

# DANGER in the CLOUDS

an original screenplay by:  
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Story By:  
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"Danger in the Clouds"

FADE IN

EXT. COOK COUNTY AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: FEBRUARY 21, 1930

The sun is peaking over the treetops on this early crisp day. A thick frost lays across the landscape. The trees are covered with a blanket of white fur over their naked branches.

The solitude is disturbed by the distant roar of an engine racing down the dusty country road. As the MODEL "A" FORD makes its way into the parking area next to the old white shack.

JOE DONNELLAN (29) wearing a heavy SHEEP SKIN AVIATOR JACKET and matching CAP, climbs out of the car. His breath is heavy in the morning air and hangs on as long as it can before disappearing with the breeze.

Joe works the thick GLOVES off his hands and fiddles with the PADLOCK on the large doors of the building. He gets the lock off and pushes the doors open exposing a beautiful PARKS P1 BIPLANE. Canary yellow with black trim. The biplane is the new pride of Joe and his partner's flying club.

INSIDE THE HANGER

Joe walks around the plane checking everything over. He opens the cowling and inspects the engine, pulling up the dipstick he inspects the oil level. He then removes the gas cap and inspects the amount of fuel in the tank.

Joe climbs up on the wing and reaches in to the cockpit and pulls out a LOGBOOK for the airplane. He writes in the book some notes then replaces the book in its place.

Joe goes over to the desk area at the side of the room. He takes the COFFEE POT into the bathroom and washes it out. He returns to make a new pot of coffee.

While the coffee is brewing, Joe sits down at the EASEL and is working on plans for an airplane design, when his partner, GUS LINDQUIST (30's) of average height and weight, strolls in through the open hanger doors.

GUS

Good mornin Joe, you're here awful early.

Joe looks up from his drawing.

JOE

Hi Gus, I wanted to get some drawings finished before my student gets here.

(pause)

I got the coffee going.

Gus walks close to Joe and takes a look at the drawings.

GUS

That's really coming along.

(jokingly)

Think it'll fly?

Joe looks up with a big grin on his face.

JOE

I'll let you test fly it to find out.

Gus laughs as he walks to the coffee pot.

CUT TO:

EXT. COOK COUNTY AIRPORT - DAY

The sun is up high and the air is clear, only a slight breeze is noticeable. A perfect day for a flying lesson.

Joe and Gus are pushing the biplane out in front of the hanger. Joe's mechanic, W.M. MANLY(45), a short stocky fellow with thinning hair and glasses, is walking around the plane puffing on his cigar.

GUS

Who's the student today Joe?

JOE

That fellow that was here last week, Richard King.

GUS

He's kinda over-anxious, I'd be careful with him if I were you.

JOE

Yea I know. He thinks he's already a pilot and he's only had three hours. He makes me nervous but I've had worse.

W.M. Manly is wiping off the wings with a cloth and inspecting all the wires between them when RICHARD KING(28) drives into the parking area in his CHEVROLET BOAT TAIL SPEEDSTER. He is dressed appropriately for the cold weather. The red curls of his hair are springing from under his cap.

Richard is shorter than the others and very hyper. He reverberates with excitement as he comes close to the plane.

RICHARD KING  
Good-day fellas! What a great day.

JOE  
Hi Richard, you ready to go?

RICHARD KING  
Yea, I can't wait.

GUS  
I can tell, you better be careful up there.

Richard walks around the plane inspecting it.

JOE  
OK Richard, let's see what you learned from last week.  
(pause)  
Gus, will you give the prop a spin for us?

GUS  
Sure thing Joe, just holler when you're ready.

Joe climbs into the rear seat cockpit of the plane and Richard climbs into the front. Joe checks the switches and primes the engine.

JOE  
Gus, give me a prime.

Gus pulls the prop through a couple of turns.

Joe turns on the master switch and gives Gus a thumbs up.

Gus gives the propeller a hard spin, the engine coughs and spits then fires away. Joe adds a little throttle and the engine smooths out.

Gus pulls the wheel chocks from under the tires and signals to Joe that all is clear.

JOE (CONT'D)  
(loudly)  
OK Richard, let's taxi out to the runway!

Richard gives some more throttle from the dual controls, and the plane starts rolling along.

He taxis the plane down between the buildings and then turns it towards the far end of the runway. As he taxis, he is making small turns in an "S" pattern so he can see around the front of the engine.

They taxi to the end of the runway and hold it there while they do the engine tests and finish letting the engine warm up. When they are ready, Richard taxis onto the end of the runway and gives the engine full throttle.

The engine revs up and they head down the strip picking up speed. The tail lifts up then the whole plane starts to lift off the ground. In just a few moments the beautiful bird is airborne and gaining altitude at six hundred feet per minute.

The two climb high and stay in the pattern around the airport. As they make their way around to the downwind leg, Richard cuts the throttle back and trims out the elevator.

They glide along slowing and descending as they move into the base leg. As Richard banks the plane sharply it stalls and slips sideways.

In a panic, Richard grabs the stick tightly and freezes. Joe is fighting to recover the plane as it noses towards the ground barely two hundred feet below.

Gus and W.M. Manly watch intently as the plane dives behind the trees and buildings.

Joe, still fighting to recover as the ground is spinning and getting closer and closer. Richard locked, frozen in terror, still holding the stick firmly...

FADE TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - DAY

SUPER: SEVENTEEN YEARS EARLIER

Beautiful early summer day outside Sodus, Michigan, on the family farm. Trees encompass the prairie style two story farm house. Birds can be heard in the thick green foliage as they busily chatter at each other.

The house painted in the traditional white has a large wraparound porch and a wide stoop leading down onto the thick grass.

A large garden next to the house in full growth of the needed vegetables. Chickens and ducks are running around the yard eating bugs as the pigs squeal in their pens.

Nearby is a large red barn with a fence outlining the pasture behind. Horses and cows can be seen grazing carelessly.

Noise is coming from the barn. Sounds of someone working diligently on some piece of machinery inside. Hammering and thumping as the tools do their job.

A man steps out from the farm house onto the covered porch. He is tall and very fit wearing a business suit. JOHN DONNELLAN, (50s) walks off the porch and towards the barn.

INSIDE THE BARN

John approaches a boy bent over a piece of equipment working away with tools in hand.

JOHN

Hey Joe, did you get it fixed?

Joe (13) looks up from the spreader.

JOE

Oh, hi dad... Yea I got it figured out. I had to pull the cover and replace the chain and one gear.

Joe points to the gear box on the side panel.

JOE (CONT'D)

It was bound up and had broken off some teeth.

Joe holds up a gear that is missing several teeth.

JOHN

Good job son. I want to go into town, would you go get the wagon hitched up and go with me?

Joe looks up at his dad inquisitively.

JOE

Sure, just let me clean up and I'll be ready.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - LATER

Joe is hitching a horse to a wooden wagon. He backs the brown mare up into the wagon and places the harness over the horse then attaches it to the wagon.

He checks that everything is done correctly and makes a couple of last minute adjustments as John walks up and climbs up onto the seat. Joe climbs on next to his dad.

JOHN

Here son why don't you drive us into town.

John hands the reins to Joe.

JOE

Dad, I was reading last night in one of my books about the Wright Brothers. Do you know about them?

With a snap of the reins they head off down the fruit tree lined driveway and turn towards town.

JOHN

Everybody knows about them.

JOE

Wouldn't it be great to fly like a bird?

JOHN

I got something else in mind for you today.

The wagon disappears into the distance.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN CENTER ST. JOSEPH, MI - AFTERNOON

The sun is high on the warm afternoon as the town is alive with activity of the day. People are scurrying back and forth around the dusty streets and boardwalks tending to their business.

The street is lined with buildings full of businesses catering to the town's needs. A lazy dog watches as John, and Joe ride up in the wagon and stop at the FORD DEALERSHIP on the corner of the main street.

JOE

We're looking at a motorcar?

JOHN

I thought it was time for one.

Joe drives the wagon to the side of the building where he can water the horse. The two are greeted by a salesman as they park the wagon and climb down.

MR. SMITHERS

Good day sir, my name is Mr. Smithers.  
What can we show you today?

JOHN

We wanted to look at one of your  
fine motorcars. Something that the  
whole family can ride in.

The SALESMAN (40ish), short and overweight, wearing a white shirt with a blue tie tucked in the blue pinstriped vest with matching pants, reaches out his hand to John.

MR. SMITHERS

Right this way and I'll show you the  
new nineteen thirteen Model "T".

They shake hands and walk into the sales lot area where several automobiles are staged for display. Some are used sitting in the back row and the new ones out front for everyone to see.

Joe is looking over a dark green Model "T" with the buckskin leather seats. It has bright brass finishes sparkling in the sun. The green wooden spoked wheels and white sidewall tires really set off the vehicle.

JOE

I really like this one dad.

JOHN

That sure is a real eye catcher.

MR. SMITHERS

This is our most popular model, the touring model. Plenty of room for the whole family. It has a four cylinder engine that is equal to twenty horsepower. This thing will really get you down the road. Yep, Henry sure got it right with this one.

JOHN

Well, this may be a little more than what we need, it looks expensive and maybe not that practical.

Joe continues to admire the car, he climbs in and sits in the drivers seat playing with the steering wheel and fiddles with the levers.

MR. SMITHERS

It really isn't that expensive at all. Only five hundred dollars. And one fine automobile... Looks like your boy sure likes it.

JOHN

I think that's more than I wanted to spend. How about something a little more practical?

Mr. Smithers scans the lot.

MR. SMITHERS

I think I got just the one you'll like. It's the same car but not as flashy. Still has all the same things but costs a little less.

They walk down the row of motorcars a little to a big black shiny Model "T". Joe close behind. The motorcar has black leather seats, lots of brass and white wall tires with the black wooden spoke wheels.

MR. SMITHERS (CONT'D)

This is an earlier model so it has a few miles on it. I can let you have this one for six hundred dollars.

They look over the car closely. Joe lifts the hood panel and inspects the engine, then closes the hood. He climbs in to the driver's seat and inspects all the workings of the auto.

JOHN

That looks a little more like it. What do you think Joe? Can you drive it?

JOE

Looks easy enough, I can reach the peddles. What do these things do?

Mr. Smithers looks a little puzzled.

MR. SMITHERS

You want the boy to drive it?

JOHN

You teach him how to drive it and maintain it and we'll take this one.

Mr. Smithers scratches his head and looks at Joe. He pulls a cigar from his vest pocket and bites off the end, then lights it up. A cloud of smoke swirls around his head.

MR. SMITHERS

You ever drive a motorcar before  
young man?

JOE

Nope, just a horse and wagon, can't  
be that difficult. How do you start  
this thing up?

MR. SMITHERS

OK,

(to John)

I'll give him a lesson. You want to  
wait in the office? Have my secretary  
get you a cola.

(to Joe)

Ok young man I'll show you how this  
works.

Mr. Smithers goes on to explain what each of the gadgets and  
levers functions are while John walks into the sales office.

Soon Mr. Smithers driving, and Joe by his side, are chugging  
happily down the dusty road and off into the distance.

EXT. TOWN CENTER ST. JOSEPH, MI - LATER

The Model "T" comes chugging around the corner with Joe at  
the wheel, a big smile across his face. They pull back onto  
the sales lot and park.

John exits the sales office and walks over to the motorcar.

JOHN

Well son, how did you do?

JOE

A little scary at first but I got  
the hang of it once we got to  
Henderson corners.

MR. SMITHERS

You got one fast learner here John.  
The lad did really well.

(pause)

I'll throw in a free oil change in  
six months. Joe you bring the  
motorcar in then and I'll show you  
how to change it. Other than that  
just check the fluid levels of all  
the places I showed you and you'll  
be fine.

Joe walks around the motorcar with his handkerchief wiping  
off the fenders.

MR. SMITHERS (CONT'D)

John why don't we go into the office  
and sign the papers.

Mr. Smithers and John head towards the office. Joe continues to give the vehicle a good once over examining every inch.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - EVENING

Joe drives the new motorcar into the driveway and honks the horn loudly. Chickens scatter. His brothers and sisters, VERONICA (11), MAURICE (9) JOHNNY (6), MARY (4) AND VINCENT (2) along with his mom, come out from the house and stand on the porch.

Joe parks the car on the lawn in front of them. His siblings all climb in and look over the motorcar as John drives the wagon up behind.

John climbs out of the wagon and meets his wife MARY ANN (40's) as she is admiring the automobile.

JOHN

Well Joe, you better give us a little  
ride before dinner.

FADE TO:

EXT. TOWN CENTER ST. JOSEPH, MI - DAY

SUPER: SUMMER 1916

The town center has gotten busier over the years. More motorcars are driving about as pedestrians have to watch out. The day is hot and sweltering as Joe, now sixteen, along with his brother Maurice (12) and Johnny (9) are loading groceries into the Model "T".

Joe steps back up on the boardwalk and spies the newspaper in the stand by the store's entrance. He picks it up and scans the front page. The big story is about the World War and how they need more troops to join.

As Joe reads along he sees the section that says to join the United States Air Force and fly airplanes. He goes into

THE STORE

And pays for the paper,

He returns

OUTSIDE

with the rest of the supplies and loads them into the rear of the Motorcar.

JOE

Hey Maurice, you and Johnny stay with the car, I'll be back in a few minutes.

Joe walks down the block passing the busy towns people scurrying around doing their business. He walks up to the recruiting office and enters

INSIDE THE OFFICE

Joe is greeted by a large man in a military uniform. He is tall with a crew cut, very muscular. He stands and offers his hand to Joe.

RECRUITER 1

Hello there young man. What can we do for you today?

Joe gives a firm handshake to the recruiter.

JOE

I want to enlist.

RECRUITER 1

Well you look a little young, how old are you?

JOE

Sixteen sir, last March.

RECRUITER 1

Uncle Sam says you have to be eighteen to enlist. Seventeen if you get your parents written permission.

JOE

(disappointed)

Oh, I wanted to do my part and learn to fly. I can fix anything and I'm a real good shot with a rifle.

RECRUITER 1

Why don't you come back next year and bring your parents, we'll see what we can do then.

JOE

Alright.

Joe turns to leave and spots a poster on the wall from Canada. It's an add for the Royal Flying Corps needing mechanics and

student pilots for the war. He stands and looks over the poster reading every word.

RECRUITER 1

Hey kid, you might try them, maybe you can get in as a mechanic's helper and then when you're older you can move into the student pilot program. I know a guy over there in Toronto, he did tell me that they would take sixteen year old's in the apprentice program. You don't mind going to Canada do you?

JOE

No, I don't mind Canada.

RECRUITER 1

Ask for Sergeant McDougal, tell him I sent you. He's at Camp Borden outside of Toronto.

JOE

Thank you sir, I really appreciate that.

CUT TO:

INT. DONNELLAN FARM - EVENING

Joe, along with his brothers and sisters are sitting at the dining table. John comes into the kitchen and sits at the head of the table.

Joe's mom, Mary Ann, is putting the remaining food into serving dishes and setting them on the table. Meat and vegetables are the meal with a pitcher of milk. Hot biscuits are in the bowl with a cloth over them.

A quick prayer is said by John and everyone digs in. The dishes of food are passed around and placed on each one's plates. Light chatter is spoken by all.

JOE

Dad, I stopped by the Army recruiting center today to see if I could sign up.

JOHN

Aren't you too young for that?

JOE

That's what I was told. I was hoping that they would let me sign up if you gave me permission.

John passes the bowl of potatoes to Joe.

JOHN

They wouldn't let you even do that?

JOE

Not until I'm eighteen they said,  
but the recruiter did say that the  
Canadian's are looking for mechanics  
and I might get in with them as an  
apprentice.

JOHN

Is that what you want to do?

JOE

It would be a step in the right  
direction, don't you think?

(pause)

I could work on airplanes and then  
maybe learn to fly.

They eat up the food as they continue to discuss the idea.

JOHN

Mother, what do you think about our  
son working on airplanes in Canada?

MARY ANN

Ever since Joe was a little boy he  
has wanted to fly. Joe, your lucky  
that you didn't kill yourself with  
that contraption you and Maurice  
tried to fly off the barn roof.

MAURICE

(mouth full)

Daredevil Joe

Everyone laughs and keeps eating.

JOHN

I guess it wouldn't hurt to go over  
the border and talk to them. We can  
go over on Thursday morning if you  
want.

JOE

(excitedly)

That would be great Dad, thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. RFC HANGER TORONTO - DAY

SUPER: SIX MONTHS LATER

Inside the large airplane hanger are three Bi-planes that look to be damaged in various ways. Many airplane parts are scattered about.

Joe, wearing greasy coveralls, is working on an airplane. He is working on the engine of a bright red DH4 BI-PLANE. It is the fourth airplane in the hanger and is in perfect condition.

Joe is finishing up the inspection and screwing the engine cowling on when SERGEANT MCDUGAL walks in. He is dressed in his military uniform. Joe catches him out the corner of his eye and throws a quick salute his way.

SERGEANT MCDUGAL

Joe, how is this one doing?

JOE

Got it all finished up sir.

Joe puts the tools down on the cart next to him and pulls a rag from his hip pocket, wipes his hands.

SERGEANT MCDUGAL

Well good, just in time. We need more airplanes and less accidents.

JOE

I'll get right on the next one sir, just as soon as I get this one moved out.

SERGEANT MCDUGAL

Do you think you can fly one?

JOE

I'm ready to learn sir.

SERGEANT MCDUGAL

We're a little short of pilots and we need you to fly, so tomorrow morning I want you in the flight training.

JOE

Yes sir.

Joe grins from ear to ear.

SERGEANT MCDOUGAL

Remember Joe, there are old pilots and bold pilots but there are no old bold pilots. You be very careful, if anything happens to you, your dad will shoot me.

JOE

Yes sir.

INT. RFC FLIGHT SCHOOL - MORNING

Joe is sitting in the front seat of a classroom with twenty students. Most are between sixteen and twenty years old. At the chalk board is the instructor. He is drawing the fundamentals of flight with diagrams on the board.

All the students are taking notes as CAPTAIN DALTON (20's) gives the lesson.

DALTON

Airspeed, altitude and brains. Two are always needed to successfully complete the flight.

Capt' Dalton draws an airfoil shape on the chalk board.

DALTON (CONT'D)

The wing gives us lift, that is the counter to weight. The wind over the top of the wing creates lift. When the wing slows and the lift is less than the weight the wing will stall. Keep your speed up so you won't stall. Who can tell me what the other pair is?

