazy.

ZACK
Come on. Invite me. All day the idea of a family Sunday dinner's been coming into my head. Since you're the only one I know around here with family...

PAULA
Zack, I don't know if I want to do that...

At that moment, Sid and Lynette come walking up from the show.

LYNETTE
C'mon, Paula. We'd better get back.

Paula starts off with her friend.

ZACK
Hey, what about Sunday dinner? When're you gonna let me know?

PAULA
(turns to him)
When I'm good and ready.

She gets into the Falcon with Lynette and they drive off.

NEW ANGLE - SID AND ZACK

Zack revs his motorcycle.

SID
What's a matter, Sweet Pea? We'll have a little fuss?

Sid gets on behind him and they drive off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABOARD THE FERRY - DAY

Paula and Lynette leave the wheelhouse, carrying cups of coffee, and we TRACK with them to the back of the ferry.

LYNETTE
You serious about having him over?

PAULA
I haven't made up my mind.

CAMERA HOLDS as they reach the fantail and look back at the lights of Port Ranier.

LYNETTE
Paula, how far would you go to catch Zack?

PAULA

What do you mean?

LYNETTE

You know what I mean. Would you...
let yourself get pregnant?

PAULA

No way... Would you?

LYNETTE

I never used to think I'd do something
like that, but now I'm not so sure.
You ask me, nine weeks just ain't
long enough to get a guy to fall in
love with you.

PAULA

That don't justify trying to trap a
boy by getting pregnant, Lynette!
Nothing justifies that. I can't
believe you're even thinking like
that. I mean, that's really backward.

LYNETTE

No more backward, if you ask me,
than the way these hotshot assholes
fuck us, then ditch us.

(beat)

Don't you ever feel used, Paula?
Don't you ever feel like if this is
all you get for your trouble then
the sonofabitch ought to be paying
for it...?

PAULA

No. I never feel like that.

LYNETTE

I do.

INT. THE POKRIFKI KITCHEN - DAY

As mother and daughter prepare the Sunday meal, Ester finds
herself studying her daughter almost as if she were seeing
herself as a girl, in Paula.

ESTHER

You look real pretty, darling. I'm sure everything'll go just fine.

PAULA

Mom, I don't want to be a fool. I like him a whole lot but...

ESTHER

Honey, you can only be yourself. If that isn't enough for Zack...

Both women move to the window as they hear his MOTORCYCLE APPROACH. Zack motors up, and starts for the door, a bouquet of flowers in his hand, his white liberty uniform almost sparkling in the bright sunshine. Esther's eyes become soft, almost limpid.

ESTHER

(a young girl again)

He's very handsome.

Paula looks at her for a moment, then leaves the kitchen.

INT. THE POKRIFKI LIVING ROOM

Joe Pokrifki is watching Zack from the living room window, threatened to his core. The DOORBELL RINGS and Paula moves past him to answer it. Seeing the expression on her father's face, she stops.

PAULA

Daddy, please be nice to him.

Joe just stares at her. The DOORBELL RINGS AGAIN and she opens the door.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Zack stands there with the flowers in his hand, smiling eagerly.

ZACK

Hi.

PAULA

Are those for me?

ZACK

No, they're for your mom.

INT. POKRIFKI DINING ROOM - DAY

The flowers he brought are in a vase on the table. Esther is serving out helpings of stew. As she serves Zack, she meets his eyes and smiles an almost flirtatious smile.

ESTHER

Thanks again for the flowers, Zack.

ZACK

My pleasure, Mrs. Pokrifki.

Across the table from Zack, Joe is staring their way in a most hostile manner.

ESTHER

How many more weeks before you graduate, Zack?

ZACK

Just three, ma'am.

Again, a flirtatious look. Joe sees it. And so does Paula.

To compound matters, Paula's little sisters are also flirting with Zack, and Joe Pokrifki is taking it all as a threat to his castle, an outright attack on his manhood.

Finally, Zack can handle his stares no longer. He smiles his most disarming smile and meets the man's gaze.

ZACK

Sir, excuse me, but why're you looking at me like that?

JOE

Looking at you?

ESTHER

He doesn't mean anything by it, Zack.
Do you, Joe?

JOE

I don't mean anything by it.

ZACK

Great dinner! Mrs. Pokrifki.
Absolutely the best meal I've had in
a long, long time.

Esther is staring at him with faraway eyes, and her answer
comes as though on a time-delay.

ESTHER

(beat)

Oh... yes... thank you, Zack.

Embarrassed to the point of tears, Paula rises to her feet.

PAULA

Come on, Zack. Let's go for a walk.

Zack rises and follows her out.

EXT. THE POKRIFKI HOUSE - DAY

As they leave the house and start down the street, Paula
starts to cry and Zack puts his arm around her shoulders.

PAULA

I'm so embarrassed. I knew I shouldn't
have brought you here.

ZACK

No, it's okay. It was a great free
meal. Everybody was so uptight I
felt sorry for you.

PAULA

That's okay. I'm used to it.

They walk in silence for awhile.

PAULA

So, after you graduate you go on to
basic flight, right? Is that in
Pensacola?

ZACK

Yeah, then if I get jets, it's on to
Beeville, Texas.

More silence. Paula words her next question very carefully.

PAULA

Zack, do you ever think about what it'd be like to have kids... a family.

ZACK

(lying)

No. Is that what you want?

PAULA

Some day. When I'm sure I can do a better job of it than my folks.

ZACK

What would you do differently?

PAULA

For a start, I wouldn't marry a man I wasn't in love with.

ZACK

Why'd your mom marry that guy if she didn't love him?

PAULA

Because my real father wouldn't marry her.

ZACK

Your real father?

Paula takes her wallet out of the hip pocket of her jeans and hands him a weathered old photo.

PAULA

Yeah... him.

INSERT - THE OLD PHOTO

is of a handsome young flight candidate in uniform, with a stylish little moustache and dark bedroom eyes.

BACK TO SCENE

Zack looks up from the photo, shaken.

ZACK

Your real father was an Officer

candidate like me?

PAULA

Twenty-two years ago.

ZACK

No wonder he was looking at me like that.

Paula watches him closely. Zack checks his wristwatch.

ZACK

Uh-oh. Time to get back to the wars.

