

AMELIA

Written by

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1

1

EXT. BAR, LAE, NEW GUINEA - DAY

RAIN.
the-
Waiting.
CLOSE on a mud-streaked AIRFIELD in mist and driving
A Lockheed ELECTRA sits. Sleek, twin-engine, state-of-
art, its metallic surface battered by the monsoon.
PULL BACK to see...

...our VIEW down onto the landing strip is from an open-
sided, thatched roof BAR high above the airfield. And
peering down through the mist and rain...

gray
her.
...a WOMAN in grimy flight clothes gazes at the plane.
Slender. Feminine. At first glance, fragile. Then the
eyes change like the sea, as a stray thought transforms
Something fierce lives there.

SUPERIMPOSE: LAE, NEW GUINEA - 1937.

FRED (O.S.)

handsome
Sure I can't talk you into
somethin' more adventurous?
She turns. FRED NOONAN is tall and lean, ruggedly

dirt-
and a

in a reckless way. His flight clothes as rumpled and
streaked as her own. He carries his bottle of tequila,
Coke which he sets down for her.

AMELIA

himself

Adventurous? You've got the wrong
girl, Mister. You should know that
by now.
Her eyes study him. Assessing something as he pours
four fingers.

FRED

Actually. I knew that the moment I
met ol' George.
He sips his drink. She says nothing.

FRED (CONT'D)

I like how you don't talk about
him.

AMELIA

That why I get so many chances to
not do it?

FRED

tequila.
her

Well. Natural curiosity.
His charming smile. She's thinking more about the
She reaches to take his bottle and glass. Moves them to
side of the table.

2.

FRED

I mean, why would a guy who needs
to run the show. Pick the one girl
he knew could kick his tail?

No response. Just her clear direct gaze.

FRED (CONT'D)

I'll bet he knew that. First time
he met you.

She looks out to sea.

AMELIA

He thought I hated him. He never
knew I was fascinated.

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE, NEW YORK - DAY

2

2

now,

sits

pad.

Alone by the window, he gazes at the city. A powerfully
built man in a perfectly-tailored suit. The face at once
strong and elegant, capable of every emotion. Yet just
there are none to be seen. Even as...
...a door OPENS. A pretty SECRETARY enters soundlessly,
respectfully. Waits, her pen suspended above her steno
Does he know she's there?

SUPERIMPOSE: NEW YORK, LATER 1937.

GEORGE

(without turning)

The first time I met her she sat
in that chair.

The secretary doesn't know whether to write that down.
still with his back to her...

And

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You may as well write it down,
Mary. Write it all down. Even the
parts that are confused or
graceless or boring.

He turns with a soft smile to put her at ease.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We'll see if I remember how to
edit.

She smiles back. She likes him, as much as her level of
being awed by him permits. She begins to write, as...

3.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'd kept her waiting two hours.

T

She hated me on sight, but she
thought I couldn't tell.

His gaze drifts to a bookcase crammed with volumes. And
one
object, oddly out of place. A stuffed CAT, with boots
and a
green frock coat. It wears a confident ironic smile.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

She was a person who cherished her
privacy and was devoting her life
to social work. And there I was...
His smile is kind. And honestly self-mocking.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Self-obsessed. Wallowing in the
glory of my authors and celebrity
acquaintances. A vain, fast-
talking, manipulator. But then I
guess you know all that, don't you?
She looks up reproachfully. Nothing of the kind, and
you
know it.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Oh, yes. And the kind of man who
fishes for compliments.
He's made her laugh.

DISSOLVE

TO...

INT. RECEPTION AREA - DAY

She is younger, dressed conservatively. The calm at the center of a storm. Agents, authors, couriers, peddlers
 come
 pouring
 and go. But she has her legs drawn up beneath her,
 through a small stack of volumes. As if preparing for an exam.

SUPERIMPOSE: G.P. PUTNAM'S SONS PUBLISHING CO. 1928.

GEORGE (V.O.)

The waiting made her furious.
 She undoubtedly felt I was

E

stablishing my dominance and
 importance.
 She doesn't look furious at all. Thumbing through WE by
 COL.
 CHARLES LINDBERGH. Photos of Lindy beside the Spirit of
 St.
 Louis in Paris.

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

Actually, I hadn't given her a
 thought. Oblivious as usual.
 Which, perhaps, was even worse.
 Now, SKYWARD by ADM. RICHARD BYRD. Photos of the explorer
 preparing for his flight over the North Pole. One of Byrd
 with George himself, displaying considerable gravitas.