Joe raises his hand. Capt' Dalton points to Joe.

JOE

Thrust and drag.

DALTON

Correct. Thrust is the force created by the power and drag is the opposite force created from wind resistance.

Capt' Dalton is drawing arrows and marks on the board as he explains the four forces. The students continue to write in their note books.

DALTON (CONT'D)

Ok that's enough for today.

(MORE)

DALTON (CONT'D)

I want to see Donnellan, Jenkins,  
Boyle and Atkinson on the flight  
line in fifteen ready for flight.  
Dismissed.

EXT. RFC FLIGHT SCHOOL - DAY

Joe, along with the three others are walking around the red  
Bi-Plane inspecting it closely when Capt' Dalton arrives.

DALTON

Donnellan, you're up first.

JOE

Yes sir.

Joe climbs into the rear seat of the airplane and Private  
Dalton climbs into the front. Jenkins walks to the front of  
the airplane as Boyle and Atkinson separate to each wing  
area.

Joe switches on the gas valve and master switch. He gives  
the throttle a little push forward, wiggles the stick as he  
watches the control surfaces of the airplane.

JOE (CONT'D)

Contact!

Jenkins grabs the propeller and gives it a pull. The engine  
gives a little cough then sputters as it catches and fires  
up. Joe adjusts the throttle and the mixture control until  
the engine is purring smoothly.

He checks all the instruments on the panel then gives a thumbs  
up. Boyle and Atkins pull the wheel chocks from underneath  
and step out of the way.

Joe gives the throttle a push and the little engine revs up  
causing the airplane to move forward. He taxis the airplane  
down the grass strip to the far end then turns it around as  
he gives it full throttle.

As the speed picks up, the tail raises off the ground. In  
moments the airplane lifts up and is flying as they continue  
down the runway.

Capt' Dalton is observing as they fly around the airport  
pattern. Joe makes a perfect turn and lines up for a landing.  
He cuts the power and settles the airplane down and lands  
without error.

Joe taxis back to where his fellow students are and before  
he shuts down the engine, Capt' Dalton turns around and tells  
him to go at it alone.

Capt' Dalton then climbs out of the airplane and walks over to the others while Joe taxis back to the other end of the strip and takes off.

They watch as Joe flies the pattern solo.

CUT TO:

EXT. RFC FLIGHT SCHOOL - EVENING

Joe, Jenkins, Boyle and Atkinson are leaving the building in a happy state. They are dressed in their finest military attire, they're joking and chatting up each other.

JENKINS

Congratulations Lieutenant Boyle and Lieutenant Atkins and you too Lieutenant Donnellan, we made it through.

ATKINSON

Man, I didn't think I was going to pass, what a relief.

BOYLE

Well we're the only ones that made it this time. Let's get drunk!

ATKINSON

Donnellan, I think you're the youngest Lieutenant ever.

The four head out to the Model "T" parked in front. Joe climbs into the driver seat and starts it up as the other three pile in.

JOE

Anybody know where we're going?

ATKINSON

Anyplace they won't check ID's

BOYLE

There's a club I know in town, just drive and I'll show you.

They back up and drive out the gate.

FADE OUT:

INT. RFC FLIGHT SCHOOL - DAY

Joe along with his three friends are sitting in the break area drinking coffee. It is a room with about a dozen tables each having four chairs around them.

Only a few soldiers are sitting in the room eating and drinking. A coffee pot and beverage counter at one end.

BOYLE

I got my orders, I ship out day after tomorrow for France.

ATKINSON

I'll be with you on that trip.

Joe looking a little worried, sips his coffee.

JENKINS

Well you fellas have a nice time, I'll be thinking of you while I buzz around Italy looking for Germans.

BOYLE

What about you Joe, where you going?

JOE

I haven't been given my orders yet so it must be top secret.

ATKINSON

More like they are sending you directly to Berlin.

BOYLE

Yea Joe, straight to hell they'll send you.

Sergeant McDougal enters the room, pauses and then looks around. Spotting Joe, he walks over to the table and Joe stands.

SERGEANT MCDUGAL

Joe, we have never seen test scores as high as yours. You will be a great pilot.

JOE

Thank you sir, I'm ready to go.

SERGEANT MCDUGAL

We have a little problem but I have a solution that I want you to consider.

JOE

What's that sir? Is it the age thing?

SERGEANT MCDOUGAL

It is Joe, but you're such a natural that we want you to be the new flight instructor over at Camp Mohawk.

JOE

Camp Mohawk sir? Isn't that the new training base?

SERGEANT MCDOUGAL

Yes Joe, and we want you to head up the training over there. You can take your airplane with you. You're to report there at 0600 Monday.

JOE

Yes sir, and thank you sir.

The sergeant leaves as Joe sits back down with his buddies.

JENKINS

Well I guess that answers that.

BOYLE

Yea Joe, you get to be a trainer. Do em good Joe, we need all the pilots we can get.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMP MOHAWK - DAY

Inside the HANGER, Joe is in the classroom area standing at the CHALK BOARD. Twenty DESKS and CHAIRS fill the area.

Joe is drawing diagrams on the chalk board and explaining the principles of flight.

JOE

OK any questions so far?

No one says anything.

JOE (CONT'D)

The three most common expressions in military aviation are: "did you feel that?" "What's that noise?" Who can tell me the third?

STUDENT 1

Oh SHIT!

The group is filled with laughter.

JOE

Next we'll go out to the flight deck  
and I'll go over what we just learned.  
Berglund, go out to the flight deck  
and ask one of the mechanics to warm  
up a trainer for us.

CARL BERGLUND (18) average height and weight, stands and  
walks out the hanger door.

JOE (CONT'D)

I want to cover the things we need  
to look for before, during and after  
a flight. With the vibration of the  
airplane, things have a tendency to  
come loose and fall off.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP MOHAWK - CONTINUOUS

Carl Berglund is at one of the Bi-plane trainers. He steps  
up on the wing and reaches inside the cockpit. Flips on the  
master switch and adjusts the fuel valve.

Steps down and walks to the propeller, giving it a spin the  
airplane fires up. Carl then pulls the wheel chocks from  
the plane and climbs into the seat.

He revs up the engine and starts taxiing out onto the runway.

INSIDE

The hanger Joe hears the engine revving and runs

OUTSIDE

As the plane shoots past, the tail already up and the plane  
in takeoff mode. The rest of the students rush out the hanger  
behind Joe.

They all watch as Berglund in the yellow "Jenny" trainer,  
lifts off the runway and climbs into the sky. The MECHANICS  
come over to Joe very excitedly, wanting to know who said he  
could fly that.

Joe watches as Berglund banks to the left and stalls the  
airplane.

A wave of astonishment quickly sweeps over the spectators as  
the plane turns nose down and slams into the ground just  
past the end of the runway. A fire ball rises up with a  
thick black smoke bellowing from the wreck.

Everyone races to the accident but nothing can be done to save the pilot or plane.

FADE OUT:

INT. CAMP MOHAWK - DAY

Inside the classroom area, Joe is at the chalk board drawing diagrams explaining to a new group of students what not to do.

The students are busily writing notes as Joe continues with the lecture. He goes over the stall speeds and how dangerous it is to bank an airplane without adding power to keep up the airspeed.

Next he goes over maintenance of the airplane. As Joe is explaining the proper procedures, an airplane can be heard in the distance outside. It is getting closer.

As Joe is going over the parts of an airplane, the propeller comes flying in through the roof of the hanger nearly missing the students. It flies past their heads as they all dive to the floor.

The wild propeller bounces off the floor and shoots out through the back wall ripping a large gash through the metal. No one was hurt.

JOE  
Everyone alright?

The students are getting up off the floor and looking around in disbelief. They brush themselves off and take to their seats.

JOE (CONT'D)  
That was close, now you see the importance of good maintenance.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP MOHAWK - DAY

Joe and the students are at one of the training airplanes. Six other airplanes are lined up. One is Joe's red airplane, the rest are yellow. An airplane nearby is running as the instructor with his student is getting ready to take off.

Joe is lecturing the students as they walk around the airplane. The other airplane revs up, moves out onto the runway and speeds away. Everyone watches as they lift off of the ground.

Just as the airplane rises up into the air, the entire landing gear assembly drops off from underneath the airplane. One of the students notices it hit the runway and bounce uncontrollably into the air a few times then come crashing to rest against the side of a hanger.

STUDENT 2

Hey, don't they need that to land with?

Pointing towards the landing gear.

JOE

Yes and they don't know they lost it. We got to warn them.

The group of students all run over to the landing gear and pull it back towards the runway. By the time they retrieve the gear, the airplane is circling for a landing. Some students run onto the runway and wave their arms frantically trying to get the pilots attention.

The pilot of the airplane spots the students on the runway then sees Joe and the rest of the students with the landing gear. He pulls up and makes a go around buying time while he decides what to do.

Joe signals to the pilot to keep flying circles.

JOE (CONT'D)

Alright you guys there is a hay wagon at the edge of that field behind the hanger, let's go get it, I have an idea.

Off they go to the field. They all grab onto the wagon full of hay and work it out of the field and back to the runway. They take it to the downwind end and then center it on the runway. The wagon is facing backwards so the tongue won't dig into the soft ground.

STUDENT 2

What are we doing with this?

JOE

Giving them something to land on.

The airplane is circling and the pilot sees what Joe is doing. He comes around and lines up for a landing. Joe gives him the sign to cut his engine. The pilot responds and shuts it off. The propeller stops in a horizontal position.

JOE (CONT'D)

OK everyone lets push the wagon as fast as we can so they can settle down on it.

The group gets the wagon rolling and the airplane drops out of the sky very close to the ground. It only takes a few seconds for the airplane to catch them and the pilot flares out and drops the airplane on the wagon.

The wagon and the airplane shoot on down the runway for a few hundred feet then slows and comes to a stop. Everyone runs to the airplane just as the pilot and his student are climbing out unharmed.

Every one cheers loudly and jumps around excited. Joe helps the pilot off the wagon.

PILOT

Oh man, Joe that was some fast thinking on your part. Thank you for that. You saved our lives and the airplane.

Joe grins and pats the pilot on the back.

JOE

I'm just glad that you're safe.

All the students grab on to the wagon and start pulling it back to the hanger.

FADE OUT:

EXT. CAMP MOHAWK - DAY

Joe (18) is giving his red bi-plane a good inspection. MAJOR NORBERG (30's) approaches Joe and watches him for a moment. Joe looks up from the area he has been inspecting and gives a quick salute to the Major.

MAJOR NORBERG

Capt', we would like you to give a demonstration at the nineteen eighteen Canadian Exposition this year. We want to promote flying and need your assistance on this.

JOE

Of course sir, it would be a pleasure to show off, a, I mean, show some good flying techniques sir.

MAJOR NORBERG

Not too many stunts Joe, we don't want to scare anybody off, we want new recruits. Just do some combat maneuvers and show how easy it is to fly one of these crates.

Joe smiles.

JOE

Yes sir, I can do that.

CUT TO:

INT. NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

The club is full of patrons, both men and women are enjoying the singer performing on stage. Joe along with one of his pilots, a Captain ALFIE FOX (18), with beers in hand, walk over to a table with two young women at it.

JOE

Good evening ladies, may we buy you a drink?

The two young ladies look up with big smiles and offer a seat to them. Joe and Alfie sit down. Joe waves the waitress over.

JOE (CONT'D)

Hi, I'm Capt' Joe Donnellan, Capt' of the Royal Flying Corp and this is Capt' Alfie Fox.

The waitress approaches and asks what she can get for them.

ALFIE FOX

Beers all around.

MURIEL

(blushing)

I'm Muriel Earhart and this is my sister Amelia. We're nurses at the Spadina Military Hospital.

They all shake hands. Joe shows more interest in Muriel (19) as Alfie is interested in Amelia (21).

JOE

Amelia and Muriel Earhart, what pretty names your parents gave you.

The beers arrive and they continue with small talk and drink. They get up and dance and have a great time as the music plays on.

CUT TO:

EXT. TORONTO - DAY

Joe and Murial are flying around the area in Joe's bright red airplane. He spots a large meadow along the river and lands the plane in the grass. They taxi towards the river and stop.

Joe gets out and helps Murial out of the plane. She hands Joe a picnic basket and they sit in the shade of the plane on a blanket and eat their lunch.

JOE

I'm really sorry to hear about Amelia not feeling well.

MURIEL

I know, she would have loved this.

JOE

Is she going to be alright? I hope she can make it to the air show next week.

MURIEL

She's suffering from pneumonia and maxillary sinusitis.

JOE

That's not good.

They continue eating lunch and chatting.

MURIEL

Are you going to be doing some stunts for the show?

JOE

Yea, I got a few things I'm going to do. Can you make it? It's at the waterfront airport.

MURIEL

I'll see if I can get Amelia out of the hospital long enough to watch.

JOE

There's a field I'll show you that you can take her to.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

It's not far from the hospital and I  
can give you a fly over.

CUT TO:

EXT. TORONTO - DAY

Joe is flying his airplane and showing some maneuvers to a crowd of onlookers at the festivities. As he rounds out of a big loop he flies over to the field that Murial and Amelia are waiting in. Joe spots them and gives a wing wave. Murial waves.

Joe lines up and dives right at them then pulls up and banks the plane hard to the right. He makes a couple of passes and gives them another fly over before heading back to the airport.

In the field, Murial is excited as she watches Joe flying around.

MURIEL

Oh Amelia, you sure missed a  
spectacular ride. That's the greatest  
feeling in the whole world.

Amelia is rather sick and coughing some. She is wrapped in a blanket.

AMELIA

I believe that little red airplane  
said something to me as it swished  
by.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMP MOHAWK - MORNING

The hanger is clean and well organized, everything in its place. A couple of airplanes sit idly by as signs that the mechanics have been working on them. Parts have been removed, engines showing. A wing is ripped, the fabric hangs limp to the floor.

The flight students sit in their chairs. Twenty of them all eager and excited for today's lessons. Joe is at the drawing board showing the students maneuvers in flight as he talks about the art of dog fighting.

JOE

Never turn your back and try to run  
away from an enemy fighter. If you  
are surprised by an attack on your

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

tail, turn and face the enemy with your guns.

He looks at the students then turns back to the board.

JOE (CONT'D)

Now the German's have devised a technique to get behind the pursuit plane quickly and very efficiently.

Joe shows on the board a loop from his drawing of two airplanes in flight.

JOE (CONT'D)

By cutting the throttle and applying a partial roll the pilot can cut his airspeed so fast that the other plane will fly past him. Then in a split second of adding full throttle and correcting the attitude he can line up directly behind the pursuit plane and have them in their sights shooting them out of the sky.

Joe steps to the side of the board and looks over the students. Every student is giving his full attention to Joe.

One student in the middle seat raises his hand.

JOE (CONT'D)

Yes, Frank...

FRANK

So how do we know that's coming and how do we counter it?

JOE

Good question. The answer is, you have to expect that is what they are doing and always be ready. You get an enemy in your sights and get that close they are going to try and get away. The only way to get away is the rule of "the hunted becomes the hunter". If they get behind you, you better be ready at a moments notice to do the same. Their birds are faster and more powerful so you will never out run one. We must out maneuver them and use that to our advantage.

Joe steps back to the board and erases it clean.

JOE (CONT'D)

Now today we are going to practice  
this maneuver with the help of Captain  
Fox.

Alfie Fox walks into the hanger dressed in his FLYING GEAR.  
He has his leather flying helmet and goggles in hand.

ALFIE FOX

Somebody challenged me in a dog fight  
I hear. Who is aching to get shot  
down today?

JOE

Perfect timing Alfie. First I want  
to go over the rules of aerial combat.

(pause)

First always try to secure an  
advantageous position before  
attacking. Climb before and during  
approach in order to surprise the  
enemy from above, and dive on him  
swiftly from the rear when the moment  
to attack is at hand.

Joe draws a picture on the chalk board as he explains the  
steps.

JOE (CONT'D)

Next, try to place yourself between  
the sun and the enemy. This puts the  
glare of the sun in the enemy's eyes  
and makes it difficult to see you  
and impossible for him to shoot with  
any accuracy.

(pause)

OK moving along, do not fire the  
machine guns until the enemy is within  
range and you have him squarely within  
your sights.

(pause)

Attack when the enemy least expects  
it or when he is preoccupied with  
other duties such as observation,  
photography or bombing.

Captain Fox walks up to the board next to Joe.

ALFIE FOX

I would like to add to that...  
Keep your eyes on the enemy and do  
not let him deceive you with tricks.  
If your opponent appears damaged,  
follow him down until he crashes to

(MORE)

ALFIE FOX (CONT'D)

be sure he is not faking. As soon as you think he is going down is when he will be most dangerous and will come back from the dead and shoot you down.

JOE

Thank you captain... Now lets go out and Captain Fox will first be the enemy and I'll show you the element of surprise. Each one of you will observe from the observation stadium while we do the maneuvers. I'll give each one of you a turn in the plane to get the feel.

The students all start getting up and heading for the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. CAMP MOHAWK - CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE OF SHOTS

Practice dog fight maneuvers.

FADE OUT:

EXT. TORONTO - DAY

In the Toronto Park the sun is high and the wind is strong as it sweeps the fallen leaves along the path. Joe and Muriel walk hand in hand.

The fall colors have marked the nearing end of summer. Barren trees have shed their clothing and prepare for the long winters Canada is known for.

As the two walk along taking in the colors, they both have something to say but are hesitant. They stop and look at each other with a look of despair. Finally Joe clears his throat and searches to find the words.

MURIEL

Joe I have something to tell you...

JOE

I think we need to talk too. You go first.

MURIEL

I've grown very fond of you this summer Joe, and this is hard for me  
(MORE)

MURIEL (CONT'D)

to say but I have to leave and go  
back home. Summer is over and I'm  
finishing college this year. I leave  
tonight.

Joe is stunned and relieved at the same time. He sighs and  
looks at his feet. His boots need a good polishing.

JOE

So soon Muriel? I was hoping to  
have one more day with you. I, ah  
I, too have grown rather fond of you  
as well, I know that this wouldn't  
last but I kept telling myself I  
didn't want it to end.

(pause)

You see Muriel... The war is ending  
and I'm being discharged. I'm going  
home in the morning.

Saddened by each others news they continue walking slowly  
along the path, heads hung down. Two squirrels run around  
chasing each other under foot.

JOE (CONT'D)

Where are you going to school?

They stop and watch the squirrels run through the leaves.