He kisses her perhaps a little too quickly and starts toward his parked motorcycle.

PAULA

Call me during the week if you get the chance.

ZACK

I'll try, but this week we go into survival training, so I can't make any promises.

(lame)

Well, thanks again for dinner. Thank your mom again for me, will you?

PAULA

Sure.

(beat)

Zack, I hope you know I didn't have to show you that picture.

ZACK

I know that.

With a smile that almost quells her concern, he drives off.

Paula watches him until he disappears.

EXT. TREE-LINED ROAD TO THE BASE - DAY

SHOOTING THROUGH the passenger window, PAST Sid and Lynette making out hot and heavy, TO Zack as he drives up on his motorcycle.

SID
See ya, sweetheart.

He gets out and get on behind Zack.

CAMERA MOVES WITH SID AND ZACK

as they drive to the base.

SID
I kid you not, Mayo, I am in love.
We must've set a new indoor record
today. You want to know how many
times we did it?

ZACK
(sharply)
You'd better get smart, man. It's
time to walk away.

SID
What? You've gotta be kidding!

ZACK
Remember what Foley said? His little
warning? Those are the girls he was
talking about. They're out to marry
us any way they can.

SID
I don't believe that. They're just
having a good time, same as us.

ZACK
That's what they want you to think,
but I saw where she lived, what is
she's trying to get away from.
(urgently)
Just take my word for it, pard. Break
it off now. Do it this week.

EXT. THE SURVIVAL COURSE - DAY

Zack, Sid, Casey, Perryman and Della-Serra are struggling to erect a shelter in the driving downpour, using a parachute and logs they've cut. It's a hokey little tepee at best but they crowd inside it as THUNDER and lightning herald a blast of monsoon-like rainfall. The shelter collapses on top of

them.

INSIDE THE TENT - NIGHT (LATER)

The five candidates are sitting around inside the tent, listening to the rain, Zack slightly aloof and pensive.

CASEY

I don't know about you guys but I'm starving.

CUT TO:

A HELICOPTER SHOT OF ELGIN AIR FORCE BASE

In the hinterlands beyond the Navy base is an Air Force base with vast acreage of swamplands and tundra. A big truck comes bouncing along a windy little road into the undergrowth. The truck stops and the candidates from Zack's class file out the back of it while Foley comes around from the passenger seat to address them.

FOLEY

Okay, worms. This is it. Can you pussies live through three days without food or water in the wilderness? This is where we thin our ranks the "natural" way, children. Incidentally, those little twigs you see floating in those mud puddles aren't twigs. They're water moccasins.

GROUND LEVEL SHOTS

reveal that he's right. Lethal-looking snakes slither and glide over the surface of the swamp waters.

THE FACES OF THE CANDIDATES

reflect what you'd expect. Fear. Even Zack looks wary of the ordeal ahead.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS

captures the humor of the next three days of survival training. The candidates are a sorry spectacle the first day and a half, trying to catch snakes with forked sticks, trying to rub wood together to start a fire, throwing up from eating

the wrong berries, but generally clowning around, not taking it too seriously. Then, as hunger sets in, a change comes over them. They set up a big tent for shelter, get a nice fire going, and prepare a serviceable meal from carefully selected roots, berries and tree bark, and strips of fried water moccasins. On the third day they plot a path through the wilderness and finally emerge onto a highway where Foley waits with the truck. The candidates send up a weary cheer and embrace each other as if they'd just pulled off an escape from a POW camp.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE SCOTT PAPER COMPANY

Paula is on the line, sorting colors, while Lynette talks on a payphone on the other side of the cavernous room. The noise of the processors and conveyors is terrible, but her coworker, Bunny, 38, a faded, jaded deb if there ever was one, calls to her above the din:

BUNNY

You and Lynette still seeing those flight candidates over to Pensacola?

PAULA

Why? What makes you think we wouldn't be?

BUNNY

I don't know... Friday... three forty in the afternoon and not a word out of you about where you're going, what you're doing over the weekend...

Paula says nothing. She glances over at Lynette again, hopefully. Bunny takes it all in, the consummate deb.

BUNNY

Comes a time right after they get through survival training when they start to think they can make it without you. Suddenly they stop calling. Suddenly they own the goddamn world.

(beat)

He hasn't called you by now, Paula, he ain't gonna call.

PAULA

You just keep your mouth shut, Bunny.
You don't know so much!

BUNNY

May they all crash and burn.

INTERCUT LYNETTE AND SID

He's at the barracks pay phone.

LYNETTE

Sid Worley, I think you're ashamed
of me.

SID

Ashamed? No – I love you, Lynette.
I mean that. After I leave them,
I'll meet you at the motel, okay?

LYNETTE

If you won't take me to dinner with
your parents, I won't meet you at
the motel.

SID

Lynette, I told you already, it won't
work.

LYNETTE

Then, I'll see you around.

She hangs up.

THE FACES OF WOMEN WHO WORK AT THE OTHER CONVEYORS

turn to watch Lynette as she returns to her place on the
tissue line. There's a saying that Mobile Debs never die,
they just go on working for Scott.

The way some of the women watch her and shake their heads a
little, suggests that it might have some basis in truth.

LYNETTE RESUMES HER PLACE ON THE LINE

and struggles to come up with a perky grin, but then it sits
on her face like it belongs to someone else.

LYNETTE

Well, so much for that.

She has tears in her eyes.

PAULA

Lynette, did he say anything about Zack?

Lynette shakes her head, no.

PAULA

Cover for me while I make a call.

She moves off suddenly, toward the phone.

AT THAT MOMENT, ZACK AND SID ARE LEAVING THE BARRACKS

The Officer of the Deck comes out of the building a few seconds later.

O.O.D.

Hey, Mayo. There's someone named Paula on the phone.

ZACK

(beat)

Tell her I already split.

PAULA PUTS DOWN THE PHONE

and returns to the line. All the old debs watch her.

INT. THE HOLIDAY INN DINING ROOM - DAY

STARTING ON Zack, eating at Mach Five. THEN INCLUDE Sid and his parents, TOM and BETTY WORLEY, two of the world's straightest human beings, stiffly WASPish in spite of their down-home Oklahoma drawls, people with so much moral fiber it shines humorless through everything they say or do.