AMELIA (V.O.)

I figured he'd be pompous.
 Her eye travels over the stack of books. Adventurers,
 explorers, celebrities. On an end table, a framed photo of
 George with the great Lindbergh.

A pretty SECRETARY comes to summon her. Amelia rises, smooths the wrinkles from her brown suit. They head down the corridor.

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

I knew, of course, that he wasn't going to choose me. I had no discernible qualifications whatsoever.

They reach the door, already ajar. It says GEORGE PALMER PUTNAM on a small bronze plate. The secretary gingerly pushes it open...

...revealing George on the phone in crisp shirtsleeves and suspenders. He paces, prowls, trailing the cord behind him, negotiating non-stop even as he flips through a pile of messages. Off again, stalking the room. Dashing, electric, masterful.

AMELIA (V.O.)

But to be rejected by this... parasite. A man who had given up any life of his own to flutter near the famous.

He glances up, realizing for the first time that she is there. Sit, please. But she doesn't.

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

I didn't know whether to laugh or throw something at the jerk.

He gestures again, more commandingly. Sit. She doesn't move, she doesn't smile. She doesn't take her steady gaze from him. He hangs up the phone.

They stare at each other for a frozen beat. He breaks the moment with a charming smile...

5.

GEORGE

Miss Earhart?

AMELIA

Mr. Putnam?

GEORGE (softly)

I asked you to sit.

AMELIA

Was that the thing you did with
your hand? Sadly, I don't speak
dog.

His smile now only a trace. But more genuine.

GEORGE

A Ah. Well, stand if you like.
melia sits.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm told you want to fly the
Atlantic Ocean.

AMELIA

I do.

GEORGE

In the 12 months since Lindbergh,
55 people in 18 planes have tried.
Three planes made it. Fourteen
people have died.

AMELIA

I'll make it.

GEORGE

Three women died trying. Two
others escaped with their lives.
If you do make it, you'd be the
first. Which...is the real
attraction for both of us, I
suspect.

She nods. No smile.

AMELIA

Always nice to know what the real
attraction is.

His smile. Beginning to enjoy this conversation.

The plane was bought from Adm. Byrd by Amy Guest, a socialite who wanted the record for herself. Her family wouldn't tolerate the danger. She has asked for a replacement...

He gestures. Perhaps you.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

...who is American, educated, well-spoken, a flyer, preferably physically attractive...

AMELIA

Why would that matter?

GEORGE

Because she wants the world to pay attention. And pretty girls command more attention.

AMELIA

Was that your advice?

GEORGE

Sure. My role is selling this event to the public. There will be a contract for the girl's story with the New York Times. Also a book to be published over her name.

Understood...? G

GEORGE (CONT'D)

But all the money from these will go to Mrs. Guest.

AMELIA

Except for the part that goes to you.

GEORGE

Which will be as great as I can manage, I assure you.

AMELIA

You said she wants a flyer.

GEORGE

Don't get your hopes up. The celebrated Wilmer Stultz will be the pilot. There'll be a male co-pilot and navigator. The woman

will be purely a passenger.

7.

He waits for reaction. She keeps her mouth shut.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

That's good for your chances.
Because your level of flying
experience wouldn't place you
anywhere near the group that would
be considered for this. If the
woman were to do any flying at all.
No punches pulled. Not his style.

AMELIA

Why would anyone want a book from a
passenger?

GEORGE

Because the hook is that we're
making the woman the commander.
The pilot will sign a contract
saying he is under her direction
and control. It's her ship, her
flight.

AMELIA

Good for my chances, you said.
What are my chan...

GEORGE

The job's yours.
She blinks. Stunned speechless.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I chose you the moment you walked
through the door.
He smiles his charming smile. Several phones are RINGING.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Now assuming my awful manners
haven't soured you on the
enterprise. May I give you a lift

to the station?
Amelia rises. Is she pissed at being toyed with?

AMELIA

You're a busy man, Mr. Putnam. I
can find my way.
The look holds. He shrugs. You probably can.

8.

4

4

INT. GRAND CENTRAL STATION - LATER

Two figures on the platform. Her train is ready to
leave.

GEORGE

I honestly feel an apology is in
order.

AMELIA

Fine. What have I done?
She watches his smile.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I didn't mind waiting. Caught up
on my reading. Knitted a sweater.

