



HAMAKI

An original screenplay
by Randall Berger

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EXT. A JAPANESE GARDEN - DAY

A traditional, larger than usual Japanese garden. It is a bright, clear day.

A small Japanese boy, EIICHIRO TANABE, aged 7, yaps excitedly as he scampers around the garden, a crudely made tin aeroplane is his tiny outstretched hand.

A man in a Japanese naval officer's uniform, TANABE'S FATHER, stands nearby.

At the naval officer's feet, an elaborate toy gunboat drifts in the ornamental pond, ignored by all but the koi that swim beneath it.

The father is noticeably displeased by his son's fascination with the aeroplane while ignoring the gift of the boat.

TANABE'S MOTHER kneels on a wooden platform behind her husband, eyes downcast, sharing his shame.

The boy is making aeroplane noises as he runs past his father, making the plane go up and down. He pretends to strafe the gunboat.

The father's fury bursts forth. Everything slows down into a dreamlike slow motion. He shouts a command and the gunboat opens fire with all guns.

The tin airplane shatters in the boy's hand, taking some of his fingers. The boy's head turns towards his father, giving him a look of surprise and betrayal.

Another broadside from the gunboat takes the boy full on the chest, exploding his colourful child's kimono and throwing him backwards.

There is a look of satisfaction from the father as the screaming mother rushes to the dying boy. The mother's dream-distorted scream becomes the shrieking roar of an aeroplane engine.

INT. JAPANESE TRANSPORT PLANE - DAY

Tanabe, a young Japanese Naval Warrant Officer, wakes from his nightmare with a start, his face covered in sweat from trying to sleep in the cramped transport plane.

He looks around at the officers and enlisted men sitting sideways along the two sides of the transport plane, with webbing instead of windows adding to the gloomy atmosphere.

An older officer opposite Tanabe smiles knowingly. Tanabe wipes the sweat from his face and straightens his collar.

EXT. KENDARI AIRFIELD RUNWAY - DAY

The Japanese Naval Air Force transport plane skims over the jungle canopy as it comes in for a landing.

TITLE: Kendari Airfield, Japanese Occupied Dutch East Indies. February, 1942.

The humidity and steaming heat of the Equatorial jungle are oppressive, making everything shimmer.

The buzz of insects and birds replaces the sound of the plane's engines as it fades into the distance.

There is a puff of smoke and then a delayed screech from the tyres as the transport plane touches down in the distance.

EXT. KENDARI AIRFIELD FLIGHT LINE - DAY

The transport plane taxis to a stop facing gleaming rows of dozens of Mitsubishi G4-M1 Attack Bombers, the pride of the Japanese Imperial Naval Bomber Command.

The red ball of the *hinomaru* (Rising Sun) is everywhere.

The group of new recruits and officers being reassigned drop onto the tarmac from the transport plane.

The sweat immediately begins to pour from every pore. They line up and receive their assignments.

Tanabe is directed towards a small truck with four other officers. As he gets in, the truck sets out across the airfield. The other enlisted men set off at a trot on foot.

EXT. KENDARI AIRFIELD - DAY

Tanabe is driven across the air base.

He gawks at the remnants of the foreign allied forces who used Kendari until it fell three weeks previously.

Trappings of the previous occupants ... Dutch, British, American and Australian ... are strewn everywhere.

Wrecks of fighters caught on the ground, hulks of vehicles, portraits of monarchs and presidents, still dot the landscape or are in the process of being removed from the offices.

The vehicle drives past a bonfire of Dutch and British Royal portraits being stoked by Allied Prisoners Of War, still looking relatively fresh in these early days of the War.

EXT. HAMAKI CREW BARRACKS - DAY

Tanabe is dropped in front of a barracks hut. He alights and grabs his bag out of the back of the truck.

The truck with the other new arrivals revs its engine and departs immediately.

Tanabe straightens himself and opens the Barracks door.

INT. HAMAKI CREW BARRACKS - DAY

Tanabe enters the hut.

The HAMAKI CREW are at attention. The pilot, COMMANDER IKITA, a small, bitter looking man, is in the middle of addressing them.

COMMANDER IKITA
(In motivational tone)
... a holy cause. There is no
other power in Asia that can
match the Empire of Japan.

Tanabe snaps to attention, delivering his smartest
salute.

TANABE
Warrant Officer Tanabe,
reporting ... [as ordered].

COMMANDER IKITA
(screams furiously)
Silence!

Tanabe immediately drops to a rigid bow and holds it,
flushing with embarrassment.

COMMANDER IKITA (CONT'D)
For your destiny as warriors
of the Emperor to be assured,
your absolute loyalty,
obedience and obligation to
your superiors must be above
question.

Ikita looks pointedly at Tanabe, who has kept his
eyes averted.

COMMANDER IKITA (CONT'D)
You have no fear of danger or
death. If I decide to crash
our plane into the enemy as if
it were a weapon, you will
follow me without question.
If I take away your
parachutes, you will accept
this without question. I am
saving you from the
humiliation of surrender and
becoming a prisoner.
(MORE)

COMMANDER IKITA (CONT'D)

If I command you to die
covered in flames, your only
thought is that even as your
skin crackles and your eye
balls boil in your skull, your
soul will be aflame with the
spirit of the warrior! I will
kill any of you personally,
and expect the rest of you to
do the same in my stead, if
your spirit wanes.

He lets that sink in. He smiles and adopts a more
friendly manner.

COMMANDER IKITA (CONT'D)

News has just arrived that
Singapore has fallen ... two
days ago. "The Invincible
Fortress" ... Ha! We have swept
unchallenged throughout South-
east Asia.

He turns to Tanabe.

COMMANDER IKITA (CONT'D)

Now, who do we have here?

TANABE

Warrant Officer Eiichiro
Tanabe, reporting sir!

COMMANDER IKITA

Our new navigator and wireless
operator.

TANABE

Yes, sir.

COMMANDER IKITA

Well, at least you found own
your way here.

A nervous laugh from the crew.

COMMANDER IKITA (CONT'D)

Welcome to the crew of the
Keuba Hamaki. I am Lieutenant
Commander Ikita.

(MORE)

COMMANDER IKITA (CONT'D)

This is my Copilot and
Bombardier, Lieutenant Toshiru
Hironaka ... the Engineer Ensign
Arima ... Dorsal Gunner Petty
Officer Samaru ... and The Twins
... Ryuku and Ohnishi ... our
waist and tail gunners have
been friends almost since
their mothers' wombs. Isn't
that right, boys?

Embarrassed laughter. Each crew member gives a very
slight bow to Tanabe on introduction.

TANABE

Sir, I would ...

When the Captain is on a roll, he hates to be
interrupted.

COMMANDER IKITA

As part of the Imperial
Japanese Naval Air Corps, we
enjoy a better life. People
look up to us, not only
because we fly over their
heads. We are part of the
famous Takao Kokutai Air
Attack Squadron. When we were
stationed at Saigon, our
squadron sank the two British
battleships guarding
Singapore, only three days
after Japan's glorious
surprise attack on Pearl
Harbour! We are a very proud
unit. Can you assume the
honour and responsibility of
being part of such a brave
group?

TANABE

Yes, Sir!

COMMANDER IKITA

I shall be in my room. I
believe we are scheduled for
what answers for a bathhouse
here at 18.00?

He knows the answer and doesn't wait for a reply. The crew snap a bow which they hold as the Commander leaves the room.

The crew break ranks and circle Tanabe, giving him the once-over. Some shake his hand.

The Copilot, Hironaka, a handsome man in his 30s, gives him a warm handshake.

HIRONAKA

Our Commander gives an unforgettable first impression, don't you think? Your first assignment, Tanabe?

TANABE

Yes, Sir.

HIRONAKA

We've been together in Hamakis since before Saigon. I have been his copilot since China in '39.

TANABE

What happened to the last navigator?

Everyone goes very quiet.

HIRONAKA

Come on. It's time to eat.

INT. KENDARI OFFICERS' MESS HALL - DAY

Tanabe and Hironaka are in line together, being served. The food is typical Japanese basic ... rice, pickles, soup, fish.

HIRONAKA

The last navigator didn't buy what the Commander was selling.

TANABE

Do you ... Sir?

HIRONAKA

You ask questions like that?
Let's just say the last
navigator lost his way. And
you can drop the 'Sir' when
it's just us.

TANABE

Why is a Lieutenant Commander
still just flying a bomber ...
he should be a Squadron Leader
or Wing Commander, at least.

HIRONAKA

The last navigator wasn't the
first to question our beloved
Commander's beliefs. His
response can be deadly. The
Admiral doesn't take kindly to
having his pilots beat the
life out of their crewmen.
So, he's still driving a bus.

TANABE

I see ...

HIRONAKA

I used to be a strong follower
of Bushido. Two years in
China cured me ... Chungking,
Nanjing...

TANABE

And the others?

HIRONAKA

The Engineer, yes ... fanatical.
That part about the boiling
eyeballs? His favourite.
That one can't wait to get
into the real war.

INT. TANABE'S HOME IN JAPAN - 1941 - DAY

Tanabe and his father sit opposite each other, the
father in traditional Japanese dress, Tanabe in a
shiny new junior Naval Officer's uniform, with Air
Corps insignia.

CAPTAIN TANABE

There will be a global war soon. The winds are blowing that way. We have been preparing for fifty years.

TANABE

Yes, father ...

CAPTAIN TANABE

My father and his father were both naval officers. They fought the Russians and the Spanish. I now have my own command of a submarine group. You have shamed all of us by choosing to fly.

TANABE

I have still joined the Navy, as you wished.

CAPTAIN TANABE

It is not the same! There is no tradition, nothing ... no ships. Just airplanes! Deathtraps!

TANABE

Any more of a deathtrap than your submarines? When you were away at sea ... my whole childhood ... I'd watch the planes. I wanted to be up in them. Mother took me to ...

CAPTAIN TANABE

What?

A paper screen slides closed a fraction. There is a rustle of a kimono as the mother scurries away from where she was listening.

CAPTAIN TANABE (CONT'D)

I could have helped you. I have many friends. You know this.

TANABE
Like your father and
Grandfather helped you?

His father looks wounded by that comment.

TANABE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry. Please forgive ...

CAPTAIN TANABE
So disrespectful! You go
without my blessing. I will
not aid you in any way. Your
mother can ring the temple
bell that asks our ancestors
to forgive you for burying a
tradition. I will not.

TANABE
Father, I leave tomorrow for
my final ...

CAPTAIN TANABE
You leave now. Go ...

INT. KENDARI BASE BATH HOUSE - DAY

The Hamaki Crew enter the large communal bath house.

Once an officer's club and pool, it is now dotted
with deep, steaming hot tubs. Native women move about
continuously, replenishing the tubs with hot water.

The men sit on small wooden stools, lather up, scrub
each other's backs and their own bodies and rinse off
before entering the steaming water.

Sake is brought out. The heat of the water sends the
alcohol straight to their heads.

Everyone begins to relax. Even the Pilot seems to
warm a bit. Tanabe feels he is welcome in the crew.

HIRONAKA
So, Tanabe. Wife?

TANABE
No!

RYUKU
Girlfriend?

TANABE
Not really. We called it off.

ONISHI
Virgin!

TANABE
I have been to the naval air
academy, you know!

SAMARU
Those Kanagawa whores don't
count!

Another air crew is waiting their turn for that bath
and start caterwauling.

IKITA
I think our time is up,
gentlemen.

Everyone rises naked from the hot tub and grabs their
things, exchanging unpleasentries with the next crew
as they leave.

EXT. BOARDWALK ALONG FLIGHTLINE - EVENING

In undergarments, with towels over their shoulders or
around their waists, the Crew walk back to the
barracks from the bath house.

On the adjacent tarmac sit gleaming row after row of
their planes, the twin-engine Mitsubishi G4-M1 Medium
Attack Bomber.

Tanabe walks beside Hironaka in sandals, lap-laps and
towels. The crew stop and look admiringly at the
rows of planes. Hironaka points to one in the second
row.

HIRONAKA
That's ours, the "Keuba
Hamaki." Number 311.

Tanabe strides off the boardwalk and over to the plane. Hironaka follows while the rest of the crew continue on.

Tanabe admires the lines of plane. He runs his fingers along the taut metal skin as if it were flesh.

TANABE

They call them "Hamaki" because they look like cigars, right? Big cigars.

HIRONAKA

Right.

TANABE

That's not fair. They should have a bold name. Not because they look like cigars.

HIRONAKA

That's not the only reason. Those pinheads at Mitsubishi who designed these things wanted to add range, so they didn't put any armament on the fuel tanks. So, these cigars are very easy to light ... if you get my meaning.

TANABE

Now you're kidding, right?

HIRONAKA

I wish I was.

Tanabe blanches.

HIRONAKA (CONT'D)

Anyway, it's a better name than the enemy gives them ... they give all of our planes women's names. To them, this is a "Betty."