SID

Zack's only a tenth of a second off the all-time obstacle course record. He's bound to break it soon.

BETTY

That's wonderful, Zack.

ZACK

Your son is the one reason I'm still in the program, Mrs. Worley. He's pulled me through every exam.

TOM

You guys are lucky you didn't go through the program when I did. They used to start that Dilbert Dunker twice as high as they do now.

ZACK

(mouth full of food)

That's really interesting, sir.

TOM

And you couldn't just quit like you can now. When I went through it... and when my oldest boy went through it... if you bilged out you were sent into the fleet as a swabby.

(suddenly)

Sid, how come you haven't written Susan in over three weeks?

Sid looks stricken. He glances at Zack, sees his quizzical expression, and looks away.

SID

We haven't had time to write anybody.

BETTY

Zack, is my son involved with a local girl?

ZACK

No, ma'am. All he ever talks about is, us, Susan.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WATERFRONT - NIGHT

CAMERA MOVES with Sid and Zack as they make their way toward the LOUD ROCK MUSIC coming out of the legendary "TRADER JON'S."

SID

Thanks for covering for me.

ZACK

No problem, but who's Susan?

SID

My girl back home. We're supposed to get married after I get my wings. She was Tommy's girl. They were engaged to be married before he died.

(beat)

I should've told you about her. I don't know why I didn't, except I didn't want you to think I was a shit for making it with Lynette.

ZACK

I'm not your folks, man. You love this... Susan?

SID

She's the sweetest person I've ever known. Loves kids. Works with handicapped kids every afternoon at the church. Everybody loves her.

ZACK

I didn't ask you all that, Sweet Pea. I asked if you loved her.

SID

(distracted)

Listen, I'm not going to go to that little reunion party. I'm meeting Lynette at the motel.

(a sheepish grin)

Best head in fifty-two states. After three days of survival training, how could I resist?

Zack rubs his buddy's bristle-brush of hair, affectionately.

ZACK

You should've done what I did. A clean break.

SID

Lynette told me it really tore her
up when you didn't call this week.

For an instant, Zack's mind seems to be on Paula, but he
pushes her out fast.

ZACK

There's women for you, pard. They
tell you they're in it for the laughs,
but it's always a fucking lie.

(a loud whoop)

Look out, Trader Jon's, I'm in the
mood for some fun!

He mock salutes Sid and disappears into T.J.'s.

INT. TRADER JON'S - NIGHT

STARTING ON THE PHOTOS of The Blue Angels that crowd the
walls... a lithe, young stripper DANCES INTO FRAME. Hanging
from a net overhead are countless model airplanes.

Seeger, Della-Serra, Perryman and Zack are at the bar, drinks
raised in toast.

ZACK

Hey, guys – we did it. We survived!

They clink glasses. As the others sip their beers, Zack downs
a double shot of tequila and pushes his glass toward the
grizzly-looking bartender, old TRADER JON himself.

ZACK

Give me another double Tequila.

His shipmates share a look. Seeger's attention then shifts
to the dancer. What a body she has. Perfect little coffee
cup breasts. A bottom that tightens and relaxes like a fist
as she dances to the loud, rock music.

CASEY

(watching the dancer)

Not bad.

DELLA-SERRA

So women turn you on, huh, Seeger? I
always thought you were a dyke.

CASEY

Cool it, Emiliano. I don't find it funny.

CAMERA MOVES with the dancer, away from the group and we:

TIME CUT TO:

SHORT TIME LATER

Zack is hoisting a chair with shells onto the bar top.

ZACK

(smashed)

Lemme show you little game called "Crash and Burn".

He climbs up on the bar and sits down in the chair. The Olongapo Kid.

ZACK

Listen up, dick-brains! This is how we separate the jet jockeys from the helo-boys. Guy who flies the farthest without crashing and burning... he's hot shit!

Seeger, Perryman and Della-Serra glance nervously around the place. Nobody thinks it's that funny, especially Trader Jon.

DELLA-SERRA

Come on, Mayo! You're gonna get our asses in trouble, man!

PERRYMAN

Get down from there, before they call the shore patrol.

ZACK

Come on! Give me a push! Never hochi in the P.I. you see jet-jockey so hot like me!

TRADER JON

Hey, buddy, cool it.

Seeger approaches Zack.

CASEY

Zack, we've got to go.

ZACK

Just trying to have fun. That fucking prison is really starting to get to me. C'mon, Seeger. Gimme a push.

(beat)

Fuck you guys! I'll do it myself!

He pushes off with his feet and the chair glides down the bar, knocking over glasses and beer bottles. The chair and its rider topple over the bar and Zack goes sprawling onto a table, laughing like a looney.

TRADER JON

Okay, that's it!

Seeger quickly turns to her cohorts.

CASEY

You guys take care of Trader Jon while I get him out of here.

Perryman and Della-Serra nod and head off to deal with the man while she goes to Zack.

CASEY

C'mon, Zack. We've got to get out of here!

He allows her to lead him toward the exit.

EXT. TRADER JON'S - NIGHT

Casey pushes him into the backseat of a taxi, but Zack grabs her by the hand and tries to pull her inside.

ZACK

C'mon, Seeger. Let's go to the Tides Inn Motel.

He pulls her close and kisses her on the lips, but she gently pulls away.

CASEY

You're cute, Mayo, but you don't

want me. And to tell you the truth,
I don't want you.
(a quick kiss)
See you back at the base.

She gives the driver a fiver and the taxi drives off.

CUT TO:

INT. SID AND LYNETTE'S ROOM AT THE TIDES INN - NIGHT

Sid lies in bed, staring up at the ceiling. WIDEN to include Lynette, just starting to get dressed beside the bed.

SID

By the way, shouldn't you have had a period by now?

LYNETTE

I'm a little late, that's all.

SID

How late?

LYNETTE

What difference does it make? If anything was to happen, which I'm sure it isn't, it would be my responsibility.

SID

Exactly how late are you, Lynette?

LYNETTE

(playing him)

What do you care? Suppose I was pregnant. Just suppose it. You don't think I'd try to make you do anything you don't want to, do you?

SID

No. But that's not the only issue here, sweetheart. There's a lot more to it than that.

She's like an expert fisherman, working her catch, easing it in so deftly it never feels the hook.