MURIEL

Boston

JOE

(thinking)

Well that's not to far for an  
airplane. I could come see you.

MURIEL

(smiling)

We could write each other too.

With the heaviness lifting they smile happily at each other.

JOE

That'd be great Muriel I'd really  
like that... Hungry?

FADE OUT:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - DAY

SUPER: November 11, 1918

Winter time in the Great Lakes region has always been severe with below zero temperatures and deep snowfalls. Westerly winds driving the cold through a man like an x-ray, no sympathy, just howling past. Chilled to the bone.

A bus arrives at the end of the lane that leads to the Donnellan farm. Joe grabs his duffel bag and walks toward the door. With today's paper under his arm and the bag over his shoulder he steps out into the knee deep snow.

Diamonds of snow glitter the bright suns rays as Joe trudges down the unplowed road home.

Joe, wearing his formal dress Captain's uniform, steps up onto the covered porch of the familiar old farm house and stomps off the snow as his mother opens the door.

Mrs. Donnellan is surprised to see that it's Joe standing at the door. She wraps her arms around the young man and gives him a hardy hug that only a mother can give.

MRS. DONNELLAN

Oh Joe, you're here. We didn't know when you would be coming home.

JOE

Hi mother, I wanted to surprise you.

Wiping the tears of joy from her eyes, Mrs. Donnellan steps back.

MRS. DONNELLAN

Let me get a look at you... My how you have grown into such a fine looking young MAN.

They step

INSIDE

the house as a hoard of Joe's brothers and sisters come gathering around giving Joe a huge group hug. They are all talking at once wanting to know what military life is like.

Joe quiets the mob down. Looking around the room he finds his father standing proud by the fireplace. Joe walks over to him. Mr. Donnellan reaches to shake Joe's hand then pulls him in for a hug.

JOHN

So the mighty fighter pilot has returned. Welcome home son.

JOE

Thanks Dad, glad to be home.

JOHN

If we had known when you were coming  
we would of had the driveway plowed.

JOE

Don't worry dad, Johnny and I will  
get that done for you.

CUT TO:

INT. DONNELLAN FARM - EVENING

The family gathers around the dinner table. Some of the younger children are setting the table as the older sisters help Mother with the food. Mr. Donnellan, Johnny and Joe are seated at the table as everything is set.

After Mr. Donnellan says the blessing, everyone digs in to a big Thanksgiving meal. Mr. Donnellan carves up the turkey.

JOE

Dad, I was wondering if it would be  
OK to use that strip of land out by  
the roadway to put in a landing strip?

JOHN

A landing strip? What for? We don't  
have an airplane.

JOE

Well not yet. But if we had an  
airstrip then I could land a plane  
on it. I was thinking I could teach  
flying and make a little extra money.

The family continues eating as they all show interest in what Joe is talking about.

JOHN

That's an interesting proposal.

JOE

That way I could still work the farm  
and then give lessons or maybe rides.

JOHNNY

That'd be great Joe, I could help  
you with that.

JOE

Sure Johnny I sure could use some  
help.

Mr. Donnellan takes a drink from his glass.

JOHN

OK boys, as long as you still get those chores done first then you can have an airplane.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - DAY

SUPER: SPRING 1919

Early spring day and all the snow has melted. The trees are showing new life as the leaves are opening up. A crisp breeze is in the air as Joe and Johnny are out in the field marking out a runway.

They have several big rocks on the wagon that have been painted white. As Johnny drives the tractor pulling the wagon Joe signals him to stop, then pushes off a rock the size of a watermelon. He jumps down and places it just right.

They move on a few feet and the process is repeated until the last rock has been neatly placed.

JOE

We got to keep this area all mowed short. It will make a great strip. Got the perfect wind direction running along here.

Johnny and Joe standing at one end look back over what they have lined out.

JOHNNY

Yea Joe, and nothing in the way.

FADE OUT:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - DAY

The peace and tranquillity of the Donnellan farm is suddenly uprooted by the roar of an engine. Everyone comes running out of the house to see what is going on. They can hear the noise close but can't see anything that could be making such a racket.

As they gather in the driveway suddenly a bi-plane buzzes very close to the house overhead and skims across the treetops.

Joe is at the stick. He circles around the farm and buzzes them again. He flies around the farm for a few more moments showing his skill as an avid flyer then shoots up and circles around to line up with the new airstrip.

The whole family goes running out across the field watching Joe as he lines up and makes a perfect three point landing on the grassy strip. He flips off the engine as he taxis up to the end that everyone is standing. Pulling off his leather helmet and goggles, Joe climbs out and all the kids gather around the strange flying contraption.

It's a beautiful flying contraption to say the least. With it's dingy yellow paint and military markings, the little Jenny, a Curtiss JN - 4 Bi-plane, shows it's age.

JOE

What do you think?

Joe's mom and dad just stare at the airplane.

JOE (CONT'D)

It's a trainer, just like the one I used in Canada. I got a really good deal since they don't know what to do with all the airplanes now. Lots of parts too. They practically gave it to me.

JOHN

Well my boy, that looks like quite a flying machine. Give you're mother a ride.

All the kids jump up and down screaming "I want a ride, I want a ride".

JOE

OK I'll give you all a ride.

(pause)

Mother you ready?

MARY ANN

Is it safe? Looks kind'a flimsy to me.

JOE

Don't worry mother, it's safe and you will really like it.

With a little coaching Joe gets his mother to take a ride. He gets the plane fired up and off they go. They take off and climb up over the trees out of sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe and his mother are flying around the valley. His mother is wearing a leather helmet and goggles looking over the side of the airplane she can see forever.

They fly past the town and around the country side then circle around the valley and back to the farm. Joe circles the farm and all the family is outside waving to them as they pass.

Joe brings the plane around and lands on the strip.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - MOMENTS LATER

Joe is helping his mother out of the airplane. He steadies her as she climbs down off the wing and onto the ground.

JOHN

How was it Mary Ann?

She peels off the leather flying gear and hands it to John

MARY ANN

I was pretty scared at first. Joe is such a great pilot that it didn't take long to relax. I have never felt so free. We flew with the birds. Now I know why you love it so much Joe.

(Teary eyed)

Thank you for that.

Joe give's his mother a kiss on the cheek and a big hug.

JOE

Any time mother.

(pause)

Dad, You're next.

FADE OUT:

EXT. AIRPLANE - MORNING

Joe and his brother John (12) are flying across the country headed to a neighboring town. Joe flies just over the treetops and buzzes along following the road as onlookers stare up at the strange contraption dominating the skies.

They fly over a town and circle around looking for a field to land in. Johnny points out a farm to his left. Joe nods and turns in that direction.

Joe scans the area looking for a clear spot to land the plane. He banks a turn and circles the farm then drops down over the barn and settles in the pasture chasing the horses as he rolls up to the barn.

The farmer and his wife come running out of the house to see what just happened as Joe and Johnny climb out of the plane and meet up with them.

The farmer (50's) wearing his work pants and plaid shirt adjusts his gray sweat stained hat.

DELBERT O'SHAY

You boys all right?

JOE

Yes sir, sorry for frightening the horses.

DELBERT O'SHAY

Is something the matter with that flying machine of yours?

Mr. O'Shay and his wife are looking the plane over closely. Mrs. O'Shay is noticeably younger than her husband. She is wearing a flowered summer dress and a big smile. Her hair done up in a bun.

JOE

No sir, everything is alright.

MRS. O'SHAY

You boys better come inside and let me feed you. Ya both look like you're starving.

Joe and Johnny look at each other then at the Mrs. O'Shay.

JOHNNY

Well ma'm we could use some water.

MRS. O'SHAY

Don't be silly young man, I got a whole stack of pancakes and some ham sitting on the table. Now come on inside.

They start walking towards the house.

CUT TO:

INT. O'SHAY HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The two boys and Mr. O'Shay are sitting at the table as Mrs. O'Shay piles pancakes, eggs and ham on their plates.

They shovel down the food hardly taking a breath as they stuff themselves.

DELBERT O'SHAY  
So if nothing's wrong with that  
contraption then why'd you storm my  
barn and drop in here?

JOE  
(still eating)  
Well sir, I would like to rent your  
field next weekend.

DELBERT O'SHAY  
Rent my field? For what?

JOE  
I want to offer airplane rides to  
the town folk and I need a place to  
use as a temporary air strip.

Mr. O'Shay looks at Joe a little confused.

JOE (CONT'D)  
I can pay you for the use, I just  
need a place to work from.

DELBERT O'SHAY  
How you going to pay for that?

JOE  
I'll give you part of the money we  
earn charging people for a ride.  
For every person that goes up I can  
give you one dollar.

Mr. O'Shay scratches his head.

DELBERT O'SHAY  
What makes you think anybody would  
get into that contraption?

JOE  
This isn't the first time we've done  
this. Been doing it all summer long  
and lots of people want to go for a  
ride.

DELBERT O'SHAY  
Well I certainly wouldn't want to  
fly. If God wanted us to fly he'd  
given us wings. No sir I'm staying  
planted right here on the ground.

Joe and John are cleaning their plates as Mr. O'Shay sips his coffee. Mrs. O'Shay comes over with a plate full of biscuits handing them to John

MRS. O'SHAY

Here boys, eat up.

(pause)

Is that thing safe?

JOHNNY

Yes ma'm, I've been up lots of times with Joe. He's a good pilot... He's teaching me to fly a little.

She sits down.

MRS. O'SHAY

What's it like?

JOHNNY

As free as a bird, you can see forever. The greatest feeling in the whole world it is.

Mrs. O'Shay gets lost in deep thought as Mr. O'Shay sips some more coffee and then leans back in his chair.

DELBERT O'SHAY

How much money?

JOE

Twenty dollars or more. Once we gave forty rides, but that took all day.

MRS. O'SHAY

Now Delbert, you stop that. You boys are more then welcome to use the field Saturday. I'll help you out with some cookies and lemonade.

JOHNNY

Thanks! We sure could use the help.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN STREET - DAY

Johnny is walking around as Joe is flying overhead doing stunts. John stops people along the street and points out the airplane up in the sky.

A crowd starts gathering around, all looking up watching the airplane buzz around. Loops and lazy eights are performed. As the crowd grows bigger and bigger John shouts out to them.

JOHNNY

Anyone that want's to go for a ride  
in that airplane can get one on  
Saturday!

Many people look excited at the news and start asking how.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

We'll be at the O'Shay farm Saturday  
and you can buy a ticket for five  
dollars. Mrs. O'Shay will serve  
refreshments too.

The crowd gets louder with excitement. Joe buzzes overhead close to the rooftops and flies down the street then turns back towards the farm.

John starts to walk rapidly towards the farm then turns back to the crowd.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Remember Saturday! See you there!

He waves then turns and runs down the street.

CUT TO:

EXT. O'SHAY FARM - DAY

A very large crowd has gathered in the barn where Mrs. O'Shay is filling up CUPS with lemonade. Several plates of COOKIES sit on top of an old door laid across some bales of straw.

Men, women and children of all ages have come to see the airplane and get a ride. A great turn out.

Joe is busy loading people up one at a time for the adults and two at a time for the little kids. He flies out from the pasture and buzzes a circle around the town then comes back all taking about ten minutes.

The passengers climb out and more climb in. Johnny stands at the head of the line collecting their money and stuffing it in a box.

As day turns into evening the line gets shorter and the barn is lit up with lanterns. Other wives have brought dishes of food. A band forms in one corner, the music plays and a dance breaks out.

As darkness settles in, the airplane sits outside quite now as the actions inside the barn plays on late into the night.

Joe and his brother John have a memorable time eating and socializing with the town folk.

FADE TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - DAY

The airplane is pulled up towards the barn as Joe is busy scurrying about. The cowling is opened. Joe is removing the bolts and taking the cowling off. He runs back and forth in to the barn for tools and back out to the plane, working away.

Joe's dad, John and Johnny saunter up looking inquisitively at what Joe is doing.

JOHN

Did you find the problem Joe?

Joe looks up from the engine.

JOE

Yea, I found it. I have to go get some stuff at Drucker's Hardware.

JOHNNY

Can I come?

Joe looks down at his little brother, grease smeared across his face. He pulls the rag from his hip pocket wiping his hands and face.

JOE

Sure thing Johnny

JOHN

Do you think you can get this going today?

JOE

Oh sure, Nothing serious.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN CENTER ST. JOSEPH, MI - DAY

Joe and Johnny come buzzing down the main street on a bright red motorcycle. The motorcycle is a late model "POWERPLUS INDIAN" with gold trim stripes and white sidewall tires.

They have on the goggles that Joe uses to fly with. The motorcycle comes to a stop in front of Drucker's Hardware. Several people stand on the sidewalk as the boys dismount.

INT. DRUCKER'S HARDWARE - MOMENTS LATER

The boy's are digging through the shelves and bins gathering up some nuts and bolts. Joe picks up two quarts of oil and places everything on the counter.

Mr. Drucker comes around the counter.

MR. DRUCKER  
How are you boys today?

JOHNNY  
(excitedly)  
We're fixing the airplane.

Mr. Drucker starts counting out the items and places them into a bag.

Joe is looking over the poster that is set up on the counter about the August, 1919 State Fair.

MR. DRUCKER  
Good thing. Joe, you going to the big fair next week?

Joe grabs a large piece of Taffy from the display.

JOE  
Yea, they asked me to come over and do some stunts for them. I'm planning something spectacular.  
(pause)  
You'll have to come and watch.

Mr. Drucker fills out a sales receipt and hands it to Joe. Joe pays the bill. Johnny breaks the taffy in half and hands a piece to Joe.

MR. DRUCKER  
Oh I plan on being there with the whole family.

Joe picks up the bag and hands the oil to Johnny

JOE  
Thank you, we'll see you at the fair.

They exit out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPRINGFIELD FAIRGROUNDS - DAY

Joe is high up in his airplane doing stunts. Another plane buzzes around with him in a friendly display of Dog Fighting.

A large crowd is gathered near the airstrip area as the planes circle around close to the crowd. They fly close then pull up and do many types of stunts.

As the stunts continue, a passenger that Joe had in his airplane climbs onto the top wing. Joe holds the plane steady as the young man walks back and forth across the wing.

The two planes come around for another pass and they get next to each other. The wing walker jumps from Joe's plane onto the wing of the other airplane. The crowd gasps then goes wild with excitement.

Standing in the crowd is Amelia Earhart and her sister Muriel. They watch intently as Joe circles overhead.

Making another pass the two airplanes get close, this time Joe flies underneath the other plane. A knotted rope is dropped down from the higher plane. The stunt man climbs down and drops into Joe's plane. The crowd cheers.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPRINGFIELD FAIRGROUNDS - LATER

Joe is standing along side his airplane with Johnny and the other pilot, Frank Hawks (22), when Amelia and Muriel stride up.

MURIEL

Hi ya stranger.

Joe takes a double look at the two.

JOE

(excitedly)

Muriel, what a surprise. I didn't expect to see the two of you here...

MURIEL

Amelia and I are visiting friends nearby and thought we'd check out the fair.

AMELIA

Hi Joe. How about that ride now?

JOE

Alright Amelia. Frank this is Amelia and Muriel Earhart, some friends that I met while I was stationed in Toronto.

Frank reaches out and shakes hands.

FRANK HAWK

Frank Hawk, ma'm pleased to meet you. My friends call me Hawk.

AMELIA

Do you fly Mr. Hawk?

JOE

If you call what he does as flying.

They all laugh and joke around.

FRANK HAWK

Did you see the show?

AMELIA

Yes, it was breath taking.

FRANK HAWK

Joe, you didn't tell me you knew such fine young ladies, and you haven't been up Amelia?

(pause)

Joe what's the matter with you? Give these ladies a ride.

JOE

Amelia, would you like to ride with Hawk? He's a really good pilot,

(jokingly)

Even though he was a U-S Air corp pilot. Muriel can ride with me.

The girls climb into the airplanes as the two pilots fire them up. Off they go up into the sky. They fly around the area for a while before landing the "Jennies" back onto the field.

A line of people has formed and all wanting to go for a ride. Joe and Hawk take several of the people for rides the rest of the day.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPRINGFIELD FAIRGROUNDS - EVENING

Joe taxies up to the area where other planes are parked. Standing patiently waiting is Hawk, Amelia, Johnny and Muriel. He shuts off the engine and the two jump down.

FADE OUT:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - DAY

Joe is circling overhead of the farm. Near the barn a small crowd has gathered wanting to go for an airplane ride.

Johnny is selling tickets and taking their money. He asks them to line up along the shady side of the barn while Mrs. Donnellan serves up cookies and lemonade.

Joe lines up for a landing and settles the airplane gently on the dirt field.

Joe continues throughout the day giving rides until only one shy girl is left. The crowd of people has dissipated as Joe drops off the last passenger.

Joe disembarks the airplane as the shy young girl steps up to Joe. Joe looks her over. She is very pretty with bouncing curls in her soft brown hair. Their eyes meet. She has very gentle big brown eyes that seem to melt Joe's heart.

Joe is somewhat tongue tied as he tries to speak.

JOE  
(stuttering)  
Ah, Hi... do you want to ah,

Joe looks at his feet.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Would you like to go up for a ride?

JOSEPHINE  
(shyly)  
OK

Josephine(17), wearing a pretty blue dress and a yellow scarf, walks over to the airplane where Joe awkwardly helps her into the cockpit. Joe hands her the leather helmet and goggles helping her to get them on.

Joe is shaking nervously as he readies the plane. Spins the prop, the plane fires right up. Joe starts to climb in then pauses to catch his breath as he looks at the most beautiful girl sitting in the front seat.

Taking in a deep breath Joe hops into the Airplane and taxies it out onto the strip. Pushes the throttle fully open and heads off into the skies.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - EVENING

Joe and Josephine fly around the area and out over the lake. They circle over Josephine's house and around the town. They spend the rest of the evening just buzzing around the sky free from any worries.

As the sun is setting and filling the skies with it's orange glow, Joe turns the plane directly into it's direction and heads back to the farm. They watch the sun settle behind the horizon, then Joe settles the plane down and lands on the strip.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - NIGHT

The big orange fireball has since disappeared and left a sky filling with darkness. Joe and Josephine walk hand in hand down the driveway.

JOE

I don't think I know your name.

JOSEPHINE

Yes you do.

They stop in the light from the windows of the farm house. Joe stares deeply into those big soft brown eyes. He looks over the petite five foot six girl starring back at him.

