B-25: The Most Dangerous Game

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FADE IN

SUPER: 1942

EXT. WHITE HOUSE – WASHINGTON D.C. – DAY

Army Chief of Staff GEORGE MARSHALL and Admiral WILLIAM LEAHY enter the room with a Navy Captain, FRANCIS LOW.

LEAHY
Mr. President, this is Francis S. Low, Assistant Chief of Staff for antisubmarine warfare.

ROOSEVELT
Submarines?

ROOSEVELT looks down at papers on his desk.

ROOSEVELT
My schedule says you’ve devised a plan to bomb Japan.
(beat)
The Japanese people have been told they are invulnerable ... An attack on the Japanese homeland would confuse and sow doubt. And there is a second reason, and equally important, a psychological reason for this ... After the disaster at Pearl Harbour, the Americans badly need a win.

MARSHALL
Yes, sir. We have a plan.

Roosevelt looks concerned.

ROOSEVELT
With submarines?

LEAHY
No, sir.

MARSHALL
With B-25s.
ROOSEVELT
Well, it took you long enough.

MARSHALL
An air raid on the Japanese capital, Tokyo, and other insulations on Honshu. Army pilots on an aircraft carrier.

ROOSEVELT
Retaliation for the attack on Pearl Harbor. I like it.

LEAHY
The Navy can take them in as close to the enemy as possible. This is a chance for both branches to give the Japs a dose of their own medicine. It's an Army-Navy show.

ROOSEVELT
Let's hear more about it.

LEAHY
Captain Low is here because... well... he's here to explain.

ROOSEVELT
This was your idea?

LOW
Yes, sir.

ROOSEVELT
A navy man. Wonderful.

LOW
Sixteen B-25B Mitchell medium bombers will be launched without fighter escort from the carrier Hornet. Far into the Western Pacific Ocean. The plan calls for them to bomb military targets in Japan, and to continue westward to land in China.
ROOSEVELT
Why don’t you just turn them around and land on the carrier.

LOW
Landing a medium bomber on a carrier is impossible.

ROOSEVELT
Suppose by the time they get to China, the Japs have taken over the landing fields?

LOW
The Chinese will arrange a signal for the pilots when they get to the field if the Japs have captured it. If that's the case, they'll keep right on going until they've run out of gas then bail out.

ROOSEVELT
Destroying their planes.

LOW
Yes, Sir.
(beat)
Fifteen modified bombers, the bombers' armament will be reduced to increase range.

ROOSEVELT
By decreasing weight.

LOW
We’ll install a 160-gallon collapsible neoprene auxiliary fuel tank, fixed to the top of the bomb bay, and also there will be room for additional fuel tanks in the crawlway and lower turret area...

ROOSEVELT
To increase fuel capacity.
LOW
From 646 to 1,141 U.S. gallons.

ROOSEVELT
How many airmen?

LOW
Five-man crews, and Army maintenance personnel, totaling 71 officers and 130 enlisted men, will be loaded onto the Hornet. The aircraft will be clustered closely and tied down on Hornet's flight deck in the order of launch.

ROOSEVELT
Bombs?

LOW
Each B-25 will carry four specially constructed 500-pound bombs. Three of these will be high-explosive munitions and one will be a bundle of incendiaries. The incendiaries are long tubes, wrapped together and carried in the bomb bay, but they are designed to separate and scatter over a wide area after release.

ROOSEVELT
What do you call those medals? Uhm...

MARSHALL
Sir?

ROOSEVELT
Medals awarded by the Japanese government to U.S. servicemen before the war.

LEAHY
The Japanese "friendship" medals?
ROOSEVELT
Collect a few of them and wire them to some of the bombs, will ya?

MARSHALL
Shall we take that as tacit permission?

ROOSEVELT
How soon can we do this?

All four men smile confidently.

BEGIN TITLES

EXT. WEST PACIFIC OCEAN

There is plenty of historic film, specifically a nine-minute reel produced by the Technical Data Laboratory at Wright Field and entitled “Combat Area Activities”.

Vintage footage shows some of the Japanese men rescued from the famous picket boat (and the boat’s destruction). There is also footage showing the planes tied to the deck and men preparing the B-25s for launch and then the launching.

The reel doesn't contain any footage after the raid left the Hornet but there are thousands of later reels showing bombs falling on Japan. Also, there is footage of crashed B-25s in China, and some footage of at least one of the raiders receiving a medal in China.

END TITLES

SUPER: 1945

EXT. JAPANESE AIRFIELD – KUMAMOTO – DAY

At the airbase, we see two Japanese officers inside the dispersal hut. They have just returned from air combat and are exiting their flight suits.

LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE #1
It becomes more and more crowded
American bombers with each raid.
LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE #2
More targets for us.

A Zero appears out of the sky and then a second one and they descend toward the landing strip. The first Zero is very shaky but lands and as it rolls to a stop we see it is a total wreck; it’s a miracle that it even flew. It does not taxi, but stops at the end of the runway.

LIEUTENANTS
It’s been shot to hell.

The lieutenants run to it with a medical crew. They must use a pry bar to open the cockpit. Inside is a boy. He is perhaps 14 or 15-years-old. He has managed to land the plane but is dead or near dead. He has thrown up blood from a stomach or lung wound.

On his lap is a paper outlining the silhouettes of the various American bombers. In his own blood, he’s circled the B-25.

The commanding officer arrives and looks into the blood splattered cockpit as well.

Meanwhile, the second Zero lands and properly taxis up to the command building.

The commanding officer turns to look at the taxiing Zero.

LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE #1
No, sir, it’s not ours. Some Zero out of fuel likely.

COMMANDING OFFICER
Right. Well inform me directly if hear anything about the others.

The second plane lands unscathed and the pilot clambers out without a scratch. It’s HIGASHIKUNI.

COMMANDING OFFICER
Too many boys. They can’t just disappear. All right, I’ll hope.
OFFICER #1
(as the pilot approaches the hut)
Sir, it’s Prince Naruhiko Higashikuni.
(beat)
Nephew of Emperor Hirohito
(beat)
Imperial Japanese Army Air Service!

COMMANDING OFFICER
That’s all we need now.

A scramble siren sounds and Lieutenant JG #1 and #2 rush back toward their planes.

OFFICER #1
Hang onto this.

Lieutenant #1 hands a CLERK the bloody identification chart and maps taken from the shot-up Zero, then goes out to meet Higashikuni.

The young pilot trainees are lined up. They are 14 to 16-years-old. Higashikuni is reviewing the young pilots.

COMMANDING OFFICER
Come inside, Sir.

HIGASHIKUNI
(to cadets)
Train well.

The two officers enter the command building.

HIGASHIKUNI
How are they making out?

COMMANDING OFFICER
Half the squadron are new pilots, sir.

HIGASHIKUNI
That’s why you were sent here, to lick them into shape. They get less warning here than any other station, so they must learn to get
up from standby in two minutes
flat if they’re to intercept the
enemy.

A clerk answers the ringing phone.

    CLERK
    Hello, Distribution? Right.

The clerk calls out through the open window.

    CLERK
    Stand down, A-flight, false alarm.

A signal is given and the scramble is aborted.

Higashikuni steps to the window looks out to see the body of the boy slowly being removed from the Zero and placed into an ambulance.

    HIGASHIKUNI
    A boy?

    COMMANDING OFFICER
    Yes, sir. I believe he was only fourteen.

    HIGASHIKUNI
    All right.

Higashikuni looks toward a hanger. There is a female cat with kittens and she is playing with a mouse. The mouse is caught but still struggling and the cat is reluctant to kill it. The kittens are learning. Higashikuni takes time to study the cat. There is an awkward silence.

    HIGASHIKUNI
    You have another pilot missing?

    COMMANDING OFFICER
    Yes, sir. Over the bay.

    HIGASHIKUNI
    Much overdue?

    COMMANDING OFFICER
    Over an hour, sir.
HIGASHIKUNI
I thought I’d made it clear; there are too many American bombers for pilots to go swanning around on their own – we can’t afford to lose them this way. What’s the excuse this time?

COMMANDING OFFICER
Youthful indiscretion, sir.

HIGASHIKUNI
Mm–yes, well we were all young once, and I have a son in training still, so I know his eagerness. But that’s no excuse.

COMMANDING OFFICER
Yes, sir.

The missing Japanese fighter pilot is seen floating dead in the sea, as a bunch of American bombers fly back to Okinawa.

EXT. SOUTH AIRBASE – OKINAWA – DAY

The bomber touches down on a site which is being prepared to serve as an airfield. Heavy construction.

Out gets JONES, donning his peaked cap. With a cigar in his mouth, he crosses a courtyard towards the façade of a large, crumbling Japanese building in which his officer pilots are billeted.

JONES
Corporal, my beer!

CORPORAL
Yes, Major.

An ORDERLY approaches carrying some papers.

The OLDER CORPORAL approaches with some beer.

JONES
Not now, Pops.
ORDERLY
Tomorrow’s orders. Kumamoto.

JONES
All right, if I must.

Jones signs the papers. Then the other pilots appear. TEX HUGHSON, big athletic guy with a Boston Red Sox baseball cap, and some others and they begin walking toward a smart military motor.

HUGHSON
I know, I just heard.

JONES
That doesn’t concern you.

Running towards the building removing his flight jacket.

JONES
Lieutenant, look after Captain Hughson.

LIEUTENANT
Good evening, sir. May I lead the way?

HUGHSON
Certainly. Lead on.

JONES
Don’t let him near a glass of milk!

INT. OFFICER’S CLUB - DAY

Inside the mess, Hughson and other American officers are standing round the bar. They are in high spirits.

SEATED OFFICER
How do you evade a Zero? Dive?

HUGHSON
Simple; they have float bowl carburetor, which is fine in a car, but NOT an aircraft. To
'lose' a zero on one's tail, make a tight left-hand spiral downwards the Zero will lean-out if it tries that.

HUGHSON
And curve in at the same time.

SEATED OFFICER
But with respect, sir, since I’ve been here we never had the altitude for a spiral downwards.

HUGHSON
When we get to Tokyo, I’ll take one up and show him how to fly it.

JONES
(entering)
By the time you get to Tokyo, there won’t be any Zero’s left.
   (beat)
   Doesn’t look like they’re gonna surrender.

HUGHSON
They keep putting kids in them and well...

SEATED OFFICER
They need to teach them boys to shoot, then...

Everyone looks at the seated officer.

JONES
That’s your thinking?

SEATED OFFICER
What?

JONES
Think about it.

SEATED OFFICER
Oh, well. You know what I mean.
The orderly take a phone call.

ORDERLY
(approaches Jones)
Sir, you are to report to
Wilsbach.

JONES
When?

ORDERLY
Immediately. Captain Hughson too.

The two officers ride in a Jeep. The driver stops before a
set of barriers as a convoy of trucks rumbles by with
bombs.

HUGHSON
I know why we’re going to
Wilsbach.

Then one after another we see trucks carrying bombs.

JONES
At last.

They drive on.

EXT. CENTRAL AIRBASE - OKINAWA - DAY

The date is now April 10th, 1945. General Wilsbach is
briefing American pilots and crews, using a map of southern
Japan.

WILSBACH:
Gentlemen... They are on their
heels. The B-25 is the ultimate
strafer and the destruction of the
Japanese Air Force is at hand.
Take-off is at 0715. Our targets
in Southern Japan are the
following airfields: Kumamoto,
Kagoshima, Miyazaki.

EXT. SOUTH AIRBASE - OKINAWA - DAY
The scene quickly moves back to the B-25s base to another briefing, for squad leaders conducted by a Jones.

JONES
(using a pointer on a map)
Kagoshima... Kumamoto. It’s our job to destroy the Japanese airfields.

EXT. SOUTH AIRBASE - OKINAWA - DAY

The meeting is about to begin. BROOKS is a loud New Yorker.

BROOKS
I don’t care who’s pitching; the Yankees can hit them. You wanna listen to the game it starts at 3 AM. Quansit hut six.

Now we see a group of pilots being briefed by Hughson.

BROOKS
Pardon, me I’m new here. What are those little triangles?

HUGHSON
Cultural sites. That is a palace and that is a shrine. Don’t touch them.

BROOKS
Not even by accident?

The men chuckle.

HUGHSON
And that is a prisoner of war camp.

Brooks point to an ominous cave with rail lines leading into it.

BROOKS
Okay, that’s the camp but what’s that?

HUGHSON
It’s a coal mine. Forced labor.
The men sit up, concerned.

BROOKS
Coal mine?

HUGHSON
If you hit either of these targets, don’t bother returning, just keep on flying to China.

All laugh.

Move to the end of the meeting. Hughson is directing group but also his own crew, including a keen Brooks.

HUGHSON
So fly on the deck, and make good use of it. Don’t fly into in the sea. Watch your fuel gauges – you’ve only got thirty minutes over there. We’re done.

EXT. THE YELLOW ROSE – SOUTHERN AIRBASE – DAY

This particular B-25 has peculiar nose art, a beautiful Hispanic pinup girl. She has a yellow rose in her hair.

BROOKS
Captain?

HUGHSON
I don’t go by all that. Call me Tex.

BROOKS
I hope I wasn’t out of line in there.

HUGHSON
The only thing I know is wrong with you, is you’re in a Yankee fan.

BROOKS
Oh, you heard?
HUGHSON
I don’t hold grudges, however.
Help fly the plane and don’t get
us lost and we’ll get along fine.

BROOKS
So what’s a guy from Texas doing
in a war wearing a Red Sox hat?

HUGHSON
That’s a long story.
(beat)
If you make a week, I’ll tell ya.

They reach the other men who are standing in front of the
plane. Captain Hughson makes the introductions.

HUGHSON
This is our new navigator/
bombardier. Brooks, from Brooklyn.