Hironaka and Tanabe head off back to the barracks in higher spirits.

HIRONAKA (CONT'D)

So what else do they look like
... Turds? Dicks? Do you want
to go to war in a big flying
dick?

TANABE

Better than in a plane called
Betty ...

INT. HAMAKI BARRACKS - EVENING

After the bath and the sake, the Crew are in a good
mood.

They stand around in the hallway in various stages of
dressing, the doors to their cubicles open.

HIRONAKA

Gentlemen, I think we should
take our newest crew member
for his "pre-flight
conditioning."

TANABE

What's this ... Getting drunk?
Drunker? Some initiation,
right? Be serious ...

HIRONAKA

(Deadly serious)
I've never been more serious
in my life.

TANABE

OK ... sorry.

Ikita comes out of his room into the hallway.
Everyone snaps to attention.

IKITA

Gentleman, relax. If you are
planning to go anywhere this
evening, be in early.
Tomorrow, a mission.

Happy news. Everyone shows raised spirits.

HIRONAKA

Sir, we are taking Tanabe for
his pre-flight conditioning.

IKITA

(Serious)

Oh, yes ... very important.
Carry on. Be in early.

He returns to his room and shuts the door.

EXT. CREW BARRACKS - EVENING

The crew, now dressed in light tropical khakis, climb into the back of an open truck with benches along the sides. Hironaka pounds on the roof and the enlisted man driver takes off.

EXT. ROAD TO TOWNSHIP OF KENDARI - EVENING

The Hamaki Crew ride in the back of the open truck through the town of Kendari.

The breeze offers some relief to the tropical heat and humidity and most of them turn their faces into it.

Tanabe plays the tourist, gawking at everything.

Lush tropical greenery whips past the truck as they drive by. Pigs and chickens scurry out of the road. Half-clad children run about as their mothers prepare dinner in open kitchens.

There is little sign of resistance to occupation or animosity towards the current occupiers amongst the population. One colonial regime is like another.

A chain gang of Allied prisoners are digging beside the road. They bow as do their guards as the elite naval air crew passes.

One POW who doesn't bow low enough or fast enough is set upon and beaten by his guards.

EXT. SHELL OIL BUILDING - EVENING

The truck with the HAMAKI CREW comes to a stop in front of a big, two storey Dutch colonial-style building with big verandas all around.

While it is now draped in Japanese flags, the facade declares it is an administration of Royal Dutch Shell Oil.

INT. SHELL OIL BUILDING - EVENING

They enter the grand entrance to find soldiers lined up along a hallway. Heads turn towards the crew as they enter.

Samaru goes up and whispers to the uniformed attendant at reception. There is a sense of anticipation.

TANABE

What is this place? You said conditioning. Is it a hospital or something?

EXT. TANABE HOUSE IN TOKYO 1939 - DAY

Tanabe is walking in the garden with a young girl, Ukiko. She is in traditional kimono dress, he in a Naval cadet's uniform.

TANABE

... really doesn't matter, does it? It's your parents and my parents who wish to marry each other. They are just using us as the means to an end. You don't say much, do you?

UKIKO

What do you want me to say?

TANABE

There, you see? It starts already. Have your own mind! Say what you feel!

UKIKO

Do you really wish me to say
what I feel?

TANABE

I can see I'm not going to get
very far.

UKIKO

How far do you wish to go?

TANABE

Huh?

Ukiko turns her back to him. She looks to make sure they can't be seen from the house. Loosening her kimono belt, she bares the nape of her neck and shoulders to him.

Coming close behind her, he runs his nose and lips within an inch of her skin up and down her neck, drinking in the warmth and scent.

He suddenly stops and moves away.

TANABE (CONT'D)

No, I don't think so. Ukiko,
you can do better than me.

UKIKO

Do I want to do better than
you?

INT. TANABE'S HOUSE - DAY

Tanabe and Ukiko enter the room where both of their parents are sitting. Lots of bowing.

CAPTAIN TANABE

So, have you decided anything?

TANABE

Yes, Sir. I don't want to get
married. I have applied for a
transfer from the academy to
the Naval Air College.

The four adults are shocked. The mothers immediately scurry and bow out of the room.

CAPTAIN TANABE

That was not what was expected
of you. You know my feelings
...

TANABE

And you know mine.

Tanabe bows deeply to Ukiko's father.

TANABE (CONT'D)

I am sorry, sir. I am
certainly not the right
husband for your beautiful
daughter, Ukiko.

INT. SHELL OIL BUILDING - EVENING

The line has advanced and the crew are further down
the hall.

Tanabe is apprehensive. No one seems to come out.
Finally, the names of the crew are called out.

TANABE

It is a VD check, isn't it?
Small arms inspection ... Right?

HIRONAKA

Yes, that's it. You guessed
it. Someone here wants to
closely inspect your joy
stick.

The crew go to the desk and each receive flat wooden
pieces with Japanese characters on them. They head
up the stairs.

INT. UPSTAIRS, SHELL OIL BUILDING - NIGHT

They enter a long, dimly lit hall with frosted glass
office cubicles along either side.

This is a daytime building and the lights try hard to
penetrate the gloom.

Odd noises and murmurs come from all around, mingling with the din of insects that dominate the tropical night.

The crew go down the hall. The frosted glass of the doors have Japanese characters painted over the carefully gold-gilt lettered names and positions of the previous occupants, the Shell administration types.

As each crew member comes to the appropriate door, they enter. Hironaka looks seriously at Tanabe and starts to break into a grin.

HIRONAKA

Good Luck.

The others remaining find it hard to keep a straight face.

Tanabe re-checks his wooden piece against the characters on the door and tentatively enters into a dimly lit room.

INT. THE COMFORT ROOM - NIGHT

A slightly built BLONDE GIRL is running water at a sink in the far corner, her back to the door. She is framed by the light cast from the doorway.

The girl is dressed in a short kimono with gay Japanese characters on it. Her neck and shoulders are exposed beneath the short blond hair. A fan slowly turns in the ceiling.

When she hears Tanabe enter, she spins and bows deeply, causing the robe to gape. She is naked and was washing her genitals. There are bruises evident ... some old, some new. She may be in her late teens or early 20s.

She bows quickly and blurts out a few badly learned phrases in heavily Dutch-accented Japanese.

GIITTA

(In Japanese with subtitles)

Honourable sir! It is my
utmost pleasure to make myself
available for your comfort.

Tanabe is taken aback, failing to fully comprehend her speech or the situation.

The girl mechanically lets the robe drop from her shoulders and gets on the bed, assuming the favoured "Lobster" position - head down, legs wide and rear slightly elevated to the man.

TANABE

You ... you are ... a comfort woman?

The realisation causes Tanabe to become visibly aroused in spite of himself.

His eyes dart around the walls at the classic Japanese pornographic prints plastered everywhere.

GIITTA

(In Dutch with English subtitles)

Please? Why do you wait? You must do it or else ...

Giitta begins to whimper like the child she almost is.

GIITTA (CONT'D)

Please! I will be beaten. They have killed others. Oh, Gott! Please, just do it. Get it over with. It is only by doing this will they feed my mother and little sister.

She grabs at him and is grotesquely amorous. He tries to push her away.

Tanabe's eyes dart from one lurid pornographic scene to the next. He finds his reason leaves him as the girl unbuttons his trousers and mouths him.

Overtaken by lust, Tanabe roughly flips her over and mounts her from behind. She whimpers a litany of appeals to "Gott" and her "Mütter."

Tanabe staggers away immediately after he grunts his wide-eyed orgasm.

The girl leaps from the bed and tearfully stammers out the parrot rote-learned Japanese phrases about his prowess and virility and she bows low.

GIITTA (CONT'D)
(Japanese with English
subtitles)

Oh, honourable sir. Your manhood has given me complete pleasure. I only hope I have been a worthy receptacle of your essence.

TANABE

Thank you ... I ...

Tanabe darts out the door, shutting it behind him.

INT. SHELL OIL BUILDING - NIGHT

Tanabe follows the exit signs which take him down the back stairs. A uniformed attendant waits at the bottom.

ATTENDANT

Your room tag, please. You can put away your "weapon" now.

The attendant points out that Tanabe's trousers are still unbuttoned.

The Attendant then passes the wooden piece he has collected through to the front desk where they are immediately handed out to other waiting soldiers and airmen.

EXT. SHELL OIL BUILDING - NIGHT

The others of the Hamaki Crew gradually join Tanabe in the truck, patting him on the back and saying their congratulations. There is much laughter and joking.

HIRONAKA

Some VD check, huh? Did you pass?

The Crew all laugh at the ruse. Tanabe grins in spite of himself. The truck starts up and heads back to Kendari Airfield.

EXT. THE CREW BARRACKS - NIGHT

The Crew alight from the truck, buoyed by their freshly sown oats and the prospect of a mission in the morning.

Tanabe is pensive.

HIRONAKA

What's the matter?

TANABE

She was Dutch, I think.

HIRONAKA

So what, so was mine. Go to bed.

Tanabe enters the barracks.

Hironaka turns and sees an oddly shaped silhouette lumbering around the end of the barracks. He goes to investigate.

He turns the corner and finds the Pilot with seven parachute packs strung over both arms, fumbling for the latch to his door.

Hironaka's eyes widen momentarily and his jaw sets, but he remains silent.

IKITA

You will say nothing. You will do nothing. That is my order. My crew will not suffer the disgrace of surviving and becoming prisoners. I'm not the only one. If we do not complete our mission, so be it.

INT. TANABE HOUSE GARDEN - NIGHT

Tanabe is in the garden house. UKIKO has her back to him and has released her kimono, exposing her back. He grabs her and drives his mouth into the nape of her neck lustily.

She turns. It is Giitta, the Dutch comfort woman. She smiles coyly. Tanabe looks shocked and disgusted and runs away.

Suddenly, he is drowning and sees his father's disapproving face starring back at him through the water.

The water becomes flames and his father's face begins to blister and boil.

Tanabe is in the flames inside a burning plane, plummeting out of control.

INT. THE CREW BARRACKS - NIGHT

Tanabe bolts up on his tatami mat with a fright, his body covered in both the sweat of the tropics and of his nightmare.

He whips away the mosquito net and goes to a pan of water on the night stand, splashing it on his face. He rises to look at the reflection of his anguished face in a mirror.

INT. THE BARRACKS - DAWN

Even in the sweltering humidity of pre-dawn, the Crew must don their heavy clothing in preparation for the cold of high altitude.

Food has been brought to the barracks. They have breakfast together ... Rice, pickles, tea.

There is little talk, not so much in anticipation of the mornings activities, but out of calm confidence.

INT. KENDARI BRIEFING ROOM - DAWN - DAY 2

The pilots, copilots and navigators of the seven-man Hamaki flight crews sit in rows in a theatre awaiting the briefing.

Flag-draped portraits of the Dutch Royal family still hang over the stage.

Dressed for high altitude, the airmen swelter, tugging at their leather helmets and sheepskin flight jackets.

Tanabe and Hironaka sit together. The Pilot sits a short distance away, ignoring them.

TANABE

Should I take notes?

HIRONAKA

Relax. Out of fifty-odd planes, someone will know the way.

TANABE

I feel I have to go to the toilet.

HIRONAKA

Everybody does. Forget it.

The room rises as one and snaps to attention as the BRIEFING OFFICER and his aide take the stage. The briefing officer is cool, confident, smiling, his manner more evangelical than military.

BRIEFING OFFICER

Gentlemen, today we attack the English colony of Australia!

A murmur of excitement goes through the assembled crews like a wave.

BRIEFING OFFICER (CONT'D)

Tomorrow, the fleet of the Hero of Pearl Harbour, Admiral Yamaguchi, will sweep down upon the Portuguese colony of Timor.

(MORE)

BRIEFING OFFICER (CONT'D)

To help clear the air for them, we will disable the pitiful Allied forces based at the Port of Darwin in Australia. Two hours before you arrive, at ten hundred hours, a wave of one hundred fighters and dive bombers from the fleet will attack the city and the airfield. Many of these are the same crews who attacked Pearl Harbour 12 weeks ago.

He continues underneath following dialogue between Tanabe and Hironaka.

BRIEFING OFFICER (CONT'D)

Fifty-four medium bombers from this base will join the second wave of dive bombers from the Carrier Nagoya and strike Darwin at 12 midday.

TANABE

This is it!

HIRONAKA

Huh?

TANABE

The Real War!

BRIEFING OFFICER

We are confident there will be little resistance. As we expect nothing to be flying after the first wave, no wasting fighter escorts on you! You are amongst the first to attack the mainland of Australia. Don't do too much damage ... some of us may have farms there soon!

Another wave of nervous laughter is released.

The briefing officer pulls down a roller-blind map of the northern coast of Australia, showing Darwin, the road south and little else. Apart from the few details along the coast, the map is noticeably blank.