JOSEPHINE (CONT'D)

Don't you remember me Joe?

She pulls Joe close and looks up. Joe is trying to remember her.

JOE

You're not that...

(pause)

Ah no way. Josephine Kenney? Wow you sure grew up beautiful.

Josephine blushing, gives Joe a big smile.

JOSEPHINE

Thank you Joe, now you can drive me home.

The two walk over to the old family car that Joe and his father bought years earlier. Joe helps Josephine into the car.

FADE TO:

EXT. OHIO STATE FAIRGROUNDS - DAY

SUPER: OCTOBER 1919

Joe and several other Pilots are all prepping their airplanes. There are airplanes of several different colors and designs painted on them. Joe's friend, FRANK HAWK, is tinkering on his engine.

One of the "Jenny's" is all painted up and has the name "Mabel Cody Flying Circus" painted on the sides. Several people have gathered around the plane as Mabel(19) chats freely with them.

The crowd is growing larger as one of the airplanes starts up and taxis to the runway. Another plane soon follows.

Joe walks over to Mabel's airplane and gives it a good once over before noticing a loose strut wire between the wings. He reaches out and gives it a tug.

Mabel's attention is directed to Joe away from the onslaught of people.

MABEL

Hey, what are you doing there?

Joe continues to examine the wire.

JOE

That's the problem with these old birds...

MABEL

What is?

Mabel walks up to Joe and investigates what he is doing.

JOE

Things keep coming loose and falling off.

MABEL

Is that right? Well mister I don't much like people messing with my plane.

JOE

Me neither. I can fix this for you real quick. I had the same problem last month.

MABEL

Alright then show me what you can do.

Joe pulls some tools from his back pocket and tightens up the cable then walks around and inspects the rest while Mabel follows like a lost puppy.

When Joe gets them all adjusted he turns and places the tools back in his pocket, pulls a handkerchief out and wipes his brow.

Looking over the airplane, Joe then turns to Mabel.

JOE

You're a long way from home.

MABEL

We just came up for the fair from Florida.

Joe holds out his hand.

JOE

I'm Joe, Joe Donnellan.

MABEL

Hi ya Joe, I'm Mabel Cody.

JOE

Yes I have heard of you and your flying circus. What are you planning for the show?

Mabel gives Joe a big smile.

MABEL

You'll just have to wait and see.

Joe smiles back.

JOE

You be careful up there, Mabel.

Joe walks back to his airplane. Johnny is waiting for him.

JOHNNY

You putting the moves on Wild Bill's niece? Better be careful Joe, she'll scratch your eyes out.

Joe looks at Johnny.

JOE

What do you know about that?

JOHNNY

I heard she's a real wildcat.

JOE

Just get in so I can start the engine.

Joe gives Johnny a little snap with his handkerchief.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF SHOTS:

-- Several airplanes buzz the skies.

-- An airplane flies past the crowd while a man walks back and forth on the top wing.

-- An airplane flies past the crowd as a man hits golf balls off the top wing.

-- An airplane flies past the crowd as two people play badminton on the top wing with a little net.

BACK TO SCENE:

Mabel Cody's airplane flies past as Mabel is doing trapeze stunts with a trapeze hanging from the wing. She hangs by her ankles and shoots arrows at a large round target in front of the grandstands.

Joe flies his airplane around the field showing different difficult maneuvers dictating dog fight moves. He flies straight then pulls a tight loop close to the ground.

He comes around and spirals several rolls as he passes the grandstands. Circling around again another airplane gives chase. They show off their skills as the pursuit plane tries to keep up with Joe.

As Joe makes some difficult turns and twists the other plane is trying very hard to stay in line pretending to get a shot.

Joe circles in a wide upward spiral climbing higher and higher as the other plane gives chase. Then when Joe is almost out of sight he dives straight for the ground and sets the plane into a tight spiral simulating a tail spin.

The pursuit plane is trying to chase Joe to the ground but cannot stay in line as Joe can clearly out maneuver the other pilot.

Joe continues to dive as the crowd gasps. Joe is coming closer and closer as both airplanes look like they are out of control. The crowd stands in anticipation, wondering if they will crash.

Closer and closer they spiral now just a few hundred feet off the ground.

Then suddenly at less than a hundred feet, Joe quickly levels the plane out of the dive pulls up and roars over the grandstands. The crowd cheers.

The pursuit plane doesn't recover so easily and crashes into the ground directly in front of the grandstands. Bursts into flames and burns out of control. Many people jump and run towards the burning pile in hopes to rescue the pilot.

No one can get close enough as the fire is too hot and in moments the plane becomes a pile of ash and cinders.

Fire and rescue crews come running out with a tank of water on a wagon. A fire brigade line is formed as they hand off buckets of water throwing them on the fire.

Joe circles above watching the excitement. He is deeply saddened by the site below.

FADE TO:

EXT. OHIO STATE FAIRGROUNDS - EVENING

Joe and several other pilots along with the fair management staff are standing by what used to be a Curtis JN-4 airplane, now the remnants of a bonfire.

MABEL

I just don't get it Joe. What went wrong?

JOE

It had to be mechanical failure...

Danny was a good pilot.

(pause)

He had plenty of time to pull up, we still had lots of room.

The fairgrounds manager, MISTER RUSKIN, short and balding with a large mustache, removes his hat and wipes his head with his handkerchief.

MR. RUSKIN

He didn't look like he even tried to pull up Joe. He just flew that thing right into the ground... I guess we'll never know for sure.

JOE

If I had only pulled up sooner maybe he would have recovered sooner.

Johnny puts his hand on Joe's arm. Joe puts his arm around Johnny and hugs him tightly.

MABEL

Joe, this wasn't your fault. Don't beat yourself up over this. There was nothing you could have done, it just happened and it is very disturbing. It could happen to any one of us.

Frank strolls towards Joe and pats him on the shoulder.

FRANK HAWK

Joe this could'a happened to any of us. I was going to give chase but Danny past me up.

(pause)

I saw what happened and he just flew into the ground. Must have froze at the stick.

(pause)

Now lets all go to the food court and get a drink to salute what a great pilot Danny was.

CUT TO:

INT. OHIO STATE FAIRGROUNDS - NIGHT

Inside the large tent, many people have crowded inside to give their respects to Danny, the pilot and friend.

Everyone raises their mugs of beer as one man gives a speech.

SPEAKER 1

JOHN GILLISPIE MAGEE once said...  
Oh! I've slipped the surly bonds of earth - And danced the skies on laughter silvered wings... Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth Of sun-split clouds... And done a hundred things You have not dreamed of... wheeled and soared and swung High in the sunlit silence... Hov'ring there I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung My eager craft through footless halls of air.

(pause)

Up, up the long, delirious, burning blue I've topped the wind-swept heights with easy grace...  
Where Never Lark, Or Even Eagle Flew -  
And, while silent lifting mind I've trod The high un-trespassed sanctity of space... Put out my hand and touched the face of God.

Everyone gives a cheer and chugs down the beer.

FADE TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Joe is flying over the rural farmlands of Michigan. He flies over some small towns fairly low. The towns people look up as he buzzes overhead. They wave, Joe waves back.

Joe continues on flying.

P.O.V. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

He notices oil is starting to spray down one side of his airplane. He watches it for a minute as the spray gets thicker. He looks over the gages on his control panel and sees the oil pressure gage is dropping.

JOE

Oh you've got to be kidding me!

Joe scans the area for a place to land but cannot find one. He quickly unhooks his seat belt and stands up. He hooks the belt around the control stick to stabilize the craft in level flight.

EXTERIOR:

Joe climbs from the rear cockpit into the front cockpit grabbing a bottle of oil as he passes and then makes his way out onto the wing. The little engine is running rough now.

JOE (CONT'D)

Come on baby just keep running, don't fail me now.

He sets the oil bottle on the top of the cowling and hangs onto the wing strut. Bracing himself with one hand he looks forward. The plane is losing altitude. He is getting very close to the treetops.

Opening the cowling flap, Joe quickly examines the engine. He finds that the oil cap has come loose and all the oil is coming out. Removing the cap he places it in his pocket then opens and pours the contents of the oil bottle into the filler. More oil tries to get away as Joe slams the cap back on and tightens it securely.

JOE (CONT'D)

That will hold you for a while.

He is covered in oil and unintentional drops the oil bottle. It falls and bounces off the lower wing and then rolls off disappearing from sight.

Joe slips and almost falls off catching himself at the last possible moment, he hangs on desperately.

The engine coughs and stutters a moment, then clears up. Joe is trying to get back up and continues to slip as he has trouble hanging on.

The airplane hits the treetops shaving off a few branches. One slaps Joe in the foot.

JOE (CONT'D)

God please don't let me die.

He regains his grip and gets up. He climbs into the front cockpit and pulls gently on the control stick aiming the airplane up, it starts to climb.

Once Joe climbs to a safer altitude he levels off and climbs into his seat in the rear. Takes a big sigh of relief as he wipes his face with a rag.

Joe soon reaches

BAY CITY, MICHIGAN.

He scours the area in search of a place to land. Spying an open field he circles the farm house looking for any life. Only the usual farm animals are seen.

He picks his spot in the field and settles the plane down to a perfect landing.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAY CITY FARM - MOMENTS LATER

A woman exits the stately farm house. She is well seasoned and in her late sixties. Joe makes his way over and meets her on the front porch.

JOE

Hello there, I'm Joe Donnellan.

MRS. EBERHARDT

Hello, I'm Mrs. Eberhardt. Are you having problems with your flying machine? You're covered in oil.

JOE

Sorry to drop in on you like this but I did have a bit of a situation. I was wondering if I can park my airplane here for a bit while I go into town and get some things.

(MORE)

JOE (CONT'D)

I need to get a can of gasoline and some more oil.

MRS. EBERHARDT

My husband is out in the barn. I'm sure he heard you come down. Why don't you go around back and wash up. There's some water back there, I'll go find Mr. Eberhardt and have him take you into town.

JOE

Thank you ma'am.

Joe retreats to the rear yard.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAY CITY FARM - LATER

Joe and Mr. Eberhardt, late sixties, are driving down the dirt lane in an old Model "T". They chug along onto the main road and aim for town.

JOE

Thank you for taking me Mr. Eberhardt.

MR. EBERHARDT

That's alright Joe, I needed to go in to the hardware store and get some stuff to fix my tractor anyway.

JOE

Better let me help you with that, I'm a good mechanic.

MR. EBERHARDT

That would be a big help Joe, thank you.

They continue on their way.

CUT TO:

INT. BAY CITY FARM - EVENING

INSIDE THE BARN

Joe is busy helping Mr. Eberhardt with the repairs when Mrs. Eberhardt makes a presence.

MRS. EBERHARDT

How are the repairs coming?

JOE  
Just about finished.

MR. EBERHARDT  
Joe is really good at this. I think  
it will stay fixed this time... Thanks  
Joe.

MRS. EBERHARDT  
Well it's about supper time so you  
guys get finished up and come in.

CUT TO:

INT. BAY CITY FARM - NIGHT

Joe is sitting at the table with Mr. and Mrs. Eberhardt as  
they finish up their meal.

MR. EBERHARDT  
So Joe, what is it that you are doing  
with that flying machine of yours?

JOE  
I've been flying around from town to  
town giving rides to people. I  
started last year and have also been  
doing stunts at the fairs.

MRS. EBERHARDT  
Oh that sounds exciting Joe.

JOE  
I was on my way up here to see about  
giving some rides. I usually collect  
five dollars a ride. If you want to  
let me use your field I would pay  
you a cut of the take.

MR. EBERHARDT  
I bet you will do really well around  
here.

CUT TO:

EXT. BAY CITY - DAY

Joe is flying over the town and out into the bay. He has a  
passenger with him as he buzzes past the ships. They circle  
out over the water before returning to the farm where a large  
crowd has gathered.

JOE (V.O.)

Barnstormer, the "airport" was a tan stripe in a field of grass; I remember, Pilot; that trip when you flew low for me so I could see how the cornfields were laid out -Do you remember Pilot, my friend, how we skimmed the yellow miles on the wings of an afternoon, You shouting to me in the sun -isn't it peaceful here -isn't it peaceful here?  
E. F. WEISSLITZ

CUT TO:

EXT. BAY CITY FARM - MORNING

Joe is checking over his airplane after yesterdays rides. Mrs. Eberhardt hands Joe a wad of cash. Joe pulls several bills from the stack and hands them to her.

She smiles and offers Joe a big hug.

MRS. EBERHARDT

Now Joe, please come back anytime.  
You're always welcome here.

Mr. Eberhardt offers up a hand shake. Joe obliges.

JOE

Thanks for everything I'll be back again.

MR. EBERHARDT

You be careful young man.

JOE

I will... I'm planning on visiting a few more towns before I make my way home.

Joe flips on the switch and gives the prop a spin. Climbs in and away he goes waving as he circles around for a pass.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Joe continues flying across the picturesque landscape enjoying the day.

JOE (V.O.)

Flight is freedom in its purest form,  
To dance with the clouds which follow  
(MORE)

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

a storm; To roll and glide, to wheel  
and spin, To feel the joy that swells  
within; To leave the earth with its  
troubles and fly, And know the warmth  
of a clear spring sky; Then back to  
earth at the end of a day, Released  
from the tensions which melted away.  
Should my end come while I am in  
flight, Whether brightest day or  
darkest night; Spare me your pity  
and shrug off the pain, Secure in  
the knowledge that I'd do it again;  
For each of us is created to die,  
And within me I know, I was born to  
fly. - Gary Claud Stokor.

FADE TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - MORNING

SUPER: JULY 1920

With the rising of the morning sun Joe and his little brother  
Johnny are readying the plane to today's flight.

JOE

Well Johnny, what do you say we go  
drop in on Aunt Anna Jane and Uncle  
Frank today? I thought it would be  
nice to see them and we can give  
them a ride.

JOHNNY

That sounds like fun. I haven't  
been over to Belding for a couple of  
years.

Johnny watches as Joe stitches a canvas patch on the wing of  
his bi-plane.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

How many more places do you need to  
fix Joe?

JOE

This one and two of them on her belly  
where that stick punched through.

JOHNNY

Here, give me the canvas and I'll  
cut out some pieces for you.

Joe hands over a large piece of canvas and the scissors to  
Johnny.

Johnny gets to work underneath the airplane measuring out and cutting the patches as Joe finishes up the wing patch.

Joe slides underneath and Johnny holds up a patch while Joe stitches it on. They work on the other one and then clean up the tools. Johnny places the tools and supplies inside the airplane baggage area.

The two give the airplane a good once-over inspection then push it around and face it down the runway.

JOE

Hop in and flip on the switch.

Johnny climbs in and readies the switch.

JOHNNY

Contact!

Joe cranks the prop slowly until it is in the correct position then gives it a hard spin. The engine fires up and purrs smoothly.

Joe climbs in the front seat and puts on his leather helmet as Johnny pulls on his.

JOE

Alright Johnny let's go.

Johnny revs up the engine and the airplane starts rolling down the runway. He gives it full throttle and the tail raises up. He works the rudder peddles trying to keep it straight.

The airplane picks up speed and bounces along the grassy strip then slowly rises into the air. Johnny pulls the nose up a little and the plane responds quickly. Soon they are soaring across the farmlands.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY

The yellow airplane gracefully appears in the sky over Belding. It makes a few circles overhead as more towns people take notice.

Joe makes a few fancy swoops and curly-ques. He does some low level stunts as the crowd grows. When he is satisfied that an abundance of people were watching he turns and flies towards Cook's Corners where he lands on the Morse farm.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORSE FARM - MOMENTS LATER

Joe taxis the plane up by the barn and signals for Johnny to shut it off. They disembark as JOHN MORSE exits the barn.

MR. MORSE

Hi you two. Didn't expect to see you guys today.

Mr. Morse wipes his hands with a rag then offers it up to Joe. Joe obliges and shakes hands.

JOE

I hope you don't mind us dropping in on you. We wanted to visit Uncle Frank and Aunt Anna Jane.

Johnny comes over to Mr. Morse.

MR. MORSE

Hello young feller' how are you?

JOHNNY

Great sir.

Mr. Morse pats him on the head.

MR. MORSE

You flying this contraption now?

JOHNNY

Joe let's me fly a bit.

JOE

Johnny here is getting quite good at this, he's going to make a great pilot someday.

Mrs. Morse steps out on the porch of the farm house and shouts that lunch is ready.

MR. MORSE

Looks like you two got here just in time. Come on lets eat.

The three walk towards the house.

CUT TO:

EXT. MORSE FARM - AFTERNOON

A crowd has gathered around the airplane. The barn doors are wide open and several people are setting up make-shift tables and spreading out table cloths. Food and drinks are placed on the tables.

Joe and Johnny are next to the airplane inspecting it. Joe is talking with UNCLE FRANK 50's, while Johnny is giving AUNT ANNA JANE 50's a big hug.

A news paper REPORTER walks over from the driveway where he had parked his car. He walks up to Anna Jane and introduces himself.

REPORTER

Hi, I'm with the Belding Banner newspaper. I was wondering if you can tell me about what's going on here.

AUNT ANNA JANE

Well sir, what's going on is my nephews dropped in for a visit.

The reporter is writing notes on his small pad with a pencil.

REPORTER

So they just dropped in to visit and give rides?

AUNT ANNA JANE

Yes, that's right.

Joe becomes inquisitive and steps closer to the reporter.

JOE

Hi I'm Joe Donnellan and this is my brother Johnny. I own this airplane.

REPORTER

What can you tell me about what it is you do?

JOE

I give rides to folks. Ever been up?

REPORTER

No, I don't think that is something that I would want to do.

JOHNNY

Well mister, you don't know what you're missing.

JOE

You come back tomorrow and I'll give you a ride.

REPORTER

Is this all you do? Just fly around landing in people's fields and give rides?

JOE

That and shows at the fairs. Been all over the area for a couple of years now. Everywhere we go lots of people come out for a ride.

REPORTER

Have you been to a lot of places?

JOHNNY

Joe has been to Iowa, Illinois Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and all over Minnesota.

REPORTER

All those places in this?

JOE

Yes sir one of the greatest inventions. Now if you will excuse me I need to give these fine people their rides. See you tomorrow?

REPORTER

Ah I'll have to think about that.

FADE TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY

SUPER: OCTOBER 1920

Joe is flying GEORGE BOOKWALTER around Berrien County, Michigan. George has several packets of election campaign flyers for his run for Attorney General.