MAN
Easy to remember.

HUGHSON
This is Manchester, the turret
gunner and engineer.

MAN
You can call me Man.

BROOKS
Great. Easy to remember.

HUGHSON
This is Wiederhold, the radio
operator and waist gunner.

BROOKS
Okay. Nice to know ya.

WIEDEHOLD
Good to know you as well.

HUGHSON
And, this is Dois, the tail
gunner.
BROOKS
That’s not a Texas name?

DOIS
I’m from Fort Worth.

BROOKS
So, you guys. I never flew with a bunch of Texans.

MANCHESTER
Make sure you write your momma. She’ll feel a little better you’re with us.

BROOKS
So that’s the famous Yellow Rose of Texas.
(beat)
She looks Mexican.

HUGHSON
She was. She was the dish that kept Santa Anna busy during the Battle of San Jacinto.

BROOKS
Yea. You gotta have a trademark, but...
(beat)
I thought he was asleep in the middle of the day.

HUGHSON
Grow up!

They move to board the aircraft.

Brooks moves to climb aboard first.

MAN
Whoa. Whoa. Big balls in Cowtown, buddy

Brooks is stopped. DOIS climbs on.
BROOKS
What?

WIEDERHOLD
You really are new.

Wiederhold climbs on.

BROOKS
Ya, I told you that.

MAN
There’s rules.

BROOKS
Like what?

MAN
First of all, you get on in reverse order. Private Dois starts. Captain Hughson boards last.

BROOKS
What if the plane’s on fire? Getting off, I bet it ain’t in that order. Huh?

They stare at him. He’s clearly a New Yorker, insensitive to their way of doing things. And he’s a rookie.

INT. THE YELLOW ROSE – SOUTHERN AIRBASE – DAY

Ammo is loaded. There is a mechanic at one of the engines. And the crew waits. Other B-25 rev their engines.

BROOKS
What are you all, superstitious? Come on, we’re not gonna catch fire. We might land in the water. Odds are...

MAN
(to Wiederhold)
He’ll never fit in.
WIEDERHOLD
They never really do, do they?

At the far end of the tarmac are the P-51s, who are sitting unmanned. No activity.

BROOKS
The fighters, we leave and they catch up with us?

HUGHSON
The fighters are for the B-29s.

BROOKS
But we’re a bomber. They could spare a few wouldn’t ya think?

MAN
What school did you go to?
(beat)
We don’t need no stinking fighters.

WIEDERHOLD
Give me a revolver.

MAN
I'll shoot him myself.

DOIS
You want me to shoot him?

INT. YELLOW ROSE - TAXI WAY - DAY

The engines are warm and the plane is in line behind others. The crew is waiting.

EXT. PITCHERS MOUND - BOSTON FENWAY PARK - DAY

FLASHBACK:

Tex is on the mound throwing his warmup pitches. An American diplomat escorts two distinguished Japanese men into the first two or three rows. They have with them two Japanese women dressed in traditional clothes.

The inning is about to begin.
UMPIRE
Okay, play ball.

Tex doesn’t respond. He’s looking in the stands.

UMPIRE
(louder)
Play ball!

Finally, Tex stops staring at the Japanese.

UMPIRE
He okay?

CATCHER
Who Tex? I think he was just looking at the Chinese.

UMPIRE
Bud, I think those are Japanese.

CATCHER
Yea?

UMPIRE
You ought to read the Globe sometime. Something other than sports. The Japanese ambassador and his wife and daughter are here.

(beat)
Alright, here we go.

Tex begins to work. First pitch is a hard called strike.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. YELLOW ROSE – TAXI WAY – DAY

BROOKS
Okay, here we go!

Tex revs the engines to full RPM and the plane moves down the runway.
EXT. VERANDA - JAPANESE PALACE - KUMAMOTO - DAY

HIGASHIKUNI and his lieutenant are sitting at a breakfast table. There is a phone on the table. And breakfast. Higashikuni is not eating.

HIGASHIKUNI
The Americans will be coming.

LIEUTENANT
You think?
(beat)
The morning seems peaceful.

HIGASHIKUNI
Don't forget, Americans are always preparing for something.

LIEUTENANT
A morning set of coffee? Toast and an egg?

HIGASHIKUNI
Cursed waiting.
(beat)
It is impossible to get used to.

LIEUTENANT
The breakfast can help. When will you eat? You look like an American.

HIGASHIKUNI
I’ll eat regularly when we end these raids.

LIEUTENANT
I’ll set my clock so we will be the first to take back Okinawa.

HIGASHIKUNI
First, we have to get back there.

The telephone rings. The aide picks it up and signals with a gesture that his commander was right.
HIGASHIKUNI
The Americans?

The aide is listening to the report but nods.

HIGASHIKUNI
Where?

LIEUTENANT
Kagoshima and Miyazaki.
(beat)
Sir, 15, 20, and 12 headed here.

HIGASHIKUNI
Scramble the fighters!

LIEUTENANT
(into the phone)
Scramble the fighters!
(beat)
Three cader squadrons are ready sir.

HIGASHIKUNI
They’ll be lined up like lice and all I have are inexperienced children.

LIEUTENANT
The Americans are coming in a predictable order.
(beat)
Like chicks behind a hen.

HIGASHIKUNI
This hen will look like a rooster to these kids.
(beat)
Well, Ito, do we fight or lie down to die?

LIEUTENANT
Fight!

HIGASHIKUNI
Start the engines! And get the boys up.
LIEUTENANT
(into the phone)
Start the engines! And get the boys up.

EXT. KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - BARRACKS - DAY

The room is full of bedrolls and trunks. Japanese boys with manga, comic books. Many are sleeping. A few are wrestling. A few are in the shower. Scramble.

EXT. AIR BATTLE - KUMAMOTO - DAY

Over Kumamoto, there is a fierce air battle. The B-25s sweep in, pursued by the young Japanese pilots, very young boys. The B-25s attack the airfield and buildings. They drop their bombs and then most of them turn for Okinawa.

The inexperienced Japanese pilots feel lucky to have survived. Survival is a huge victory for them.

YOUNG ZERO PILOT
They are running!

Several Japanese boys shout victory into their radios.

OLDER ZERO PILOT
They dropped their bombs and have escaped, you idiot.

INT. B-25 - KUMAMOTO - DAY

One B-25 recklessly hangs back; the Yellow Rose.

BROOKS
Sir?

HUGHSON
There’s something I need to check out.

BROOKS
But sir.

HUGHSON
I’m the commander of this plane.
Hughson circles and we see a Japanese palace in the far distance. However, he’s spotted by the Japanese.

OLDER ZERO PILOT
One remains.

YOUNGER ZERO PILOT
They dropped their bombs.

OLDER ZERO PILOT
Perhaps not. He wants to hit the palace.

There is another long sequence of air combat scenes. The B-25 dogged by a three Zeros. The Yellow Rose banks left and right.

HUGHSON
It’s kids.

BROOKS
How do you know they’re kids?

HUGHSON
Three Zero’s and we’re not dead yet.

They shoot down one Zero. And the resistance (bullet holes in their Zeros) frighten the other two young pilots, who peel away. They circle and build up their nerve.

INT. B-25 - ABOVE THE PALACE - DAY

As the Yellow Rose approaches, Hughson pulls back the pilot’s side window.

BROOKS
What are you doing?

HUGHSON
Nothing for you to report.

BROOKS
I’m not gonna report anything. But we’re out of bombs.
HUGHSON
I’m just looking.

Hughson takes a baseball out of his jacket pocket and casually pitches it out the window. It hits the roof of the palace and breaks a tile in two pieces. They slide down the roof and into the courtyard. The clay shards of roofing and the baseball land not far from Higashikuni, a Japanese aristocrat. He looks up with an hateful expression.

INT. B-25 – ABOVE THE FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP – DAY

They are pulling a hard right and The Yellow Rose is banked over on her side. Their exit will bring them over the POW camp.

Hughson has a second baseball and he’s looking to pitch it out. He hands it to Brooks, who is on the bottom side in a right bank turn. Brooks does get the ball launched out his window.

It lands in the sand of the camp. The American, British and Australian prisoner of war are too emaciated to cheer but they are able to chuckle and some only manage to smile.

INT. B-25 – ABOVE THE MOUNTAINS – DAY

The young Japanese pilots lay into them again and fire on them until the Zero’s run out of bullets. One of the B-25’s two engines stops functioning. The radio is struck by a high caliber bullet that would have his Weiderhold.

MAN
Left engine, smoking.

Hughson pulls a few levers and throws a few switches. The left engine stops smoking and the engine seizes.

HUGHSON
Radio Okinawa. We are coming in lame.

WEIDERHOLD
Radio’s out. Took a 50 cal.

BROOKS
What’s keeping this bucket flying?
HUGHSON

Luck.

WEIDERHOLD

And a prayer.

BROOKS

So what’s the plan?

HUGHSON

Fly on 201° until we’re screwed.
Hope we find some shipping.

BROOKS

We’re already screwed.

There are four Japanese Zeros approaching head on, blocking their exit.

INT. B-25 - ABOVE MIYAZAKI - DAY

Above the city, there is more harassment. But the kids flying the Zeros can’t get it done. The B-25 turret and waist gunner exhaust their ammunition.

The Japanese pilots miss with most of their firing, but over time it begins to look ominous for the B-25. The plane is leaking fuel and hydraulics inside the plane.

DOIS

It looks like it’s just me and you.

(beat)

This kid is good.

One Zero remains. Three-hundred rounds are expended from the Zero and sixteen bullets rip through the fuselage. He’s not that good.

HUGHSON

More kids.

BROOKS

They can’t hit shit!

The tail gunner is the last to run out of ammo.
DOIS
That’s it I’m out and this kid’s lined up.

Brooks looks in panic to the back of the plane.
BROOKS
This may be it.

HUGHSON
No. No. If we get out over the water. We’ll be okay. We’ll, just out last him.

That one last Zero. Only three rounds are expended and one shatters the rear turret glass.

They wait and wait and the kid flying the Zero is out of ammo.

WEIDERHOLD
He must be out. Hahah!

MAN
We made it!

All the combatants have run out of ammo. But the last Zero pulls beside them. He rolls the canopy back and fires eight pistol rounds directly at the cockpit.

BROOKS
What the heck!

HUGHSON
Kid’s got balls.

The pistol’s bullets impact the only remaining engine, cut electrical wires, and finally after tons of abuse, it sputters.

HUGHSON
We’re going down.
(beat)
How lucky can a kid get?

BROOKS
A damn pistol?
(beat)
How unlucky?

HUGHSON
S.O.P. destroy any equipment or intelligence that may fall into enemy hands.

BROOKS
Can we make it to the water?

HUGHSON
I doubt it.
(beat)
Maybe.

BROOKS
Hold on fellas.

They loop out of the water.

HUGHSON
Okay, start pitching.

Papers, codebooks, bombsights, radios and machine guns are pitched overboard into the sea.

The plane arches back toward land.

They crash land in two feet of water.

INT. B-25 - MIYAZAKI BEACH - DAY

Everyone takes off their headsets and move toward the center of the plane. They will exit the waist gunner ports.

They appear to be working up their nerve to exit. Everyone but Dois is there.

Japanese people with rudimentary weapons (pitchforks and scythes) are ready to met them.

BROOKS
Angry mob.
HUGHSON
What do you expect; we’ve been bombing them for months.

BROOKS
All right, I’m not in any rush.

HUGHSON
But they don’t wanna get their feet wet and come get us.

BROOKS
Maybe we should just stay here and shot the bull until some professional soldiers come.

Awkward silence.

HUGHSON
Fellas, I owe you all an apology.
(beat)
I shouldn’t have flown over the palace.

BROOKS
No. I think that was okay.
(beat)
Right fellas.

WEIDERHOLD
Sure.

MAN
I’m good with it.

BROOKS
Now the baseballs were classic.

HUGHSON
Okay, I was thinking those guys in the camp...

BROOKS
Wait till the media gets a hold of that move. You guys can tell your grandkids about that ballsy move.
(beat)
You’ll be a celebrity back home for that gesture.

WEIDERHOLD
Well, you’re gonna get a chance to ask those boys how they liked it.

BROOKS
Guy’s don’t worry about it. The war’s nearly over.
   (beat)
It’ll be a short uneventful stay.

MAN
Where’s Dois?

Over the internal coms faintly, we hear singing.

DOIS
Put on your new shoes
Put on your gown
Shake off them sad blues
The Big Ball's in town
Board up your windows
The big boy's in town
We'll go to Cowtown
We'll dance around

WEIDERHOLD
Probably trying to get rid of that gun.

MAN
It’s not gonna detach so easily.

WEIDERHOLD
But still, we should at least leave it in the water.

MAN
Let’s go help him.

Man and Weiderhold walk to the back of the plane and Dois is already dead. He has a tool in his hand and he’s been pawing at the gun mounts. One screw is off and another is loose.
WEIDERHOLD
They killed him.

MAN
Must a been that last Zero.

WEIDERHOLD
We just can’t buy a break today.

They bring Dois’ body up to the middle of the plane.

MAN
What do we do?

WEIDERHOLD
Leave him?

HUGHSON
No, if we leave him; they’ll just leave him to rot. They don’t care so much for sanitation.

BROOKS
But, if we put him on their beach, they’ll have to bury him.

They wade in from the plane, hands not raised. Man and Wiederhold have Dois’ body.

The army arrives shouting commands. They raise their hands only when it looks like they might be shot.

The tide is already carrying the plane up out to sea.

EXT. YARD - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - DAY

A truck brings the crew and a dozen others to the camp.

Fukuhara’s boots. And a Victrola record player hooked to the camp’s PA system welcomes them.