ANOTHER PILOT

Excuse me, sir ... why isn't there anything on the map?

BRIEFING OFFICER

Because there isn't anything there!

More laughter from the crews, a little more relaxed. He brings them immediately down to earth.

BRIEFING OFFICER (CONT'D)

Silence! You think I'm kidding? Go down in the middle of that and you might as well be on the moon!

Continues under the following exchange between Hironaka and Tanabe.

BRIEFING OFFICER (CONT'D)

You will approach from the north-east, passing over the aerodrome at 12,000 feet. You will drop your loads across the city and airfield along this line. The dive bombers will take care of any ships still left floating in the harbour. You will come about to starboard and return from the south west.

HIRONAKA

Can it really be that empty?

TANABE

My navigation instructor at the Imperial Naval Air Academy said that until just a few years ago, Australia had all their maps printed in Japan. If that's one of them, that's really what's out there.

HIRONAKA

Shit. That's over 2,000 kilometres across! Maybe you'd better take notes after all.

BRIEFING OFFICER (CONT'D)

The picket submarines will remain on patrol 100 miles either side of Darwin and around Melville Island for five days from today. If any downed aircrews make it to the coast, keep a small signal fire going, visible only from the sea. A white flare will be fired followed by red. Good luck!

Tanabe shifts uneasily at the mention of submarines.

The crews snap to attention as the officer and his aide leave the stage.

EXT. JAPANESE AIRCRAFT CARRIER - 8.30AM

Japanese fighters and dive bombers take off from aircraft carriers.

TITLE: Admiral Yamaguchi's fleet, Timor Sea - The First Wave launches

EXT. KENDARI FLIGHT LINE - DAWN

Tanabe and his crew are driven to their plane in a small open truck.

There is a great sense of anticipation with Tanabe as the truck travels down the line of aircraft.

Air crews continue to load bombs and prepare the Hamaki bombers.

On the tarmac, the ritual blessings and acknowledgment of the divine rule of the Emperor are being carried out at each aircraft.

A small table covered with a white cloth is carried by privates down the line of waiting bombers and crews, followed by the commanding officers. It stops in front of each plane and the honours are repeated.

Tanabe and the crew drive past the ceremony and stop at a plane two down the line.

The crews fidgets at attention in the sweltering heat. Their fleece-lined flight helmets are turned up at the ears, making them look like Tibetan Sherpas.

The air crews stand in front of each plane at attention, scarves with slogans around their necks or tucked in their flight jackets.

Cups of sake are poured, toasts made, banzais shouted and the crews leap aboard their planes as the table and procession moves on to the next crew.

At last, Tanabe arrives at the Keuba Hamaki, #721-311.

The truck drives up to the left hand side near the tail. The circular hatch is open, symmetrically within the large red *hinomaru* (Rising Sun).

The Crew jump out of the truck, some of them jovial, others reflective, some indifferent to the occasion. Ikita struts slowly about.

EXT. BENEATH THE 721-311 - MORNING

The ceremonial entourage reaches Tanabe's plane. Tanabe and the Crew stand at attention beneath the nose, Ikita in front and the other six in line behind.

As the minions set up the table and a portable gramophone begins to blare out the Japanese National Anthem, the ADMIRAL addresses the crew.

ADMIRAL

Men, you have a most important mission to perform. The people you obliterate today are insignificant to our destiny.

(MORE)

ADMIRAL (CONT'D)

I pour you all a drink of sake
and wish you well. You are
the sword of the God Emperor.
Cut deep. Banzai!

The Crew echo his three Banzais, raising their arms each time. They all step forward and drink the ceremonial thimbleful of sake.

The Admiral has a private word with the Pilot and nods towards Tanabe.

ADMIRAL (CONT'D)

Ikita ... take care of that one.
His family have a long history
with the Imperial navy. Let's
keep it that way.

The Admiral comes right up to Tanabe, looks him straight in the eye and whispers sarcastically.

ADMIRAL (CONT'D)

You should have obeyed your
father. I hope nobody lights
up your cigar today, Tanabe.

The first bombers down the line begin to warm their engines as the crew of the "Keuba Hamaki" leap aboard their plane.

More "Banzais" are heard as the entourage has moved to the next crew in line.

INT. INSIDE THE 721-311 - MORNING

Tanabe takes his position behind and below the flight deck. He flicks on the radio and puts on his headset. He removes a chart and then stows his map case beside the wireless. He keys transmit.

TANABE

Uh ... 311 ready to taxi ...

The rest of the Hamaki Crew each prepare for take off and the flight ahead.

Each has his own way of reflecting on the challenge ahead: Looking at photos of family and girlfriends, wishing comrades the best, brooding.

They taxi to the runway and join the 54 departing Hamaki planes.

EXT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

The sun beats down on the wide, low wooden building, both home and office for the local constabulary.

The tiny town of Pine Creek is dotted along the wide, dusty road into the distance.

INT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

RUSSELL HAWKINS sits in his sparse office. He is the local chief constable, though his opened neck, sweat stained khaki uniform belays his status.

A ceiling fan gently stirs the steaming summer air.

GLYNIS O'REILLY sits opposite him, weatherworn, in her early 40s, still very attractive though dressed entirely in men's clothes. She rolls a cool glass of water across her forehead.

GLYNIS

I've only got the three young blackfellas left to work the place now. Everyone else has signed up or headed south. Much as they need beef, I don't see how I can do a muster this year.

HAWKINS

Have you heard from Matthew?

GLYNIS

All I know is he's somewhere in North Africa. Nothing for two months. I thought they were going to pull them back to Australia.

She downs the remainder of the tall glass of water.

GLYNIS (CONT'D)

I'll be back in a few days to pick up the stuff I ordered and the mail. Maybe there'll be something then.

HAWKINS

I'll see you then.

GLYNIS

You bet.

Hawkins stands as she leaves the office.

A high powered motor cycle is heard departing outside.

A cooler looking young Aboriginal Constable, JIMMY, brings in a steaming enamelled tin mug of tea and an official looking parcel.

JIMMY

Rider just brought this from Darwin. Here's your morning tea.

HAWKINS

Ta.

Hawkins takes a pull on the hot mug, puts it down and then unceremoniously cuts open the parcel with a huge knife.

He removes the official looking document and starts to read as he raises the mug again. He freezes midway.

HAWKINS (CONT'D)

What the fuck?

His assistant calls through the open door.

JIMMY (V.O.)

Boss?

HAWKINS

Jimmy, listen to this ... "War Department Melbourne, 12 Feb 42. Highly Confidential. Priority.

(MORE)

HAWKINS (CONT'D)

To All Chief Constables and
above ..." If you talk, mate,
I'll have to kill you.

The Constable enters through the door from the outer
office.

JIMMY

My lips are healed, Boss.

HAWKINS

" ... In the event of enemy
invasion, all measures are to
be taken immediately to
prevent your local aboriginal
population from coming in
contact in any manner
whatsoever with the invading
armed forces, up to and
including the total
elimination of said aboriginal
population by whatever means
necessary."

JIMMY

Fuck me ...

HAWKINS

So, if the Japs show up on our
doorstep, first thing we do is
shoot all the Abos? Sorry,
mate, it looks like I'm going
to have to kill you anyway.
Get this asshole on the
blower, will ya?

The Constable takes the letter and exits into the
outer office. He cranks up the phone and waits for
the operator to respond.

HAWKINS (CONT'D)

And ask him while we're out
shooting youse bloody 'Boongs,
what are we supposed to do
about the fucking Japs!

INT. AUSTRALIAN ARMY BARRACKS, DARWIN - MORNING

A bunch of Australian soldiers lay around, some smoking, some reading.

PRIVATE SYMONS is a hard arse, muscle bound and scared from scores of bar room punch ups. He is playing cards with another private, DONALDSON. Symons chucks down his cards in frustration.

SYMONS

This is boring as fucking bat shit.

DONALDSON

Glad I'm not in fucking Singapore, that's all I've got to say.

SYMONS

My brother's in fucking Singapore.

An young Australian officer, Lieutenant Dixon, comes into the room. The soldiers snap to attention.

DIXON

At ease, lads. We still don't have any orders. We'll just have to sit tight until someone down in Melbourne decides what to do with us.

DONALDSON

Pardon me, sir. We only have our kit. No weapons.

DIXON

We're not in a war zone yet, soldier. You know the drill.

SYMONS

The Septics have guns ... sir.

DIXON

Yes, well, the Americans do tend to do things differently, don't they.

SYMONS

Can't we even go into town,
sir? We're going a bit troppo
stuck in the barracks.

DIXON

No, I think not. We may need
to get a hold of you quickly.

DONALDSON

What do we do if the Japs hit
us, sir?

DIXON

Well, lads, I guess we just
head south, wouldn't you say?
There's a lot of Australia
between us and where the
people start, what? As you
were.

The Officer taps his brim with his stick and leaves.

SYMONS

That's bullshit.

EXT. MELVILLE ISLAND MISSION - MORNING

The bustling Aboriginal mission station on Melville
Island goes about its morning business.

FATHER MICHAEL is purposefully crossing a square when
his attention is drawn skyward by the noise of
planes.

He turns his head this way and that as he mentally
counts the air armada. He then dashes to the radio
shack.

INT. MELVILLE ISLAND MISSION RADIO SHACK - MORNING

Father Michael enters hurriedly and interrupts a
group doing a radio class. He is mumbling the tally
to himself.

FATHER MICHAEL

I'm sorry. Mr. Morse will
have to wait.

(MORE)

FATHER MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Dit dit dit, dash, dash, dash,
dit, dit, dit ... I have an SOS
to send. Off you go, children
...

The class gather their things and leave. Father Michael quickly re-dials the frequency on the massive short wave set.

FATHER MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Darwin Base, Melville Mission,
emergency, over.

MALE RADIO VOICE

Melville, Darwin ... What can we
do for you, Father?

FATHER MICHAEL

I have just spotted a sizeable
group of aircraft headed south
west. Fifty to sixty fighters
and dive bombers. Repeat,
Five-Oh to Six-Oh aircraft.
Undeniably Japanese. Over.

MALE RADIO VOICE

Now, Father ... are you sure?
We've got a lot of US planes
being ferried down from the
north.

FATHER MICHAEL

Sorry, Darwin. I could see
the red spot as sure as ...

The mission is suddenly strafed from the air and the father dives under the bench, taking the mic with him.

FATHER MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Is that proof enough for you,
Darwin Base? We are under
attack. I repeat, we are
under attack and you're next.
Melville out!

EXT. DARWIN AIRFIELD CONTROL TOWER - 9.50AM

A jeep pulls up and a young Australian soldier, the MALE RADIO OPERATOR, jumps out, running into the control tower and up the stairs

INT. DARWIN AIRFIELD CONTROL TOWER - 9.50AM

The young Australian radio operator comes in from the radio room.

RADIO OPERATOR

Sir, Melville Island says they have spotted a massive air attack coming in from the north east. They came under attack as they signed off.

The FLIGHT OFFICER picks up binoculars and looks north east.

FLIGHT OFFICER

Something's coming in. Bit of a ways out. Could be Yanks. Was he sure they were Japanese? We have no other reports.

RADIO MAN

Father Michael isn't a coast watcher, but he knows his planes. He said they were shooting.

FLIGHT OFFICER

OK, we'll take a chance. We can use the drill. Sound general quarters.

Another OFFICER closes a circuit and sirens begin to wail.

INT. P&O FORWARDING OFFICE, DARWIN - DAY

SUPER: Thursday, February 19, 1942 9.58am - The First Wave

It is an absolutely stinking hot and humid Darwin morning.

FRANK CHARLES is a forwarding agent. He sits, already a sweaty mess in his shirt, tie and braces by 10.00am.

His wife, HELEN enters followed by their five year-old daughter SARAH who bounds into the room. Helen offers an aloof greeting to the secretary.

HELEN

Margaret.

SECRETARY

Good Morning, Mrs. Charles

Sarah rushes into her father's arms, who resigns himself to a hug in this heat.

SARAH

Daddy!

FRANK

It's only been since breakfast, pet.

HELEN

Frank, can I have another 10 bob. I need a few things.

FRANK

Christ, Helen, what do you think I am ...(Made of money)?

HELEN

Don't swear, Frank.

Sarah is looking out the open windows through the venetians as we realise that droning sound in the background is getting louder.

SARAH

Daddy, look ... Airplanes!

FRANK

Probably more Yanks.

The distant crump-crump sound of falling bombs is heard, like giant footfalls approaching. Frank approaches the window.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What in Christ's name is that?

HELEN

Frank, I told you ... [not to swear] ...

Suddenly, the venetians are blown inwards with the concussion of a near miss, throwing Frank, Sarah and Helen backwards into the office.

EXT. DARWIN AIRFIELD - 9.55AM

Australian and US airmen pile out of their respective barracks, hastily pulling on flight suits and some even basic clothes.

Ground crews start to prepare the RAAF Hudsons and the US Kitty Hawks and PBYS.