LYNETTE

What other issue is there, Sid?

SID

My responsibility as its father, for one. I mean, if I've made you pregnant, I'd want to... do the right thing.

Lynette waits hopefully.

SID

...I'd want to pay for the abortion... I'd want to be with you through the whole thing... by your side.

(beat)

So how late are you, Lynette?

LYNETTE

(cold)

Let's just wait and see what happens.

She finishes dressing and leaves.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS SHOWER - NIGHT

Zack sits in the shower, the water blasting down on his head.

Sid bursts in.

SID

Zack? God, I'm glad I found you. I need to talk to you, buddy.

Zack is a zombie. He groans and gestures Sid off.

ZACK

Talk to me in the morning. I feel like shit.

SID

But it can't wait.

He presses close to the shower, so preoccupied he doesn't even notice the water spattering his uniform.

SID

Guess fucking what! Lynette's missed her period. What am I gonna do, Zack? What can I tell my folks?

What on God's green earth do I say to Susan.

ZACK

Calm down, Sweet Pea. She seen a doctor?

SID

No, but she's gotta be at least a month late.

ZACK

Doesn't mean shit. Get her to a doctor. You can't do anything until you hear what he says. Make the appointment yourself.

CUT TO:

INT. THE LEARNING CENTER - DAY

The class is taking a critical multiple choice exam. Zack struggles against his basic instinct to cheat off of Casey's paper. He's still slower than most of the others but he's doing okay. It's Sid who's slipping under. His mind is so far away he hasn't even bothered to write his name at the top of the exam paper.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS - LATER THAT DAY

The class, down to a scrappy 23 survivors, comes running in after the exam, Foley right on their heels.

FOLEY

Fall out on the lawn in five minutes!
This is your last shot at the 101
Course... Mayo... Seeger... Della-
Serra...

As the rest of the class goes bounding up the stairwell. Sid rushes up to the O.O.D.

SID

Sir, request permission to make an emergency phone call, sir!

The O.O.D. nods and Sid starts feeding quarter into the payphone on the wall. Zack hangs back, concerned.

FOLEY

Move it, Mayo!

Zack glares at Foley and runs up the stairs.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE OBSTACLE COURSE - VARIOUS SHOTS - DAY

STARTING TIGHT on Seeger's face as Foley starts her.

FOLEY

Go!

He starts several of the others AD LIB. Then it's Zack's turn.

FOLEY

Go!

Zack takes off across the course with a gleam in his eye. He wants that record. Zack dances through the innertubes, hand over hands the parallel bars, and churns his way through a stretch of knee-deep sand, his classmates cheering him on, wanting the record, too, wanting to leave their mark.

They all wear warmups similar to the ones worn by the crack squad they saw in the early days of training, except that their shirts are gold and their pants are blue.

On the front of their shirts is an insignia and the words:

"FOLEY'S FIRE EATERS." Their nicknames have been printed boldly on the back: "MAYONNAISE," "B. SANDWICH," "THE MARRIED MAN," "THE WILD WOP," (DELLA-SERRA), "GODZILLA." "WHAT ME WORRY?," ETC. Across the back of Foley's all red warmup suit are these words: "YOU'RE PISSING ME OFF, BOY!"

As Zack passes his slower classmates, they add their shouts of encouragement to the cheering from the sidelines. "Do it, Mayo!" "Put our name up there, Mayonnaise!" "You can do it!"

Zack shimmies up a rope, yanks his body over the low hurdles, crawls on his back under the low horizontal bars, scampers up the angled beam, leaps the moat... and is approaching the wall full tilt when he sees Seeger up ahead, struggling as usual to get over it.

ZACK

(calling)

Come on, Seeger! Let's go over it together!

He makes it in one leap but she falls back to the ground, beaten. Zack pauses at the top of the wall and looks down at her.

Foley watches from the distance.

Zack drops back down beside Seeger. She has tears of frustration in her eyes.

She's not going to make it and the realization that she's come this far only to fail is crushing her.

CASEY

Go on, Zack! Go for the record!

ZACK

Fuck the record. Now you listen to me and do exactly what I tell you.

(he draws a line with his foot)

Start back ten yards and take off from here. Not here... or there... but right here!

(the total officer)

No excuses, Seeger! You are going to plant those legs here and then you're going to yank yourself over that wall because you have to! You want jets? Then do it, goddamnit!

Seeger nods, almost mesmerized by his decisive tone of voice, his sudden emergence as a leader. She starts running, takes off exactly on the mark, and struggles to the top of the wall.

She drops down on the other side and Zack joins her, smiling

FOLEY STOPS HIS WATCH

and shakes his head. He can live without that record.

ZACK AND CASEY

As they finish the course, they stop and hug each other. Then something catches Zack's eye that chases the good feelings away.

ZACK'S POV

Big Sid is trudging slowly toward the 101 Course in his warmup, his nickname: "LOVERBOY" somehow ironic, especially in this moment. Sid sees Zack looking his way and signals the news to him by putting his arms into a baby-cradling position and rocking the imaginary off-spring from side to side.

CUT TO:

INSIDE THE MESS HALL - DAY

Zack and Sid are in line, getting their food.

SID

It's a big religious thing with her and she won't even discuss it.

ZACK

But she expects you to marry her?

SID

She said it was up to me. If I don't, she'll go off and have the baby on her own somewhere.

At the mention of the word "baby" nearby classmates perk their ears up.

ZACK

So what's the problem? Girls do that all the time.

SID

I can't let her go off and have the kid by herself and not do anything.

If it's my kid, too, then I've got a responsibility, don't I?

ZACK

Not if she won't even talk about an abortion.

SID

But it would still be my kid. That's the point.

ZACK

Do you know that for sure?

SID

It's mine.

They leave the food line and start toward the tables.

ZACK

Okay, but what if it's like Foley said and she got knocked up, to trap you – is it still your responsibility?

SID

No matter how it happened, if she goes ahead and has it" Zack, there'll be a child in the world that's mine – and I couldn't go through life knowing that and not knowing its name or where it lived.

ZACK

Jesus Christ, Sid! Is everything your responsibility?

ANGLE A TABLE

Sid and Zack sit down with their classmates and start eating.