The starving prisoners almost all stand to watch. A few only sit up in their beds and strain to look out the window. One is clearly dead his eyes open staring at a wall.
The new POWs climb down from the truck and line up. There is a Filipina translator, MARY. At this point in the film, none of the Japanese characters speak Japanese. She is in every scene to translate.

**FUKUHARA**
Sangai-bushi/Sado Okesa by Katsutaro Kouta 1938

**LIEUTENANT**

From the experienced prisoners, who are watching, we hear a shout.

**BRIT**
American Victrola. Enjoy.

The entire group of new POWs chuckle.

**FUKUHARA**
The next man I hear laugh will lose his head.
(beat)
They are dying and bitter. But you are fresh and not dying... yet.

Fukuhara puts his hand on his sword. Mary translates. One man in the group of new POWs makes eye contact with her. He feels maybe they know each other.

**LIEUTENANT**
Gentlemen. A little decorum. That sword isn’t ceremonial. We don’t want pointless deaths.

**FUKUHARA**
Tell them the whole speech as I normally deliver it.

**LIEUTENANT**
I need to dispel some rumors. These men will tell you that they are flying missions from Okinawa. Your intelligence officers have cleverly told them to claim that you are knocking on our door.
(beat)
These new men lie.

BRIT
Okinawa!

The older POWs cheer. Fukuhara is enraged, but he can’t use the sword on the entire camp. The POWs are needed to mine the coal.

He screams at the new prisoners.

FUKUHARA
Bow.

LIEUTENANT
Remain in this position.

Fukuhara takes out his sword. There is one POW, LEICESTER, who refuses to bow. Leicester has a beard that’s at least three years old. He looks at Mary. Mary is curious.

FUKUHARA
Bow.

MAN
I don’t know who you are but the war is almost over.

BROOKS
Bow. That’s an order.

The POW doesn’t bow.

HUGHSON
No, leave him alone.

The lieutenant looks through the papers he’s been handed.

LIEUTENANT
Commander, this is a famous British bomber pilot.

(beat)
Leicester Lycanthrope

Some of the Japanese guards have heard the rumors of a POW werewolf. Their eyes show their superstition.
FUJKUHARA
What?

LIEUTENANT
Leicester Lycanthrope
(beat)
Name and rank are not real.
(beat)
Leicester is a city. And a lycanthrope...

FUJKUHARA
I know the myth.

LIEUTENANT
He escaped seven times always when the moon was full. Always. Guards have always been found mutilated.

FUJKUHARA
No. No. That’s a myth also. Spread by them, to frighten our guards.

LEICESTER
Well, don’t believe everything you hear.

FUJKUHARA
Name? Rank?

LEICESTER
He told you. Leicester Lycanthrope, that’s with an L.

FUJKUHARA
I asked, name and rank?

LIEUTENANT
Answer please, or he’ll kill you.

Fukuhara signals two guards who kick the legs out from beneath Leicester. Fukuhara is about to swing the sword.

MARY
They’re here.
Fukuhara does swing but stops when he sees Higashikuni enter the camp.

FUKUHARA
(to Leicester)
I’m not playing.

MARY
He says he’s not playing and he’s not.

LIEUTENANT
You may all straighten up.

The new POWs stand at ease.

EXT. YARD – FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP – DAY

The camp is next to the Mitsui Miike coal mine. The camp measures 200 yards by 1000 yards and is surrounded by a 12 feet high wooden fence topped with heavy gauge wire.

The Brit and Hughson and Brooks are in line for chow.

HUGHSON
What is the situation here?

BRIT
A quarter die. The rest are sick and damaged.

HUGHSON
Damaged?

BRIT
Damaged.

(beat)
Three-and-a-half years, lethal conditions.

HUGHSON
How much chow are you getting?

BRIT
Less than a cup of filthy rice a day. Magots are the only protein.
HUGHSON
That’s meager.

BRIT
Gross malnutrition. Some have gone blind. Others, unrelenting nerve pain.

HUGHSON
Diseases?

BRIT
Malaria and dysentery, everyone.

HUGHSON
Your men are skeletons.

BRIT
Living skeletons. Yes.

BROOKS
You get the baseball?

BRIT
That was you?

Brooks gestures to Hughson.

BRIT
I’ve never even played baseball. But it was effective. Thank you.

The Brit takes the baseball out of his pocket.

The men chuckle.

BRIT
The baseball was a nice bugger off to the japs, but just the flyover was priceless.

HUGHSON
Priceless?

BRIT
To see those a-holes run like rats for cover into the coal mine.
Two Japanese officers emerge from a building.

BRIT
And there they are. That’s Asao Fukuhara and the officer with him is the doctor.

HUGHSON
Horrible conditions. Far worse than I imagined.

BRIT
I’m gonna kill them both.

HUGHSON
I hope you get a chance.

BRIT
A B-25? You had some modifications to get here?

HUGHSON
Not from Okinawa.

BRIT
Wow.

(beat)
That’s good news.

HUGHSON
Should be over soon.

BRIT
They’ll never surrender.

HUGHSON
In the end, they’ll have to.

BRIT
They treat us like this because they don’t surrender. We’ll have to kill everyone single one of them.

BROOKS
About that baseball.
BRIT
Oh, I’m giving it to my kids. Sort of a present. I don’t think they’ve ever seen one.

BROOKS
Well about that. Since it’s a historical ball and first even pitched into a Japanese POW camp... I was wondering if...

BRIT
No.

BROOKS
I’ll give you my bowl of rice.

BRIT
Deal.

The Brit quickly hands over the ball. Brooke hands the malnourished Brit the rice bowl.

Later...

INT. BARRACKS - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - DAY

There are 33 barracks, all one-story buildings 120' x 16' with ten rooms to a barracks. Wood with tar paper roofs, and windows with panes.

BROOKS
Leicester?

LEICESTER
Sydney actually.

BROOKS
You’re not a Brit?

LEICESTER
But they don’t know that.

BROOKS
Why the...
LEICESTER
Whoever heard of a werewolf from Sydney. The Nips might be dumb but they’re not that dumb.

BROOKS
Well, you’re from a bomber.

MAN
Lancasters, I heard?

LEICESTER
Cinematography. I’m not a flyer.  
(beat)
I was with the ABC and we were working in Manila when the film was suddenly canceled, December 8th.

MAN
Not in the Air Force?

BROOKS
Well, why don’t you just tell them?

LEICESTER
And ruin my fun?

WEIDERHOLD
That commander was about to lop off your head.

LEICESTER
Crazy bugger is he?

MAN
They might let you go. You’re not even a combatant.

LEICESTER
Well, I sort of let on that I knew more about the Lancasters than most.  
(beat)
And, I know about a new secret bomb, powerful enough to destroy an entire city.

WEIDERHOLD
Really?

LEICESTER
No, I just made it up. But they are seriously messed up about it.

WEIDERHOLD
That sort of arrogance can get you killed.

LEICESTER
They can’t kill me... because...

BROOKS
It might be true. They don’t know.
(to Leichestre)
I like your style.
(to the others)
Guys, he’s yanking their chain.

LEICESTER
And I let it slip that I’m Churchill’s illegitimate son.

BROOKS
No?

LEICESTER
I really took the worse beating for that one.

WEIDERHOLD
And they believed you?

LEICESTER
Fully half believed I’m a werewolf.

MAN
So you escaped how many times?
LEICESTER
If I knew how to fly, I could have really escaped. I’d be eating Roast lamb at the Rockpool.

WEIDERHOLD
In Sydney?

LEICESTER
There’s a jap airfield right beside every single POW camp I’ve ever escaped from.

BROOKS
Well, you’ve been locked up with hundreds of flyers.

LEICESTER
Yes, but I’ve always been looking for a voice. I found it.

They all look at Leicester like he’s crazy.

LEICESTER
You do understand, right?

BROOKS
And there isn’t a downside to all this foolishness.

LEICESTER
There’s always a downside. They’ll be here in about five minutes.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM – FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP – DAY

The Japanese are torturing him mercilessly with bamboo sticks.

INTERROGATOR #1
Talk, and don't die!

INTERROGATOR #2
He'll talk.
INT. FUKUHARA’S OFFICE - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - DAY

Fukuhara and Higashikumi sit in the office. Higashikumi has an aide and Fukuhara has his lieutenant there as well. It’s all very cordial and polite. They don’t close the door and consider Mary in the hall as harmless. Japanese, use subtitles.

FUKUHARA
Colonel Higashikumi!

HIGASHIKUMI
Commandant Fukuhara!
(beat)
You have a prisoner here.

FUKUHARA
Many.

HIGASHIKUMI
Commandant, soon, American bombers by the hundreds will cross our border.
(beat)
If we don't take urgent action, the Empire will fail.

FUKUHARA
This is a timely thought.

HIGASHIKUMI
I want to create a new generation of super-fighters.

FUKUHARA
Which can stop it, the American Air Force?

HIGASHIKUMI
Training the youngest generation is the Emperor’s only salvation. Harnessing their power.

FUKUHARA
They need more time at target practice.
HI GASHIKUMI
There isn’t time.

FUKUHARA
You should begin immediately.

HIGASHIKUMI
You hate the Americans, Asao?

FUKUHARA
I’m a soldier. We don't care about emotions.
(beat)
My duty is to serve the Emperor.

HIGASHIKUMI
And your family. Commandant, you have a wife and two children in Tokyo?

FUKUHARA
I do.

HIGASHIKUMI
The Americans are coming and naturally, Tokyo will be the number one target.

FUKUHARA
I understand, Commander! The drama isn’t necessary.

HIGASHIKUMI
Pardon me. But, the fate of the Empire is in one man’s hands.

FUKUHARA
Well, of course, the Emperor is a living god.

HIGASHIKUMI
Not exactly. Let me explain.

FUKUHARA
To avoid confusion.
HIGASHIKUMI
Sometimes the brightest officers are privileged to read western literature.

FUKUHARA
All right.

HIGASHIKUMI
Did you ever read “The Hounds of Zaroff”, it’s a short story by Richard Connell.

FUKUHARA
No.

HIGASHIKUMI
It contains some Soviet propaganda, but it also conceals a gem. Men want to live.

FUKUHARA
Some men want to live more than others.

Quick shots of the cemetery and starving POWs.

HIGASHIKUMI
Precisely.
(beat)
I need an aviator who wants to live.

FUKUHARA
An aviator?

HIGASHIKUMI
A famous aviator.

Higashikumi shows Fukuhara a photo of Leichester.

HIGASHIKUMI
You have this man? He’s a genius and extremely well connected in London. And most important, he wants to live.
FUKUHARA
He’s scheduled for execution.

HIGASHIKUMI
I found who I need and you want to kill him?

FUKUHARA
I'm afraid you have it mixed up, commander.
(beat)
This Brit, has been trying to kill himself.
(beat)
He’s escaped 7 times.

HIGASHIKUMI
Has been in captivity since 1941, but still he hasn’t disclosed either his name or his rank.

FUKUHARA
We’re extracting that information from him now. But I doubt...

HIGASHIKUMI
Fukuhara, are you for the Emperor or against him?

FUKUHARA
I’m good soldier.

HIGASHIKUMI
We are talking about a secret mission.
(beat)
I need a trained English translator.

Fukuhara isn’t pleased but he gestures to Mary who is waiting out in the hall.

MARY
I speak English, Commander.
INT. BARRACKS - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - DAY

The room has one 15-watt light bulb.

Leicester lies beaten on his bunk. He can hardly move. Mary must help him rise.

LEICESTER
(whispering to Mary)
Hey, I know you.

HIGASHIKUMI
Air Commander.
(beat)
Do you remember Hong Kong, December 8, 1941?

LEICESTER
I was there but I’m guessing you’re going to tell me you where.

HIGASHIKUMI
I was.

LEICESTER
I’m sure your mother is proud of you.

HIGASHIKUMI
(reading)
Incorrigible.
(beat)
Not suitable for use!
(beat)
Scheduled for execution!

Leicester doesn’t blink.

HIGASHIKUMI
I'll give you another chance.
(beat)
You choose and prepare a bomber crew.
(beat)
On a designated day you will fly from here to Hiroshima.
LEICESTER
That’s in the north. Why?

HIGASHIKUMI
You show your ability to my cadets.
   (beat)
You won't have ammunition or communication.
   (beat)
Just your skill.
   (beat)
If you die ... you die as a soldier on the battlefield.
   (beat)
If you survive, well then you survive.

LEICESTER
I choose the crew?
   (beat)
These people are starving.

HIGASHIKUMI
Maybe we can do something to help. Extra rice.

LEICESTER
You’ve starved to death every friend I’ve made the last three years.

HIGASHIKUMI
But you survived.
   (beat)
I’m waiting for your response.

LEICESTER
Fuck you!

HIGASHIKUMI
(to Mary)
It doesn't have to be translated.
EXT. YARD - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - DAY

Leicester is on his knees and ready for execution. But also bound and on their knees are the newest POWS, including the crew of the Yellow Rose. At least a dozen executions are lined up.

A swordsman moves over to Leicester.

HIGASHIKUMI
I count to five.
(beat)
One.
(beat)
Two.
(beat)
Three.
(beat)
Four.
(beat)
No. I’ve changed my mind. Spare the werewolf and execute the prisoners first.

LIEUTENANT
All of them?

HIGASHIKUMI
(to the lieutenant)
Yes.
(to Leicester)
Good fun, don’t you agree?

The swordsman moves over to Hughson.

HIGASHIKUMI
No counting; just begin.

The swordsman prepares.

LEICESTER
No. I’ll do it.

HIGASHIKUMI
Good choice, air commander.
(beat)
Name and rank?
LEICESTER
Flight Lieutenant Anthony Browne.

HIGASHIKUMI
Cut them loose!

Higashikumi approaches Leicester.

HIGASHIKUMI
I think you are a liar, an actor.
(beat)
Bombs that can destroy entire cities. Hah!
(beat)
Churchill’s son. I heard he was gay.