It is pandemonium as the Japanese fighters approach.

Two US Kitty Hawks manage to get off the ground. One is shot down immediately and arches into the ground at the end of the runway.

The other has three fighters on its tail as it leaves the ground and doesn't make it very far either.

The remaining planes are destroyed on the ground, much as they were at Pearl Harbour.

EXT. FORWARDING OFFICE, DARWIN - DAY

Frank comes bolting out of the door of the office, Sarah in his arms and Helen following closely behind. The secretary Margaret follows, along with others working in the building.

Shocked people are running everywhere or staring disbelieving at the terror falling from the sky.

In the distance, dive bombers are scoring hits along the docks and in the harbour. The bombs are falling closer.

Frank tears open the right-hand driver's door of his soft top Austin Seven, tossing Sarah over the seat into the back as his wife piles into the passenger side.

FRANK

Get down. Below the glass.

He starts the car, slams it into gear and rabbit hops away as fast as the little car will go.

As they clear the area, the wooden P&O Forwarding Office is splintered into a million bits by a bomb.

EXT. AUSTRALIAN ARMY BARRACKS - 9.58AM

Symons, Donaldson and the other soldiers come tumbling out of the barracks. Bombs are falling all around.

SYMONS

Holy Shit!

DONALDSON

Let's get out of here.

SYMONS

If I'm heading South, I ain't
fucking walking, that's for
sure!

Symons and Donaldson dash for a nearby truck, followed by the other Australian soldiers. They get it started and take off.

EXT. DARWIN G.P.O. DAY

People caught on the street rush towards the sturdiest looking structure still standing, the Darwin G.P.O.

Frank Charles' Austin Seven careens down the street past the G.P.O. and heads out of town.

INT. DARWIN G.P.O. - DAY

Inside the G.P.O., people scramble to protect themselves under tables and in corners.

A little girl begins to cry. A chorus of cries rises as the sounds of the carpet bombing comes closer.

EXT. DARWIN G.P.O. - DAY

A direct hit completely obliterates the Darwin G.P.O.

Across the square, a flak battery tries to fling their shells up to 12,000 feet where the Hamaki are cruising.

EXT. MONTAGE: DARWIN HARBOUR - 10.00AM

A fishing trawler tries desperately to make it out to sea, but is blasted to the waterline at the harbour entrance.

The USS Percey, a destroyer, is itself destroyed by several dive bombers.

A cargo ship is tied up at the Main Dock. Its deck is loaded with distinctive sea mines, depth charges and crates marked "High Explosive." This takes a direct hit and devastates the entire dock side area.

EXT. AERIAL: SMOKING RUINS OF DARWIN - 10.20AM

As the first wave of Japanese bombers and fighters depart, Darwin burns. Bells and sirens can be heard everywhere.

Ships continue to explode and burn in the harbour. An enormous cloud of black smoke rises above the harbour into the sky.

Cries for help are heard as people emerge from the ruins.

EXT. DARWIN HOTEL RUINS - 10.30AM

Lieutenant Dixon is supervising a group of soldiers and able-bodied civilians pulling people from the ruins of a pub.

When he turns, he looks down the street and sees TWO MEN stepping from a shop with hands full of wrist watches and a silver salver.

He draws his service revolver and starts to run.

DIXON

Stop! You men, stop!

He fires into the air. They look at him and smirk defiantly, one giving the two fingered salute before taking off in the opposite direction.

Dixon is stopped dead in his tracks by the audacity of the boldfaced looters.

INT. THE 721-311 - DAY

There is little chatter as they fly 700 miles across the Timor Sea from the Celebes to Darwin.

At 266mph, it takes them around 2 and a half hours.

Out of the windows, the 53 other Hamaki planes can be seen flying in formation.

EXT. THE HAMAKI ARMADA - DAY

In the distance to one side, the returning first wave of bombers and fighters is sighted flying northward in formation after having spent 20 deadly minutes over Darwin.

There is much dipping of wings and cheering.

The resulting column of smoke from burning fuel and the devastated harbour can be seen from a hundred miles away as the planes approach.

EXT. MELVILLE ISLAND MISSION - DAY

Father Michael is attending some of the wounded on the veranda of the mission clinic when he once again hears the drone of planes approaching.

INT. MELVILLE ISLAND RADIO SHACK - DAY

Father Michael tunes in the radio once again.

FATHER MICHAEL
Darwin Base, Melville Island,
come in, over.

MALE RADIO VOICE
Darwin Base ... they got us,
Father. They got us good.
Thanks for your warning,
Father, but there were just
too many. Over.

FATHER MICHAEL
They're coming again. I count
fifty plus twin engine
aircraft at high altitude.
I'm sorry, Darwin. Over.

MALE RADIO VOICE
Fifty bombers, Melville?
There's nothing left! Over.

FATHER MICHAEL
Good luck, Darwin. I will
pray for you. Melville out.

EXT. THE DRIVEWAY OF FRANK CHARLES' HOUSE DAY

Frank and Helen are bundling some hastily packed bags
into their car.

Sarah stands watching the frenzy in a daze. She has
a nasty cut over one eye that has a bit of gauze
slapped on.

FRANK
Quick ... into the car. We've
got to get out of town.

HELEN
Sarah, honey, hurry. Into the
car.

Sarah doesn't stir, so Frank grabs her under one arm
in the same fashion as the valise under his other.

He tosses both into the back seat and jumps behind
the wheel.

Frank mumbles a quick prayer as he presses the starter button.

EXT. DARWIN RESIDENTIAL STREET - 11.50AM

Frank Charles and his family head back towards town and the road south in the Austin Seven.

They turn into a somewhat affluent street and pass an large Army truck backed up at a partially bombed-out house.

Private Symons exits the house carrying an armful stuff: two bottles of spirits, a box of cigars and a mantle piece clock.

HELEN

That's the Pierce's, isn't it?

FRANK

And that isn't Tom Pierce.

HELEN

Frank, we ... [have to stop]

FRANK

We don't want to get involved,
Helen.

The Austin Seven putt-putts away post haste.

Symons watches it go as he chucks his stuff into the truck cabin and goes back to the house. Other soldiers are bringing out food and valuables.

Donaldson is standing looking down, forlorn. Symons mistakes this for guilt.

SYMONS

Every man for his fucking
self, mate.

DONALDSON

No. She's trapped.

Symons follows his gaze and sees a small aboriginal girl in a maid's outfit trapped under a collapsed beam. She returns their gaze defiantly.

SYMONS

She can save her own black
arse, mate.

The soldiers go back to their looting.

INT. COLONEL MYERS' OFFICE - 11.55AM

COLONEL MYERS is a 40 something Australian army
administrator dropped in the thick of it. His office
is a mess and there is glass everywhere.

Sirens can be heard through the empty windows. There
is a firm rap on the door.

COLONEL MYERS

Don't bother knocking. Nobody
else does.

Lieutenant Dixon, looking worse for wear, but keeping
up appearances, enters briskly and does the full
salute.

DIXON

Lieutenant Kenneth Dixon
reporting, Sir. Signal Corps.
I'm afraid I have no unit.

COLONEL MYERS

Who does, Lieutenant?

DIXON

I was working with a rescue
group, but I thought it best I
report to someone.

COLONEL MYERS

It'll be a while before we
sort this out. You won't be
missed.

DIXON

I'm sorry, sir?

COLONEL MYERS

Nothing, Dixon. I'm happy for
your help. What can you
report?

DIXON

There are a lot of injured and quite a lot of dead. I don't envy them at the base hospital.

COLONEL MYERS

This much I know.

DIXON

People are trying to leave the city by whatever means possible. The exodus is going to get worse once the initial shock wears off. They won't go the usual way by coastal steamer ... to much risk. I assume they will try the train as far as Katherine. Or car. Anything.

COLONEL MYERS

Take a squad and patrol the train station. Any sign of panic, or worse profiteering, you have the authority to deal with it. Martial law. To its fullest force. This is a war zone now.

DIXON

I've seen looting, as well.

COLONEL MYERS

Oh, Christ on a bloody stick ... Robbing from ourselves. Or from the dead. Shoot them. Make an example. Drop them in their tracks.

The sirens start to wail again.

COLONEL MYERS (CONT'D)

What now?

Myers and Dixon go to the empty window and spot the 54 high altitude bombers filling the sky.

COLONEL MYERS (CONT'D)

Oh, Mother of God ...

EXT. DARWIN MONTAGE - DAY

Super: 12.00 noon The Second Wave.

The second wave of Japanese planes arrives, mainly Hamaki bombers at higher altitudes.

Darwin is still smouldering from the first wave of bombing and strafing.

Eyes turn skyward from the task of fighting fires and digging out bodies as the low rumble of the second wave is heard approaching.

Gun emplacements begin sending flak skyward.

EXT. THE DARWIN DOCKS DAY

Residual explosions are still occurring around the docks.

There is massive devastation from the exploding ship filled with mines and depth charges.

Tired faces become hardened as the sirens start to wail again.

EXT. DARWIN AERODROME - DAY

At the Aerodrome, there is nothing left.

Those fighting the fires of burning RAAF Hudsons, American Kitty Hawks, PBYS and the skeletons of aircraft hangers begin to scurry toward the trenches.

INT. THE 721-311 - DAY

The Copilot, Hironaka, is also the bombardier and unstraps from the right-hand seat to prepare for the bombing run.

The Engineer comes from his seat behind the Pilot takes the right-hand seat to assist the Pilot in his tasks.

Hironaka drops down behind the Pilot next to the Navigator/wireless operator, Tanabe.

Hironaka winks and pats him on the shoulder as he passes, then goes forward and crawls up to the nose.

EXT. THE HAMAKI FLEET - DAY

The bomb bay doors open, as they do on the other planes in the fleet.

The odd puff of ineffectual flak bursts below and in the distance as they approach.

INT. THE 721-311 - DAY

Through Hironaka's bombsight, the tiny town of Darwin is spread two miles below.

Smudges of smoke from fires wrought by the first wave trail off in the wind, like dark fingers all pointing in the same direction.

The rest of the Crew calmly look out from their various positions, oblivious to the destruction below.

The occasional cursory glance shows there is no fighter cover for Darwin.

Ohnishi the tail gunner pulls a tightly folded newspaper from his fleecy coat and starts to read.

EXT. THE HAMAKI FLEET - DAY

The Keuba Hamaki lines up and drops her bombs with the other Hamaki around her.

From above, little grey puffs blossom across the landscape, crawling from the harbour down the railway line to the airport.

EXT. ACROSS THE HARBOUR DAY

From across Frances Bay, an even blanket of destruction is captured by the newsreels, who are ready to roll this time.

EXT. DARWIN DOCKS DAY

A Bofors gun battery chases the attackers with AA fire.

The dive bombers are now simply dropping their bombs on the wrecks of ships.

INT. THE 721-311 DAY

The crew shows as much emotion as if they were going through a drill.

It is very quiet up at 12,000 feet. A few puffs of anti-aircraft flak burst harmlessly nearby.

From the point of view of the crew of the Keuba Hamaki, little is seen of what is going on below.

INT. INSIDE THE AIRPLANE - DAY

Tanabe, working at his chart table, presses his throat mic.

TANABE

On my mark, prepare to come
about to ...

Suddenly, the glass canopy of the entire flight deck of the 721-311 is blown away.

A stream of blood runs from the compartment above across Tanabe's charts, instantly steaming like acid in the now frigid air.

The plane, much lighter after droppings its bomb load and using half its fuel, recovers and continues on in somewhat level flight.

The engines hardly miss a beat. Wind whistles shrilly as it rips through the fuselage.

Hironaka crawls back from the nose. He is cut on the face.

Hironaka tosses a worried glance at Tanabe and seeing none of the gore is his stands up into up to the flight deck.

Little appears to remain of the Engineer, or the controls for that matter. They have been blown away.

The Pilot is still alive ... barely.

COMMANDER IKITA

You ... are ... to ... stay at your posts. You can not ... bail out. That is an order! Do you ... understand?

HIRONAKA

Yes. I understand.

Samaru, the dorsal gunner, only slightly wounded in the explosion, has overheard. He rushes to the back to get his 'chute and un-dog the circular hatch. Hironaka is right behind him.

HIRONAKA (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

SAMARU

He's crazy ... cracked. I'm not riding this thing down 12,000 feet to satisfy his Bushido bullshit! Let me go! I'm getting out ...

Hironaka slaps him down. The four other crew members stare on in disbelief.

HIRONAKA

Nobody is going anywhere. The Commander has ordered that we stay at our posts. Anyway, he removed the parachutes before we left.

The survivors look at him, aghast. Tanabe rips open the compartment under his seat and finds it empty.

EXT. THE 721-311 - DAY 1

As the rest of the Second Wave comes about to return to Kendari, the 721-311 flies straight on into the deep outback, gradually losing altitude.