Joe circles around a small town as George throws out a bundle of flyers. The bundle stays together and drops rapidly to the ground with a thud. Joe watches over the side of the airplane.

JOE

Hey Mr. Bookwalter, maybe you better untie the bundles first then throw them out.

GEORGE BOOKWALTER

That sounds like a good idea Joe.

He then unties the next bundle as Joe circles around town again. Mr. Bookwalter tosses out the bundle and it comes apart spreading the flyers all over the town.

GEORGE BOOKWALTER (CONT'D)

That's more like it.

Joe gives him a thumbs up.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - EVENING

Joe and Mr. Bookwalter are standing next to Joe's airplane as the sun has already dropped behind the trees.

GEORGE BOOKWALTER

Thanks again Joe for all your help on the campaign. I really appreciate it.

JOE

Glad I could be of service Mr. Bookwalter, I believe you will make a great Attorney General.

GEORGE BOOKWALTER

Joe if you ever need anything you just ask.

They shake hands.

FADE TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - MORNING

SUPER: DECEMBER 1920

Joe is bundled up tightly in his sheepskin coat and overalls. His leather flying helmet and goggles are covered with ice formations.

JOHN SMITH sits in the front seat with a big thick blanket wrapped around him. He has on a scarf and heavy gloves. His breath is thick in the winter air.

Joe flies over the heavily snow covered ground. He hollers to Mr. Smith. As Mr. Smith turns back around Joe hands him a thermos bottle. Mr. Smith pours himself a cup full of hot coffee then looks out over the beautiful landscape as he sips it.

They fly to Lake View, Illinois. Mr. Smith points to a house below.

JOHN SMITH

That's my daughter's house.

Joe circles over the house as he descends lower. A young woman steps out and waves. Mr. Smith waves back.

Joe looks for a place to land on Lake Shore Road. He spots a long straight away and settles the airplane down. He parks in a clearing off the roadway as Mrs. Jensen pulls up with her husband in the old Ford.

MRS. JENSEN

Well look what Santa has brought for Christmas.

She runs up and gives her dad a great big hug.

JOHN SMITH

Hi little girl. I want you to meet Santa. This is Joe, he flew me all the way here from Chicago.

She looks at Joe and offers her hand. They shake.

JOE

Hello it's a pleasure to meet you.

MRS. JENSEN

Welcome Joe. This is my husband Clarence.

JOE

Nice to meet you Mr. Jensen.

They shake hands.

MRS. JENSEN

You two must be frozen stiff. I don't think it got above ten degrees today.

JOE

That's why you gotta dress warm to fly.

(pause)

I guess I better be getting back Mr. Smith. I'll be here to pick you up after Christmas next week.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe is flying over Lake Michigan towards home when the airplane starts losing altitude.

He pulls up on the stick, the plane slows and is having trouble climbing.

Joe looks at the altimeter and watches for a moment as the plane is sinking. He looks out over the wings and notices the ice is building up.

As he continues over the lake he can see the distant shore line. Joe tries to work the throttle and gain some altitude with no avail. Sinking closer and closer to the water Joe becomes unsettled.

Now he has dropped down to where the waves are slapping at the tires. Joe fights to hang on to what little altitude he has left. Working the throttle and holding back on the stick Joe looks like it's all over.

Just then a large piece of ice brakes off the top wing and flies past him. Then another followed by more pieces. A chunk flies off and hits Joe right square on the top of his head.

He wavers for a minute fighting passing out. The airplane starts to gain a few feet of altitude. More ice slides off both wings until all is gone and Joe is able to rise above the waves to a safe altitude.

Joe wipes his forehead and notices he has blood on his gloves. The blood is running out from under his helmet now and down across his goggles as he tries to see.

Joe is dizzy and struggling to stay awake as he flies the airplane. Shaking his head to try and regain his wits, he makes it across the lake and back to the farm.

He lands on the runway and rolls up to the barn shutting off the engine. He steps out and falls collapsing on the frozen ground. His face is covered in blood.

Josephine comes running out from the farm house to see him and discovers Joe lying in the snow all bloody. She screams for some one to come and help.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Joe is in a bed with his whole family standing around him. Josephine is sitting on the edge of the bed holding his hand. The doctor enters the room with a clipboard in his hand.

DOCTOR

Well Joe, you're one lucky guy.

(MORE)

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

You have a pretty good concussion but I think the cold helped keep the swelling down. Other than that large goose egg on your head you will be fine.

JOE

Thanks doc. That's good to know. When can I get back to flying?

Everyone laughs.

JOHN

That's my Joe, can't let anything stop him from flying.

The doctor writes notes on the clipboard. Then scribbles a prescription for him.

DOCTOR

Here Joe, I want you to get this filled and take one every four hours for pain. Keep an ice pack on that bump. When it goes away then come back for a follow up visit. I'll release you so you can fly then.

FADE TO:

EXT. WISCONSIN STATE FAIR - DAY

SUPER: OCTOBER 1921

Joe along with a number of other pilots are showing off several types of "Daredevil" stunts.

MONTAGE OF SHOTS:

- Joe and another airplane are simulating dog fights over the airport.

- Two airplanes fly towards each other until it looks like they are going to crash then turn and bank hard right just missing each other.

BACK TO SCENE:

An airplane comes flying low to the ground as a woman is dangling from a rope ladder. A car shoots out from the side of the crowd and on to the runway just ahead of the airplane. The car is speeding along as the airplane catches up.

They match speeds as the woman is directly over the open car.

She is hanging by her feet upside down and drops gently into the seat of the car next to the driver. She sits up and waves as the airplane pulls up into the sky. The crowd roars with delight.

CUT TO:

EXT. WISCONSIN STATE FAIR - LATER

Joe is standing next to his airplane with several of his friends and fellow pilots from today's activities. They are talking about the day and debating what to eat for dinner.

As the sun is getting low in the sky a young man (19) scampers up to Joe. He is tall and lanky, somewhat awkward in appearance. He taps Joe on the shoulder.

JOE

Oh  
(startled)  
Hello.

LINDY

Hello sir, I would like a ride in  
you're airplane please.

JOE

Well I was just going to park it for  
the night and get some supper with  
my friends.

LINDY

Oh please sir, Just a little ride.  
I never been up in one of these.

Joe scratches his head as he looks the kid over.

JOE

Alright, but just for a few minutes.

The young man climbs in as Joe spins the prop. The little engine spits and fires up. Joe hops in the rear seat, pulls his helmet and goggles on. Hands the other set to his passenger.

Joe taxis the airplane out onto the runway and in moments they are sailing up into the evening skies.

A little while later they come soaring around the field like a fighter plane and buzz the runway pulling up at the end in a steep left bank, almost rolling over.

Joe circles around for another pass then settles the bird down gently with a perfect three point landing. They taxi back to the tie down area and Joe shuts off the engine.

As the two hop out Joe goes and secures the plane.

LINDY

Thank you sir, thank you.

The young man is very excited and starts to run away. Joe hollers at him.

JOE

Hey kid, what's your name?

He stops and turns back.

LINDY

Charles Lindbergh, sir. But you can call me Lindy.

JOE

Nice to meet you Lindy, hope to see you again.

Lindy waves and runs off into the crowd.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY

SUPER: 1923

Joe is flying across the open countryside when he notices the fabric on the top wing is coming loose. He looks for a place to land and sees none.

Joe watches intently as the fabric flops in the breeze. Suddenly a large piece rips off the wing and flies past his head wrapping itself around the tail section.

The plane drops a few feet as Joe fights to keep it in the air. He tries to use the rudder and discovers the fabric has wrapped itself tightly around the tail.

Joe keeps flying and in moments he spies a small clearing through the trees ahead. He banks the airplane slightly and it responds turning marginally. Joe figures out that he can still maneuver the airplane and works it in line with the small clearing.

He descends down and into the trees clipping the tops as he flies past. His wings break off tiny branches as they pass through. He settles down into the grassy clearing and rolls to a stop. He sits for a moment before shutting off the engine.

Joe climbs out and inspects the fabric clinging to the tail. He unwraps it, checks it over for damage then proceeds to lay it out flat back on top of the wing where it came off.

He gets out his sewing tools and proceeds to repair the wing. Joe sews the piece back into place then cuts a small patch and overlays the leading edge.

He gets out a small can and brush from the baggage compartment. Joe applies the dope to the seams. Afterwards Joe inspects the rest of the airplane looking for damage.

Satisfied that the plane is damage free, Joe sets the switches, spins the prop and climbs into the pilot's seat. He taxis the plane to the far side of the clearing and turns around facing the way he came in.

Joe revs the engine up with full throttle and as the plane lunges forward, he pushes the stick forward then pulls it back just as the tail comes up. In just moments he lifts off the ground.

He aims the plane into the narrow opening in the trees and as he passes through the wings again brush the branches out of the way. He barely clears the trees and is soon free.

With a sigh of relief, Joe turns the plane back into the direction he was previously on and sets the course.

CUT TO:

EXT. IOWA STATE FAIR - DAY

Joe flies over a sign that says "Iowa State Fair". He circles around the area and settles down on the dirt strip where other airplanes are parked.

Joe taxis over to a spot with the others and shuts off the engine. Climbing out he pushes his plane in line and ties it to the ground with the tie-down straps provided.

As he is pulling out his camping gear and setting up his tent a tall thin man approaches him.

LINDY

Hello sir, do you remember me?

Joe stands up and gives the lad a once over.

JOE

Yea, I think I remember you. Lindy right?

LINDY

Yes sir.

They shake hands.

JOE

Well what brings you here? I think the last time I saw you was a couple of years ago at the Wisconsin Fair.

LINDY

You brought me here. Ever since you gave me that ride I knew I was born to fly. I went home and bought me an airplane. Had to trade my motorbike for it.

JOE

No greater feeling in the World than to be free as a bird.

LINDY

I taught myself to fly that old plane. Got it parked right over there.

Lindy points to the well worn bi-plane across the taxiway.

JOE

Are you here to fly in the air show this week?

LINDY

Yea, I have been flying around from Fair to Fair. Actually I thought I would run into you sooner.

JOE

That's great Lindy, tomorrow let's get together and review some of the stunts that we can do.

FADE TO:

EXT. IOWA STATE FAIR - DAY

MONTAGE OF SHOTS:

-- Several airplanes fill the skies doing stunts

-- Joe and Lindy chase each other in dog fighting maneuvers

BACK TO SCENE:

Joe is chasing Lindy. Joe's engine stutters then quits. He circles around as he descends and lands with no power. The crowd looks worried.

Joe climbs out and opens the engine cover. He grabs up his tools and gets to work.

The other airplanes buzz overhead.

Soon Joe looks satisfied, closes the cowling, puts the tools away then starts the engine up. Joe climbs back in to his seat and soon he is back in the skies giving chase to the other airplanes.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY

MONTAGE OF SHOTS:

-- Joe and Lindy flying at several fairs across the area around the Great Lakes States

-- Joe and Lindy develop a strong friendship flying the fairs

-- Looks of gratitude between Joe and Lindy as signs of State Fairs flash across the screen

CUT TO:

EXT. INDIAN LAKE, MI - EVENING

SUPER: 1925

Joe is busy talking to the local sheriff. Joe's airplane is parked on the road near the lake. Several police officers and spectators are standing nearby.

The vast lake stretches out past the horizon. Boats are scurrying about the waters just off shore with police officers scanning the horizon.

SHERIFF

Joe, we have been looking all day for the body of Joseph Bolka. We believe he has drowned when he was out on the lake yesterday. Can you take one of the officers up in that contraption of yours and get a better look?

JOE

Yes Sheriff, the lake looks a whole lot different from up there. I can cover a lot more area too.

SHERIFF

This is Officer REX RISHER, he has agreed to go with you.

The Sheriff signals for Officer Risher to step up. He shakes hands with Joe.

JOE

Hello officer, I'm Joe Donnellan.  
Have you ever been up before?

OFFICER RISHER

Nope, never tried that before.

JOE

Don't worry it's safe.

SHERIFF

OK good, you two are set then. Here  
take this marker float in case you  
find the body. That way you can  
drop this out and we can find him.

Joe and Officer walk to the airplane. Joe gives direction for Officer Risher to sit up front. Joe sets the switch and gives the prop a spin. The engine fires up and smooths out to a even purr.

Joe climbs in and they are off climbing up into the sky.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe is buzzing a hundred feet over the water scanning in each direction. Officer Risher points off to the left. Joe turns in the direction. They fly in a wide circle. Joe thinks he spots something in the water. Officer Risher hollers back to Joe.

OFFICER RISHER

Hey, I think I see something down  
there!

Joe drops altitude till they are just skimming the surface of the lake. Joe makes a tight circle. Down in the water about twenty feet in depth, is a body laying in the sand.

JOE

I see it. When I circle around again  
drop that marker just before we pass  
over him.

Joe circles around then lines up for a straight line to fly over the body. Officer Risher gets the marker ready and hangs it over the side of the airplane.

OFFICER RISHER

OK ready.

JOE

Hold on till I tell you to drop it.  
 (long pause)  
 Now!

Officer Risher lets the marker drop. It splashes into the water just a few feet from where the body lies. They fly around and very close to a boat with two police officers in it.

JOE (CONT'D)

See if you can get those officers  
 attention when we pass.

Officer Risher hangs over the edge of the airplane as Joe flutters past. Joe throttles back on the engine.

OFFICER RISHER

(yelling loudly)  
 Hey we found the body, follow us!

Officer Risher is waving his arms. The two police officers wave back, then take chase in the direction Joe steers the airplane. Once it looks like they find the marker Joe heads for the nearby airport.

It is dusk when they arrive and it is very difficult for Joe to see the runway clearly. He makes out the dark straight runway and lines up, touches down and comes to a full stop.

JOE

Well we made it just in time.

OFFICER RISHER

A few more minutes and I don't think  
 we would have seen the runway.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - MORNING

Joe is getting his airplane checked for today's flight when an ambulance arrives. They stop near the airplane. Joe goes over as the driver steps out. They shake hands.

JOE

Who's the passenger for today?

DRIVER

It's a young woman that is very ill.  
 We just don't have the resources  
 that she needs. If she doesn't get  
 the treatment today she will certainly  
 die.

JOE

It won't take us long to get over to  
South bend.

They go around to the rear of the ambulance and assist the woman. She is white as a ghost and very sickly. Joe helps her get into the airplane, then straps her in the seat. He places the leather helmet and goggles on and helps her adjust them.

JOE (CONT'D)

You just relax and hold on miss,  
we'll be over to the hospital in no  
time.

Joe gets the airplane started up and soon they are flying over the land towards South Bend.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe flies over the small towns and farms. He spots the hospital and circles overhead. On the ground a team of nurses come out and climb into the ambulance.

Heading in the direction that Joe signals for them, he flies towards an open field not far away. Joe lands the airplane in the field and taxis over to the waiting nurses.

Soon the patient is in the ambulance and the Nurses thank Joe for his assistance commenting that he may have saved her life. They drive away.

FADE TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - MORNING

Joe and Josephine are loading a picnic basket into the airplane. Josephine tucks a blanket into the front seat. She climbs in while Joe readies the airplane.

JOSEPHINE

Ready when you are Joe.

Joe spins the prop and the engine fires up. He pulls the wheel chokes and jumps in to the pilot seat. Revving up the engine soon they are heading down the runway lifting off into the morning sun.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe is buzzing close to the tree tops enjoying the flight as Josephine is busy looking at the scenery below. The lush green landscape soon gives way to the shores of the large lakes ahead.

They fly out over the water. Josephine waves to the fishermen in their tiny boats below. Joe circles out over the water then heads back to the shore. He settles the airplane down on the sandy beach and taxis to a safe place near some large rocks.

CUT TO:

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Joe cuts the engine and removes his goggles and helmet.

JOE

This looks like a good spot for a picnic.

Joe climbs out of the airplane and helps Josephine with the basket and blanket. They pick a nice spot near the rocks and spread out the blanket.

They eat lunch and relax leaning against the rocks. Joe looks deep into Josephine's eyes. She smiles then quickly looks away.

A sail boat passes by, they wave.

JOSEPHINE

Did you get enough to eat Joe?

JOE

Yes, you made a great lunch Josephine.

JOSEPHINE

My mother always said the way to a man's heart is through his stomach.

JOE

Well

(awkwardly)

That's what I wanted to talk to you about.

JOSEPHINE

Did the lunch give you indigestion Joe?

Joe laughs then smiles.

JOE

No but it does make my heart grow  
founder of you. We have been seeing  
each other for a couple of years  
now.

JOSEPHINE

Yes Joe, I have enjoyed being with  
you. I can see why you love to fly  
so much.

JOE

Do you? Would you support me and  
let me keep flying?

JOSEPHINE

Oh silly Joe, I would never ask you  
to stop doing what you really love.  
That's what makes you who you are  
and that's the Joe I fell in love  
with.

Joe reaches into his trouser pocket and pulls out a ring  
box. He gets on his knees and just as he is opening the box  
showing it to Josephine, a large wave splashes up over the  
rocks and douses both of them.

Soaked Joe has lost the box. Josephine laughs and wipes the  
water away, sees Joe frantically searching for the box. She  
joins in and finds the ring tucked between the rocks.

Joe sits up with the empty box in his hand, staring in  
disbelief, the ring missing, Joe looks to Josephine as she  
admires the beautiful ring now displayed on her finger.

JOE

Oh good you found it.

JOSEPHINE

(Excitedly)  
Yes.

JOE

Josephine...

JOSEPHINE

(excitedly)  
Yes, yes

She is grinning from ear to ear, dripping wet staring at the  
ring on her finger.

JOSEPHINE (CONT'D)

Yes Joe.

She jumps to Joe and they fall hugging and kissing. Another large wave crashes over the rocks and washes them down the beach taking the blanket and basket with them.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Joe and Josephine stand at the alter of the decorated church. Facing each other, the REVEREND gives the ceremony.

REVEREND

Do you, Joseph, take Josephine to be your wedded wife, and in the presence of these witnesses do you vow that you will do everything in your power to make your love for her a growing part of your life? Will you continue to strengthen it from day to day and week to week with your best resources? Will you stand by her in sickness or in health, in poverty or in wealth, and will you shun all others and keep yourself to her alone as long as you both shall live?

JOE

I do.

REVEREND

And do you, Josephine, take Joseph to be your wedded husband, and in the presence of these witnesses do you vow that you will do everything in your power to make your love for him a growing part of your life? Will you continue to strengthen it from day to day and week to week with your best resources? Will you stand by him in sickness or in health, in poverty or in wealth, and will you shun all others and keep yourself to him alone as long as you both shall live?