LEICESTER
Those are fighting words, to a Brit.

HIGASHIKUMI
So, fight. Take these men and fight. Make yourself useful.
(beat)
And clean up, start acting your rank. Or the deal is off.

Fukuhara approached Leichester.

FUKUHARA
I’m glad you’ve learned to speak Japanese, but stop telling the guards you’re a werewolf. They’re simple peasants and you’re confusing them.
(beat)
And if you do, I’ll cut your head off; I don’t care what the air force says.

Everyone is cut loose and the Japanese leave them.

BROOKS
Gee, I’m glad you’re not so stubborn.
HUGHSON
But you gave up your real name?

LEICESTER
Hell no. That was my starved friend from the Los Baños POW camp.

(beat)
Listen, fellows. I may need your help.

Leicester makes eye contact with each of the men.

LEICESTER
I’m afraid if you can’t help me, the film is over before the last reel.

Weiderhold can’t speak but points. Passing, outside gates of the camp on the road, the men see that a B-25 has been disassembled and is being moved on huge trucks. Most of the plane is under tarps but various distinguishing parts are visible. The cannon in front. The dual tail fins.

MAN
That’s a B-25, sir.

BROOKS
Where they taking her?

HUGHSON
And what for?

LEICESTER
Well, that’s what I want to talk to you about.

EXT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

Mary, Higashikumi, and the lieutenant are waiting. A truck arrives.

Leicester (clean-shaven), Hughson, Brooks, Weiderhold and Man and three MECHANICS jump down from the truck and peer into a hanger.
LEICESTER
This is your last chance. If you change your mind, you should do it now.

(beat)
If you want to return to the camp, I can probably replace you.

INT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

The Japanese pull off the tarps and the Americans flinch from the smell of dead bodies. The crew was never removed.

It’s a B-25, the Apache Princess. Nose art. Native American woman, full headdress, scantily clothed.

LEICESTER
This bugger is full of dead bodies?

BROOKS
Unlike the Texas Rose.

HUGHSON
We were lucky.

HIGASHIKUMI
Flight Lieutenant Browne!

Leicester doesn’t answer, he’s sick and vomiting. Hughson nudges him. Or, he doesn’t answer to “Browne” yet.

LEICESTER
Oh, yes. You were saying?

HIGASHIKUMI
Your task is to restore the plane.

(beat)
After a week, you will be ready.

LIEUTENANT
This is the latest American loss. We got it from the south.

HIGASHIKUMI
They say this plane can defeat our air defenses?
LIEUTENANT
Get started, remove dead bodies, and assemble the plane.

The Americans simply stand there.

HIGASHIKUMI
Get started!

Higashikumi and the lieutenant walk outside the hangar. They can see the prisoner's conversation but not hear.

LEICESTER
Crew, line up!
(beat)
From now on I am your commander.
(beat)
Appear to follow my commands and please don’t question things.

MECHANIC #1
Allow a question, Flight Lieutenant?

LEICESTER
Of course.

MECHANIC #1
You’re not a real officer are you?

LEICESTER
If I’m not, then I’m dead.

HUGHSON
And we’ll all be here for the rest of the war.

MECHANIC #1
(to Hughson)
What is our mission?

HUGHSON
Look at him, please.
(beat)
Escape. Maybe fly this thing out of here.
MECHANIC #1
Fanciful.

LEICESTER
Okay, then maybe exhaust or confuse the enemy.

MECHANIC #1
Bolder dash.

LEICESTER
Come on Chap, think of it as a movie. A “reel” adventure.

MECHANIC #1
Listen, my friend, I could be the commander, better than you.  
(beat)
I only joined you because of these fellows.  
(beat)
Now I’m here, I don’t know.

HUGHSON
Nobody wants to die here.

LEICESTER
We have a plane to fly.

HUGHSON
Against Japanese cadets.

WEIDERHOLD
That can’t hit the side of a barn.

BROOKS
Tell it to Dois.

WEIDERHOLD
Hey, don’t tell me that. Man and I brought his body up to the beach.

LEICESTER
We'll beat them.

HUGHSON
(to the mechanic)
If we want to live, we’ll need this plane in top-notch condition. Just like it left Inglewood.

MECHANIC #1
It is an excellent machine.

MECHANIC #1
300 MPH.

MECHANIC #2
75 mm cannon.

LEICESTER
We do our jobs. (beat)
Anymore questions?

MECHANIC #1
Then what are we mice for the cat?

HUGHSON
The hunter doesn’t always win.

MECHANIC #3
This reminds me of a story I read. Only the hunted became the hunter.

LEICESTER
If you agree...

HUGHSON
We agree!

The Japanese officers are about to return. The mechanics agree and they enter the airframe.

The Japanese officers remain outside in the fresh air.

INT. APACHE PRINCESS – HANGER – DAY

Weiderhold and Man enter the plane, with two of the mechanics. There are five dead airmen in various crew positions. All are at their battle positions.
WEIDERHOLD
Well, these fellas, ya might say, died with their boots on.

The gunners must have their hands pried off the guns with tools.

Weiderhold notices ammunition still in the bins. He points that out to Man. Man goes to the waist gunport and calls Hughson over.

MAN
There’s ammo and guns. And even cannon rounds. And I found a map.

Hughson takes the map and hides it inside his shirt. He contemplates the situation.

MAN
What do we do?

HUGHSON
Wrap the guns up like they’re bodies.

MAN
What about the bodies?

HUGHSON
Well, those too. (beat) I’ll find you some tarps. (beat) There’s a crew of eight.

LONG SHOT: Hughson converses with Leicester.

EXT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

Higashikumi and the lieutenant stand away from the stench. Leicester approaches them. Mary is there to translate.

LEICESTER
Commander Higashikumi.
HIGASHIKUMI
What is the condition of the plane?

LEICESTER
Unbearable! It’s being disinfected.
(beat)
Inside the plane a full crew of eight.

HIGASHIKUMI
Eight?

LEICESTER
Yes, Sir.

HIGASHIKUMI
Oh, that accounts for the massive gunfire. Six gunners?
(to the lieutenant)
Make a note of that.

LEICESTER
I ask for permission to bury them.

HIGASHIKUMI
I don’t mind.

LEICESTER
I need tarps.

The lieutenant points to some tarps in the hanger.

LIEUTENANT
Bury them in that field.

Back near the plane. Mechanic #1 is just standing around and Hughson hands him a shovel and walks away.

HUGHSON
Shallow. Very shallow

Hughson points to the field, a place near the plane.

Weiderhold looks like he’s about to have a mental breakdown.
MAN
Hang on buddy, we’ll have them in the ground soon.

Mechanic #1 digs graves.

Weiderhold and Man wrap gunbelts around the dead bodies. The gunbelts are wrapped around three guns. The tarps are brought carefully out of the plane to the field.

Higashikumi and the lieutenant are watching from a distance.

Hughson and Leicester casually walk behind the plane. Hughson takes out the map and he’s examining it. Leicester looks over his shoulders.

LEICESTER
(disappointed)
It’s only a map of the south.

HUGHSON
What?
(beat)
Where are we going?

An entire squad of B-25s begin to strafe and bomb the airfield. The Japanese boys scramble for their fighters and most make it off the ground. However, the B-25s are long gone. Hit and run!

Machanic #1 is just patting down the graves and runs across the field in the hanger when the attack starts.

A Betty bomber is blown up and burning.

Higashikumi and the lieutenant race back to the POW camp in a vehicle, looking to shelter in the coal mine.

The Japanese guards, who were watching the hanger, dive into bomb shelters.

Leicester sprints across the field and enters the burning wreck of the Betty and emerges with papers.

Mary prays over the graves.
INT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

The attack is over. Leicester lays out the maps on the table. They are partially burned. But they clearly show all of the home islands. Korea and China as well. Leicester is delighted, too happy.

LEICESTER
Perfect.

Hughson is highly concerned.

The entire group of POWs gather around.

LEICESTER
Crew! Here's a map of the Japanese islands.
(beat)
Completely in Japanese, but let's study. Who knows how to read Japanese?

HUGHSON
Brooks is our navigator. Give it to him.

BROOKS
I’m not taking that back to the camp, they’ll search us for sure.

LEICESTER
Leave it here, but get to know it.

MECHANIC #1
You having fun?

LEICESTER
We are here.
(beat)
This is...
(beat)
And we’re going...

Leicester is about to put his finger on Hiroshima.
HUGHSON
Flight Lieutenant Browne, may I speak with you in private.  
(tense)
Just two words.

MECHANIC #1
Let’s start on the wing assembly.

HUGHSON
Where do you think you’re going?

LEICESTER
Busan in Korea?

HUGHSON
Occupied.

LEICESTER
Farther, but maybe Shanghai?

HUGHSON
Occupied.

LEICESTER
I’m sorry. I’ve been locked up for over three years. I thought maybe…

HUGHSON
No such luck.

LEICESTER
Then it’s the Soviet Union; that’s the plan.

HUGHSON
First, these guys won’t go for it. That’s 900 miles.  
(beat)
Second, the japs won’t give you that much gas. Not for target practice.

LEICESTER
Of course not; we’re going to steal the petrol.
HUGHSON
Why not try Okinawa?

LEICESTER
We will have an almost new B-25.

HUGHSON
Three hours tops.

LEICESTER
That's it then?

HUGHSON
Think about it.

LEICESTER
We have ammo.

HUGHSON
And if we can get the fuel, there's a chance.

LEICESTER
You are with me?

HUGHSON
If you want a miracle, it will be a miracle!

LEICESTER
I'm with you, Commander, I'm with you.

When the discussion is done, the plane is sitting like it was previously and the crew is simply waiting.

MAN
(to Weiderhold)
Maybe the deal is off.

WEIDERHOLD
(to Man)
The war's nearly over. Why...

HUGHSON
Assemble the plane!
(beat)
Leicester is the boss.

MECHANIC #1
Our boss is in the White House.

HUGHSON
(to the Mechanic)
Hey, buddy. It’s just for pretend okay? For the Japs.

MECHANIC #1
He’s an Aussie!

LEICESTER
Yes. Roosevelt! I understand.

HUGHSON
Truman!

LEICESTER
Truman?

INT. APACHE PRINCESS - HANGER - DAY

Wiederhold has restored the radio. He’s listening to the radio via a headset.

TRUMAN (V.O.)
If they do not now accept our terms, they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth.

MAN
What?

WEIDERHOLD
Truman.

(beat)
Trying to get them to surrender.

MAN
I wish him luck.

WEIDERHOLD
Radio Saipan.
MAN
What they saying?

Weiderhold takes off the headset and hands it to Man. Man listens.

RADIO SIAPAN (V.O.)
Allied occupation of Japan; liberation of Pacific territories gained by Japan since 1914; swift justice for war criminals; freedom of speech and religion; fundamental human rights. The allied forces now demanded that the government of Japan proclaim now the unconditional surrender of all Japanese armed forces. The alternative for Japan will be prompt and utter destruction of thirty-five cities we chose.

MAN
Thirty-five cities.

WEIDERHOLD
I’m sure that makes the boys a bit nervous.

MAN
You don’t tell the enemy where or when you’re gonna strike.

WEIDERHOLD
Ya, that’s weird.

MAN
You better tell the captain.

WEIDERHOLD
He already knows.

A Japanese guard has entered the plane surreptitiously and machine guns the radio. Shocks the living devil out of the Americans.
INT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DUSK

Mary is escorted into the hanger.

MARY
Higashikuri is requesting you.

EXT. OFFICE - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - NIGHT

As they walk to the office...

LEICESTER
I know you from Manila.

MARY
That might not be wise.

LEICESTER
Really, why?

MARY
Because Flight Leutinenat Browne was in Hong Kong on December 7th.

LEICESTER
Aren’t you a smart cookie.

INT. HIGASHIKURI’S OFFICE - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - NIGHT

HIGASHIKURI
You may enter!

LEICESTER
Colonel!

HIGASHIKURI
Come!

Leicester enters and is motioned to a chair. Mary translates. Higashikuri is drinking.

HIGASHIKURI
There in Hong Kong, were you in one of the Lancasters?
LEICESTER
What is this a test from bloody old school?

HIGASHIKURI
I’m just curious.

LEICESTER
You probably know there weren’t any Lancasters. I flew Vickers Vildebeest.

HIGASHIKURI
But you had so many aviation officers. You should have put up a better defense.

LEICESTER
There were seven of us.

HIGASHIKURI
If I had known that, I’d have bombed your barracks.

LEICESTER
But you didn’t.

HIGASHIKURI
How are you doing restoring the bomber?

Leicester notices a calendar with the phases of the moon.

LEICESTER
Forty or maybe forty-eight days.

HIGASHIKURI
What?

LEICESTER
Look, it’s a complicated machine. In the US, there are eight manufacturing plants that makes about 25 planes per day. But they only have 1,000s of employees. (beat) You gave me only 8 men.
HIGASHIKURI
You have only another week. Or you will be executed. It’s not me. The order comes from upstairs.

LEICESTER
I thought this was your idea.

HIGASHIKURI
In Japan, the idea never comes from below.

LEICESTER
I understand.

HIGASHIKURI
Sit down!

LEICESTER
It will soon be a fight, Browne. And I have to define your task.

HIGASHIKURI
Browne, it's normal that I should call you that?

LEICESTER
They call me Sir Anthony.

Higashikuri laughs and pulls out a map.

HIGASHIKURI
You just can’t help pouring it on.
   (beat)
Listen, Sir Anthony. I’m an aristocrat and know another one when I see them and you aren’t

Leicester winks at Mary.

HIGASHIKURI
We are here...
   (beat)
You fly here.
   (beat)
My cadets. Here, here and here.
(beat)  
They'll try to down you.