EXT. MONTAGE: DARWIN STREETS - 12.40PM

Lieutenant Dixon stands in the back of an open one tonner with a mixed squad of Australian and US soldiers.

They survey the destruction of the Second Wave as they venture through the city.

A line of people throw buckets of water on a burning shop.

A pair of soldiers carry a stretcher with a covered body.

A man sits on the footpath in front of a bombed out house, wracked with grief as he rocks the body of a child.

INT. THE 721-311 - LATER

The wounded bomber struggles on, gradually losing altitude.

It is a roller coaster ride for the five remaining crew, who try desperately to hang on as the out of control plane lurches with every air pocket.

Looking out the window, Hironaka notices fuel leaking out of holes in the wing.

They stare up into the remnants of the cockpit at the back of the Pilot, watching him slump and jerk upright as he lulls in and out of consciousness.

EXT. MONTAGE: THE 721-211 - DAY

The wounded Hamaki gradually descends over the barren landscape of the Outback.

EXT. OUTBACK FENCE LINE - DAY

Three young Aboriginal boundary riders look up at the sound of a plane and see the wounded 721-311 fly overhead at around 1000 feet.

INT. THE 721-311 - LATER

It seems that the Pilot has fainted, what remains of his hand still gripping the column.

HIRONAKA
I think he's dead.

TANABE
What can we do now?

One of the engines begins to cough, then the other.

HIRONAKA
Oh, shit ...

Hironaka rushes to the cockpit and shuts both engines down. He sees that the ground is rushing up.

There are no controls left. They have all been blown away.

He hears a groan. The Pilot is remarkably still alive. Hironaka pulls the remains of the Pilot out of his seat and drags him towards the rear of the plane.

HIRONAKA (CONT'D)
Grab onto something. Tie
yourself down if you can.
We're at about 500 feet.

The Keuba Hamaki goes into a shallow gliding decent.

In the sudden silence, the crew rush to grab for something to hold onto: webbing, straps, anything.

EXT. THE 721-311 CRASHES - DAY

With the wind whistling through rips in its skin, the 721-311 glides in towards the desert.

The invisible hand bringing the plane in evenly lets go. Suddenly it dips one wing and cartwheels across the absolutely flat desert, breaking up as it goes.

There is no explosion, only the shrieks and groans of rending metal.

INT. THE 721-311 - DAY

Inside, the plane crash is a ride from hell.

The surviving crew are tossed about like rag dolls in a tumble dryer.

Tanabe is kept pinned to one bulkhead as the plane spins from end to end.

The crash seems to go on forever.

EXT. THE 721-311 - DAY

The cigar-shaped fuselage finally comes to a rest remarkably intact, sans engines, wings and tail.

INT. THE 721-311 - DAY

Tanabe is dragged back to consciousness by the screaming of Ohnishi, the tail gunner.

Ohnishi has one of the numerous crisscross struts of the Hamaki's frame sticking through his body from behind like a spear.

Ohnishi makes an inhuman scream, like a pig. Ryuku, the other gunner, hugs him tightly, trying to absorb his agony.

Tanabe grabs a medical kit. It is crushed nearly flat. He rips it open and finds the tin of morphine ampules. He prises open the lid with his nails. They are all smashed. There is nothing left.

The dying man's muffled screams are replaced by Ryuku's weeping as he buries his friend's face into his chest.

Finally, in a few moments, it is over.

EXT. THE 721-311 - DAY 1

Four survivors drag themselves out of the wreckage through the circular hatch.

Hironaka drags the still unconscious pilot out and then collapses.

Hironaka has a gaping gash in his thigh and is losing a lot of blood.

TANABE

Let me have a look.

Tanabe folds his scarf into a thick square and presses it against the wound.

TANABE (CONT'D)

Hold this, hard. The cut must be closed tightly and fast, or you will bleed to death. There isn't any morphine.

Tanabe rummages in his pack and brings out a Soldier's Valet, a sewing kit.

HIRONAKA

Shit. What are you going to do with that?

TANABE

I watched my grandfather do this dozens of times.

HIRONAKA

Was he a doctor?

TANABE

No, a senior naval captain, actually.

HIRONAKA

Terrific.

Tanabe threads a sewing needle and begins to stitch up the sides of the gash together. Hironaka stoically grimaces in agony. Twice he nearly faints as thread is pulled through live flesh. Tanabe talks as he does this.

TANABE

When he retired from the navy, he bought a small farm and bred cattle. 20 head!

(MORE)

TANABE (CONT'D)

Whenever they cut themselves on wire or bamboo, he would stitch them up before infection set in. Too valuable to just leave.

HIRONAKA

Thanks. I have value after all. I am compared to a cow.

In the harsh light of day, the survivors survey their surroundings: absolutely desolate, barren terrain, in stark contrast to the lush, tropical rainforests of the Celebes which they had left only hours before.

They strip off their leather and sheepskin flight suits. Their shirts are soaked through with sweat.

EXT. DARWIN CITY STREET - DAY 1

Lieutenant Dixon leads his squad of armed soldiers from both Australian and US forces on foot.

As they come around a corner, they witness a group of men, some dressed in khaki, and one woman, looting a store. The LEADER is the same as the first looting scene Dixon saw.

The leader nods knowingly at Dixon and says something to the others, who laugh and carry on looting.

Knowing what is about to occur, Dixon doesn't put any force whatsoever in his command.

DIXON

This is a warning ... Stop,
Stop, Stop.

He is already pulling his service revolver and without hesitation puts a bullet through the head of the head looter.

Shocked, the other looters immediately drop their loot and raise their hands.

INT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

Hawkins is at the counter of the outer office with a TEENAGE BOY.

HAWKINS

How old are you, really?

TEENAGER

Seventeen. Really.

HAWKINS

And how long have you been driving?

TEENAGER

Since I was 12, but only on the station. Down to the gate.

HAWKINS

Well that's over 50 miles. OK, you can drive. Keep your nose clean.

Hawkins stamps the paper drivers' license and hands it to the beaming boy.

JIMMY sits at a large wireless set by the wall. He pops off a pair of headphones and turns to HAWKINS.

JIMMY

Well, phone's still dead, but I'm getting some good banter on the short wave. Darwin's been bombed twice. One hundred and eighty planes or more.

HAWKINS

Christ.

JIMMY

Every plane on the ground and whatever made it off the ground, plus every ship in the harbour. Bathurst Island say they were bombed twice. The mission on Melville Island says they were strafed.

(MORE)

JIMMY (CONT'D)

Ipswich Station reckons the Japs have invaded Darwin. Say they saw planes and can see smoke.

HAWKINS

Well, mate, you'd better kiss your black arse goodbye. If that's the case, we'll see a few survivors heading south, I reckon. Check if the Post Office has heard anything down the telegraph. Afternoon smoko yet?

JIMMY

Coming right up.

EXT. DARWIN RAILWAY STATION - AFTERNOON

It is pandemonium. Every civilian who isn't injured seems to be trying to leave Darwin.

People are waving cash at passing motorists. Women are holding out children as a means of hitching a ride on sympathy.

A rail motor is packed to the gunnels with people. The police are trying to sort the women and children, but it is a losing battle.

Lieutenant Dixon and his men muscle their way through the crowd to the HEAD POLICEMAN. They have to shout to be heard.

DIXON

Is there anything I can do to help?

HEAD POLICEMAN

This is crazy. Everyone is trying to head south, but there isn't a town that can feed them all until Adelaide. Can't blame them. Nobody expected this.

Dixon pulls his service revolver for the second time in an hour and fires a shot in the air. There is a short collective shriek and then relative silence.

DIXON

That's better. Now listen to me. You would be better off staying in Darwin and allowing relief to come to you. Go home. If your home has been bombed, go to an aid station and you will be taken care of.

ANGRY MAN

But we could be invaded [at any moment] ...

DIXON

We will not be invaded! Don't be absurd. The Japs don't want Darwin. They just don't want us to interfere, so they bombed us, like the Americans. It's their way of saying "Leave Us Alone." Now go home.

There is a brief pause and then pandemonium again as every man, woman and child is determined to get south.

HEAD POLICEMAN

Oh, well. You tried.

DIXON

I'll leave some of my men to at least give you a bit of clout.

HEAD POLICEMAN

Ta. Good luck.

EXT. HAMAKI CRASH SITE - NIGHT, DAY 1

The survivors sit quietly in the darkness amidst the wreckage of 721-311. They have started a small fire.

The Pilot has been made as comfortable as possible. He has still not regained consciousness.

SAMARU

Hasn't the bastard died yet?
I still can't believe he stole
our 'chutes.

HIRONAKA

Shut up. You're still alive.

TANABE

We don't need a fire for heat.
It doesn't seem any cooler at
night. It's just so damned
dark. How is your leg?

HIRONAKA

OK. How far did we travel,
after we were hit.

TANABE

Twenty minutes ... maybe a
hundred and fifty kilometres,
south south-east. We had a
lot of drag.

Hironaka survey's the horizon.

HIRONAKA

The map was certainly right.
There is nothing here.

TANABE

To reach the coast within 100
miles of Darwin, we have to
travel north west.

IKITA

You ... will ... not go to the
coast.

Ikita has regained consciousness. His deep eyes
reflect the fire as if alight.

HIRONAKA

Sir ...

Ikita is wracked with a spasm of pain. Hironaka
looks to Tanabe.

HIRONAKA (CONT'D)

Are you sure there isn't any morphine?

IKITA

No morphine! My pain is my power.

SAMARU

Don't give us any more of your ...

IKITA

Silence! I am still your commander. You will not skulk back to Japan or risk becoming prisoners. We will stay here!

HIRONAKA

Sir, please.

IKITA

We will stay with our ship. No one will find us. Our families will believe we have died gloriously! We will ...

Ikita is overcome with a fit of coughing. Blood flows from his mouth. He loses consciousness again. Hironaka moves slowly over to him.

HIRONAKA

I will stay with him. Try and get some sleep.

The others move well away and curl up to sleep.

EXT. HAMAKI CRASH SITE - NIGHT

The fire has died down. Hironaka stares into the embers, sitting next to Ikita.

He suddenly realises Ikita is conscious again.

IKITA

You of all people, Hironaka. You must hold onto the Spirit. They must obey.

HIRONAKA

I have been with you since
China. Nanjing, Shanghai,
Saigon, The Philippines, now
Kendari.

IKITA

Glorious victories.

HIRONAKA

I have seen what your Spirit
has done to men. What it has
made them do. That's all.
It's over. Let these men go.

IKITA

You will obey ...

HIRONAKA

I will take them to the coast
if I can. They have survived,
no matter what you have tried
to do.

IKITA

You will ...

Hironaka grips the weakened husk of a man that was
the Pilot on both sides of his head and easily
dislocates his spine. The look of surprise on
Ikita's face is frozen forever.

Hironaka carefully wipes the burned flesh from his
hands onto Ikita's blanket, rolls over and goes to
sleep.

He doesn't see Tanabe's gaze taking in the scene or
the look of support for his action.

EXT. HAMAKI CRASH SITE - DAWN - DAY 2

The next morning, the buzzing of flies is a roar.

The survivors stand around looking down at Ikita's
corpse, still sporting the look of surprise beneath a
coating of flies. Maggots already begin to form in
his nose, eyes and mouth.

Hironaka tries to maintain discipline.

HIRONAKA

Attention!

Dumbfounded, the other three trudge into an approximate line.

HIRONAKA (CONT'D)

Carry him away from the plane.
Don't try and bury him, save
your strength. Then let's
salvage what we can.

The Samaru and Ryuku brush away the flies, pick up the Pilot and carry him away. Hironaka limps into the plane.

TANABE

No, you sit somewhere and
we'll bring stuff to you.

HIRONAKA

You don't want me to ruin your
needlework.

TANABE

No.

The other men return and join Tanabe in collecting what they can from inside the plane. They bring their loot to Hironaka.

HIRONAKA

OK, we have two pistols, 50
rounds, a knife ... very little
food. One thermos vacuum
flask wasn't shattered and two
tin canteens. Fill each with
water from what's left in the
tank and drink the rest ... all
of it. We will attempt to
make it to the coast and
attract a submarine. We have
four days. Tanabe, you're the
navigator ... which way?

Tanabe spreads a map on the ground.

TANABE

I took a sighting and estimate we are somewhere off the map just here. There are no points of reference, so I cannot be sure.

HIRONAKA

The maps from the plane are as useless as those at the briefing.

Because of the intense summer heat of February, their clothes are now merely their cut off pants, lap-lap undergarments, their flight boots and crudely fashioned caps which extend down their necks and backs.

Hironaka's leg, though sore, is serviceable, with a limp.

The four airmen start walking in the direction indicated by Tanabe.

EXT. JAPANESE SUBMARINE - DAY 2

On the conning tower of a Japanese submarine running on the surface, two officers scan the land along the horizon with binoculars.