GEORGE

I mean an apology. For what's
coming.
His voice softens.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm going to be pretty controlling
these next few months. How you
dress, move, cut your hair. Speak
in public. It's all part of the
package we're selling.

AMELIA

We.

GEORGE

That's right. If you're not in there selling with me, it won't work.

The smile turns friendly.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You're the star. I'm no one at all.

AMELIA

Spoken like a gentleman.

man. She steps up onto the train. Extends her hand like a

watches He shakes it firmly. The train begins to move. She his cheery wave as she rolls away.

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

Of course a gentleman. Would have paid for my ticket.

9.

5

5

INT. TRAIN - LATER

pages, Gazing out the window as she rattles toward Boston. She looks down now to a notebook in her lap. As she flips thoughts. we see it is a collection of hand-written POEMS and She writes...

AMELIA (V.O.)

Courage is the price that life exacts
For granting peace
We SUPERIMPOSE over her image the wall of a little
girl's
bedroom, filled with treasured NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS about
women doctors, officials, bank presidents, women who had
established themselves in positions previously thought
to be
available only to men.

AMELIA (V.O.)

The soul that knows it not
Knows no release
From little things

DISSOLVE

TO HER

MEMORY

OF...

6

6

EXT. FIELD, DES MOINES - DAY

Two LITTLE GIRLS, maybe 10 years old, walking in a
field.
Amelia and a girlfriend. They stop, hearing...
The DRONING of an engine, a small red plane APPEARING
above
the treetops. The pilot seeing two girls alone in the
field,
SWOOPS down to BUZZ them. Amelia's friend runs for her
life.
But Amelia stands still, throws her arms WIDE, and the
plane...
...DROPS lower, and LOWER, as it CLOSES straight in on
the
slender girl with her outstretched arms. LOUDER and
FASTER,
as if intent on winning some impulsive duel of wills.
The
aircraft SCREAMS past, just above her head.

AMELIA (V.O.)

As the little red airplane passed
by, it said something to me.

Amelia beams. She fills her lungs, transported.

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

I don't think I've ever stopped
listening.

HOLD on her, hair and uniform whipping in the breeze.

SMASH CUT TO...

10.

7

7

INT. AMELIA'S PLANE - DAY

Amelia flying her little yellow Kinner. Feeling the
freedom
she thrilled to as a A
child.

AMELIA (V.O.)

Ten years, 28 jobs and an unspeak-
able number of crashes later, I
hadn't changed my mind.

She LIFTS the nose of the tiny craft. Begins to CLIMB.

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

I even had my own plane. Bought
with my last dime.

At the apex of her climb, she FLIPS into a breathtaking
LOOP
THE LOOP, as...

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

Course in the early days of
flying...

...her engine SPUTTERS. Then STALLS. The plane DIPS
into a
TAIL-SPIN, PLUNGING downward...

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

...crashing was so common, you
almost forgot it could kill you...
Amelia STRUGGLING to start the engine, the little plane
HURTLING toward earth, SPINNING as it goes.

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

SWOOPS
...until it did.
The engine COUGHS to life and at the last second she
harrowingly above the ground to SOAR FREE.

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

Almost.

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

8

8

big

up

A small HANGAR in a lonely field. See a group of...
...MECHANICS in their grease-stained jumpsuits. Three
guys and one little one working on an engine that's been
pulled from Amelia's Kinner. When the little guy comes
for air...
...he isn't a guy at all.

11.

AMELIA

Got it. I think.

INT. DENISON HOUSE, BOSTON - DAY

SAM CHAPMAN, a handsome young man is being led down an institutional hallway and out onto the grounds of this venerable settlement house. He finds...

...Amelia sitting cross-legged on the grass. Reading to a group of CHINESE GIRLS, who hang on her every animated word. On the periphery, ADULTS sit, taking in the story. They are of various ethnicities, homeless or handicapped or immigrant.

A

Two are blind. Amelia sees Sam...

MELIA

Girls, this is Mr. Samuel Chapman.
Sam, say hullo to the Octopus Club.
The Octopus Club waves to Sam. The adults wave, too.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

You're just in time. Alice has
come through the Looking Glass,
and things are getting, well...

OCTOPUS CLUB

(on cue)

REALLY STRANGE!**AMELIA**

They are, actually.
She pats the grass beside her. Sam has no choice but to sit.

EXT. GROUNDS - LATER

Amelia and Sam walk a wooded path beside the grounds. Through the chain link fence, they watch other social workers

playing with groups of children.

SAM

And it's a secret.