ZACK

Your brother getting killed instead of you... Isn't that why you promised to marry this Susan? Isn't that why you do everything, man? Out of some bullshit code of ethics you inherited from your family?

Foley can be seen at the Instructors' table, IN SHOT

BACKGROUND, watching them, but Sid and Zack are oblivious to their audience.

SID

(angrily)

Maybe it's all bullshit to you, but that's now how I was raised. I believe we have a responsibility to the people in our lives – that that's the only thing that separates us from the goddamn animals!

(beat)

I'm not like you, Mayo. I can't just shit on people and then sleep like a baby all night!

The words sting and Zack flares back at his friend.

ZACK

You got a responsibility to you first, pard – and if you can't handle that, you've got bigger problems than getting a girl pregnant!

They stare at each other a long time, but no more words come.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE ALTITUDE CHAMBER - DAY

Wearing full oxygen masks, Zack and Sid are part of a group of six candidates playing pat-a-cake at simulated altitudes inside the claustrophobic-small decompression chamber. An INSTRUCTOR is explaining the test over an intercom, from outside the windowed chamber.

INSTRUCTOR

Now everybody take off your masks but continue the same exercise. The purpose is to show you the effects of altitude on the motor skills when you've been cut off from your oxygen.

Slowly their reactions begin to deteriorate. At first Sid seems amused by his and Zack's fumbling to slap hands. Then

as a SHINING SOUND mounts into a crazy place, he begins to panic.

SID
(suddenly, calling)
Stop this thing! I said stop it!

Everyone looks at him strangely. Sid lurches like a drunk to his feet and tries to move toward the door. He trips over himself and falls, then stays there with his hands on his ears and his body curled into a fetal position.

SID
I want out! Let me out! Please! Let me out!

Zack extricates himself from his harness like a man with eight thumbs condemned on top of it to move in slow motion. He weaves, drops to his knees by Sid, and awkwardly tries to enclose him in his arms.

ZACK
Sid, it's okay. Don't be afraid.

The WHINING STOPS as they start to back off on the pressure inside the chamber, but they can't do it too fast. Slowly Sid comes to his senses, and his eyes focus on Zack.

ZACK
Sid, what happened?

SID
I don't know... I felt like... like
I was suffocating... Christ, Zack...
I was so scared... so godddamn
scared...

Tears are running down Sid's face.

ZACK
Hey, man, don't cry... not in front
of the instructors.

Zack looks around at the faces, all staring back in judgement, not just the instructors. By now, the candidates know the symptoms of a DOR as well as anybody.

The door to the chamber slams open and Foley is standing

there, grim-faced.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARADE GROUND - DAY

Zack is on morning "colors" duty. He and one of the lesser-known candidates are raising the flag, a bugler standing nearby, blowing "morning colors". Zack suddenly sees something that chills him.

Sid and Foley stand in front of the Admin. Building, Foley saluting the flag, Sid just standing there arms at his sides, shoulders slumped.

As the bugler finishes, Zack turns to his classmate.

ZACK

I gotta do something.

He breaks into a run.

TRACK WITH ZACK

as he runs toward Foley and Sid and walks with them toward the water.

ZACK

(to Foley)

You didn't kick him out...? Wait, didn't he tell you what he's been going through?

FOLEY

It doesn't matter what he's going through. That's the whole purpose of this zoo. What matters is he freaked out for some reason at twenty-five thousand feet and that can't ever happen again.

ZACK

But you don't understand. There's this girl he's gotten pregnant and she's putting him through hell, sir.

SID

He's right, Zack. It doesn't matter.

ZACK

Just like that it's all over? With less than two weeks to go, you're out?

FOLEY

It can still happen to you, too, Mayo.

Foley marches off like a windup toy.

ZACK

(furious)

Come back here, motherfucker!

Foley spins around, his eyes sparkling wildly.

FOLEY

What did you call me, Mayo?

SID

Zack, don't!

ZACK

I thought the D.I.'s were supposed to help you in this place! What kind of human being are you?

FOLEY

Stop eyeballing me, Mayo, or you're out!

SID

Please, Zack – go back to the barracks!

ZACK

I don't get it! He's the best candidate in our class! Ask anyone! The best student! The best leader! The best friend to everybody! Couldn't you bend your goddamn standards just a little?

SID

Zack, it wasn't him! He didn't ask me to D.O.R. I came to him on my

own.

(beat)

I'm glad it's over, Zack. I really mean that. He was right. I wasn't doing this for me.

He feels his tears coming up so he runs off suddenly across the parade ground.

ZACK

Sid, wait! Where're you going?

Sid keeps running. Zack turns back to Foley and they stare at each other a long moment before Zack bitterly salutes him.

ZACK

With your permission, sir.

Foley returns the salute and watches Zack walk off toward the barracks.

CUT TO:

EXT. PAULA'S HOUSE - DAY

Zack drives up on his motorcycle. Esther is in the yard, gardening.

ZACK

Is Paula here?

Paula suddenly appears on the porch, dressed in a simple cotton dress, her hair un-coiffed, none of her Deb makeup.

ZACK

I'm looking for Sid.

PAULA

So?

ZACK

Paula, he DORed and nobody's seen him.

PAULA

Why'd he do it?

ZACK

Hey! You know goddamn well what happened so let's not play any games, okay?

PAULA

I'm not playing any games! Go look at Lynette's!

ZACK

I don't know where that is.

Paula slowly moves to him and gets on the motorcycle behind him. They speed off, Esther watching them go.

EXT. LYNETTE'S HOUSE - DAY

She sits on the porch of the old home she was born in, her hair up in curlers, doing her nails. The National Paper mill sends up pillars of smoke on the horizon. A taxi drives up and Sid steps out, in a sport coat and tie.

SID

Hi, babe. Come on. I've got a couple of things I want to tell you.

LYNETTE

What're you doing out of uniform, Sid? You don't want to get in trouble.

SID

Forget that. Come on. Got a little surprise...

LYNETTE

I can't go like this. Can't you wait a few minutes 'til I'm ready?

SID

No way. I'm so happy I'm about to bust. Here, honey. This is for you. It cost me my whole savings, but I said what the fuck.

He hands her a little box. She opens it and finds an engagement ring. She looks up at him, happily.

LYNETTE

Sid! Oh, it's beautiful! You mean...