Leicester makes careful note of the locations.

HIGASHIKURI  
And the naval cadets will be here.  
(beat)  
Land on the field, here. Refuel and return. We will repeat the process and if you live, I’ll free you.

LEICESTER  
Two turkey shots? Going and coming?

HIGASHIKURI  
I’ve told them to aim for your engines.

LEICESTER  
Thank you.

HIGASHIKURI  
A common decency.

LEICESTER  
Imagine that.  
(beat)  
Without killing us, you can provide a target just a bit longer.

HIGASHIKURI  
Cheers!

LEICESTER  
Who needs a liver, huh?

HIGASHIKURI  
Long and happy life.

EXT. KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - NIGHT  

As they walk from the office back to the hanger.
LEICESTER
So, how did I do?

MARY
That might not be have been wise. Telling them how the plane is manufactured.

LEICESTER
I don’t know how the plane is manufactured.

MARY
Oh, I see. You are a sly man.

LEICESTER
Thank you.

MARY
Those did seem like incredible figures. You were trying to frighten them.

LEICESTER
They’re too dumb to be frightened.

EXT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

Outside the hanger there are 20 B-29s over the city of Kumamoto. Higashikuri is walking toward the hanger.

HIGASHIKURI
All of America's great might and to do what? To fly over our cities? A bluff. There are no bombs falling. America is a paper tiger. Literally a paper tiger.

A pamphlet falls from the sky. Another.

The front side of the leaflet is in English. It’s handed to Mary.

MARY
OWI notice #2106, LeMay bombing leaflet.
Higashikuri takes it back and reads the Japanese text on the reverse side of the leaflet.

HIGASHIKURI
The American Air Force, which does not wish to injure innocent people, now gives you warning to evacuate the following cities and save your lives.
(scoffs)
America is not fighting the Japanese people but is fighting the military clique which has enslaved the Japanese people.
(scoffs)
So heed this warning and evacuate the cities immediately.

Higashikuri wads the paper into a ball and throws it on the ground. He continues. Mary picks up the second leaflet and follows.

INT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

BEGIN MONTAGE:

The parts are all laid out. They are cleaned and inventoried. The plane is assembled. The wings and then the tail. The engines are mounted and the holes are patched.

END MONTAGE:

Hughson speaks with Brooks.

HUGHSON
I want the upper turret moved forward to improve the field of fire. Understand?

Suddenly, the JAPANESE OFFICERS enter the hanger. There are many of them. Higashikuri of course and his lieutenant, but others. Mary is there to translate.

LIEUTENANT
Attention!
LEICESTER
Crew fall in.

LIEUTENANT
Attention!

LEICESTER
All right. Don't waste time!

HIGASHIKURI
Start the test flight.

LEICESTER
Crew, take your place.

HUGHSON
Roger that!

HIGASHIKURI
No, no.
   (beat)
The gunners will not be required.

LEICESTER
But they've been working for a week, at least let them have a little fun.

HIGASHIKURI
There's no fun in war.

LIEUTENANT
Only the pilot and engineer,

LEICESTER
And the navigator?

HIGASHIKURI
No.

LEICESTER
But what about the trip to Hiroshima?

Higashikuri thinks. He feels hostile to the Americans.
LIEUTENANT
I don’t know why not. Sure.

HIGASHIKURI
Absolutely not.

Japanese mechanics bring a fuel carrier.

LIEUTENANT
You will be given enough fuel to make a short fly around. You are not to leave the sight of the field. If you do, you will be shot down, immediately.

CUT TO: a sign on the wall, “Key to Defense, Attack all the time!” The motto of the Imperial Japanese Army Air Force.

LEICESTER
Crew, just standby.

INT. APACHE PRINCESS - HANGER - DAY

Leicester boards the plane followed by Hughson. They enter the cockpit. Already suspicious of Leicester, the Japanese are watching every move.

HUGHSON
Ready?

LEICESTER
I have no idea what to do.

HUGHSON
I thought you were the movie director?

LEICESTER
But this is an airplane.

HUGHSON
Just pretend.

Leicester pretends to throw a couple of switches.

HUGHSON
(out the starboard window)
Is everything ready?
The two of the mechanics give the thumbs up.

LEICESTER
(out the port window)
Is everything ready?

The mechanic shrugs.

Hughson starts the port engine. Leicester reacts.

HUGHSON
Ya feel it? 1,700-hp. Each side.

Hughson starts the starboard engine. Leicester smiles.

LEICESTER
Wow, I feel it. This is a real plane!

HUGHSON
Fast and lean and every flying man’s dream.
   (beat)
Forward!

LEICESTER
Roger that!

EXT. KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

As the B-25 taxis out to the runway, the Japanese Officers climb into the control tower.

As the B-25 takes off, it looks innocent enough. They slowly circle the field.

LEICESTER
Feel okay?

HUGHSON
Thanks, don’t mind if I do.

Hughson pushed the throttle forward and the plane accelerates. Hughson glances at the control tower.
INT. CONTROL TOWER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

JAPANESE OFFICER
He doesn’t have ammo does he?

LIEUTENANT
Of course not.

JAPANESE OFFICER
He’s lined up to strafe the tower.

A few Japanese officers climb down from the tower.

HIGASHIKURI
He’s being who he is. A fool. I’m accustomed.

The remaining Japanese officers flinch and brace for impact. Higashikuri does not flinch.

The B-25 veers off at the last minute. Hughson flies so near that part of the corrugated tin roof of the control tower comes loose and floats to the ground.

Mary is impressed.

WEIDERHOLD
I’d like to see them try to catch us.

MAN
We’re not going?

BROOKS
I have an idea.

The B-25’s fuel gauge is on empty and the engines sputter. The plane must make a dead stick landing and it’s close.

Mary overhears.

JAPANESE OFFICER
They are not to be trusted.

LIEUTENANT
Of course not.
HIGASHIKURI
I want Tsutomu Iwai & Yoshio Iwaki. Here and available to dog them if they stray.

LIEUTENANT
Sir, they are our best aces.

INT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - NIGHT

LEICESTER
Hi, my beauty. Come on, I'll show you our bomber.

MARY
What happened?

LEICESTER
Hughson was just testing combat preparedness.

MARY
That wasn't you?

LEICESTER
Lord, no. I can't fly.

MARY
I'm glad.

(beat)
There will be two aces called and parked at the end of the runway.

LEICESTER
Are you sure?

MARY
You won't escape?

LEICESTER
Sure we will.

MARY
Leicester, I'm not deaf or blind.
LEICESTER
If we had a map of the petrol depots.

MARY
I'll get the map from Higashikuri’s office.

LEICESTER
No, you will be the first suspect.

MARY
And you carry it with you.

LEICESTER
No!

MARY
Well, I’ll come with you.

LEICESTER
It might mean death!

MARY
They’re cadets! And I’ll take our chances with you.

EXT. HANGER - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - EVENING

Two savy and experienced Japanese aces arrive and park their Zeros at the end of the field.

The cadets are lined up and Higashikuri is addressing them.

HIGASHIKURI
Cadets! In the morning, you will be participating in a live fire battle trial.
    (beat)
I'm sure you will prove you’re worthy heirs of the Japanese spirit!
    (beat)
Remember!
    (beat)
If you learn to fight with the B-25, against the B-29 it will be a child's play!

(beat)
The Empire dominates the world.

LIEUTENANT
Be ready one hour after sunrise.

(beat)
Good luck!

Japanese mechanics bring a load of fuel to the B-25.

EXT. THE FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - NIGHT

The moon is full. We hear a wolf howl. The guards jump. One guard leaves his post to converse with another. It was Liechester.

LEICESTER
Works everytime.

BROOKS
I’m convinced.

LEICESTER
Well, not on every guard but there is always one that has to inquire about it.

(well)
Move. He’s not gonna worry about it all night and I’m not howling all night either.

The entire crew with mechanics. Leave the camp. The fence is relatively easy to scale. The only thing preventing mass escape has been starvation.

EXT. FIELD - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - NIGHT

The moon is full and the graves are excavated. The guns and ammunition are harvested. The crew starts for the hanger.

HUGHSON
Aren’t you forgetting something?
The men look at the bodies. They’ve left them exposed. They set the guns down and return to bury the bodies.

LIECESTER
Can’t leave until daybreak anyway.

HUGHSON
Do a good job. Please.

Wiederhold and Man take some dogwood berries and approach the Zeros. A Mitsubishi J25 jeep patrols and the men have to dive into the brush. But the vehicle leaves and the men fill both tanks with berries.

The men board the Apache Princess, they clean and organize the guns.

Leicester and two mechanics sneak down to the fuel tanks and spot a fuel truck. Leicester howls a dozen times and it’s convincing, but the only reaction from the guards is to look about cautiously.

LEICESTER
(frustrated)
We could make it to Russia or Okinawa or even Iwo if we could get our hands on that truck.

The sunrise is eminent and they are supposed to take off soon. One last speech.

HUGHSON
There will be dozens of Zeros against us.

(beat)
We have sixty cannon rounds, and 4,000 rounds of 12.7 mm and 200 miles of fuel.

(beat)
Guys... We break the cadets by stealth.

Leicester and the mechanics return.
LEICESTER
I’m sorry, sir. Those guys just wouldn’t budge.

HUGHSON
I'll say one thing.
(beat)
The time has come, you have been waiting for many years.

LEICESTER
I just want to go home.

EVERYONE
Me too.

LEICESTER
Sorry boys,

HUGHSON
God take care of us all.

The sun rises and they start the engines. They idle.

EXT. CAMP GATE - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - NIGHT

Mary bluffs her way through the gate. She has a messenger's pouch and the Brit has taken to howling like a wolf.

GUARD
Where are you going?

MARY
Regulation No. 11, papers

It’s dark; the guard tries to read it by the moon.

GUARD
Labour use imperial permission of the Commander.

The Brit is concealed near the gate and howls at the moon. The guard shudders in fear.

MARY
Signed, Camp Commandant, Asao Fukuhara.
And howls just as Mary is making her play.

MARY
It’s a single use exit permission
from the camp.

GUARD
No later than sunrise.

MARY
(in Tagalog)
Goodbye, you idiot!

INT. BARRACKS - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - DAWN

Low-ranking Japanese prison camp guards enter to wake up
the crew, but their beds are occupied with other prisoners,
emaciated.

GUARD
Pilot?
(beat)
Co-Pilot?
(beat)
Crew?

POW
Yes.

EXT. FIELD - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAWN

The Japanese, Higeshikumi and the lieutenant, wake to the
sound of a B-25 taxiing out of the hanger out onto the
runway. They will be gone in a matter of seconds. The alarm
is sounded, but it’s too late.

The skilled Japanese aces scramble and run to a J25 but the
tires are flat. They begin run the quarter mile to their
Zeros.

INT. BARRACKS - FUKUOKA 17 POW CAMP - DAWN

Fukuhara arrives and is fuming mad when he sees frail
nearly dead skeletons who served the purpose of fooling the
Japanese. The alarm sounds at the camp, but the men have
been gone for hours.
EXT. END OF THE RUNWAY – KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD – DAWN

As the B-25 begins it’s take off, the Zero pilots arrive exhausted. They sit and watch for a moment. They appear confident they can catch the bomber. They catch their breath and grin at each other like hounds. They climb up.

EXT. MIDDLE OF THE RUNWAY – KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD – DAWN

As the B-25 gains speed, Higeshikumi and the lieutenant run out of their quarters. Higeshikumi begins firing a pistol.

Many of the Japanese officers climb the control tower. Higeshikumi and the lieutenant join them. Hughson and Brooks make note.

The Zeros start-up and are immediately behind the bomber.

But the engines crap out on the Zeros and they turn to try to make it to the runway but the pilots both crash into the trees.

The B-25 turns and lines up on the control tower. It’s a repeat of a previous scene. However this time, the B-25 opens up with the front guns, both the cannon and the machine guns.

    MAJOR GENERAL
    What the hell is this,
    Higashikuni?

The control tower is destroyed and the Japanese who didn’t run are forced to jump when it topples over.

Higeshikumi is covered with dust and looks menacing at the bomber as it makes a turn.

The B-25 crew cheers.

The B-25 turns and lines up on the row of planes assigned to the cadets. The cadets are running toward their planes and turn on a dime when the B-25 opens up with the front guns.

The B-25 crew cheers, again.
However, the B-25 front guns fall silent.

BROOKS
That’s it, Tex.

LEICESTER
Fifteen seconds of pleasure.

Hughson has seriously damaged all the cadet Zeros but one. One isn’t damaged and a DAUNTLESS CADET reaches it and begins flipping pre-flight switches.

As the plane passes over the row of parked cadet planes, Weiderhold on a waist gun strafes Higashikuni’s Kurogane Type 95 (car).

The Japanese aces crawl out of the trees; they survive.

One ace is leisurely walking, watching the entire show. The other ace has run from the forest and wants in the only Zero.

JAPANESE ACE
Get out of the plane; you’re a kid.

The cadet starts the engine.

The ace is pitching a fit, stomping and pointing because the cadet won’t get out. Screaming like a petulant child!

The ace climbs up on the wing, and appears like he’s going to physically pull the kids from the Japanese fighter. The kid pulls a pistol and pushes it into his nose.

CADET
Get off the wing. This is my plane.

The ace, eyes like saucers, pulls back, hands in the air.

EXT. JAPANESE VILLAGE – EARLY MORNING

Mary is walking down a country lane. She approaches a village. At a distance, she sees a DAIRYMAN/FARMER with a horse-drawn cart. The cart is laden with vegetables, fruit
and rice. Mostly milk, a 5-gallon clay container with a spigot.