AMELIA

Has to be. Competition, you know.
Millionaire heiresses, hot shot
girl pilots. If George knew I told
you, he'd have me publicly flogged.

She looks over.

12.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

So long as he could sell tickets.
He's not smiling.

SAM

And no one else knows.

AMELIA

Marion. She's giving me a leave
of absence.

SAM

I would think so. Your name will
be in all the papers, and not just
Boston. Denison House stands to
come in for funding, national
attention.

AMELIA

Specially if I don't make it.

SAM

Don't joke about that.
She wasn't joking at all.

SAM (CONT'D)

You'll make it. And then you'll
have opportunities to work in

aviation. Anywhere you want.
She laughs.

AMELIA

Well, I'll have impressive
credentials as a long-distance
passenger. That's not exactly a
career in aviation.
She looks up at his eyes.

I AMELIA (CONT'D)

'm not going anywhere, social work
is my life. After all the years of
false starts, I found the thing I'm
meant to do.
Keep walking. She gives him time to say...

SAM

And where does that leave us?

13.

AMELIA

You do love to look on the dark
side. Whatever did you see in a
sunny character like me?
She gives him a sweet playful smile. It doesn't
reassure
him.

SAM

It's not as if I'd been putting
pressure on you.

AMELIA

What love means to you. What it
requires. Is the pressure.
He stops walking.

SAM

I love you. Is that such a
terrible problem?
She gazes at him. Can he even hear this?

AMELIA

The problem is what it's always
been. The problem is me.

INT. WALDORF ASTORIA HOTEL - DAY

11

11

signature

A

strips of

MOVIETONE NEWSREEL footage, accompanied by their
fanfare theme. Hotel conference room jammed with press.
sexy brunette in a sweater that seems to be made of
GOLD FOIL steps to a bank of microphones. Flashes start
POPPING.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The Queen of Diamonds Mabel Boll,
about to become the first female to
fly the Atlantic in the wake of
Lindbergh's historic journey,
regales an eager world press...
The sound switches to Mabel at the mikes...

MABEL

Okay, boys. I'll take any
questions you wanna throw my way.
Except about what's behind this
sweater.
The boys ROAR. Mabel keeps her smile tight.

MABEL (CONT'D)

The story. Behind it. Of course.

14.

As the laughter CONTINUES...

12 12 T

INT. HANGAR, EAST BOSTON AIRPORT - NIGHT

he heavy door rolls OPEN. George and Amelia enter the
brightly-lit hangar to see two men working on the
a sea-plane with golden wings. Its red-orange fuselage
stands beside gigantic PONTOONS, each 29 feet long. The
pontoons have been opened, and the men are attaching
the plane.
They turn toward us now. BILL STULTZ is short and wiry
quick eyes. Only 28, he seems weathered by his
and the streaks of gray through his hair. He is not
necessarily happy to see us.

AMELIA (V.O.)

George had told me Stultz was Adm.
Byrd's favorite pilot, fearless,
gifted. He drank. But George said
it never affected his work.
George waves as we approach. Bill and Amelia seem
each other.

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

When he said it, I must have had a
funny look. So I just said, 'Yeh,
I grew up around a guy like that.'

GEORGE

Boys, I'd like to introduce your
commander, Miss Amelia Earhart.

AMELIA

We felt 'commander' was less
grandiose than, say, 'empress.'
Bill doesn't smile. The other man does...

GEORGE

Say hello to Slim Gordon your
navigator.

She is shaking hands in that strong, direct way.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

And Bill Stultz here, simply the
most talented pilot working.
She takes Bill's powerful hand. The look between them
calm,
yet somehow intense. As if each is establishing a tone
for
their relationship.

15.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

We've got Byrd's pilot, we've got
his plane...

AMELIA

Y

ou mean the Admiral flies on
those?
The pontoons. She does not seem admiring.

GEORGE

Nope, those are new, personally
suggested by the old man himself.
Bill nods on that. Sure were.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

This way, if you're forced down
at sea, you can wait for a rescue.

AMELIA

Hmmn. What does that do to our
fuel?

BILL

Costs us at least 400 gallons.
Don't bother bringing clothes for
Paris, we'll be lucky to hit the
nearest beach in Ireland. Real
lucky.

GEORGE

The Admiral estimates the pontoons
only cut our range by 200 miles.
But Amelia looks to Bill. That's not really possible is
it?

BILL

The Admiral is the Admiral. He
gets to estimate any damn thing he
wants. All we have to do is figure
out how to fly without petrol.
She turns to George with challenging eyes.