The Radio man climbs up and hands a message to the submarine commander. The Captain turns. It is Tanabe's father. From the look on the radio man's face, it's not good news.

RADIO MAN

Sir, this has just been received.

CAPTAIN TANABE

Thank you.

With a short glance at the note, Captain Tanabe hands his binoculars to his 2.I.C. and begins to climb down the ladder.

CAPTAIN TANABE (CONT'D)

I will be in my cabin. You have the watch.

Captain Tanabe walks the length of the cramped control room to his tiny cabin.

From the looks on their faces, the whole crew know about the message by now.

To a man, they are slightly bowed, eyes averted, in respect.

EXT. OUTBACK MONTAGE SCENES - DAY 2

The survivors halfheartedly sing Japanese marching songs, which echo through the cathedral-like canyon walls.

Arms swinging, they stumble and struggle their way along, making slow progress.

From a distance, these tiny men seem almost like wildly animated ants on a ochre pavement, dwarfed even more by the epic grandeur of their surroundings.

Even in their tenuous situation, they pause to marvel at the strange creatures and sights they encounter.

EXT. OUTBACK ROCK POOL - DAY 2

They stop to soak in a pool to cool off.

TANABE

At least we can find plenty of water. It must be the wet season.

RYUKU

I am hungry.

HIRONAKA

We have four days. It is our duty to at least try and get back.

EXT. OUTBACK WASH - DUSK, DAY 2

Exhausted, the survivors stagger into a wash to seek shelter and shade in the deep crack.

HIRONAKA

We must try and travel more
during the night.

SAMARU

It's no cooler. And we can't
see. We must rest now.

INT. JAPANESE SUBMARINE - DUSK, DAY 2

Tanabe's father, the Submarine Commander, stands in
the Control Room, peering through the periscope at
the distant shore.

He is not looking at anything, but peering into the
eyepieces so the crew do not see there are tears in
his eyes.

INT. COLONEL MYERS' OFFICE - DAY 2

Lieutenant Dixon snaps to attention and reports to
the very hassled Colonel Myers, whose desk is covered
in reports, his ashtray overflowing with butts and
very little of his uniform not stained with sweat.

DIXON

Sir.

COLONEL MYERS

Yes, Dixon. Good news?

DIXON

I'm afraid not, Sir. We don't
know what to do with all the
bodies, sir. We have no power
for refrigeration ... the ice
works is down, as well. In
this summer heat, sir ...

COLONEL MYERS

How many are there?

DIXON

Most we haven't a clue who
they are. Some are just
parts. I'd say close to
fifteen hundred by now.

(MORE)

DIXON (CONT'D)

More are being brought in every hour.

COLONEL MYERS

You'll have to keep that quiet. The official total from Melbourne is meant to be seventeen killed, 200 wounded. We don't want to panic them down South.

DIXON

But, Sir ... wouldn't it help? To know over a thousand have been murdered in a sneak attack?

COLONEL MYERS

You have a lot to learn about propaganda, Lieutenant Dixon. It's a two-edged sword.

DIXON

They hit us with more planes and bombs than they hit the Yanks with at Pearl Harbour. They've killed more people ... innocent civilians, too ... not sailors, most of them. Someone should tell the truth.

COLONEL MYERS

Bury it, Lieutenant. Literally. Get a bulldozer and bury those bodies somewhere. Quick, before we have an outbreak of cholera or typhus. And no more talk about truth. Didn't someone say that's the first casualty of war?

DIXON

Yes, Sir. An American, I believe ... surprisingly.

COLONEL MYERS

Off you go, then. *Captain* Dixon.

DIXON

Yes, sir!

INT. KANAGAWA DREAM BAR - NIGHT, DAY 2

Tanabe dreams he is in a Kanagawa bar with Naval Air Corps buddies.

They are all eating and drinking the most fabulous food and drink ... fish, noodles, rice, mushrooms, beef, beer, saki ... but the table in front of Tanabe is bare.

All around him, there is plenty, but he has nothing.

TANABE'S BUDDY

Here, have some. It's fantastic!

TANABE

No ... Thanks. Unless I can take some for my crew.

Tanabe starts to hear strange voices coming from his friend's mouths instead of singing.

TANABE'S BUDDY

(Private Symons voice)

Aw, fuck me dead, that feels good!

EXT. OUTBACK WASH - NIGHT

Tanabe wakes with a start. They are still sleeping in a deep wash. He continues to hear voices.

A stream of urine comes sailing into the wash, followed by another and then a chorus of streams.

He quietly shakes the others awake and they try to skulk further into the dirt.

EXT. OUTBACK CLEARING - NIGHT

It is the ragtag band of a dozen unarmed Australian soldiers urinating into the wash.

DONALDSON

God, I hate to give that up.
I'm dying for a drink.
Anything. I'm as dry as a
dead dingo's donger.

SYMONS

Drink your own piss, mate?
You're fucking barmy.

STUCK-UP SOLDIER

Do you think the Japs have
actually landed? Invaded
Australia?

SYMONS

Fucked if I know.

STUCK-UP SOLDIER

Listen, we've got to get
organised.

SYMONS

Who died and made you fucking
boss cocky, mate?

DONALDSON

He's only a private.

SYMONS

We're all fucking privates!

STUCK-UP SOLDIER

The Lieutenant ordered us to
head South. So, we're heading
South.

DONALDSON

And we're fucking lost. We
should have stayed with the
truck. The truck with no
fucking petrol!

SYMONS

No food, no water, no guns, no
map, no compass ... no beer, no
sheilas and no fucking hope.

DONALDSON

Fucking Japs. Fucking slant-eyed, slope-headed, fucking rice-chewing fucking Japs!

STUCK-UP SOLDIER

Oh, well ... War is hell.

SYMONS

How long did it take you to think that up, arse hole? My brother was in fucking Singapore, mate! What fucking hope does he have?

STUCK-UP SOLDIER

Now, see here ...

SYMONS

No, mate ... you see this!

He slugs the Stuck-up Soldier square in the kisser. The others get stuck in.

In their panic and frustration, they all end up slugging each other. Some weep openly.

EXT. OUTBACK WASH - NIGHT, DAY 2

Cowering in the wash, the Hamaki survivors can do little but listen and hope they are not discovered. The fight continues for some time.

EXT. A DESERTED DARWIN BEACH - NIGHT, DAY 2

By the light of several tip trucks, Lieutenant Dixon supervises the burial of over a thousand corpses and body parts.

A bulldozer has excavated a huge long trench and is tumbling the bodies into the hole. Many are women and children.

It is a surreal, tropical version of a Holocaust burial, with palm trees and floral printed dresses.

The DOZER DRIVER, wearing a cloth across his face, calls down to the lieutenant, himself nearly gagging with the smell and gore.

DOZER DRIVER

Maybe this beach wasn't such a good idea, Lieutenant. Lots of crabs and crocs. There won't be much left in a few days if they want to find out who these people are.

DIXON

Just get on with it.

The Dozer Driver revs his engine, engages the treads and shovels another scoop full of Australian civilians into his deep trench, followed by tonnes of sand.

EXT. OUTBACK WASH - DAWN, DAY 3

In the dim pre-dawn light, the Hamaki Crew are still awake and alert to any noises above.

EXT. OUTBACK CLEARING - DAWN, DAY 3

The soldiers stir, some regaining consciousness.

They gather themselves and begin to trudge off southward.

Symons, who beat the shit out of him the night before, offers the well-beaten Stuck-up Soldier a hand up.

SYMONS

Common, shithead ... let's go.

They stagger off together after the other soldiers.

EXT. OUTBACK MONTAGE SCENES - DAY 3

The airmen wander northward through the interminable Australian outback.

The Copilot's leg begins to fester, and he clings to Tanabe as they stumble.

EXT. OUTBACK TRACK - DUSK, DAY 3

Ryuku stumbles and lands square on a snake. He is struck several times in the face and neck by a deadly taipan.

RYUKU

I ... I think something has bitten me! A snake. Here and here. What do I do?

TANABE

Where is it? I can't see it in the dark. What if it is poison?

SAMARU

There!

Tanabe takes a big rock and obliterates the snake as it tries to get away.

HIRONAKA

Samaru, use your knife. Cut the bites and suck out the poison. Don't swallow ... spit it out.

SAMARU

Forget it. You do it.

RYUKU

I'm ... my breath. Please.

TANABE

Lie still. Give me the knife.

SAMARU

None of us have any more energy.

Ryuku begins to tremble, then shake. He convulses.

TANABE

We're all so weak.

RYUKU

Please ...

Ryuku give a tremendous spasm. His final breath is expelled in a tightening hiss, like a leaking balloon. He relaxes and is still.

HIRONAKA

He is lucky. He has made it to the coast.

Samaru has grabbed the body of the snake. He peels it like a banana and begins eating it, sashimi style. Reluctantly, he passes a portion to the other two.

EXT. OUTBACK RIVERBED - DAWN DAY 4

The three survivors find a river and scramble over the muddy bank to the water.

SAMARU

Here ... water!

TANABE

Wait, don't stir the mud.

They are a muddy mess, but at least they are a little refreshed.

A crocodile on the opposite bank slithers into the water and the airmen depart in haste.

INT. JAPANESE SUBMARINE OFFICERS' MESS - DAY 4

Captain Tanabe and his First Officer drink tea.

FIRST OFFICER

With all due respect, captain, the orders were to stay on our station for a five days. Tomorrow it will have been five. Your son ...

CAPTAIN TANABE

My son has nothing to do with this! We will stay on station until tomorrow night. We will return to Macassar the following day. That is the order.

EXT. OUTBACK - MORNING - DAY 4

The three survivors are very nearly dead. Almost everything they carried has been abandoned. They collapse in the lee of a rock.

HIRONAKA

We have to rest. Day after tomorrow is the last day. Press on ... to the coast.

SAMARU

Tomorrow is the last day.

TANABE

Shut up.

SAMARU

Listen, you wet mouth ... !

HIRONAKA

Shut up ... both of you.

TANABE

How is your leg?

HIRONAKA

Surprisingly good, if I can keep the flies off.

Maggots roll out of the wound.

TANABE

They are good. Eat the infection ... keep blood flowing.

They are confronted by a rabbit which tumbles off the rock above them. They all grab for it.

Tanabe sets off in desperate pursuit, but his short, weary legs are not match for the bounding leaps of the animal.

EXT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY 4

Hawkins and Jimmy lean on the front veranda, watching the parade of cars and trucks heading south. Nothing is going north.

JIMMY

They're calling it the
"Adelaide River Cup" ... every
man and his dog trying to get
as far south as they can as
fast as they can.

Hawkins grunts a laugh at the ironic humour.

A procession of a dozen completely buggered, dirty
Australian soldiers, unarmed and with nothing but the
clothes on their backs, trudge up to the police
station.

SYMONS looks at the others, decides he's probably the
most senior of the privates, and halfheartedly
salutes Hawkins. He doesn't return it and continues
to lean on the veranda above.

SYMONS

Sir, I guess we're reporting
to you. We're from Darwin.

HAWKINS

What in the hell am I supposed
to do with you? Alright, come
on in.

INT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

Hawkins takes the men through the police station to
the back veranda.

HAWKINS

There's a toilet and shower
block over there. I'll call
the pub and tell them to fix
you up some food ... no grog
till I find out what to do
with you. Jimmy will get all
your names so I can ring them
through to Darwin now the
phones are working again.

SYMONS

Sir, we're not AWOL or
anything. We just didn't know
where to do.

(MORE)

SYMONS (CONT'D)

There was a lot of bombing. I mean, they won't do anything to us.

HAWKINS

That's not for me to say.
Nice wristwatch.

Symons didn't realise he had a bit of loot showing.

EXT. OUTBACK CLEARING - MORNING - DAY 4

The three survivors come upon a kangaroo. Bewildered at first, they need to eat. Food is food.

As it bounds away, Hironaka and Samaru blast away at it with their pistols.

Suddenly, there is a whoosh of a woomera and a spear takes the kangaroo in mid jump right through the neck.

An Aborigine strides up, wearing almost as little as they are, speaking a native tongue. He throws the kangaroo over his shoulders, still talking and gestures for them to follow.

EXT. ABORIGINAL CAMP - DUSK - DAY 4

The survivors follow the aborigine into the camp. There are around 15 women and children in total.

The rest of the tribe don't appear at all phased by the strange band of small men. Their guide says something and everyone laughs.

The kangaroo is tossed straight on a large fire, fur, skin, offal and all, along with a few goannas and a water turtle. The women set about putting out other bits of bush tucker.

It is almost comical as the Japanese airmen come to grips with the Aboriginal feast, but they are starving and hoe in.

EXT. ABORIGINAL CAMP - NIGHT - DAY 4

The three airmen and the tribe sit around the fire.

The men and women perform for their bewildered guests.

Tanabe uses his useless paper maps and makes some origami cranes for the children.