JOSEPHINE

I do.

REVEREND

The ring is the symbol of the commitment which binds these two together. There are two rings because there are two people, each to make a contribution to the life of the other,  
(MORE)

REVEREND (CONT'D)

and to their new life together. Let us pray: Bless, O Lord, the giving of these rings, that they who wear them may abide together in your peace and grow in one another's eyes.

JOE

I give you this ring,  
as I give you myself,  
with love and affection.  
Wear it in peace always.

JOSEPHINE

I give you this ring, as I  
give you myself, with love  
and affection. Wear it in  
peace always.

REVEREND

May the seamless circle of these rings become the symbol of their endless love and serve to remind them of the holy covenant they have entered into today to be faithful, loving, and kind to each other. Dear God, may they live in Your grace and be forever true to this union. Amen. I now pronounce you husband and wife. You may kiss the the Bride.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - DAY

Several airplanes are parked at Joe's runway. The barn is embellished for the ceremonies with decorations and tables of food. Several people are piled into the many cars and are heading down the driveway.

Amongst the guests are Charles Lindbergh and many of Joe's friends from the fairs that he has been flying at.

All of Joe's family and many of the local townsfolk are at the festivities. They dance and eat late into the evening.

Joe and Josephine dance and hold hands, they mingle with the crowd.

CUT TO:

EXT. DONNELLAN FARM - MORNING

SUPER: APRIL 5, 1926

Joe is loading his bags and supplies into the airplane as Josephine watches intently. He does a complete walk around inspection of the airplane.

Johnny comes running out of the farm house with a lunch sack and bounds up to Joe.

JOHNNY

Here Joe, ya just about forgot your lunch.

JOE

Oh, thanks Johnny. Just set that on my seat.

Johnny places the sack lunch in the seat and then helps Joe with the inspection of the airplane.

Josephine helps by wiping the windscreen with a clean cloth.

JOHNNY

Joe, when you coming back?

JOE

I'm not sure yet, but I'll let you know. Now don't you need to get to school?

JOHNNY

I'm going... sure you don't need my help?

JOE

As much as I'd like that, I have to do this one alone I'm afraid.

JOHNNY

OK Joe, you be careful.

JOSEPHINE

See ya later Johnny.

Johnny runs off down the lane waving.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe takes off as Josephine waves. Joe climbs up over the trees and circles around. Gives a wing wave then flies West.

DISSOLVES TO:

INT. MAYWOOD FIELD, ILL - AFTERNOON

Several people have gathered in the waiting area of the little airport terminal. Joe, along with Charles Lindbergh, PHILIP R. LOVE, THOMAS P. NELSON, and HARLAN A. "BUD" GURNEY are being instructed about the routes they will be flying from a POST OFFICE REPRESENTATIVE.

Joe looks the map over in the area of Beaver Island sitting in the lower portion of the Great Lakes. Lindy strolls over to Joe and looks at the map.

LINDY  
Hi Joe, glad you could make it.  
(shake hands)  
What area did you get?

Joe points at the area on the map.

JOE  
That little island. They can't get mail or supplies very easily this time of year.

LINDY  
Where's the air strip?

JOE  
They don't have one yet. Gotta land on the ice in the harbor.

LINDY  
Well good luck with that.

Joe folds up the map.

JOE  
What route did you get?

LINDY  
Number two, here to St. Louis. Gonna fly a couple of dry runs before we take the mail.

JOE  
I'll fly over to Charlevoix in the morning and get the details, but it looks like I'll be going from there to Cross Village then across the lake to Beaver Island. Just making the loop.

Lindy's three friends come over to see what's going on.

LINDY  
Joe, I'd like to introduce you to some friends of mine. This is Philip Love, Thomas Nelson and Bud Gurney. They'll be flying the rest of the route with me.

Joe shakes hands with each of them.

JOE

Glad to meet you chaps. What do you say to getting some dinner after we're finished up here?

DISSOLVE TO:

P.O.V. AIRPLANE - MORNING

Joe is looking over the instrument panel and watches the tachometer as the needle moves up and down. The engine is running rough and sputters in unison with the tach. Joe looks over the ground below for a place to land. The ground below is covered with trees for as far as Joe can see. The engine coughs and quits. The air is still. Joe looks to his left. The only choice he has to land is on the ice.

He starts descending to the edge of the lake. It is melting and Joe can see the water near the shoreline. He banks the airplane to the left and glides out onto the ice further losing altitude rapidly. He sets the plane down on the ice, bounces along and comes to a stop.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

Climbing out, Joe grabs a TOOLBOX and heads to the engine. He opens the cowling and works on the engine for a bit. Looking satisfied, Joe puts away the tools. He steps up and reaching into the cockpit he flips the switches on. Gives the propeller a spin and the little engine fires up.

As soon as it starts to smooth out the plane starts moving across the ice. Joe gets knocked over by the wing. He jumps up and runs after it. He makes a mad dash for the side so he can grab on. Catching the top of the cockpit, Joe hops effortlessly up onto the edge and climbs in his seat. Gives full throttle and races back into the sky.

CUT TO:

EXT. CHARLEVOIX AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Joe taxis up to a waiting truck with several people standing around. He shuts off the engine and jumps down. The crowd gathers close to examine the airplane.

A YOUNG BOY (9) pushes his way up through the crowd towards the airplane. He reaches out and touches the wing. Joe steps close to him.

JOE

To most people, the sky is the limit.  
To those who love aviation, the sky  
is home.

A man steps out of the crowd and introduces himself to Joe.  
Reaching his hand out, Joe shakes hands.

JOHN MCCANN

Hello, I'm John McCann. I'll be  
your guide over to Beaver Island.  
We'll first go on up to Bay Harbor  
then to Petoskey. We can then jump  
over to Harbor Springs and on up to  
Cross Village before crossing out to  
Beaver Island.

JOE

That sounds like a great plan, I  
haven't been up here before so glad  
you can show me around.

Joe climbs up into the airplane and pulls out a bag of mail  
from the front seat.

JOE (CONT'D)

I think some of this is for here.

JOHN MCCANN

Great, we got a few things here to  
take with us as well. I'll round  
them up and we can get going when  
you're ready.

John takes a few bundles from the bag then adds in a handful  
of letters. Joe takes the bag and returns it to the front  
seat.

JOE

I think we can stuff this bag to one  
side so you have some room to get  
in.

(pause)

Do you have any warmer clothes with  
you?

JOHN MCCANN

Yea I did grab my extra stuff.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe accompanied by John, are buzzing around the skies over  
CROSS VILLAGE.

They look for a place to land but can't find one big enough.

JOHN MCCANN

(yelling to Joe)

You are going to have to put us down  
on the ice.

(pointing)

Joe nods and buzzes the rooftops until they are past town a little. Picking a smooth patch on the lake where the snow has been cleared away, Joe sets the airplane down on the ice.

Before they can get parked and out of the airplane, a large mob is heading their way cheering and waving.

John pulls a bundle of mail from the bag then jumps down onto the ice and heads towards the crowd. They trade bundles and John returns to the plane with the crowd close at hand. The crowd gathers around the airplane to get a closer look.

A man steps up to Joe.

MAN

Excuse me sir, what's it like way up  
there in the sky?

JOE

Well mister, I think Mark Twain summed  
it up best when he said "The air up  
there in the clouds is very pure and  
fine, bracing and delicious. And why  
shouldn't it be? -it is the same the  
angels breathe."

JOHN MCCANN

We better get going Joe, still got  
twenty five miles across the lake to  
Beaver Island.

Joe signals for John to climb in while he starts the engine.  
Joe signals the crowd to back away from the airplane.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe and John are flying across the frozen lake following the chain of little islands towards the West. They both are gazing out and enjoying the view when they reach the frozen harbor of Beaver Island.

John signals to Joe and points to a large clearing on the ice where all the snow has been plowed. Joe acknowledges and circles around over the small town.

When the airplane passes overhead, the people are so excited that they all come running down to the harbor.

A man over at Green's Lake, a mile away rides his HORSE as fast as it will run, down onto the ice. As he stops his horse, it drops dead on the ice.

Joe looks at the horse then to the man as he is getting up from the ice and brushes himself off.

JOE

What happened?

MAN WITH HORSE

Don't know, he must've been scared to death of your airplane.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHARLEVOIX CAFE - MORNING

SUPER: APRIL 14, 1926

The little cafe is bustling with patrons all excited for the morning special. All the seats are filled with chatting customers. Joe sits at a small table near the window by himself. The remnants of breakfast clutter the table top as Joe scribbles a letter.

JOE (V.O.)

Dear Mother,  
I have two more trips to make here, will finish on Sat. This is a great little place tucked away from the rest of the world among the pines.  
(pause)  
Charlevoix is the home reminiscent of the Loeb's, there is nothing but wilderness around here's birch and pine forest. Well have nothing more to say but will say that I probably be stationed here.  
I'll see you all Sunday With love to all,  
Your son Joe

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - DAY

SUPER: APRIL 15, 1926

Joe is loading several packages and bags into the front seat of the airplane as the wind and snow is whipping around. Joe is all set as he buttons down a cover over the front seat protecting the valuable cargo.

Joe is soon taxiing down the snowy runway and off into the storm.

CUT TO:

INT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe is bundled up tightly in his sheepskin coat and gloves. He looks frozen as the goggles are iced over. He tries to clean the lens with little success.

EXTERIOR:

The airplane is tossed around in the thirty knot winds and snow. The wings are icing over heavily as the engine struggles to keep running.

INTERIOR:

Joe notices the heaviness of the airplane as he fights to keep it in the air. Blinded by the blowing snow, Joe aimlessly continues on across the frozen lake michigan.

Loosing altitude as he goes, Joe is forced to land on the snow covered ice.

EXTERIOR:

Suddenly jagged ice projections are all around and he is fighting desperately to guide his plane in between them and find a level area to set her down.

He weaves between the tall ice pieces sticking up and after brushing the snow off of some with the wings, Joe sets down on the flat ice and slides around, bouncing from the rough ice he manages to get the airplane stopped.

CUT TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - MOMENTS LATER

The wind and snow pound on as Joe climbs out with tools in hand. He hammers some stakes into the ice and attempts to tie the airplane as the wind plays havoc and forces the airplane out of control. It slams into the jagged ice formations and damages the right wing.

Joe fights the wind, gaining some control he cinches the ropes and secures the airplane. As he is tying off the tail the winds force the stakes out of the ice and slams the airplane again into the jagged ice, this time destroying the left wing beyond repair.

Joe fights on and anchors all the stakes deeper into the ice. He cinches the ropes so the airplane cannot move again.

Joe makes room in the front cockpit and fastens the cover over himself. The storm rages on.

FADE TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - MORNING

The airplane sits alone on the ice covered with a blanket of snow as the Sun peaks a ray of hope over the tops of the endless ice formations. The only clear spot for miles shelters the little airplane.

Joe's hand inches its way from under the cover. He unfastens the cover and pokes his head up for a look. Miles of diamonds gleam and dance in the morning Sun. Joe is mesmerized by the tranquillity of the sight. He sits and stares at the landscaping for what seems like an eternity.

CUT TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - MOMENTS LATER

Joe is stuffing his supplies into a backpack. He throws it on his back. Taking the map from the side pocket in the cockpit Joe checks it against his pocket compass.

Looking at the map he draws a line with his finger from where he took off and the direction he was heading when he landed. Calculating his course Joe looks off into the distance. He scans the horizon in a left to right pattern slowly.

He looks at his compass and picks the direction then steps out to make his way across the desolate snow covered ice. Joe soon disappears into the horizon.

FADE TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - DAY

Joe continues his trek across the frozen waters of Lake Michigan in search of Beaver Island. Referring to his map and compass, Joe forges his way across the new fallen snow. Occasionally he hears ice cracking beneath his feet.

Wolves howl in the distance. Joe stops and listens for a moment then trudges on. The landscape is desolate with snow covered jagged ice formations into the distant horizon.

CUT TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - EVENING

Joe saunters on as the sun is sitting low on the western horizon. The howling wolves are closer.

As Joe continues into the darkness, the wolves follow about a mile behind sniffing his trail.

CUT TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - NIGHT

Pitch black skies filled with brilliant diamonds. The Ice gives off a luminescent glow. Joe hears the wolves very close.

They run past him almost knocking him down. Joe yells at them. He marches on at a quicker pace. The wolves follow and run circles around him.

FADE TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - MORNING

The winds have started whipping around in the early onset of morning. Cold and alone except for a pack of hungry wolves, Joe exhausted from the long trek across the ice and snow, staggers relentlessly as the wolves run up and nip at his heels.

He tries to fight them off but they dash out of his reach. Joe struggles aimlessly to continue on. Joe looks up and spies an Island poking up from the ice. He gets a spurt of energy and picks up the pace as best he can.

As Joe reaches the bank. The ice is thin and Joe falls through to his waist. The wolves back off. Joe breaks the ice in front of him and waddles up on the shore and darts into the brush leaving the wolves behind starring.

Joe pushes his way through the brush and discovers an old LOG CABIN. He seeks shelter inside.

CUT TO:

INT. GARDEN ISLAND CABIN - CONTINUOUS

A pot belly stove sits against the wall. Joe builds a fire in the stove and hangs his clothes on a make shift rack.

He takes a can of beans from his pack and opens them with his pocket knife. Places the can on the stove and lays back on the bed.

He dozes off for a few minutes as the beans start to boil.

CUT TO:

INT. GARDEN ISLAND CABIN - LATER

Joe sits at the dilapidated table eating the beans as he looks over the map. Trying to decide where he is as he traces the line across the map from Charlevoix to Beaver Island.

He taps on the map at Garden Island and nods his head in agreement. Finishing up the can of beans, he gathers up his belongings, puts his clothes on and makes his way back outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN ISLAND CABIN - CONTINUOUS

Joe plots his course, checks his compass and starts off to find Beaver Island. He makes his way down to the shore in a different direction from whence he came. Finding the ice in better condition, Joe makes his way back out onto the Lake.

CUT TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - LATER

In the distance he can see the next Island. He makes his way to the shoreline and finds a safe passage on to land. Joe checks his map and locates Hog Island. The silence is broken by the distant barking of several dogs.

Joe runs in the direction of the barking. As he breaks out of the snowy brush he spies two dog sled teams making their way across the Island. Joe yells and waves his arms in the air.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOG ISLAND - LATER

Joe is sitting in the sled with a heavy blanket over him drinking hot coffee from a tin cup as the teams are racing across the Island and back out onto the ice.

CUT TO:

EXT. FROZEN LAKE MICHIGAN - NIGHT

The dog sleds have run all night across the frozen lake and the lights of civilization are flickering in the distance. They push on for what seems timeless.

Eventually reaching the mainland, the dog sleds arrive on the beach as the towns people gather around.

## VOICES FROM THE CROWD

Did you find him? Is that the pilot?  
Is he alive?

## TEAM LEADER

Yes we found him... He's alright!

CUT TO:

## EXT. CHARLEVOIX CAFE - NIGHT

A crowd has pushed their way into the diner and all try to get closer to Joe. He is shaking hands with several people and thanking them for rescuing him.

FADE TO:

## EXT. CHARLEVOIX AIRPORT - MORNING

Joe is loading packages and supplies into the front seat of his new DEHAVELAND DH-4 Bi-plane. He finishes up and sets the controls to start the engine. Gives the propeller a spin and the big engine fires up.

Joe pulls the blocks from the wheels and climbs in. In moments he is roaring into the skies.

CUT TO:

## EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe is looking over the instruments and gazing around at the frozen landscape below. He is out over Lake Michigan nearing Beaver Island. As Joe reaches the harbor he can see water below.

Joe circles the bay and looks for someplace to land. The ice is still intact outside of the buoy markers. He sets the bi-plane down on the ice and slush.

CUT TO:

## EXT. BEAVER ISLAND HARBOR - LATER

A fishing tug chugs out of the harbor towards the ice patch that Joe is sitting on. Joe is dragging the bags of mail to the edge as the boat inches up.

Joe hands up the bags one at a time to Mike Cull.

## MIKE CULL

Glad you were able to make it Joe.

JOE

Didn't think I was going to. It's getting really mushy.

MIKE CULL

This may be the last time you can fly over here. We should be able to get the boat out next week if this warm weather keeps up.

JOE

I'll let the postmaster know that when I get back.

They wave and Joe sashes back to the bi-plane.

FADE TO:

EXT. BENTON HARBOR AIRFIELD - DAY

SUPER: MAY, 1927

Joe is giving a student, Mr. WILL KEGLY, a flying lesson. As the two take off the bi-plane stutters a little. They continue to circle around the pattern when the bi-plane quits completely.

CUT TO:

P.O.V. AIRPLANE - MOMENTS LATER

Joe is trying desperately to work the throttle before the propeller stops spinning. With no luck Joe aims the bi-plane towards the runway.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

The two land short of the runway and as the plane flips over Joe is thrown out leaving Will Kegley hanging in his seat.

Joe regains his composure and gets up slowly. Checking himself over for any broken bones and cuts, he finds he has a cut under his eyes and his lip is bleeding. He then tries to free Mr. Kegley from the seat. Mr. Kegley drops out onto the ground with a thud.

JOE

Mr. Kegley, are you alright?

WILL KEGLEY

Nothing seems to be broken. Just a little scared.

JOE  
I think that is enough lesson for  
today.

WILL KEGLEY  
What do you think went wrong?

JOE  
Defiantly tampered with.

WILL KEGLEY  
We better take you to the doctor,  
you're bleeding pretty good from  
that cut under your eye.

FADE TO:

EXT. BENTON HARBOR AIRFIELD - DAY

A new Tri-motor Fokker passenger plane sits in the open hanger. A sign on the wall gives identity to "MIDWEST AIRWAYS CORP".

Joe is working on an ULTRALIGHT airplane. He is going over the airplane carefully checking out every inch of the fuselage and wings.

The wings are twenty four feet across and the engine is a four cylinder out of a motorcycle.

A Model "T" enters on to the field and slowly drives up near Joe. Four men climb out and stroll up looking over the tiny airplane.

Joe's injuries are healing well.

Joe looks up and sees the men. He pulls a rag from his pocket and wipes his hands before shaking the hand of Walter W. Dwyer.

JOE  
Hello William, what brings you out  
here today?  
(pause)  
Need to schedule a trip?