SID

That's right. Let's get married,
Lynette. Let's find a justice of the
peace and just do it!

Lynette tries the ring on.

LYNETTE

(euphoric)

Let's go tell Paula! God, I wonder
where we'll be stationed first. I
hope it'll be Hawaii. I've always
wanted to go to Hawaii.

SID

We're not gonna be stationed anywhere,
baby. I DORed.

LYNETTE

(shaken)

You what?

SID

I had to, baby... I'm no aviator. I
was faking it, like I was with
everything else in my life... up
'til right now.

LYNETTE

But... but what would we do? Where
would we go?

SID

Oklahoma. I can get my old job back
at JC Penney's. In a couple of years,
I'll be floor manager. Oh, you're
gonna love Oklahoma, Lynette. You
and mama'll get along just great. Of
course, money will be a little tight
for a while, but we'll make it.

LYNETTE

(suddenly)

Sid, there's no baby.

SID

What?

LYNETTE

I'm not pregnant. I got my period this morning. There's no baby, Sid.

SID

Well, I'll be goddamned.

Sid stares at her disbelievingly, but she's telling the truth, at least partly. There is no baby.

SID

(a big smile)

What do you say we get married anyway?

I love you, Lynette. I'm in love with you... and I didn't realize it until right this second... but I've never been happier in my life than I have been the last seven weekends, never more relaxed... more loved for just who I am...

(beat)

Marry me, Lynette. I love you.

Lynette looks off at the factory, then back at Sid.

LYNETTE

I'm sorry, Sid, but I don't want to marry you. I like you a lot and we had ourselves some real nice times, that's for sure... but I thought you understood. I want to marry a pilot, Sid. I want to live part of my life overseas... the wife of an aviator, Sid.

(bitterly)

Damn you! Goddamn you! Nobody DORs after eleven weeks! Nobody!

She throws the engagement ring at him and runs toward the house. Numb to his core, Sid slowly retrieves the ring and gets into her car. He starts it and drives off.

LYNETTE

Hey! Come back with my car!

EXT. A DIRT ROAD - DAY

Lynette's Falcon takes a sudden turn. A split-second later, Zack and Paula speed past in the opposite direction, missing him.

EXT. LYNETTE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zack and Paula drive up and move toward the front door.

PAULA
Lynette??

INT. LYNETTE'S HOUSE - DAY

They find her in the kitchen, sitting at the table, smoking a cigarette.

PAULA
Lynette, where's Sid?

LYNETTE
Already come and gone. Can you believe it? He DORed in the twelfth week. How can you win?

Zack grabs her by the shoulders and forces her to meet his eyes.

ZACK
What did you tell him about the baby?

LYNETTE
That there isn't one, as of today. I had my period.
(beat)
I couldn't believe it. He still wanted to marry me.

ZACK
And you turned him down??

LYNETTE
Of course. I don't want no Okie from Muscogee. I can get that right here in Port Angeles.

Zack starts shaking her angrily.

ZACK

You little bitch! How could you? Was there ever a baby, Lynette? That's all I want to know! Did you make up that baby, Lynette? Did you??

LYNETTE

(caught)

Of course there was a baby. I'd never lie about something like that. Would I, Paula?

She looks at Paula for support but she seems to be wondering the same things herself, and offers none. Zack abruptly pushes out of the room, leaving the two girls alone.

PAULA

Lynette, did you make up that baby or didn't you?

Lynette's silence is answer enough. Paula suddenly slaps her across the face with all her might.

PAULA

God help you, Lynette!

LYNETTE

You're no better than me, Paula!
You're just the same!

PAULA

No! That's not true!

She runs from the room.

EXT. LYNETTE'S HOUSE - DAY

Zack is getting on his motorcycle as she emerges from the house.

PAULA

I'd like to come with you.

ZACK

Why?

PAULA

Because he's my friend, too.

She gets on and he doesn't try to stop her. PAN as they drive off.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. THE TIDES INN - DAY

Carrying a pint bottle of bourbon, Sid weaves his way into the office. He smiles a quirky smile for the WOMAN behind the counter as he hands her some money and she gives him his key.

As he turns away from the counter, the woman calls after him.

WOMAN

Hey, is this yours?

She holds up the engagement ring he bought for Lynette. Sid smiles, takes it from her.

SID

Ever seen this one?

He pops the ring in his mouth and swallows it as the woman looks on, speechless. Sid weaves out.

WE'RE TIGHT ON SID'S FACE

as he trudges up the steps to the second floor of units. We stay with him until he reaches his room and walks in, slamming the door behind him to close the world out.

WE STAY LIKE THAT, OUTSIDE HIS DOOR

The SOUND of the TV going on, loud. Some game show. The passage of about twenty seconds. Then the SOUND of Zack's MOTORCYCLE approaching, stopping.

ZACK (O.S.)

He's here. She said he just came in.

The SOUND of FOOTSTEPS ascending to the second floor, running toward us. Zack PUSHES INTO SHOT and knocks on the door.

ZACK

Sid, it's Zack. Open up.

No reply, then from inside some SOUNDS are heard, a CHAIR FALLING, a sudden, dull SNAPPING NOISE, abrupt and final.

Zack throw his weight against the door and it splinters open.

ZACK
Sid?

Then he looks up and pales.

ZACK
Oh, God...

Paula steps into the doorway and utters a little gasp as she sees what poor Sid had done to himself.

INT. THE ROOM - DAY

The big Okie hangs by his necktie from a cluster of exposed drainage pipes in a corner of the ceiling.

ZACK'S FACE IS STRETCHED WITH PAIN

Tears flood his eyes. He shakes his head in disbelief.

ZACK
Oh, God... why? Why, Sid?

Zack cuts him down and cradles his friend's body in his arms.

ZACK
You stupid, fucking Okie! Why'd you do it! Why didn't you talk to me first? Why didn't you even try??

Paula watches from the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE TIDES INN - LATER THAT DAY

The last of the police cars and the one Shore Patrol sedan from the base are pulling out of the Tides Inn lot, behind the ambulance that carries Sid's body. Paula stands on the upstairs landing.

PAULA

Please stop it. None of that's true.
Goddamnit, I love you. I loved you
ever since I met you.