The cart stops at a house and the JAPANESE HOUSEWIFE comes out with an empty pitcher. The farmer looks at the pitcher and gives her a price. The lady of the house hands him some money. When the farmer turns to fill the pitcher with milk, Mary is driving the cart; she has a cup and a milk mustache. She, the horse and the cart are away.

She turns and waves to the farmer and housewife, who are in awe.

EXT. NORTHEAST - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAWN

There is an air battle between the dauntless cadet and the B-25. Finally, the cadet’s engine flames out and he must pull away.

EXT. NORTHWEST - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAWN

The B-25 waits for the zero to be out of sight and then Hughson pulls a tight left and nearly returns to the camp and airfield. The plane is very very low.

Brooks is over his shoulder holding a map for him.

    LEICESTER
    It’s almost a 180.

    BROOKS
    Not quite.

    HUGHSON
    I see it.

There is an empty field. Lush grass and dairy cattle.

EXT. DAIRY PASTURE - WATAZI - DAWN

The plane’s landing gear strike some treetops and lands. Engines are cut and the crew doesn’t move.

    LEICESTER
    Silent as a submarine.
    (beat)
That doesn’t sound like any American aircrew I ever knew.

BROOKS
I don’t know why. The japs all think we’re going to Hiroshima.

They all laugh and begin to chat. They exit the plane

WEIDERHOLD
So what are we doing, sir?

HUGHSON
Waiting.

MAN
On...

LEICESTER
A map.

MECHANIC #1
We don’t have a map?

MECHANIC #2
Well, who’s bringin’ it?

BROOKS
The Filipina.

WEIDERHOLD
The translator? She’s kinda cute; don’t ya think?

MECHANIC #1
No, no, no!

Mechanic #1 appears defeated.

BROOKS
What?

MECHANIC #1
She’ll betray us in a second.

Two mechanics disappear into the trees and are peering out.
LEICESTER
No. I knew her in Manila.

BROOKS
And, she’s a Filipina.

MECHANIC #1
Where’s that?

BROOKS
The Philippines.

MECHANIC #1
Oh, okay.

BROOKS
They hate the Japs worse than we do.

LEICESTER
You have no idea.

MECHANIC #1
Yea?

LEICESTER
(exuberant)
I think that’s her.

They look out across the pasture and Mary is smiling and bringing the cart. She gives them an energetic wave.

BROOKS
Slowly but with stead. Hey. Leicester, I know what you were doing in Manila.

LEICESTER
Look fellas, I just happened to be there making a film.

The entire crew laughs at him and he laughs back.

Before she arrives with the cart, several Catholics cross themselves for the blessing. Two Protestants fold their hands in prayer. Hughson watches the sky with a pair of Japanese field glasses.
Mary gives the pouch with the map to Leicester who hands it to Brooks.

Leicester’s eyes are locked on to Mary as she serves food to the men. Leicester has been locked up over three years and looks malnourished.

EXT. DAIRY PASTURE - WATAZI - DAWN

BEGIN FEAST MONTAGE

They’ve been in a POW camp a bit more than two months. But they are starved. They eat like they are starved. Everything is there. Vegetables, fruit, sushi.

The milk is a huge attraction and they line up to drop on their knees to drink from the spigot. Milk is dripping on their chins and they are laughing and it’s a regular party.

END FEAST MONTAGE

EXT. BESIDE DESTROYED CONTROL TOWER - AIRFIELD - DAWN

The officers are up and dusting themselves off. A few in the background are injured.

LIEUTENANT
It's a good idea to leave early.
(beat)
Did you expect this?

HIGASHIKUNI
The Brit is not stupid.

They walk over to a building and a communications soldier brings out a microphone and radio headset with a very long line. He hands it to the lieutenant.

LIEUTENANT
Attention to everyone! Full combat preparedness!
(beat)
Full combat preparedness!

The Lieutenant’s message goes out to the Kumamoto field.
COMMUNICATIONS SOLDIER
Radio connected. All the southern command can hear you.

Higashikuni speaks into the microphone.

HIGASHIKUNI
Yamaguchi cadets, take flight! Your target is on a direct path from Kumamoto to Hiroshima. Seek and destroy.

CUT TO: Party in the cow pasture. Laughing and horseplay.

HIGASHIKUNI
Iwakuni Kintaikyo, expect action. Enemy B-25 on a direct path to Hiroshima. Over the Inland Sea!

CUT TO: Young cadets, who can barely see out the cockpit. They strain to see. They find nothing?

HIGASHIKUNI
Get on it! Come on!

CUT TO: Mary feeds sushi and he makes faces and the giggle. The crew glances over and chuckle.

HIGASHIKUNI
What do you see?

CUT TO: The young cadet pilots are now over water and there is nothing.

HIGASHIKUNI
Matsuyama, prepare!
(beat)
Ten minutes.

CUT TO: The men aren’t satisfied with the milk they cut open a large melon.

HIGASHIKUNI
Kaijojieitai Kurekyoikutai, scramble in 15 mins.
(beat)
When you see the enemy, fire immediately!

Higashikuni takes off the headset and hands the microphone to the clerk.

HIGASHIKUNI
Where in hell is he?
(to the radio clerk)
Contact the Naval aviators at Hiroshima. Have them intercept the bomber.

CUT TO: The crew of the B-25 are all laid out napping under the wing. Mary and Leicester watch a praying mantis destroy a bee. Hughson is relieved of the watch by Brooks.

The dauntless cadet, the kid with the pistol, is lined up to land his zero. It’s missing badly and the engine is about to seize up. Oil is spraying up on the windshield. The cadet has the canopy pulled back and his head is out the side. His wind goggles become covered in oil. He’s got a ceremonial flag that he cleans the goggles. It’s a miraculous landing and the kid even manages to taxi over to the main building.

The kid climbs out and he’s badly shaken. The ground crew run over to him, but he wants to walk. The ace who had the pistol pointed at him runs over shouting cursing the kid.

Higashikuni draws his sword and steps between them. Higashikuni is facing the ace and backs him up. They are eyeball to eyeball. When the ace realized the sword is at his chest, he relents and backs off bowing. Higashikuni returns his sword to its scabbard and looks cross at the ace.

Higashikuni turns to the kid. The kid is covered in oil and looks exhausted and weak. Higashikuni bows and unhooks the scabbard from his belt. He bows again and hands the kid the sword. The kid faints dead tired. He’s put on a stretcher and hauled off.

The Major General is bleeding but up and hobbling.

MAJOR GENERAL
Everybody alive?!
Higashikuni has the headset on again and is on the radio again.

HIGASHIKUNI
Get it together.

MAJOR GENERAL
How did they get live ammunition?

INT. OFFICE - AIRFIELD - DAY

Higashikuni steps into the building and walks into his office. The clerks are trying to keep the lines from being tangled.

HIGASHIKUNI
Set up an emergency command center.
   (beat)
Here, of course.
   (beat)
This is where the bomber escaped from.
   (beat)
I know that. It’s regrettable.
   (beat)
Report the losses!
   (beat)
What do you mean?
   (beat)
You didn’t find them yet.
   (beat)
They should be there already.
   (beat)
I’ve already contacted the navy.
   (beat)
Sure, they don’t know either.
   (beat)
Yes!
   (beat)
Scramble every fighter within 500 kilometers radius!
   (beat)
I’m gonna catch you.

The Major General limps into the office.
MAJOR GENERAL
You better, you have the entire southern section looking for a single plane.

(beat)
And at a time when fuel is a scarce commodity.

HIGASHIKUNI
Don’t you see it? It’s working out perfectly. The cadets are getting real-world experience.

MAJOR GENERAL
I just hope that they don’t find a next-world experience.

HIGASHIKUNI
I see what you mean. So far, no one has been killed. We will find them.

MAJOR GENERAL
If you don’t find him by the morning, there’s nothing I can do to help you.

INT. APACHE PRINCESS - PASTURE - WATAZI - NOON

It begins to rain and Leicester brings Mary on board the plane. Brooks and Hughson are in the cockpit with the map. They are making calculations.

LEICESTER
First, we fly to Sydney.

(beat)
I want you to meet my mom.

MARY
Oh, how sweet.

LEICESTER
(to the mechanics)
Move over!
MARY
Hi!

(to the mechanics)
Hello.

MARY
(to the Weiderhold and Man)
Hello, my brave American friends.

WIEDE RHOLD
Strictly from Dixie.

They think Leicester wants to make out with Mary.

MAN
Goodbye!

The crew leave to stand under a wing.

LEICESTER
Here, this will be your place.
(beat)
Welcome to our bomber.

INT. COCKPIT - APACHE PRINCESS - WATAZI - NOON

Brooks and Hughson have a plan. We see a red line arch on the map from Watazi to Higashihiroshima.

HUGHSON
Smart, you’re coming around like that.

BROOKS
We’d be spotted over the Inland Sea.

HUGHSON
And Hiroshima we’ll, duh?

BROOKS
But we’ll need to graze by it.

HUGHSON
Right. It’s a good plan.
BROOKS
It’s all I got.

EXT. APACHE PRINCESS – PASTURE – WATAZI – NIGHT

The crew is sleeping.

INT. APACHE PRINCESS – PASTURE – WATAZI – DAWN

When the crew awakes.

HUGHSON
What is today anyway?

BROOKS
Monday, August 6.

HUGHSON
First order of business, find some fuel.

BROOKS
We have Higashihiroshima. Maybe.

HUGHSON
It’ll be guarded.

BROOKS
The girl said some are abandoned. Higashihiroshima is marked abandoned on the map.

HUGHSON
And we might get enough fuel to get somewhere. I understand.

Hughson feels he’s being watched and he turns to look outside. Nearly all the crew is looking outside.

EXT. APACHE PRINCESS – PASTURE – WATAZI – DAWN

There are 100 Japanese citizens standing in an arch around the sides and back of the plane. They are all standing around in awe.

HUGHSON
We better get.
BROOKS
Certainly, one of them has gone for a telephone.

HUGHSON
But they don’t seem belligerent.

BROOKS
They look mostly elderly and rural.

HUGHSON
One fellow has a pitchfork.

BROOKS
Maybe he’s just a farmer and it’s just coincidence.

HUGHSON
He doesn’t look like he wants to hurt anyone.

INT. APACHE PRINCESS — PASTURE — WATAZI — DAWN

BROOKS
Can you tell them that we are playing a game with Air Commander Higashikuni and we’re returning to Kumamoto?

Mary agrees and crawls out of the plane.

LEICESTER
We’re not going back, are we?

BROOKS
Of course not.

(beat)
We found a fuel depot we might be able to get more fuel.

LEICESTER
Where?

BROOKS
Well, ironically, Hiroshima.
LEICESTER
That’s where the entire Japanese 2nd Army is.

Hughson is in the cockpit and the first engine starts. The Japanese villagers “oh” and “aww”.

BROOKS
Well, it’s a bit north and an army depot. I’m not even sure we can get there.

LEICESTER
Well, still, that’s where the army is looking for us?

BROOKS
That was yesterday.
(beat)
Today, because of them, they will be looking for us here.

Brooks point to the map and Kumamoto.

LEICESTER
Oh, I see. How much fuel do we need?

BROOKS
Five miles per gallon.

The second engine starts. The villagers back up... are blown back by the thrust of the engines

Mary barely makes it back into the plane. Leicester looks quite worried. But stands at the ladder and gives her a hand up.

The plane takes off into the southeast rising sun. But soon veers left toward the North.

The villagers on the ground point to the southeast and seem to agree.
HAGIASHIKUNI
Where?
(beat)
And southeast. You’re sure.

LIEUTENANT
They’re returning here?
(beat)
Maybe they want to surrender.

HAGIASHIKUNI
(to the lieutenant)
No chance. That isn’t going to happen!
(into phone)
I want all the available Zeros, cadets, and trained pilots, here in this sector immediately.

LIEUTENANT
From how far?

HAGIASHIKUNI
(into phone)
Scramble the entire southern islands.
(beat)
I want this bomber destroyed.

The Major General enters and he doesn’t look happy.

MAJOR GENERAL
I’m returning to Tokyo.
(beat)
When I get there, I’m going to call back down here.
(beat)
If you don’t catch them and provide a positive training
experience, then I must suggest that honor take it’s course.
(beat)
You have been an honorable warrior and of great service to the emperor but this... this is just too much.

HAGIASHIKUNI
I understand.

The lieutenant understands that to mean hari-kiri. It’s a very somber moment.

EXT. TAXIWAY - KUMAMOTO AIRFIELD - DAY

Hagiashikuni walks past his shot-up, nearly destroyed, automobile. The Major General is leaving in a nice new. Mitsubishi Ki-57.

The Zeros are all disabled and the ground crews are working on them. The cadets stand watching, hoping to get a chance.

Hagiashikuni makes eye contact with the GROUND CHIEF and gestured to the Zeros. He gets negative. The ground chief points him to an ancient Ki-9 trainer. It is a biplane from the 1930s and it’s the most basic of planes.

INT. TACHIKAWA Ki-9 - OVER THE INLAND SEA - DAY

There aren’t any other craft so the Lieutenant and Hagiashikuni are in the barely air-worthy trainer. There are no guns but there is a radio.

LIEUTENANT
Sir, this is only a trainer. If we spot them, there really isn’t anything we can do. No guns.

HAGIASHIKUNI
We’ll radio for help.

Compass heading shows north. Fly south are army and naval aviators. They pass like cars on a two-lane highway.
LIEUTENANT
That was the army squadron from Matsuyama. Flying south.

HAGIASHIKUNI
As ordered.

More fighters pass them flying south.

LIEUTENANT
That was the naval squadron from Kure Hiroshima.
(beat)
Sir, why are we looking this far north. All indications are, they flew south.

HAGIASHIKUNI
Well, they didn’t return.

LIEUTENANT
Maybe they went to Okinawa?

HAGIASHIKUNI
No fuel for that.
(beat)
Keep looking!