EXT. ABORIGINAL CAMP - DAWN - DAY 5

The tribe are obviously on the move as they gather things together to break camp.

Hironaka tries desperately to ask directions to a road. Tanabe steps in. He mimes driving, making motor noises.

Their original aboriginal guide laughs and points off in one direction. He heads off that way, gesturing for the airmen to follow.

The tribe head off another way without so much as a goodbye, still un-phased by these strange men.

INT. COLONEL MYERS' OFFICE - MORNING - DAY 5

Captain Dixon comes in smartly and salutes.

COLONEL MYERS

I don't know how you keep it up, Dixon, or why you bother, but thanks ... I'm glad someone does. The Captain's pips look good on you.

DIXON

Thank you, Sir.

COLONEL MYERS

I've had a call from a copper down the road. Pine Creek. Had a dozen soldiers show up at his place yesterday and some of the names sound like the ones you gave me.

He hands Dixon a list.

DIXON

Yes, Sir. That is part of my unit.

COLONEL MYERS

Take a truck and driver and bring them back ... and a couple of escorts in case they give you any trouble. The chaps name is Hawkins.

DIXON

Thank you, Sir. I should be back this evening.

Dixon salutes and departs. Myers tosses back a halfhearted salute and is immediately back to his mountain of paperwork.

EXT. OUTBACK ROAD - DAY

The three airmen and their aboriginal guide break out of the bush onto a wide dirt road, bullet straight in both directions.

Their guide babbles on about something, gesturing at the road and in both directions. He imitates Tanabe's car noises and laughs at his own joke.

The aboriginal then turns back towards the bush and is gone.

Tanabe, shielding his eyes, looks at the position of the sun and then his shadow. He points.

TANABE

This way.

EXT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY 5

Glynis pulls up in front and gets out of her beat up old ute. She has a few boxes of supplies in the bed. Hawkins is on the veranda.

GLYNIS

Have you heard any more?

HAWKINS

Well, seems they hit Darwin pretty hard. Twice. Same day. I've heard over a thousand killed and twice that wounded.

GLYNIS

Did we get any of them?

HAWKINS

Supposed to have shot down fifteen of them out of what some say was a couple hundred planes. Kind of like killing a mozzie with a hand grenade. I can't imagine there's anything left. I might go up in a few days and have a look around.

GLYNIS

Jesus, Russ ...

HAWKINS

You head on back to your place and sit tight. There's nothing you can do. Check in on the radio every day and I'll let you know if I have anything new. You take care. There's some pretty nasty types coming down the road.

GLYNIS

You take care, too, Russ.

EXT. OUTBACK DIRT ROAD - DAY 5

The Austin Seven convertible sits by the dirt roadside.

Frank Charles is still dressed unsuitably in his office attire, has his head under the bonnet flap.

His wife and daughter, still in shopping dresses, sit on the running board sharing a parasol. Their best clothes are filthy after five days.

A bus comes barreling down the dirt track. Frank tries to flag it down. It roars past, blaring its horn, every nook and cranny taken up by wide-eyed people fleeing Darwin.

The area is engulfed by dust. Frank and Helen cover their eyes and mouth. Helen buries Sarah's face in her bosom.

When the dust settles, it reveals the three Japanese airmen standing a few metres away across the road.

The three crewmen approach from behind. Frank hears them at the last minute and spins, spanner raised in defence. They slowly raise their two pistols towards him. His look of resignation shows he is slightly outgunned.

FRANK

Aw, Christ!

Helen and Sarah are sitting on the other side of the car, unaware anything is amiss.

HELEN

Frank! Don't swear!

SARAH

Is it fixed yet, Daddy?

Frank is a good two heads taller than the Japanese, but fears them like the plague.

FRANK

Helen, it's bloody Japs!

Helen's head shoots up from behind the car as Sarah comes careening around. Frank has to stop her from running straight into Hironaka.

HELEN

(Simultaneously with Frank)

Oh, God, Frank! What do we do? They'll rape me!

FRANK

Don't you swear, either! I don't bloody know. They don't look fit to rape anything.

Sarah has walked right up to Hironaka and is staring curiously at his wound. Helen grabs her and pulls her back. Hironaka smiles. Frank raises his spanner menacingly an inch higher.

HELEN

(Simultaneously with Frank)

Have we been invaded? We've been invaded. I told you we should have left Darwin when the Yanks got it in Pearl Harbour, but no, Mr. P&O Manager has to look after the office in the national interest! You should have fixed this hours ago!

FRANK

They don't look like invaders. Oh, for heaven's sake, Helen. I had to stay. The bloody stupid car's the problem, isn't it? I don't know what's bleeding wrong with it!

Samaru has poked his nose into the engine bay. Sarah is looking in beside him, holding his hand.

The other two crewmen watch the play between Helen and Frank. Their presence seems to now go almost unnoticed.

SARAH

My Daddy works at P and O. It sounds like pee.

SAMARU

(In Japanese, subtitled)

The fan belt's broken.

SARAH

What's he saying? It sounds like baby talk.

SAMARU

(In Japanese, subtitled)

I can fix this. I need one of the woman's stockings.

Tanabe bows deeply to the woman and begins to gesture towards her legs, miming the removal of her stockings.

HELEN

Oh, God, Frank. I knew it.
They are going to rape me. Do something!

The gunner touches her leg and she screams. Finally, he just reaches up and rips the stockings right off her garters. Frank takes a limp swing with the spanner and the others hold him back.

SARAH

You leave my Mummy alone!

The gunner ties the stockings together and then around the water pump and flywheel. He gestures for Frank to start the car.

FRANK

(Simultaneously with Helen)

Helen, you and Sarah get in the car. I think I've seen what he's done. Quickly now, smile at them ... bow, that's right, bow. They like that.

HELEN

That was my last pair of stockings. God only knows where I'll get another pair with a war on, and I refuse to paint them on! Bow? I will not!

The family get into the car. The engine refuses to turn over.

Three of the crewmen push the car which starts, revs and takes off in a flurry of dust.

The father gives them a two fingered salute out of the right hand window. The child waves goodbye out of the rear.

The men go to shoot at the car to make it stop, but the little girl's face stops them.

SAMARU

We should have stolen that car
and left them here. Or killed
them. Then we could have
driven to the sea.

The three airmen resume their trudge along the road.

EXT. REMOTE DIRT ROAD - LATER - DAY 5

The three Japanese airmen trudge along the pencil-
ruled straight road.

In the distance, they hear the sound of a backfire.
They dive into the brush at the side of the road and
wait.

Glynis' ute, struggling along in second gear through
the hard going sand and potholes, comes into view.

With hastily shouted orders, the three pounce onto
the running boards and into the tray. Glynis slams
on the brakes in alarm, almost throwing the three
attackers off the vehicle.

GLYNIS

Jesus fucking Christ!

They are as surprised as she is, mainly because it is
a woman driving, she at these three small weather-
ravaged, mud covered men in loin cloths who pounce
onto her ute.

She tumbles out of the ute and begins to run a few
paces, slowly realising there is nowhere to go. She
walks back to the ute.

GLYNIS (CONT'D)

You're not Abos ... you're
fucking Japanese! You're from
Darwin!

Her sudden coldness transcends language and the men
sense her change in attitude. Hironaka raises the
pistol and addresses the others.

HIRONAKA

(In Japanese, subtitled)
Get in. Tanabe will drive.

They get in, Tanabe forcing Glynis into the middle and driving, Hironaka on the opposite side with the pistol.

Samaru gets into the tray. He spots a packet of biscuits amongst Glynis' supplies and tears them open hungrily, not passing any to the others.

They don't menace her, so she resigns herself to the situation.

INT. GLYNIS' UTE - DAY

They are driving along the dirt track.

GLYNIS

What are you going to do with me? Nobody fucks around old Glynis O'Reilly, you know! You might as well turn yourselves in. "Gee, Daddy .. look what I brought home. A truckload of fucking Japs!" You Speeky Engrish? Oh, Christ all-fucking-mighty.

Hironaka just looks at her blankly. She glances at the pistol in his hand.

EXT. THE HOMESTEAD - DAY

The ute pulls into the homestead of a small cattle property.

It is a low slung house with verandahs all round and lots of outbuildings.

They alight from the ute. Tanabe takes the keys and pockets them.

INT. HOMESTEAD KITCHEN - DAY

Glynis lays out food for them, just grabbing things from the pantry and chucking them on the table ... a jar of pickled onions, a cold leg of mutton, a big old tin of Saos, some Vegemite, a jug of water.

They are wolfing it down. She speaks in her nicest voice, more nervous than trying to communicate.

GLYNIS

My husband is off in North Africa. My station hands have been out doing a boundary ride since before you pricks smashed Darwin. They don't even know that's happened. Jesus, I wish they were here right now. They'd tear each of you a new arsehole, that's for sure. What's the matter? Haven't you ever tasted Vegemite, you little shit eater?

EXT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

Frank Charles' Austin Seven chugs up to the front of the Police Station and literally dies.

Frank jumps out of the car, leaving the car door open and his wife and child behind. He dashes up the steps onto the landing and almost head butts Hawkins in the stomach.

FRANK

Oh! Thank God! You've got to do something. We were attacked by Japanese ...

HAWKINS

In Darwin ...

FRANK

No, on the road. Three of them. Jap soldiers. Maybe pilots. I don't know.

HAWKINS

I think you'd better come out of the sun, Mr. ...?

FRANK

Charles, Frank Charles. I was the forwarding agent for P&O in Darwin.

Helen and Sarah now stand forlornly beside the car.

HAWKINS

Missus, if you and the little
girl would like to come
inside, too, I'm sure we can
get you all a cool drink.

EXT. THE TURKEY NEST - DAY

Glynis shows the airmen the large circular clay
walled pool ... a turkey nest ... near the house.
Steaming hot water pours into it, brought up from an
underground bore by the adjacent windmill.

GLYNIS

(In her sweetest voice)
That's right, you dirty little
arseholes. Come out here.
Have a swim. You likee swimmy-
swimmy? Nice hot bore water.
I hope you burn to death.

She pulls some discarded clothes from visiting
stockmen out of a shed.

GLYNIS (CONT'D)

Put these on after. Then I'll
burn 'em.

The men are very grateful. They bow deeply and begin
to strip off immediately.

She forces a smile and beats a hasty retreat back to
the house.

INT. HOMESTEAD KITCHEN- DAY

Glynis runs to the sideboard and whips off the Damask
cover from a large wireless set.

She hits the power switch, puts the headphones on and
fidgets impatiently as she waits for the tubes to
warm up.

She keeps glancing over her shoulder at the door and
window. She can see the three men are still
cavorting in the turkey nest.

GLYNIS
Come on ... Come on!

INT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY 5

Captain Dixon enters the outer office and approaches the counter.

JIMMY
Can I help you, Captain?

DIXON
Yes. I'm here to collect a few strays that seem to have come down the road from Darwin.

INT. HOMESTEAD KITCHEN - DAY

Finally, the wave oscillation tells Glynis the set is "hot."

As she dials a frequency, she tries desperately to remain calm. She picks up the mic and hits the transmit switch. She tries to keep her voice down, but can't control the emotion.

GLYNIS
Pine Creek, this is Mount Haywood Station, emergency, over ...

INT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

The voice of Glynis O'Reilly comes out of the speaker behind Jimmy's desk. He turns to the wireless.

JIMMY
Just a tick, Captain.

INT. HOMESTEAD KITCHEN - DAY

Glynis flicks the switch to receive and waits a few seconds. Impatiently, she hits transmit again.

GLYNIS
 Pine Creek, this is Mount
 Haywood Station, I have a
 bloody emergency here, over ...

She hits the switch to receive and toggles it between exchanges throughout the following.

INT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

Jimmy has the mic now.

JIMMY
 Mount Haywood, Pine Creek ...
 Hold your horses, Glyn. I'll
 get the Boss, over.

Jimmy calls to Hawkins, who is still interviewing Frank Charles in his office.

JIMMY (CONT'D)
 Boss? Glyn Marshall. Sounds
 kind of upset. Says it's an
 emergency.

Hawkins comes out, acknowledges Dixon and takes the mike. Jimmy turns up the volume on the open speaker.

HAWKINS
 Mount Haywood ... Glyn, it's
 Russ ... what's your emergency,
 over.

INT. HOMESTEAD KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Glynis whispers, glancing out the window.

GLYNIS
 Listen, I've got three bloody
 Japanese in my turkey nest
 having a bath, that's what!
 Over.

HAWKINS (V.O.)
 Jeess, Glyn ... I can hardly hear
 you. What's wrong? Over.

GLYNIS

(Enunciated whisper)

I can't talk loudly. I've got three Japanese soldiers here and I'm all alone. They've got a gun! ... Over.

HAWKINS (V.O.)

Steady on, Glyn. Are you sure they're Japanese? Over.

INT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - SAME TIME

GLYNIS (V.O.)