WALTER W. DWYER  
Well actually yes we do want to  
schedule a trip. But not the kind  
you're thinking of.  
(pause)  
That's an interesting little bird.

Walter walks around the Ultralight airplane.

JOE

I saw an article in the Popular Mechanics a while back. Thought I could build one of my own... So what can I do for you?

WALTER W. DWYER

We have a proposition for you.

JOE

How so?

WALTER W. DWYER

Since Charles Lindbergh has successfully flown to Europe, some of us have been talking about a trip to South America.

JOE

South America?

Joe scratches his head in thought.

WALTER W. DWYER

Sure, why not set up an airline route down there. Plenty of potential for passengers from the U S to destinations south.

JOE

Well I'm kinda busy right now with my passenger service to New York from here.

WALTER W. DWYER

Ah Joe, anybody that can fly can do this route, we need you to set up the South American route.

JOE

I would need a special type of aircraft. Sorta like the one Lyndy had.

WALTER W. DWYER

Let me introduce you to Clayton Brukner and Elwood Junkin from Advanced Aircraft Company.

JOE

Oh, hello,  
(shaking hands)  
You're the ones that build Waco's.

CLAYTON BRUNKNER

That's right, and we got a new design that just came out. A sort'a improved version of the Waco Nine. We've revamped it and made it a little bigger, giving it a Curtiss ninety horse engine.

JOE

You mean the O-X-Five engine?

CLAYTON BRUNKNER

Yes, water cooled, but we did a rebuild of the old design and have come up with a more reliable model, the engine is an O-X-Six

WALTER W. DWYER

It was Glenn Curtiss that suggested that we come see you.

JOE

I haven't seen Glenn for a couple of years, how is he doing?

WALTER W. DWYER

He said for you to drop in anytime you get to Florida. So what do you say, interested?

CLAYTON BRUNKNER

You know Lindbergh is famous and you could be too.

JOE

I don't care to be famous, but I wouldn't mind making that flight for you.

(pause)

Let me think about it for awhile. In the mean time tell me about this new airplane.

CLAYTON BRUNKNER

It's called the Waco Ten. An open cockpit bi-plane design that has a two place bench seat in the front. Plenty of room for cargo or passengers.

FADE TO:

EXT. BENTON HARBOR AIRFIELD - MORNING

SUPER: JANUARY 28, 1928

SUPER: DAY 1

A very large crowd has gathered at the airport. They are circled around a little airplane where several reporters are snapping pictures and writing in their notebooks.

Joe stands next to his new airplane. Painted on the cowling in big letters is the words "I WILL". Four men stand with Joe as he points to the lettering.

JOE

On this historic occasion we have gathered here today as good will ambassadors, to open up a route to South America showing the practicability of aviation in their Countries.

WALTER W. DWYER

With the sponsorship of the Allerton Hotel, may you go safely and Godspeed.

Several reporters are snapping pictures as Joe shakes hands with the four men. Joe's dad and mom push in close to wish him safe travels. Joe exchanges hugs with both.

Mrs. Donnellan hands Joe a lunch sack as she kisses him on the cheek. Joe thanks her as she steps away. Josephine looking quite pregnant, waddles up to Joe and gives him a big hug. He kisses her gently on the lips.

She looks up into his eyes, with tears in her eyes she tries to speak.

JOSEPHINE

Oh, Joe.

She chokes on the words but continues on.

JOSEPHINE (CONT'D)

Joe, please be careful and hurry back safely. We got this little one on the way and she is going to need her daddy.

She rubs her tummy.

JOE

Don't you worry your self, nothing is going to stop me from completing this trip and getting back here. Like it says on the airplane, I will succeed.

Joe gives her another big kiss then climbs into the cockpit. He flips the switches and sets the throttle, giving a wave to his little brother Johnny, Johnny pulls the prop through a couple of turns.

JOHNNY

Contact!

Joe flips the switch on.

JOE

Contact!

Johnny gives the prop a hard yank and the little engine fires up. Everyone steps back away as Joe revs up the engine. Seven other airplanes all start up nearby. Joe looks over the gages on the panel to make sure everything is working before he takes off.

Joe waves to everyone and starts adding more power. The plane struggles to get moving as Joe gives more power. Then the overloaded airplane jumps forward and Joe taxis it down to the end of the runway. The other airplanes follow pursuit.

The news media is taking pictures and scribbling notes in their notebooks as Joe and the other airplanes, all in unison, roll down the strip and soon up into the air.

They circle around and do a fly-over where everyone is watching, then Joe aims for his next stop. As the airplanes disappear into the afternoon sky, Walter Dwyer is being interviewed by several of the news media.

WALTER W. DWYER

Well the plan is for Joe to fly down to Miami, then over to Havana, Cuba. From there he plans on heading to Teal, Honduras. With this flight, our goal is to establish a commercial flight throughout South America from Chicago.

Walter lights up a cigar, puffs for a moment then continues to explain the trip.

WALTER W. DWYER (CONT'D)

Donnellan is going to visit Managua, Nicaragua, Panama City, Columbia; Ecuador, Peru, then drop over to Chile. From there he is planning on coming home by way of Mexico City, Tampica and through Dallas, Texas before heading back to Chicago.

(MORE)

WALTER W. DWYER (CONT'D)

We figured the whole trip would take about thirty days depending on the weather.

FADE OUT:

EXT. AIRPLANE - AFTERNOON

Joe is buzzing along towards Kentucky when he notices the oil pressure is dropping low. Looking out the cockpit he can see a stream of oil streaking down the side of the airplane. Joe shakes his head. He looks for a place to land.

Joe checks his map and calculates that he is near Paoli, Indiana. Scouring the ground Joe spies a farm with a big open field. He lands in the field and taxis over next to the road. Shuts off the engine, hops down and heads over to the farm house.

CUT TO:

EXT. FARM HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The farmer and his family all welcome Joe as he steps upon the porch.

JOE

Hello, I'm in need of your field for a short time while I make some repairs. I hope it's alright that I parked my airplane over there.

Joe points to where he had parked. The kids all get excited that they have an airplane in their field. The farmer invites Joe

INSIDE

He introduces himself to Joe.

RICH JANZARUK

Welcome, welcome. I'm Rich Janzaruk, this is my wife Emily, and our four children. How can we help you?

JOE

I'm having a bit of engine trouble. I have a bad oil leak. I'm headed to South America.

RICH JANZARUK

South America? What in the world for?

JOE

I'll tell you all about it but first  
I need to see to the repairs before  
it gets too late.

Joe turns towards the door to leave as Rich grabs his coat off the rack.

EMILY

You boys go check out the repairs  
and I'll fix you something to eat.

As Joe and Rich step out the four children all put on their coats and hats and follow close behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - LATER

Joe has the cowling opened up and his head is stuck inside. All four children are sitting in the airplane playing with what ever they can. Rich hands Joe a adjustable wrench and assists Joe in making the repairs.

As they work Joe tells Rich of some of his flying adventures, the children listen in awe.

INT. FARM HOUSE - LATER

Joe and the farmer's family are finishing up with the meal Emily had prepared. The children get up and start clearing the table off as Joe explains about his trip.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - EVENING

Joe is in the airplane taxiing to the far end of the field as the farmer and his family look on. Joe turns the plane around and revs up the engine. Soon he is in the air and passes over their heads as he climbs back into the sky.

The family waves as he climbs up and away. Joe gives a wing wave.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOUISVILLE AIRPORT - EVENING

As the sun is setting the roar of a distant airplane is heard. The crowd searches the skies for which direction it is coming from. An onlooker yells out "There, over there, he's coming".

Joe drops out of the dark skies and settles down on the runway smoothly.

He taxis over to the waiting crowd and instantly is engulfed by a siege of people.

Joe barely gets out of the airplane when he is bombarded by questions. He answers and explains the problems to the crowd all the while he is stowing away his gear and pushing the airplane into a nearby hanger for the night.

He grabs his bag from the cockpit, exits the hanger and pushes the door closed securing the lock.

JOE

Now then, who is going to give me a ride to the hotel?

FADE OUT:

EXT. LOUISVILLE AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 2

Joe climbs out of a Model "T" with his bag, unlocks the hanger and pushes the doors open exposing his airplane. Dozens of local people all appear as from nowhere. They are excited to see Joe off for his journey.

Some help Joe push his airplane out of the hanger. A woman hands Joe a thermos of hot coffee for the trip. He thanks her and places it in the cockpit.

Reporters get their cameras set up and start taking pictures as Joe readies the airplane. He lifts open the engine cowling and inspects his oil line. A mechanic double checks all the fittings and announces that everything looks good.

A couple of people help fill the gas tank up with cans of gasoline. Everyone is busy talking and helping where they can. Children run around excitedly as the airplane is made ready.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPLANE - MOMENTS LATER

Joe is sitting in the pilot seat looking over the panel and setting the switches. He waves and the mechanic spins the prop some then hollers "contact".

JOE

Contact!

The mechanic gives the prop a hard spin and the engine fires up. The crowd steps away as Joe adjusts the throttle. The engine purrs smoothly.

Joe taxis out to the runway and soon is off climbing high into the sky.

CUT TO:

P.O.V. AIRPLANE - DAY

Joe is looking out over the landscape as he flies towards his next destination. He refers to his map and traces a line with his finger to Atlanta. Looking up he can see the Appalachian Mountains with heavy clouds and dense fog hiding the tops.

Joe looks discouraged as he continues on looking for a break in the fog he can pass through. He flies closer to the mountains and the fog is not getting any thinner.

He retraces his path and pointing to the map he locates the town of Etowah, Tennessee. He banks the airplane and sets his compass heading in that direction.

Soon Joe is circling a small airfield. He lands there and taxis over to a hanger.

CUT TO:

EXT. AIRPORT - MOMENTS LATER

Joe is greeted by a local pilot as he climbs out of the airplane.

EDDIE ANGEL

Hello there, I'm Eddie Angel. That's some fancy airplane you got there.

Joe reaches out his hand.

JOE

Nice to meet you sir. Yea this is the new Waco 10.

EDDIE ANGEL

What's with the lettering?

JOE

Oh, that, I'm on my way to South America.

EDDIE ANGEL

Are you Joe Donnellan, the famous pilot?

JOE

(laughing)

Well I don't know how famous I am,  
I'm not Lindbergh!

EDDIE ANGEL

I read all about this trip of your's  
in the paper. What are you doing  
here?

JOE

Fog.

EDDIE ANGEL

Oh, that again. Yea that happens a  
lot this time of year. Trying to go  
over the mountains are you?

JOE

Too far to fly around them.

EDDIE ANGEL

You're welcome to hang out here until  
it clears up. We can park your  
airplane inside my hanger.

JOE

That would be great, thank you.

They open up the hanger doors and push the airplane in along  
side Eddie's bi-plane. His airplane is all painted up with  
"Angels Fly High Flying Circus".

Joe recognizes the airplane. With a surprised look on his  
face he turns to Eddie.

JOE (CONT'D)

Speaking of famous people, I know  
who you are. We flew together at  
the fair in Chicago a few years ago.

EDDIE ANGEL

I was wondering how long it was going  
to take you to remember that.

JOE

You were the one that Glenn Curtis  
was telling me about back then. He  
came up to me at that fair and said  
I flew just like Angel. I thought  
he was talking about the angels not  
you.

Eddie laughs and pats Joe on the shoulder.

EDDIE ANGEL

Well my name is Angel but I fly like  
the devil. Lets go get something to  
eat, you may be here a while.

FADE TO:

EXT. ETOWAH AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 3

Joe looks out towards the mountains and can only see a wall  
of fog in the distance.

FADE TO:

EXT. ETOWAH AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 4

Joe looks out towards the mountains and can only see a wall  
of fog in the distance.

FADE TO:

EXT. ETOWAH AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 5

Joe looks at the fog and can see a thin outline of the  
mountains in the distance.

JOE

Hey Eddie, looks like I might make  
it to Atlanta today.

Eddie steps out from the hanger and looks at the horizon.

EDDIE ANGEL

Well then, we better get you ready.  
South America awaits!

The two open up the hanger doors and push the airplane out  
into the morning sun. They both go over everything intensely  
and soon Joe is climbing aboard.

JOE

Eddie, thank you for everything.

EDDIE ANGEL

You are greatly welcome, fly safe  
and stay out of the trees.

JOE  
I'm off to Atlanta for a quick stop  
then I'm heading to Miami.

CUT TO:

EXT. CANDLER FIELD ATLANTA - DAY

Overhead Joe buzzes the airport checking the wind sock. He flies over mid-field and circles into the wind. Lands with a strong cross-wind and has some difficulty in keeping the airplane straight on the runway. Soon he is taxiing over to the big hanger and stops by the gas pump.

While the attendant is fueling up Joe's airplane, three gentle men approach Joe. They gather around him and introduce themselves.

CHARLES HOKE  
Hello Mr. Donnellan, I'm Charles  
Hoke, President of the Atlanta Foreign  
trade Club.

Joe shakes his hand.

JOE  
I'm Joe, my father is Mr. Donnellan.

CHARLES HOKE  
Alright Joe, this is Captain Charles  
Mclain from the Department of  
Commerce.

Joe shakes his hand.

JOE  
Glad to meet you sir.

CHARLES HOKE  
And this is Ivan Moseley, the manager  
of the Ansley Hotel here in town.  
(beat)  
We would like you to be our guest  
tonight at the banquet in your honor.

JOE  
Uh Oh, well...

CHARLES HOKE  
We're having the American Aeronautics  
Association along with the Atlanta  
Foreign Trade Bureau banquet. You  
are the guest of honor so you have  
to come.

JOE

Well since you put it that way, I'd be honored to come, thank you. Just let me put my airplane away and get my bag.

CHARLES HOKE

Great, we'll have your airplane taken care of for you and locked in a secure hanger, you don't need to worry about a thing. Shall we go?

CUT TO:

INT. ANSLEY HOTEL - EVENING

BANQUET HALL

Joe is sitting at a big table in a crowded room. He is dressed in a suit eating a fat steak. Sitting on each side of him are the men he met at the airport along with many others.

A big band is playing music while everyone eats. A bellhop enters the hall and presents Joe with a telegram. Joe looks it over and reads that it is from Glenn Curtis inviting him to stay at his country club estates in Miami.

Joe folds up the paper and stuffs it in his jacket pocket. Another bellhop arrives and hands Joe a letter.

Joe reads the letter from the mayor of Atlanta. He shares the letter with the men seated next to him.

CHARLES HOKE

Congratulations Joe, not very many people get a letter from our mayor. This is a great undertaking you are on and one that I'm sure will help everyone. Opening up a route like this to South America could also open up a whole trade alliance for commerce.

JOE

It is a great honor, thank you.

The music plays on and the festivities last late into the night.

FADE TO:

EXT. CANDLER FIELD ATLANTA - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 6

Joe readies the the airplane for his next leg to South America. He is placing supplies into the cockpit. A RIFLE, PARACHUTE, MAPS, CONSULAR LETTERS, six days of FOOD and WATER, ninety nine gallons of GASOLINE and seven quarts of OIL.

Several news reporters are setting up cameras and gathering around Joe as he finishes up. They start asking questions of Joe and compare him to Charles Lindbergh.

REPORTER 2

Hey Joe, do you have any inklings to do a trans-Atlantic flight like Mr. Lindbergh did?

Joe turns to the reporters and scratches his head.

JOE

Emphatically, NO! That trip across the Atlantic that he did was a total suicide mission and Slim was really lucky that he made that at all.

Joe continues to prep the airplane, then he waves to everyone. They shoot a few pictures as Joe starts the engine. Soon he is taxiing down to the runway and into the air.

CUT TO:

P.O.V. AIRPLANE - DAY

Joe is checking the instruments and watching the scenery below. As he passes over the small towns people wave to him. He gives them a wing wave and flies on.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACKSONVILLE AIRPORT - EVENING

Joe appears out of the sky and settles down on the runway. He taxis over to the fuel area and shuts off the engine.

A mob of spectators and news men, push their way towards him. He jumps down from the airplane and is almost mauled by the group.

The MAYOR of Jacksonville, JOSEPH ALSOP, steps through the crowd with outstretched arm to welcome Joe.

JOSEPH ALSOP

Welcome, welcome Capt. Donnellan.  
It's an honor to meet you and welcome  
you to our fine city.

Joe turns and with a little surprise, he shakes the man's hand.

JOE

Thank you sir.

JOSEPH ALSOP

I'm Joseph Alsop, Mayor of  
Jacksonville, Florida.

(beat)

How was your flight so far? We were  
expecting you earlier.

JOE

Mostly uneventful, however I ran  
into bad weather which delayed me  
for a couple of days.

JOSEPH ALSOP

Well, we're just glad to see you.  
Don't worry about anything here, I  
will have the airport manager take  
care of your airplane for you. Let  
me take you to the hotel and we can  
have some dinner there.

JOE

Thank you Mayor, I really appreciate  
the hospitality.

Two maintenance workers from the airport come up to the  
airplane and fill up the gas tank. Joe gathers his bag and  
escorts the Mayor to his car.

FADE TO:

EXT. JACKSONVILLE AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 7

As the sun is peaking over the horizon, Joe pushes the  
airplane out of the hanger and checks over every inch of  
her. He takes stock of the supplies and checks his map.

He traces a line down the Eastern coastline to Miami. Nodding  
his head he taps on Miami, then folds the map and puts it  
away.

CUT TO:

P.O.V. AIRPLANE - DAY

Joe, following the coastline, is nearing Miami and traces  
his path on the map. He looks over the horizon and can see  
the OPA-LOCKA main building. From there he can see the  
runway.

Joe circles around taking in the view of the beautiful blue ocean, white sandy beaches and lush vegetation. Joe lines up for the runway and makes a perfect landing.

CUT TO:

EXT. OPA-LOCKA AIRPORT - AFTERNOON

Joe is parked at the fuel island unloading his bags from the cockpit. A crowd is growing around him. Many spectators are touching the airplane and looking it over. The crowd asks questions to which Joe is eager to answer.

MAJOR SMITH steps from the crowd and marches up to Joe. He salutes Joe. Joe returns the salute. They shake hands.

MAJOR SMITH

Major Smith at your service sir.

JOE

Captain Donnellan sir, but you can call me Joe.

Major Smith pats Joe on the shoulder.

MAJOR SMITH

Glenn Curtiss has asked me to see to your arrival. Is there anything you need?

JOE

A stiff drink and a fat steak.