LIEUTENANT
The fuel in this plane will soon run out, Commander.

RADIO VOICE #1 (V.O.)
I don’t know who’s in charge of this goose chase.

RADIO VOICE #2 (V.O.)
It happened yesterday too.

RADIO VOICE #1 (V.O.)
All this for a single plane?

RADIO VOICE #2 (V.O.)
And its hard enough to secure fuel as it is without wasting it here.
HAGIASHIKUNI
Our prey needs liquid,
did not drink for a year.

LIEUTENANT
The nearest fuel depot is
abandoned but is only 60 miles
away.

HAGIASHIKUNI
Get there.

The lieutenant turns toward Hiroshima.

HAGIASHIKUNI
There it is.

Hagiashikuni sees the B-25.

INT. THE IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS – TOKYO – DAY

Intelligence Department. War Minister, SOEMU TOYODA. Is
touring the various desks. SHIN TANIMOTO is the officer.

TANIMOTO
Earlier sir, our early warning
radar net detected the approach of
some American aircraft headed for
the southern part of Japan.

TOYODA
The alert has been given and
radios are broadcasting warnings?

TANIMOTO
Cities of Hiroshima, Kochi,
Kumamoto and Fukuoka.

Toyoda looks worried. But the air-raid warnings have been
given.

TOYODA
What else can be done?
INT. APACHE PRINCESS - OUTSKIRTS OF HIROSHIMA - DAWN

BROOKS
Everything okay?

HUGHSON
Just conserving fuel.

INT. TACHIKA WA KI-9 - OVER THE INLAND SEA - DAY

We see the B-25 cruising along, conserving fuel.

LIEUTENANT
Lumbering right along, sir.

HAGIASHIKUNI
(into radio)
All fighters in the southern, commend. The B-25 has been spotted. It’s approaching Hiroshima. Converge and attack.

RADIO VOICE #1 (V.O.)
You damned idiots. You said the bomber was down here.

HAGIASHIKUNI
This is Colonel Hagia shikuni and I want you here.

RADIO VOICE #1 (V.O.)
Yes, sir! I’m sorry.

HAGIASHIKUNI
You’re in Kumamoto?

RADIO VOICE #1 (V.O.)
We’re all in Kumamoto.

HAGIASHIKUNI
Well, he’s here. I’m looking at him. Come and shoot the bastard down.
RADIO VOICE #1 (V.O.)
It will be thirty to forty minutes. Can’t you find a closer fighter group?

HAGIASHIKUNI
No, you’re the nearest. I’m following them and I’ll let you know.

LIEUTENANT
Should we follow them?

HAGIASHIKUNI
No; pull next to them.

LIEUTENANT
They might have weapons.

HAGIASHIKUNI
Well, the tail gunner is asleep. Maybe the waist gunners too? Or they are out of ammo.

INT. IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS – TOKYO – DAY

Tanimoto knocks and enters Toyoda’s office.

TANIMOTO
Sir, an update. The planes approached the southern cities are at a very high altitude. At nearly 8:00 A.M., the radar operator in Hiroshima determined that the number of planes coming in was very small - probably not more than three.

TOYODA
Only recognizance?

TANIMOTO
And the air raid alert was lifted.

TOYODA
Okay, good. No bombs.
TANIMOTO
There is an odd occurrence. Cadets, actually everyone is chasing a lone B-25 over the inland sea. Headed directly toward Tokyo.

TOYODA
What the devil is that all about?

TANIMOTO
Well, it started out as a training mission for the cadets, Sir.

Toyoda scoffs.

INT. TACHIKAWA KI-9 - OVER THE INLAND SEA - DAY

The trainer pulls next to the B-25. Hagiaoshikuni looks menacingly at the B-25.

HAGIASHIKUNI
(into radio)
Enemy B-25 bomber approaching Hiroshima harbor. Target, naval yard. Minimum speed, 190 kph.
Course 075° 33′ 57″. 8:09 AM.

LIEUTENANT
What are they doing?

HAGIASHIKUNI
It looks like they’re lining up for a bombing run?

LIEUTENANT
No. They’re skirting around any normal targets.
(looking at map)
Sir, that heading is for Tokyo.

HAGIASHIKUNI
No fuel for that. It looks like...

LIEUTENANT
But how?
Hagiashinhuni pulls his pistol and empties all eight at the B-25. No effect.

Suddenly, the city of Hiroshima is rocked and obscured in a cloud of fire. BRIGHT FLASH. The cloud of smoke and dust and ash mushrooms up. LONG BEAT and the shockwave hits the planes.

The shockwave is devastating to the trainer. Part of the trainer’s frame is covered with only resin covered canvas and it has caught fire. The trainer drops out of the sky.

The shockwave nearly crashes the B-25. It’s blown over on its side and then completely upside down by the blast it’s plummeting to the ground. There isn’t much altitude to recover. The ground is racing up. Hughson saves the plane and it pulls into level flight at a very low altitude.

From 1000 feet, the B-25 crew are able to witness much of the destruction. They are just at the edge of the blast radius. The animators might want to know; the E2 highway wasn’t there at the time, but the bomber crew might have seen something horrific from that distance.

DARKNESS. The fire damage in Hiroshima is total; the center of the city is in the distance. Only the reinforced concrete buildings are standing. A desert of clear-swept, charred remains, with only a few strong building frames left standing; it is a terrifying sight even from 1000 feet. Trolley cars were destroyed. The large trees which fell in Hiroshima were uprooted.

NOTE: The B-29 that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima released it at 31,060 feet. No one saw the B-29s and despite the warnings, no one expected it.

EXT. ŌTA RIVER – NORTH OF HIROSHIMA – DAY

The trainer crash lands in the river, it stops near the bank. Hagiashinhuni and the lieutenant survive but are seriously burned.

HAGIASHIKUNI
That son of a bitch. He wasn’t lying. He really did know about a bomb that could destroy an entire city.
LIEUTENANT
This is a horrific event, sir.

HAGIASHIKUNI
We’ve got to warn Tokyo. He’ll murder them and the Emperor as well.

They leave the beach but can’t get any vehicles to stop.
Cars and ambulances are moving in and out of Hiroshima.
Hagiashinhuni and the lieutenant walk.

INT. APACHE PRINCESS – OUTSKIRTS OF HIROSHIMA – MORNING

The B-25 crew is visibly affected by the destruction. They sit in silence. Stunned. Even when Hughson spots the runway and fuel tanks at Higashihiroshima, he simply lands. The plane flies over the airfield. It is abandoned.

EXT. AIRFIELD – HIGASHIHIROSHIMA – MORNING

Some of the barracks at Higashihiroshima are collapsed. Some of the buildings are intact roof and windows okay, and yet next to them a similar building collapsed to ground level.

The crew all separate and segregate.

HUGHSON
Get that plane out of sight.
(beat)
Check that fuel tank.

The two mechanics find equipment to pull the B-25 into a hanger. Leicester and Mary enter the galley. Brooks and Hughson enter the abandoned command center.

INT. IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS – TOKYO – DAY

Tanimoto puts down the phone and walks to Toyoda’s office.

TANIMOTO
Sir, that was the Tokyo control operator of the Japanese Broadcasting Corporation and at 8:16 A.M., he noticed that the
Hiroshima station went off the air. He tried to use another telephone line to reestablish his program, but it too has failed. Perhaps...

TOYODA
It doesn’t sound good.

INT. ABANDONED COMMAND CENTER - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - DAY

Mechanic #1 enters with a big grin on his face.

MECHANIC #1
There’s an old trainer in the second hanger.

HUGHSON
What about that fuel tank?

MECHANIC #1
It’s three-quarters full.

HUGHSON
What about the Princess?

MECHANIC #1
Topped off, sir. High-quality aviation fuel. It’s in the first hanger.

BROOKS
We can make it to Okinawa.

MECHANIC #1
Ya?

BROOKS
That’s it; the war’s over. We have the fuel and even if we didn’t that was one hell of a bomb. They’re done.

(beat)
Did you see that?

HUGHSON
I saw.
MECHANIC #1
When do we leave, sir?

HUGHSON
As soon as I find out what’s going on.

BROOKS
Maybe they left a radio?

They scour the office and the previous commander’s quarters. Hughson finds an ancient Japanese revolver (1914) and some ammunition in the bottom drawer of the former commander’s wardrobe. He loads it and pockets it.

Brooks and Hughson find an old RCA radio; it has the RCA dog "Nipper" listening to the old Victrola with the phrase "his Master's Voice" printed below.

INT. IMPERIAL GENERAL HEADQUARTERS – TOKYO – DAY

TANIMOTO
Sir, the Tokyo railroad telegraph center is reporting that the main line telegraph has stopped working. It’s fine until just north of Hiroshima. From some small railway stops within ten miles of the city there are unofficial and confused reports of a terrible explosion in Hiroshima.

TOYODA
What ammunition dumps are there?

TANIMOTO
None that I’m aware of; nothing this sizable. Sir, it’s the 2nd Army Headquarters.

TOYODA
Nothing serious has taken place; it’s all just a terrible rumor starting from a few sparks of truth.
TANIMOTO
Sir?

TOYODA
But just to confirm things. Get them on the phone. And if you can’t, I want you on a plane down there and I wanna know what happened.

(beat)
Take my plane it has big windows and report back.

INT. OLD RADIO ROOM - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - DAY

Weiderhold and Man are in the abandoned radio room looking for parts for a radio to call for help. They open every cabinet. Nothing.

Brooks and Hughson bring the former commander’s personal radio to Weiderhold.

MAN
It’s a RCA.

WEIDERHOLD
Naturally.

Brooks and Hughson assume it’s broken, but they plug it in, nothing distinct. But Weiderhold hooks it up to the military-grade antenna. Japanese army radio tower.

BROOKS
Radio Sipan?

WEIDERHOLD
Tokyo.

HUGHSON
Get that girl in here.

Man leaves to find her.

Later...

Mary translates the radio.
MARY
Radio Tokyo is still exhorting all Japanese to prepare defenses against an enemy invasion.

RADIO (V.O.)
The atomic bombs dropped at Hiroshima caused such great devastation that the weapon is sufficient to brand the enemy in the ages to come as the destroyer of mankind. The United States, by its use of the bombs, becomes "public enemy number one of social justice".

They look to Hughson.

HUGHSON
Everything is propaganda. I’m pretty sure there was just one bomb. Yes, but it's not so spectacular if there’s a few. And their people don’t wanna hear it was just one bomb.

EXT. TOKYO AIRPORT - DAY

Tanimoto goes to the airport and takes off for the southwest in the Mitsubishi Hinazuru-type Passenger Transport. Big windows.

PILOT
What do you think happened?

TANIMOTO
I don’t know.
(beat)
Rumor.

The pilot doesn’t look convinced.

Later...
EXT. PASSENGER TRANSPORT - TOKYO TO HIROSHIMA - DAY

PHOTOGRAPHER and the Tanimoto sit. Waiting.

PHOTOGRAPHER
How long have we been flying?

TANIMOTO
Three hours.

PILOT
Sir, you better come see this.

Tanimoto comes to the cockpit area. He and the pilot see a great cloud of smoke from the bomb. In the bright noon sun, the remains of Hiroshima were burning.

TANIMOTO
How far are we?

PILOT
Still nearly 100 miles from Hiroshima.

Later...

EXT. PASSENGER TRANSPORT - ABOVE HIROSHIMA - DAY

PILOT
Twenty miles out, sir.

Tanimoto looks to the front but he also looks down and out the side. They are passing over the abandoned Higashihiroshima airfield.

Later...

EXT. PASSENGER TRANSPORT - ABOVE HIROSHIMA - DAY

The transport plane reaches the city, and they circle in disbelief. A great scar on the land, still burning, and still covered by a heavy cloud of smoke.

PHOTOGRAPHER
This is all that’s left of the city?
TANIMOTO
It was a great city.

TANIMOTO
( into microphone)
Hiroshima mission to General HQ.

RADIO (V.O.)
Go ahead Hiroshima mission.

TANIMOTO
Within a radius of 1 kilometer from the center, men and animals dead almost instantaneously and outside a radius of 1 kilometer and within a radius of 2 kilometers from the center, some men and animals died instantly from the great blast and heat but the great majority were seriously or superficially injured. Houses and other structures are completely destroyed while fires are blazing everywhere. Trees uprooted and withered by the heat.

RADIO (V.O.)
Roger that.

TANIMOTO
We are landing to learn more and possibly evacuate the wounded.

EXT. HIGHWAY – SOUTH OF HIROSHIMA – DAY

They land south of the city on a highway (E31), and Tanimoto immediately walks over the bridge toward the city. He’s confronted with seriously burned walking zombies. They are trying to escape.

WALKING
Help.

TANIMOTO
Where is the hospital?

The zombie points behind her, to central Hiroshima.
Tanimoto begins to organize relief measures. He points the photographer into the city. The pilot opens the first-aid kit. It’s of little help. He holds the plane door open for evacuees.

Tanimoto looks at the pilot who shrugs.

TANIMOTO
The plane might be needed for some other purpose.

PILOT
I can’t turn them away.

The plane is full and they wait for the photographer. The photographer returns uninjured but he appears damaged.

The photographer simply boards without comment or facial expression. Tanimoto enters the cockpit area.

TANIMOTO
Once we are in the air. Send this.

Tanimoto hands the pilot a paper.

PILOT
(reading)
Evacuating injured to Higashihiroshima.

TANIMOTO
It’s the airfield we passed over.

Tanimoto points on the pilot’s map.

TANIMOTO
Here.

PILOT
It’s abandoned. It’s soldiers are... they were... they’re away.

TANIMOTO
It doesn’t matter where they are now. These people need shelter.
PILOT
(reading)
Tens of thousands total. Need planes, trucks and boats to evacuate.
(to Tanimoto)
What then?