Look, they're short little fuckers and I can't understand a fucking word they say! Of course they're fucking Japanese, Russell Hawkins! Maybe they crashed near here. I don't know ... Bloody Over!

HAWKINS

Hang on a second, Glyn. Watch your language ... I've had a report from a bloke that made it into here from Darwin that he met Japs on the road this morning. I'll be there as fast as I can. Just keep calm and stay out of their way. I they try to leave, let them go. Don't do anything stupid. Over.

GLYNIS (V.O.)

OK. Just hurry. I'm shitting myself, Russ. Oh, over.

HAWKINS

Sit tight, Glyn. Won't be long. Pine Creek out.

INT. HOMESTEAD KITCHEN - SAME TIME.

Glynis shuts down the wireless set and hurriedly stows the headphones and mic.

She replaces the Damask cloth over the wireless set and smooths it.

As an after thought she puts a photo of her husband on top.

EXT. PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY 5

Hawkins bursts onto the back veranda, Dixon in tow, startling the Australian soldiers strung out everywhere. When they see Dixon, they sheepishly snap to attention.

HAWKINS

You chaps come with me. I may need your help. Captain, you heard the situation. Is that OK with you?

The soldiers have noticed the extra pips on Dixon's epaulets and steal glances at each other. This isn't lost on Dixon.

DIXON

Absolutely. You're in charge.

They follow Hawkins down the steps and under the building.

He unlocks and throws open a big steel cabinet and starts tossing rifles and ammunition to the soldiers, who eagerly snap them up and begin doing a quick check of the weapons and load them.

HAWKINS

Two of you, go over to the pub and tell Sydney I'm commandeering his van ... he can come too if he wants. Two more of you, the same with the truck at the garage. Back here on the double.

The four soldiers take off at a run.

DIXON

I have a truck and two more armed men.

This isn't lost on the soldiers around him. Frank and Helen have heard all of this.

FRANK

I'd like to come, as well,
Chief Constable. They ... uh ...
tried to rape my wife.

The soldiers snigger. Helen blushes. Hawkins tosses Frank a rifle. He catches it clumsily.

HAWKINS

Alright. Someone show him how
to use that. Now, it seems
there are three Japs holding a
woman hostage at Mount Haywood
Station, around 30 miles north
west. Flyers from Darwin,
it's supposed.

EXT. FRONT OF THE PINE CREEK POLICE STATION - DAY

Word has spread fast and other men and transport begin to converge on the Police Station.

The Pine Creek posse mounts up. The soldiers climb into the back of the army truck and a few into the other vehicles.

Everyone takes off out of town in a cloud of dust.

EXT. THE TURKEY NEST - DAY

The three men are languishing in the deep, steaming pool.

Tanabe lays on his back, gazing up at the windmill of the water pump, slowly spinning in the light breeze, the afternoon sun flicking through the vanes.

As he floats, his eyes drift to wires attached to ceramic insulators half way up the windmill.

His eyes follow the wires to a pole on the homestead roof. He suddenly comes alert.

INT. HOMESTEAD KITCHEN DAY

Glynis is feigning washing up.

She jumps with fright turns to find the freshly scrubbed Tanabe has been watching her. He looks a bit silly in the hastily donned outsize stockmen's clothes, his wet body soaking through. She smiles.

GLYNIS

(In sweetest voice)

You're a ridiculous looking
little monkey, aren't you. I
was hoping you would drown,
the lot of you ...

Tanabe's eyes dart around the room, looking for something. His eyes light on the big shape under the lace cloth on the sideboard.

He slowly runs his hand along the top and takes it away as if stung when he senses the residual heat.

GLYNIS (CONT'D)

Well, I like to listen to the
doctor sometimes. What are
you going to do about it, huh?
Little prick.

Showing no animosity, Tanabe runs from the kitchen.

EXT. HOMESTEAD - DAY

Tanabe runs out the back and shouts for the other two men, still languishing in the monster hot tub.

TANABE

Get out and get dressed. Now!
She has used a radio.

Hironaka and Samaru need no further explanation to burst into action. In moments, they are dressed.

With a curt bow to Glynis, they get into the ute.

TANABE (CONT'D)

(Japanese with subtitles)

Thank you for your truck. We
must take it.

GLYNIS

Fuck off, you fucking Jap bastards! I hope you rot in Hell for what you did to us. The police are on their way here now! You're dead, you hear me? Dead!

Tanabe starts the truck and they tear out off the homestead in a billowing cloud of dust.

EXT. OUTBACK ROAD - DAY

Tanabe drives with the three small men fitting easily across the ute's bench seat.

They barrel down the bullet straight dirt road, crossing cattle grids and not even stopping to open gates.

They hit one "Shut The Bloody Gate!" sign square on, smashing the entire gate right off its hinges.

Suddenly, they meet three vehicles nearly head on. With nothing to lose, they plough straight through, driving the others off the road to bog in the soft shoulders.

It is Hawkins with the hurriedly deputised Pine Creek militia, including Frank Charles, Captain Dixon and the Australian Soldiers.

Hawkins makes eye contact with Tanabe as they fly past.

Hawkins and the others get out. He kicks the front tyre, sunk to the axle in the soft dust.

HAWKINS

Well, I'll be fucked ... She was right. Fucking Japs! Let's get back on the road. Push, you bastards!

A dozen men with a purpose immediately alight and begin to work their vehicles back onto the road.

EXT. OUTBACK ROAD - DAY

The fugitives speed on, the tiny ute followed by a monstrous cloud of red dust.

SAMARU

Look! There! Off to the right.

A hundred metres off the side of the road, seen just above the bush, a directional wind sock flutters in the breeze.

In a spray of dust, they turn off the main road.

EXT. OUTBACK AERODROME - DAY

The ute screeches to a halt in front of the small, open ended hangar at the far end of the single dirt runway.

Inside the hanger, the fugitives see an old biplane with its engine out. They look like their hopes are dashed, until Tanabe points and shouts.

TANABE

Look!

Behind the disabled biplane, almost hidden, is a tiny, single seat linen and spruce monoplane.

HIRONAKA

Samaru, you check the fuel.
Try those barrels. Tanabe,
see if you can find any maps
in that office.

They dash around like mad men. Tanabe comes back empty handed. Samaru pulls a wet finger out of the tiny plane's fuel tank.

SAMARU

There's enough!

They manoeuvre the small plane into a better position.

Hironaka jumps in and hits the contact switch. Samaru rapidly winds the hand crank on the side of the plane. The tiny engine springs to life.

Samaru and Tanabe wriggle into the fuselage behind the single pilot's seat which is then hurriedly reoccupied by Hironaka.

The tiny plane taxis out of the hangar, dancing onto one wheel as Hironaka throws it into a hard turn to line up with the runway. He gives the tiny engine full throttle.

EXT. OUTBACK AERODROME RUNWAY - DAY

A billowing cloud dust can be seen heading across the saltbush towards the aerodrome, heralding the arrival of the posse from Pine Creek.

The tiny plane picks up speed down the dirt runway, trying to gain take-off velocity.

The ragtag brigade of cars and trucks careens towards the runway in an attempt to cut off the tiny plane.

The plane is almost going fast enough, but the weight of even the three small men makes it nearly impossible.

It's touch and go. The engine whines and strains. The wheels begin to bounce off the dirt and gravel.

INT. THE LITTLE PLANE - DAY 1

Tanabe and Samaru are squashed in the tiny tapering fuselage, from their expressions willing the tiny plane aloft.

Hironaka rocks forward to give the tiny plane one last push.

HIRONAKA
Come on, little bird! Fly!

EXT. OUTBACK AERODROME RUNWAY - DAY

The men alight from the cars as the plane passes them.

Captain Dixon takes command and lines up his men. The Australian soldiers, now finally armed, fire a fusillade after the tiny plane.

Dixon pulls out his service revolver and empties it in the direction of the plane.

INT. THE TINY PLANE - DAY

The three wince and duck as some bullets find their mark with the rapidly moving target and rip through the thin lacquered cloth of the plane.

EXT. THE OUTBACK AERODROME RUNWAY - DAY

Charles puts the .303 to his shoulder, closes his eyes and fires. He opens his eyes again and smiles at the others in his accomplishment, but no one is looking.

The plane leaps into the air and powers away from the tiny airstrip into the setting sun.

INT. THE LITTLE PLANE - DAY

Tanabe turns to his companions with relief in his eyes.

TANABE

We made it! We made it!

Lying along side Tanabe, Samaru lolls forward, dead.

From the grimace on the Hironaka's face, he has obviously been wounded in the fusillade, too.

HIRONAKA

Tanabe ... Do you still have
your needle and thread?

EXT. THE LITTLE PLANE - DAY

The tiny plane can't gain much altitude because of the excess weight.

It bobs and weaves only a few dozen meters above the ground.

INT. THE LITTLE PLANE - DAY

Hironaka fights for control of the plane and against losing consciousness.

Wind whistles through holes in the taut fabric like a chorus of pan pipes.

Tanabe grips the back of the seat, willing Hironaka to keep the tiny plane in the air.

TANABE

(Shouting over the noise)

You are doing so well. As soon as we land, we can ... fix you up.

HIRONAKA

Sure.

EXT. THE LITTLE PLANE - DAY

At last, the sea spreads across the horizon before them. They are flying into the sun.

INT. THE LITTLE PLANE - DAY

TANABE

There it is! The sea! You can land on the beach. There!

From the pallor of Hironaka's pale, blood drained face, he is as much dead as alive. He can't last much longer.

HIRONAKA

Hey, kid. What do you think ... Are the subs still waiting for us?

In a supreme effort, Hironaka brings the tiny plane into the wind and attempts to land along the beach.

EXT. A REMOTE BEACH - DAY

The tiny wounded plane comes in low and slow over the broad sandy beach and stalls.

The little plane goes over on its nose, folding in on itself in a pitiful mess of cloth and spruce, sounding more like the tearing of sheets, twanging of guitar strings and the snapping of twigs than a plane crash.

One of the tiny plane's wheels still spins, now facing skyward.

The dazed Tanabe pulls himself from the collapsed wreck of the tiny plane.

He then attempts to pull the obviously dead Hironaka out of the wreckage.

The whoosh and crackle of a small fire begins and soon Tanabe is driven back from the wreck by the flames.

As the lacquered linen and spruce struts catch alight, the remaining fuel explodes in a pitifully small ball of flame.

Tanabe turns away, mournfully, and looks out to sea, framed against the flames. He rails against the fates.

EXT. A REMOTE BEACH - DUSK

A fire burns brightly along the long, thin very flat coastline. It can be seen for miles.

Just off shore, the white foam of blown ballast tanks appears around the rising conning tower of a surfacing submarine, back lit by the last rays of the setting sun.

EXT. A REMOTE BEACH - DUSK

An inflatable raft is being paddled ashore by Japanese sailors. The sub conning tower can be seen offshore.

They alight from the inflatable boat and come ashore, guns at the ready.

They find a bonfire on the beach, surrounded by the remnants of a midden ... An aboriginal feast of shellfish, crabs and fish.

Suddenly, a spear is thrown from the bush and hits one of the sailors in the leg. He goes down and is helped back to the boat by his shipmates.

A tribe of Aborigines emerges from the bush, spears at the ready. The sailors withdraw.

EXT. A REMOTE BEACH - DUSK

The silence of the remote beach where Tanabe sits is stark contrast.

Only the crackle from the dying funeral pyre and the lap of the waves can be heard.

He continues to look out to sea. He hangs his head into his arms, shocked by the loss of his comrades and losing all hope.

EXT. JAPANESE SUBMARINE - DUSK

Tanabe's father stands on the dripping conning tower, not daring to hope.

A white flare is fired from the conning tower, followed by a red.

CAPTAIN TANABE

Launch the raft again.
Lookouts, keep a sharp ...

2.I.C.

Sir, I must protest. This is
the second time today ...

CAPTAIN TANABE

Shut Up.

2.I.C.

But the signal was not
returned ...

CAPTAIN TANABE

Go below! I will deal with
you later.

The 2.I.C. bows curtly, mouth set in protest, and goes down the ladder.

Captain Tanabe puts the binoculars to his eyes once more.

EXT. A REMOTE BEACH - DUSK

Tanabe is sitting in the sand starrng out to sea.

The funeral pyre of his comrades has become a successful signal.

He finally sees the submarine conning tower against the absolute last rays of the setting sun.

He peers beneath his hand, then stands and slowly begins to wave.

EXT. AERIAL OF REMOTE BEACH - DUSK

The crash site on the beach looks to all intents and purposes like a proper signal fire.

The Japanese Submarine, surrounded by water churned from surfacing, sits off shore. An inflatable boat is being lowered down the side.

From greater and greater distances, the pyre on the beach becomes a small fire against the deep ruby landscape coloured by the setting sun.

The flames ultimately become a spark on the edge of the sea with the vast, dark landscape of the limitless Australian outback stretching off behind.

THE END