MAJOR SMITH

I believe Mr. Curtiss has everything ready for you at the country club... Is this your only bag?

Major Smith picks up Joe's duffel bag and slings it over his shoulder.

JOE

That's all I have, but what about my airplane?

MAJOR SMITH

Don't worry about a thing Joe, the airport crew has explicit instructions to take excellent care of your bird. She'll be watched all night by the guards.

(beat)

Shall we head out?

JOE

Lead the way.

CUT TO:

INT. CURTISS COUNTRY CLUB - EVENING

Joe, accompanied by Glenn Curtiss, Major Smith and several pilots, are sitting in the DINNING ROOM relaxing after dinner. Drinks and cigars are served by the staff as Joe is reviewing several charts and maps of South America.

Some of the pilots are looking over the papers with Joe as they discuss his destinations. Pointing to the map a young pilot explains his experiences to Joe.

PILOT 2

When I was down in the Yucatan area it was in a flying boat. We went over the jungle here for about five hundred miles and never found a clear place to land.

(beat)

The majority of the open land is on the coast and is swamp or soft sand.

Glenn looks over the plan.

GLENN CURTISS

Well Joe, looks like you got your work cut out. Better be sure of where you are going before you get there. Wouldn't want you landing in the trees somewhere.

Joe follows the coastline on the map around the East and down to Cancun.

JOE

I figure if I can make one stop before I get inland, I can make it to Cancun. There is an area I was told about here that I can land. From there I'll have to work my way down the coast and just land whenever I can and add fuel so I can keep flying. There has got to be some places to land in Nicaragua.

PILOT 3

Well from what I've been told, the farther you go south the more mountains and dense jungles.

(MORE)

## PILOT 3 (CONT'D)

Even the shoreline is cliffs and no places to land. The cities are carved into the trees and only some farms may be scattered around to land in provided they aren't full of crops when you get there.

## PILOT 2

Remember that you are nearing the equator and the seasons are different down there.

## GLENN CURTISS

Sounds dangerous Joe, are you sure you are ready for this?

## JOE

I gotta make it Glenn, a lot of people are counting on me. I'll be careful and just make sure I can backtrack if I can't find a safe place to land.

Some of the other pilots are chatting about how dangerous it is to fly in the jungles. They talk about pilots never being found that tried before and got lost. Joe folds up the maps and charts.

## JOE (CONT'D)

Glenn, thank you for dinner and letting me stay here, this a beautiful club you got.

## GLENN CURTISS

You're welcome to stay here anytime as my guest and bring your wife sometime.

FADE TO:

EXT. OPA-LOCKA AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 8

Joe is prepping the airplane for today's flight. Glenn Curtiss and Major Smith are helping Joe look over everything. When they are satisfied Joe climbs in and sets the switches.

## GLENN CURTISS

Keep in touch and let me know how things are going.

(beat)

Now listen Joe, nobody is going to be mad at you if you change your

(MORE)

GLENN CURTISS (CONT'D)  
 mind. We all know it's a dangerous mission to fly into the jungle when you don't know the area. If you decide that it's not safe turn around. You know the saying about bold pilots.

JOE  
 I promise Glenn, I'll be careful. How about a spin?

GLENN CURTISS  
 Good luck.  
 (beat)  
 Spin it up Major!

MAJOR SMITH  
 Contact!

Joe waves and Major Smith spins the prop. The engine fires up and moments later Joe, is climbing into the skies towards Cuba.

CUT TO:

P.O.V. AIRPLANE - DAY

As Joe makes his way across the Atlantic to Cuba, he scans the horizon to the left. He can see in the distance dark clouds. The wind is starting to pick up and it makes his flight very bumpy.

Cuba appears in the horizon. Joe aims for the dirt field on the West edge of HAVANA. Joe circles over town and scopes out the area. He then lands on the dirt strip and taxis over to the waiting crowd.

The crowd gathers close as Joe hops down. Asking for some help to tie off his airplane he realizes no one understands him. They are all speaking Spanish and Joe cannot understand any of it.

He stands there and scratches his head in bewilderment. A short Cuban fellow pushes his way through the crowd. He grabs Joe by the arm.

GUIDO SARDUCCI  
 (broken English)  
 Hello, I'm Guido Sarducci, may I help you?

Joe shakes his hand.

JOE

Yes, I guess I wasn't thinking about the language problem. Can you translate for me?

GUIDO SARDUCCI

Sure you just leave everything to me. We can tie your airplane over there and put a canvas over the opening. It's going to rain tomorrow.

JOE

Great, but I got to leave tomorrow.

Many people help Joe push the airplane back towards the edge of the field and secure it. Joe pulls his belongings out and they tie a canvas cover over the cockpit. Many people are asking Joe questions in Spanish. Joe looks puzzled. Guido translate into English. Joe answers the questions as they are walking to the cars. The crowd follows Joe and Guido.

GUIDO SARDUCCI

We got a nice room reserved for you over at the De Alberto Lavin Hotel. Everyone is waiting for your arrival. Big festivities for tonight.

CUT TO:

INT. DE ALBERTO LAVIN HOTEL - EVENING

Joe sits in the dinning room of the hotel with many guests. Guido translates the conversations with Joe as the evening progresses on.

The winds outside grow stronger. The shutters slam back and forth on the windows. A bellhop secures them then closes the windows.

GUIDO SARDUCCI

I told you we were in for a big storm.

JOE

Darn, I'm already behind and really can't take anymore delays. I gotta get going in the morning.

GUIDO SARDUCCI

You're not going anywhere tomorrow, Joe. Better have a drink and relax.

FADE TO:

INT. DE ALBERTO LAVIN HOTEL - DAY

SUPER: DAY 9

Joe looks out his hotel room window. The storm is in full force of a tropical hurricane. Eighty mile per hour winds and drenching rain pound against the window.

FADE TO:

INT. DE ALBERTO LAVIN HOTEL - DAY

SUPER: DAY 12

Joe sits in the dinning room eating lunch when Charles Lindbergh walks in. Charles is wearing his coat and hat dripping with water from the storm outside.

Joe looks up and sees him about the same time as Charles spots Joe. Joe stands up and waves him over. Charles removes his coat and hat as he walks over to Joe.

JOE

Wow Slim what are you doing here?

They greet each other with a hug.

Charles and Joe sit down.

LINDY

I'm looking for you.

JOE

Hungry?

A waiter comes over and brings Charles a menu and a cup of coffee.

LINDY

Are you crazy? I thought I was crazy for that flight across the Atlantic, but what the hell are you thinking?

JOE

Whate'er you talking about?

LINDY

Flying to South America. Where are you going to land, in the treetops?

JOE

I've got a plan and I believe I can make this trip.

The waiter returns and takes Charles' order.

LINDY

Listen, I talked to a few friends  
that have been down there and there  
is no place to land in the jungle.

Joe looks rather beaten and depressed. He sips his coffee.

LINDY (CONT'D)

Got your maps handy?

JOE

Yes, here in my bag.

Joe reaches down next to him and pulls out his maps and charts  
from the small briefcase. He unfolds them on the table as  
Charles clears a spot.

LINDY

Follow this coastline and all there  
is, is steep cliffs and dense jungle.  
You can land down here but you don't  
have enough fuel to get there. I  
could do it in the Spirit but I  
wouldn't want to. I'd rather use a  
flying boat. It's safer.

Joe sadly looks over the map.

JOE

I was just sure I could do this, I  
gotta do this. So many people have  
invested in me. How can I go back  
and face them as a failure?

LINDY

What's worse, going back and telling  
them you need a flying boat or not  
going back at all. Now if you want  
to make this thing work we can go  
together and get all our resources  
to invest in float planes.

JOE

That's a great idea, if we team up  
then we would surely get the capital  
needed.

LINDY

Fairchild has built a new FC-2 model  
and they have floats for it. That  
has the Wright J-4 engine. More  
power and will fly a thousand miles.

The two continue discussing the new plans late into the evening.

FADE TO:

INT. DE ALBERTO LAVIN HOTEL - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 17

Joe sits quietly in the dinning room drinking his cup of coffee. The storm rages on outside.

Joe is writing a letter to his mother.

JOE VO (V.O.)

Dear Mother, Hope you and all the loved ones are doing Okay. I have been delayed here longer than expected, however I'm acting in accordance with the locals and not with the press agents. I am taking off later today or in the morning, weather permitting, for my airplane flight to Central America from Cuba. Your loving son, Joe.

Joe finishes his letter. He sits in silence torn between continuing his journey or returning to Chicago.

FADE TO:

EXT. HAVANA AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: DAY 18

Joe is stuffing his gear into the cockpit and checking over the airplane. The field is deserted. Joe pauses and looks over the area. Joe sits on the wing and stares off into the distance.

He rubs his head and reluctantly he readies his airplane for the next journey. He sets the switches and then pulls the prop. The faithful engine fires up and purrs smoothly. Joe reaches in and sets the throttle.

He pulls the wheel chokes and drops them into the over stuffed baggage area. Joe climbs in and revs up the engine taxiing his way out onto the muddy runway. He keeps adding power to keep from sinking into the mud and soon he is racing down and into the air.

CUT TO:

## P.O.V. AIRPLANE - CONTINUOUS

Joe sets a course South, traces it out on the map then checks his compass heading. He settles down for a long flight over the ocean.

He looks down as he passes over the Gulf of Batabano. Tears start to form in his eyes making it hard to see. He pulls his goggles up and wipes away the tears. Repositioning his goggles, Joe knows what he has to do.

He banks the airplane hard to the right and makes a course due North. Joe is going home, home to Chicago.

FADE TO:

## INT. COOK COUNTY AIRPORT - DAY

SUPER: OCTOBER 28, 1929

Josephine holding a baby, VERONICA (age 1), enters the hanger where Joe is working at his desk. She has a newspaper in her hand.

JOSEPHINE

(Worried) Joe, did you see today's paper?

Joe looks up and smiles at Veronica. Veronica reaches out for her daddy.

JOE

No, what's it say?

Joe stands up and takes Veronica from Josephine and holds her affectionately. Josephine opens the paper and reads Joe the headlines.

SUPER: News paper October 28, 1929 Headlines read "Billions lost in Stock Market Crash".

JOSEPHINE

It says that billions of dollars lost as the stock market crashes and people are making a run on the banks.

(beat)

What's that going to do to our savings Joe?

A wave of panic races over Joe's face. He hands Veronica back and takes the paper. Reading for himself, he is dumfounded. He drops back into his chair and puts his hand on his head.

JOE

It's not our savings I'm worried about. I was supposed to go on the flight from San Francisco to Hawaii next week. Now I'm sure with this that trip will be canceled.

The TELEPHONE on Joe's desk rings. Joe picks up the handset.

JOE (CONT'D)

Hello... Yes sir, I understand.

(beat)

Okay sir, good bye.

Joe hangs up the phone and stares at it blankly.

JOSEPHINE

Who was that?

JOE

Walter Dwyer.

JOSEPHINE

Well what did he say?

JOE

It's over... No funding... No trip.

Joe is deeply saddened by the news.

JOSEPHINE

What are we going to do now Joe? Are we going to be alright? You didn't put our money in that crazy stock market did you?

JOE

No, I never did put any in there. I got some money to keep us going for awhile.

(beat)

I'll figure out something don't worry.

FADE TO:

EXT. COOK COUNTY AIRPORT - MORNING

SUPER: FEBRUARY 21, 1930

The sun is peaking over the treetops on this early crisp day. A thick frost lays across the landscape. The trees are covered with a blanket of white fur over their naked branches.

The solitude is disturbed by the distant roar of an engine racing down the dusty country road as the MODEL "A" FORD makes its way into the parking area next to the old white shack.

JOE DONNELLAN (29) wearing a heavy SHEEP SKIN AVIATOR JACKET and matching CAP, climbs out of the car. His breath is heavy in the morning air and hangs on as long as it can before disappearing with the breeze.

Joe works the thick GLOVES off his hands and fiddles with the PADLOCK on the large doors of the building. He gets the lock off and pushes the doors open exposing a beautiful PARKS P1 BIPLANE. Canary yellow with black trim. The biplane is the new pride of Joe and his partner's flying club.

#### INSIDE THE HANGER

Joe walks around the plane checking everything over. He opens the cowling and inspects the engine, pulling up the dipstick he inspects the oil level. He then removes the gas cap and inspects the amount of fuel in the tank.

Joe climbs up on the wing and reaches in to the cockpit and pulls out a LOGBOOK for the airplane. He writes in the book some notes then replaces the book in its place.

Joe goes over to the desk area at the side of the room. He takes the COFFEE POT into the bathroom and washes it out. He returns to make a new pot of coffee.

While the coffee is brewing, Joe sits down at the EASEL and is working on plans for an airplane design, when his partner, GUS LINDQUIST (30's) of average height and weight, strolls in through the open hanger doors.

GUS

Good mornin Joe, you're here awful early.

Joe looks up from his drawing.

JOE

Hi Gus, I wanted to get some drawings finished before my student gets here.

(pause)

I got the coffee going.

Gus walks close to Joe and takes a look at the drawings.

GUS

That's really coming along.

(jokingly)

Think it'll fly?

Joe looks up with a big grin on his face.

JOE  
I'll let you test fly it to find  
out.

Gus laughs as he walks to the coffee pot.

CUT TO:

EXT. COOK COUNTY AIRPORT - DAY

The sun is up high and the air is clear, only a slight breeze is noticeable. A perfect day for a flying lesson.

Joe and Gus are pushing the biplane out in front of the hanger. Joe's mechanic, W.M. MANLY(45), a short stocky fellow with thinning hair and glasses, is walking around the plane puffing on his cigar.

GUS  
Who's the student today Joe?

JOE  
That fellow that was here last week,  
Richard King.

GUS  
He's kinda over-anxious, I'd be  
careful with him if I were you.

JOE  
Yea I know. He thinks he's already  
a pilot and he's only had three hours.  
He makes me nervous but I've had  
worse.

W.M. Manly is wiping off the wings with a cloth and inspecting all the wires between them when RICHARD KING(28) drives into the parking area in his CHEVROLET BOAT TAIL SPEEDSTER. He is dressed appropriately for the cold weather. The red curls of his hair are springing from under his cap.

Richard is shorter than the others and very hyper. He reverberates with excitement as he comes close to the plane.

RICHARD KING  
Good-day fellas! What a great day.

JOE  
Hi Richard, you ready to go?

RICHARD KING  
Yea, I can't wait.

GUS  
I can tell, you better be careful up there.

Richard walks around the plane inspecting it.

JOE  
OK Richard, let's see what you learned from last week.  
(pause)  
Gus, will you give the prop a spin for us?

GUS  
Sure thing Joe, just holler when you're ready.

Joe climbs into the rear seat cockpit of the plane and Richard climbs into the front. Joe checks the switches and primes the engine.

JOE  
Gus, give me a prime.

Gus pulls the prop through a couple of turns.

Joe turns on the master switch and gives Gus a thumbs up.

Gus gives the propeller a hard spin and the little engines coughs and spits then fires away. Joe adds a little throttle and the engine smooths out.

Gus pulls the wheel chocks from under the tires and signals to Joe that all is clear.

JOE (CONT'D)  
(loudly)  
OK Richard, let's taxi out to the runway!

Richard gives some more throttle from the dual controls, and the plane starts rolling along. He taxis the plane down between the buildings and then turns it towards the far end of the runway. As he taxis, he is making small turns in an "S" pattern so he can see around the front of the engine.

They taxi to the end of the runway and hold it there while they do the engine tests and finish letting the engine warm up. When they are ready, Richard taxis onto the end of the runway and gives the engine full throttle.

The engine revs up and they head down the strip picking up speed. The tail lifts up then the whole plane starts to lift off the ground.

In just a few moments the beautiful bird is airborne and gaining altitude at six hundred feet per minute.

The two climb high and stay in the pattern around the airport. As they make their way around to the downwind leg, Richard cuts the throttle back and trims out the elevator.

They glide along slowing and descending as they move into the base leg. As Richard banks the plane sharply it stalls and slips sideways.

In a panic, Richard grabs the stick tightly and freezes. Joe is fighting to recover the plane as it noses towards the ground barely two hundred feet below.

Gus and W.M. Manly watch intently as the plane dives behind the trees and buildings.

Joe, still fighting to recover as the ground is spinning and getting closer and closer. Richard locked, frozen in terror, still holding the stick firmly...

The yellow bi-plane crashes into the ground just past the treeline. Bursting into a large fireball, the sound is heard across the valley.

Gus and W.M. Manly race across the airfield to the wreck. The fire is too hot for them to reach the plane. The airplane is totally engulfed in flames, no survivors. Towns people start gathering but there is nothing they can do.

Some try carrying buckets of water but cannot get close enough to reach the flames and throw short. The crowd watches and the plane burns to a pile of ash.

FADE TO:

INT. SMALL APARTMENT - DAY

Gus knocks on the door to Joe and Josephine's apartment. Josephine opens the door to see Gus with tears streaming down his face. Josephine turns white and collapses in the floor.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH - MORNING

A very large crowd of people have stuffed themselves into the chapel for Joe's funeral. Joe's CASKET sits on the right of the PULPIT. A PRIEST gives the funeral services. Not a dry eye in the audience.

Joe's full family sits in the front rows listening intently as the priest preside over the service.

## PREIST

Amelia Earhart said about Courage;  
 Courage is the price that Life exacts  
 for granting peace. The soul that  
 knows it not Knows no release from  
 little things:

Knows not the livid loneliness of  
 fear, Nor mountain heights where  
 bitter joy can hear The sound of  
 wings.

How can life grant us boon of living,  
 compensate For dull gray ugliness  
 and pregnant hate Unless we dare The  
 soul's dominion? Each time we make  
 a choice, we pay with courage to  
 behold the restless day, And count  
 it fair.

(beat)

We all know that Joe was a very  
 courageous young man, with all he  
 had accomplished in his short life,  
 Joe lived the lives of many.

CUT TO:

EXT. GRAVEYARD - DAY

Cloudy with a heavy cold rain makes the burial site rather  
 dismal. The crowd has gathered around the site with umbrellas  
 opened wide and heads hung low.

As the pallbearers carry Joe's coffin and set it over the  
 open grave, an airplane flies low through the clouds over  
 head.

A wreath of beautiful flowers is dropped by the pilot, AL  
 JACOBS, a close friend. Al circles around for a second pass  
 and drops out a handful of roses then flies into the clouds  
 and disappears out of sight.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE END.