TANIMOTO
Take us there.

Tanimoto walks to the back of the plane. The photographer appears like he might work again. He fumbles with the camera. Sobs of the burn victims.

TANIMOTO
There isn’t anything I can do.

INT. OLD RADIO ROOM - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - DAY
Music. Nearly the entire crew are listening to the radio.

MAN
We’re just waiting on the news.

LEICESTER
There’s a plane.

Hughson and the others run out and landing at the far end of the strip they see the Tanimoto’s passenger transport.

BROOKS
It’s Japanese.

HUGHSON
Out of sight...
(to the mechanic)
If things go bad, I want that fuel tank destroyed.

MECHANIC #1
Understood.

The Americans scatter.
The mechanic #1 begins looking for equipment to build a gas bomb. He finds a bottle and fuel and a rag. He soaks the rag but can’t find matches.

He finds his compatriot mechanics who are hiding. They don’t have matches.

He passed a portable battery, the ground crews use to start planes. He touches the two electrodes together and there isn’t a spark. He looks curiously at the machine. He turns a switch and he gets a spark.

The passenger transport pulls directly to the office where Hughson has the old pistol trained on the door.

Instead of infantry, the photographer and Tanimoto exit the plane with some evacuees. They are walked over to the nearest barracks.

The photographer is documenting the injuries. The plane is emptied and Tanimoto enters the office.

INT. OFFICE – HIGASHIHIROSHIMA – DAY

Someone has been there. A bit of food left over from the dairy farm and the radio. And the light is on. The map is out on the table.

Tanimoto speaks broken English. Tanimoto feels a presence.

   TANIMOTO
   I know you’re here.

Hughson emerges with the revolver on Tanimoto.

   TANIMOTO
   Where did you get that revolver?
   (beat)
   It looks like my father’s service pistol.

   HUGHSON
   Your father’s pistol work?

   TANIMOTO
   I’m sure yours works.
Long beat.

TANIMOTO
I have a situation. I have humanitarian work to do.

HUGHSON
I’ll say.

TANIMOTO
And you’ll stand in the way?

HUGHSON
We’re at war.

TANIMOTO
These people are suffering.
(beat)
I need this base... I need to return to continue the evacuation.

HUGHSON
I can’t let you do that.

The pilot enters the office and puts his pistol in Hughson’s back. Hughson hands over the revolver. The situation has changed.

TANIMOTO
What are you doing here?

Hughson says nothing.

TANIMOTO
Oh, my god. You are the bombers.
(beat)
You did that?

He points to still smoking Hiroshima.

HUGHSON
No.

Tanimoto pulls his pistol and puts it to Hughson’s temple.
HUGHSON
I’ve been a POW and this insane commander wanted to use us for target practice.

TANIMOTO
Us?

HUGHSON
I can’t tell you. Not yet.

TANIMOTO
In what?

Cut to the fuel tank. Mechanic #1 is ready to blow it.

Hughson is silent and expects an explosion.

TANIMOTO
I’m going to execute you. And return for more of the injured.

They move outside.

EXT. OFFICE – HIGASHIHIROSHIMA – DAY

The mechanic #1 sees the situation and is about to blow the fuel.

HUGHSON
My men won’t let you do that.

The photographer comes up behind the mechanic and prevents him from blowing up the fuel.

TANIMOTO
What men?

HUGHSON
A five bomber crews.

TANIMOTO
You’re outnumbered. Best I can tell is you’re only three.

The photographer brings the mechanic back to the office.
HUGHSON
Congratulations. Only twenty-seven more to go.

TANIMOTO
Twenty-seven?

PHOTOGRAPHER
He was trying to blow up the fuel.

HUGHSON
You can’t win.

TANIMOTO
I need that fuel, you’ve destroyed an entire city.

HUGHSON
Remember Pearl Harbor.

TANIMOTO
I didn’t do that.

HUGHSON
I didn’t do that.

Hughson nods toward the still burning town.

TANIMOTO
I guess we should agree. Mr. Boston Red Socks, man.

HUGHSON
I... don’t...

TANIMOTO
Shin Tanimoto. Tokyo Kyojin, often called the Tokyo Giants.

HUGHSON
So you’re a baseball player too. The war’s still on.

Long beat.

TANIMOTO
How about if I surrender?
(beat)
You will allow me to bring back more evacuees?

HUGHSON
You guys don’t surrender. If you surrender don’t you have to kill yourself?

TANIMOTO
I’m sorry, I don’t have the time for that now. Many people are suffering.

Big shocker! Tanimoto offers to hand over the pistol and the revolver.

HUGHSON
You going back to Hiroshima?

TANIMOTO
Yes.

Hughson takes the pistol from him. Tanimoto gestures to the pilot and the photographer and they hand over their pistols as well.

Tanimoto moves for the old revolver in his pocket. Hughson stops him and refuses.

HUGHSON
Leave it in there. Where you’re going, it might get a little desperate. You might need it.

TANIMOTO
Come on; you can help?

HUGHSON
What?

TANIMOTO
Your plane can haul victims too.

MECHANIC #1
That would be treason.
HUGHSON
I can’t do that. Giving aide and comfort to the enemy would be...

Weiderhold arrives and it pointed to the transport.

HUGHSON
(to Weiderhold)
Go get his radio.

TANIMOTO
You’re not honoring our agreement?

HUGHSON
No, you can go. Knock your self out.
(beat)
It’s just that we can’t help you.

An elderly Japanese laundry lady drives up in an old van, it’s full of clean white laundry. She’s talking 100 mph in Japanese and no one seems to understand. Tanimoto translates.

TANIMOTO
For bandages.

Mary and the Leicester take a load to the barracks. Man brings water to the barracks.

TANIMOTO
We are agreed then?

HUGHSON
I agree.

Tanimoto, the pilot and the photographer grab a load of sheets and leave in their plane.

BROOKS
Brilliant. Let’s leave.

HUGHSON
They’re on the verge of surrender. Seems a big risk.
(beat)
I made an agreement.
BROOKS
Well, I don’t understand.

MECHANIC #1
No, he’s right. We should leave.

BROOKS
Forgive me for saying this but you’re just the kind to make a deal like this. He’ll have every civil guard unit here in minutes.

HUGHSON
Did you see that city?

The argument silences Brooks.

Other Japanese arrive. One is a doctor. Nurses, other volunteers. They stop by Hughes and politely bow and go to work.

HUGHSON
(to the mechanics)
Go up there to the gate and set up a checkpoint. Confiscate their weapons.

INT. RADIO ROOM - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - DAY

Weiderhold mans the radio. And he’s been in conversation with the U.S. commanders.

WEIDERHOLD
No, you don’t understand. We are in control of the base. And we need help.

RADIO (V.O.)
You tell the Captain that if he helps them in any material way, I’m gonna barbeque his ass.

WEIDERHOLD
Barbeque?
RADIO (V.O.)
Son, what you are talking about is treason. Tell him that.

WEIDERHOLD
Thank you, I’m sure he’s aware.

RADIO (V.O.)
Then what are you asking for?

EXT. AIRFIELD - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - DAY

A small Japanese trainer arrives and Tanimoto walks out to see the pilot. Tanimoto returns.

TANIMOTO
Captain,

HUGHSON
Yes, Major.

TANIMOTO
That plane is from Tokyo. They want the photographer.

HUGHSON
Absolutely not.

TANIMOTO
With all due respect. I know these people and they will not surrender without evidence.

HUGHSON
What? You’ve lost an entire city.

TANIMOTO
I know them. They think they fear it’s a trick.

HUGHSON
How does that happen? All they have to do is look over...

TANIMOTO
They live in a different world.
Hughson contemplates.

    HUGHSON
     Very well.

The photographer gathers up the film and boards the trainer. They taxi out and take off north.

BEGIN MONTAGUE

- Mary and Leichester work as nurses.
- The mechanics acts as guards. Confiscate a baseball bat and slingshot from a kid.
- Weiderhold mans the radio.
- Hughson and Brooks look to Weiderhold for news of surrender. Weiderhold shakes his head, no.
- Man acts as an orderly. Bedpans and supplies water.
- Farmer and wife bring and cook rice.
- Tanimoto returns with another plane full of evacuees.
- Night falls.
- Next moring montage start again.
- This time there are five planes and 50 villagers. The camp looks full.

END MONTAGUE

EXT. AIRFIELD - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - DAY

    TANIMOTO
    The camp is nearly full, If I can arrange it, will you take a group to Tokyo. Many have family there.

    HUGHSON
    Can’t do it.

    TANIMOTO
    I’m sorry to ask, but the situation, it’s grave.

    HUGHSON
    Can’t do it.
REPEAT THE MONTAGE

- The beds are becoming full.
- Tanimoto returns with another plane full of evacuees.
- Night falls.
- Next morning montage start again.
- This time there are ten transport planes and 100 villagers. The camp looks full.
- A third night.

END THE MONTAGE

INT. RADIO ROOM - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - NEXT DAY

Weiderhold mans the radio.

Hughson and Brooks look to Weiderhold for news of surrender. Weiderhold’s eyes light up.

WEIDERHOLD
Nagasaki, we just did the same thing to Nagasaki.

HUGHSON
But no surrender?

The American crew gathers around; they want to fly evacuees.

HUGHSON
They’ve got to surrender.

Weiderhold returns to his radio.

EXT. AIRFIELD - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - DUSK

The beds are totally full, evacuees are laid out in hanger and under trees.

Tanimoto returns with another plane full of evacuees.

Night falls.
EXT. AIRFIELD - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - MORNING

TANIMOTO
The camp is full. Those people lined up by the barracks have family in Tokyo and are well enough to travel. I’m going to take them there.

HUGHSON
And you’re not going back to Hiroshima.

TANIMOTO
Not me. Not today.

HUGHSON
You’re almost out of evacuees?

TANIMOTO
No. There is an everlasting supply of ghosts.

Hagashikumi emerges out of the trees. He appears to have been traveling three days. His feet are bloody. His skin and some of his clothes are burned off.

The lieutenant simply sits at the tree line, exhausted. Hagashikumi advances but stops on the runway. There are a ton of people standing behind and around Hughson. If there is going to be gunplay, Hagashikumi wants it to be western-style in the middle of the runway.

HAGASHIKUMI
These are the Americans who destroyed our most beautiful cities.

TANIMOTO
(to Hagashikumi)
Really?

HUGHSON
(to Hughson)
You know him?

HUGHSON
That is Hagashikumi.
HAGASHIKUMI
It might not change the fate of
the world, but there's no reason
why we can't be civil about it!
March your ass out into this
runway so we can finish this.

Tanimoto translates.

TANIMOTO
Captain, he’s seen too many
western movies.

HUGHSON
I’d say...

HAGASHIKUMI
What are they saying? Come on
Major. Translate.

TANIMOTO
The war is over.

Mary translates.

HAGASHIKUMI
No, it’s not! It’ll never be over.

TANIMOTO
They’re not barbarians!

HAGASHIKUMI
Oh, ya? The city is still smoking.
Now send that American pilot out
here. I’ve been through hell and I
want to go home.

TANIMOTO
(to Hughson)
You don’t have to fight him.

BROOKS
No, we wanna fight. Just gives us
a second.

HUGHSON
You think?
BROOKS
Look at him Captain. You can take him.

EXT. DUGOUT - TOKYO GIANTS STADIUM - DAY

FLASHBACK
Tanimoto remembers in 1939 waiting in the dug out to be announced before running on the field. The announcer calls his name “Shin Tanimoto” and he runs onto the field.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. AIRFIELD - HIGASHIHIROSHIMA - MORNING
Tanimoto walks out onto the runway.

Americans and Japanese, everything stops. Everyone is watching Captain Hughson take out his pistol and check it. He chambers a round. Tex Hughson is working up his nerve.

LEICESTER
I thought I’d never see this.

MARY
What?

LEICESTER
Well, there’s a lot going on in this scene. Ultimately, it could be because the villain wants to maintain an air of dignity even in defeat, or maybe he just wants to show the Captain that he can beat him at his own game.

MARY
The western showdown?

LEICESTER
Never in a million years, have I…

MARY
And your Captain will go?
LEICESTER
Americans love to see things done right and seems like a good story for his grandkids.

Pistol loaded. Hughson takes a step toward the runway and realizes Tanimoto is there.

Tanimoto and Hagashikumi are conversing. Tanimoto is trying to reason with him. It’s a LONG SHOT.

LEICESTER
What are they saying?

MARY
I can’t hear.

Hagashikumi takes a step toward Hughson; he’s going to walk around Tanimoto, who is blocking his path. Tanimoto pulls the old revolver. Hagashikumi pulls his pistol. Tanimoto fires six times. Hagashikumi fired eight times.

Hagashikumi falls.

At that instant a B-29 flies over. Low altitude.

Tanimoto is still standing. The pilot runs to his side.

Tanimoto isn’t hit, but we only realize it when he smiles.

EXT. AIRFIELD – HIGASHIHIROSHIMA – DAY

A leaflet floats down. Mary picks it up.

MARY
Tokyo – The Cabinet and the Supreme Council voted in unanimity to accept the Potsdam offer, but with the stipulation that the Emperor remain the sovereign ruler of the country. Truman, on behalf of the allies, accepts these terms of surrender.

Wiederhold has the news from the radio room and he runs out with the news.
WEIDERHOLD
The war is...

MAN
OVER!

The celebration has already begun. Even the Japanese citizens are smiling.

HUGHSON
Thank you for doing that.

TANIMOTO
I had my reasons.

HUGHSON
Yes, okay.

TANIMOTO
But what I need to know is can you take these people to Tokyo?

HUGHSON
Happy to.

Hughson gives them the signal and the mechanics pull the B-25 out of the hanger.

ROLL CREDITS

FADE OUT