ZACK

Come on, Paula! You were looking for
a ticket out of here and you didn't
care who it was, any more than you
cared with the last class of
candidates you and Lynette fucked
your way through, looking for a
husband! Or the class before that!

PAULA

Yeah. You got the whole story just
right.

ZACK

Beware of the Puget Debs – and we
all laughed, especially him.

PAULA

I'm not a Puget Deb. I hate that
goddamn term!

ZACK

I bet you do!

PAULA

However you got it figured, I didn't
kill Sid and Lynette didn't kill
him! He killed himself!

ZACK

That's brilliant.

PAULA

Maybe not, but it is the truth. And
Zack, you didn't kill him either.

He goes out the door. Paula can see him drive off on his
motorcycle.

EXT. THE BARRACKS - LATER THAT DAY

As Foley calls muster.

FOLEY

Mayo.

He takes notice of Zack's absence, unsurprised, before pushing on the next name on the list.

FOLEY

Meyers.

Zack suddenly drives up on his motorcycle and walks toward the group, unshaven, tie askew, uniform totally wrinkled, eyes as red as sores.

FOLEY

Mayo, the rest of your class knows about candidate Worley, and we're all sorry.

ZACK

Sir, this officer candidate requests permission to speak to you in private.

FOLEY

I'm busy, Mayo. It'll have to wait.

ZACK

It's important, sir!

FOLEY

Mayo, you didn't hear me – I said I'm busy! And so are you! Go get cleaned up!

ZACK

Aw screw it...

He starts to walk into the barracks.

FOLEY

(suddenly)

Martial arts demonstration in the old blimp hangar in five minutes! Mayo, you're my volunteer!

Zack stops in his tracks and turns to face his antagonist.

He'll wait around for this.

CUT TO:

INT. THE MUSTY OLD HANGAR - DAY

Foley is up in the ring in his VC pajamas, watching them take do their seats. Zack is the last to walk in.

FOLEY

What're you waiting for, Mayo? Get your scuzzy ass up here.

ZACK

Yes, sir!

He climbs up into the ring with Foley.

FOLEY

Put these on.

He hands Zack a set of safety-punch gloves and safety-kick foot pads. Zack sits on the canvas and puts them on. Foley already wears his.

FOLEY

I'll start with some basic kicks. You try to copy me.

Zack gets to his feet and squares off opposite Foley.

MOST OF ZACK'S CLASSMATES

know about the incident in town with the locals, and the word spreads quickly to the others in excited whispers. They share a common dream, these twenty-one survivors, to see Foley broken and humbled.

THE MARTIAL ARTS DEMONSTRATION - A SERIES OF SHOTS

Foley demonstrates a simple side kick, the heel of his foot slamming hard against Zack's jaw. As in the previous demonstration, Foley isn't afraid of inflecting a little punishment along with his instruction. He's unprepared, however, for the skill and and speed with which Zack returns a version of that kick, the heel of his foot hitting Foley so solidly it rocks him back a couple of steps before he can catch his balance.

Foley grins, a rivulet of blood running down his chin.

FOLEY

Looky-looky what we got. That's pretty cute, Mayo.

Foley executes a crescent kick, his specialty, and bloodies Zack's mouth. Zack returns a crescent kick that knocks the Marine right on his ass.

FOLEY

You're good.

ZACK

Get on your feet and find out how good, sir.

Before Zack can get set, Foley seizes the offensive and starts backing him across the ring with a series of fast kicks.

Momentarily trapped in the corner, Zack ducks a punch, slips under a crescent kick, and hits his man three times in the face with his foam-padded knuckles, then follows with a kick to the mid-section that makes the Marine sink to his knees with a silly expression on his face.

Suddenly unafraid of Foley, the class rises to its feet and cheers Zack on.

Ad-LIBS of "Get him, Zack!" "No mercy!" "Remember what he did to us!" Quieter mumblings of "Kill the motherfucker."

Foley gets to his feet. Zack drops him instantly with a jumpspinning back kick.

Foley gets up again and manages to stay up for a short time but it's a pathetic mismatch and Zack can land solidly at will with hands and feet. Finally, with a spinning outside crescent kick that awes his classmates, Zack flattens him again. Foley just lies there, obviously spent.

Zack offers him a hand. Foley looks up at him helplessly, shakes his head in defeat, and reaches out to accept his help.

Then, with shocking suddenness, Foley coils his knees to his chest, yanks Zack toward him, and – at the same time – unleashes a kick straight to Zack's chin. Zack crumples to the canvas and lies there, barely conscious. Foley rises to his feet.

FOLEY

Oldest trick in the book. Now, is there anything you want to tell me, Mayo?

Zack shakes his head, no. Foley bows to him formally, then to the rest of the class, and marches like God's Warrior Son from the old hangar.

Zack watches his classmates file out, leaving him alone in the cavernous hanger.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE BARRACKS - NIGHT

Zack comes in by himself.

INT. ZACK'S ROOM - NIGHT

Perryman looks up from his Navigation book as his only surviving roommate enters. Zack looks at the two stripped bunks, the empty lockers... then he stares at his own locker for a long time, trying to make up his mind.

Then Perryman gets up, puts a reassuring hand on his shoulder, just for an instant, and goes back to his studies. Finding some coins in his locker, Zack leaves the room.

INT. THE BARRACKS PAYPHONE - NIGHT

Zack throws some money in to satisfy the operator.

ZACK

(into phone)

Byron, it's me. You doing anything weekend after next?

(beat)

Yeah... it's graduation.

DISSOLVE TO:

GRADUATION MORNING ON THE BASE - DAY

The sun is just rising and sending its colors across the big, wide lawn where the graduation ceremony will soon take place.

Four enlisted men are positioning risers and folding chairs.

CUT TO:

INT. PAULA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Paula gets up to the SOUND of her alarm. She hurries to turn it off so as not to awaken her sisters. The time is 6:30 in the morning. Time to go to work. Grudgingly, she relinquishes the warmth of the bed, and trudges toward the bathroom in her pajamas.

EXT. PAULA'S HOUSE - DAY

Paula gets into Bunny's Toyota and the carpool drives on.

EXT. THE NATIONAL PAPER MILL - DAY

As Paula is punching in, Lynette, waiting in line behind her, whispers:

LYNETTE

What do you think of the new mechanics?

Paula glances off at the two boys Lynette is flirting with, father back in the line. Both could be her father's sons.

Candidates for apehood.

Paula has a faraway look on her face as she pulls her card from the clock.

PAULA

Today's graduation. I hope he made it.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE PARADE GROUND - DAY

Zack and his classmates are passing in review before the Commanding Officer and his staff (including Foley), seated on the risers, and the large gathering of family and friends seated on the folding chairs. The base marching band, a phalanx to the left of the rises, is in fine and rousing form.

As Zack and Casey and Perryman and the others pass CAMERA, they do a precise EYES-RIGHT.

BYRON IS APPLAUDING LOUDER THAN ANYBODY

It's a proud moment for the reluctant father and he's not above letting the stiffer-looking parents around him know how he feels about having a son made it into the officer ranks.

ZACK SEE HIS FATHER

and smiles.

SECONDS LATER, THE CAMERA IS PANNING THE FACE OF THE GRADUATES.

standing at attention on their risers, reciting their commissioning oath.

THE GRADUATES

I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States of America against all enemies foreign and domestic...

Find Casey's proud face, Perryman's, Della-Serra's, Marcus'...

THE GRADUATES

...that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same, that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion...

CAMERA HOLDS ON Zack's face, his eyes moist, his voice rich with emotion.

ZACK

(with his classmates)

...that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God.

MINUTES LATER, THE NEWLY-

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS HAVE BROKEN RANKS

and are embracing their families and friends on the lawn.

Byron finds Zack and the two men stare at one another warily, before warmth floods their faces and they come together in an embrace. Zack pulls a folded document from his breast pocket.

ZACK

Look – my orders to Pensacola for
basic flight training... then it's
on to jets!

Byron quickly glances at the orders and pounds Zack on the back.

BYRON

I knew you'd make it!
(beat)
Where's your girl? Didn't she come?

ZACK

Naw. That's over with.

Byron almost looks sad to hear it.

BYRON

Zackie, I'm so proud of you. Get
ready, 'cause I'm gonna give you
your first salute and you'll owe me
a silver dollar. That's the tradition,
you know.

He starts to bring his hand up to salute his son but Zack grabs his wrist to stop him.

ZACK

(gently)
No offense, Byron, but my first one's
gonna come from... him.

He looks over at:

FOLEY, IN DRESS BLUES

He cane propped characteristically behind him, the newer

notches clearly recognizable from the ones that predate this class, he watches them approach... one after the other, each of his worms, his scuzzes, his college pukes... and he renders to them, as is the tradition, their first salute. In return, they hand him a silver dollar.

Perryman pays up, then Casey approaches him.

FOLEY
(saluting)
Congratulations Ensign Seeger, sir!

CASEY
Thank you, sir. I mean, Sergeant.

She gives him a silver dollar and hurries off to rejoin her family.

ZACK APPROACHES FOLEY

and the Marine salutes him briskly, his heels clapping together like a flamenco dancer's.

FOLEY
Congratulations, Ensign Mayo, sir!

ZACK
I'll never forget you as long as I live, Sergeant.

FOLEY
I know.

ZACK
Well, goodbye.

Zack gives him a silver dollar and Foley pockets it and snaps off another brisk salute.

FOLEY
See you in the fleet, sir!

ZACK
Yeah. See you in the fleet, Sarge.
And thank you.

Foley just grins as Zack answers his salute.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BASE - DAY

MOVING WITH ZACK ON HIS MOTORCYCLE. He still wears his dress whites and his gear is packed in a Navy seabag strapped to the back, as he drives away from the barracks, waving farewell to some of his classmates. As he rumbles past the parade ground, he sees Foley addressing a spanking new class of candidates, still in civvies, still sporting hair.

FOLEY

I don't believe what I'm seeing!
Look at all that hair! All those
lard bellies from junk food and pot!
Where you been all your lives, at an
orgy? Listening to Mick Jagger and
bad mouthing your country, I bet.

The new class cracks up, laughing, as Zack motors past, headed for the gates. It's hard to believe only thirteen weeks have elapsed since he heard those words for the first time. Seems more like a lifetime.

EXT. THE GATES OF THE NAVAL AIR STATION - DAY

Zack drives out and disappears down the road.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE NATIONAL PAPER KILL - DAY

Paula is at work on the line. The sweat of a long day stings her eyes as it stings the eyes of her fellow workers. Poor Paula. It's not hard to imagine her in a few years as Bunny.

Hell, Lynette's already there. Old debs never die...

THE WOMEN ON THE PAPER TOWEL LINE NEAR THE DOOR

are the first to see him enter.

ESTHER POKRIFKI

stops her work as she sees the flash of gold on a Naval shoulder board.

THE WOMEN ON THE NAPKIN LINE

send up a buzz of gossipy excitement as he strides past them.

So clean. So handsome. So perfect. Every deb's fantasy.

HE WEARS THE DRESS WHITE UNIFORM WITH ENSIGN GOLD

and he wears it proudly as he strides through their ranks, toward the girl who is only now stopping to watch him approach.

PAULA CAN'T BELIEVE IT

Almost as she might have dreamed it long ago as a little girl, she watches him take her face in his hands and kiss her in such a romantic way that it's unlikely the women at National Paper, or any of us, will ever forget that kiss.

LYNETTE AND BUNNY WATCH THAT KISS

with a mingling of happiness and painful, desperate longing, on their faces.

ESTHER POKRIFKI

is the second happiest Deb in the room.

THE OTHER AGING DEBS IN THE HUGE FACTORY

stop their work to watch. A few even applaud.

ZACK SUDDENLY LIFTS PAULA IN HIS ARMS

and with their eyes still touching, he carries her toward the door.

LYNETTE'S FACE

reveals all the jealousy that accompanies the happiness she is feeling for her friend. She's never leaving this place and she knows it.

LYNETTE

Way to go, Paula! Way to go!

She adds her applause and half the factory is clapping and cheering by the time the officer and his girl reach the doorway.

EXT. THE NATIONAL PAPER MILL - DAY

Zack carries Paula out into the sunshine and kisses her again.

She's like candy, all right, and he'll never get enough.

PULL BACK INTO HELICOPTER SHOT that dwarfs them far below us, and...

FADE OUT.

THE END