BILL (CONT'D)

Don't go blaming the bookseller.
He's been all through this with
Mrs. Guest, but she worships the
Admiral. And it's money that puts
planes in the air.

AMELIA

I wonder if it can keep them up
there. Not that I've ever had
enough to try.

16.

Bill's small smile. Maybe the girl's all right.

13

13

EXT. DOCK - LATER

lights George and Amelia approach a waiting motorboat, as the
of Boston glimmer across the harbor. His head is down.
She's watching his profile.

AMELIA

Sorry. I'll try keeping my mouth shut.

GEORGE

What I ought to try. Is listening to you once in awhile.

H

e meant that. And she seems oddly touched.

AMELIA

Careful. I could get to like it. No reaction from him. He hops into the boat. Turns, out his hand. She hesitates. Clearly doesn't need his to jump into a boat. Their eyes lock. We are watching decide. And then... She reaches to clasp his hand. Hops down beside him.

holds
help
her

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Thank you, Simpkin. Thank you for everything.

GEORGE

(a smile)
Simpkin.

AMELIA

It's in a book. Oh, that's right. You read the ones you publish. Her smile is friendly, not flirtatious. She goes to sit the bow. He doesn't follow. But he is watching.

in

14

14

EXT. ROOF, COPLEY PLAZA HOTEL - DAY

Amelia in a flying outfit. Hands on her hips as if posing.

AMELIA (V.O.)

There's a Beatrix Potter story about a cat named Simpkin.

They

PULL BACK to see the PHOTOGRAPHER, George beside him.
are on a hotel rooftop, precariously high above Boston.

T

A

17.

AMELIA (V.O.)

He wasn't happy unless he had
several mice, each under a
different teacup. So he could
never become bored.

We see that Amelia's POSE looks exactly the SAME as a photo
of CHARLES LINDBERGH in the photographer's hand. It is
labeled 'LUCKY LINDY.'

AMELIA (V.O.)

The illusion of activity was
essential for him to feel at peace.
The photographer now shows George ANOTHER PHOTO of Lindbergh
in a different pose.

AMELIA

What are you boys doing over there?

GEORGE

Trying to make you look like a
girl.

George studies the photo, then goes to Amelia and begins
moving her body into the new pose. Tilting her head to
Lindbergh's angle.

MELIA (V.O.)

I wondered. Was I Mr. Putnam's
43rd mouse? Or his 307th.

Now touching her, adjusting her coat, fluffing a bit of her
hair, pulling the collar around to frame her face...

G

GEORGE

he more we can make you look
like a girl, the better.

AMELIA

Oh god, is it worth the effort?
He cocks his head, studies her. Nah, guess not.

GEORGE

Wondering who should play you
in the film of all this. I'm
thinking Chaplin.

AMELIA

Valentino's not available?
He shakes his head sadly. Adjusts her collar once more.
This time, his hands linger.

18.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Two things. One, Chaplin can't
play me because he's perfect for
you. And two, you have company.

She glances to where a WOMAN, beautiful and
aristocratic, is

her.
being helped onto the roof. George's face lights to see
them
He rushes over, sweeps her into his arms, kisses her
tenderly. Amelia smiles to see this, makes her like
both.

GEORGE

Amelia Earhart, this is Dorothy
Binney Putnam.
The women trade smiles. They shake hands, holding eye
contact.

DOROTHY

Great to meet you. George talks
so much about you.
(a wink)
In fact, lately, you're all he
does talk about.

three- George steps in close, and the photographer SNAPS a
shot. And another.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Hold those smiles for one more,
please.

LIGHT 15

EXT. JEFFREY YACHT CLUB HARBOR, EAST BOSTON - EARLY

15
are
a
plane's
see...
The FRIENDSHIP bobbing on its pontoons. Bill and Slim
off-loading equipment and other gear from the plane to
TUGBOAT filled with support crew and family. The
engines REV in the predawn stillness. PULL BACK to

1

EXT. YACHT CLUB DOCK - EARLY LIGHT

boots.
her

...the yacht club dock. George and Amelia alone at the railing. She's wearing her leather flight jacket and

They stare out at the plane, so frail and awkward. From bag now, she pulls three ENVELOPES...
Puts them in George's hand. Straight, unblinking...

AMELIA

Popping off letters. For my dad,
my mom, my sis. You know. In
case.

19.

He stares down. Rocked by the weight of this against the simplicity of her words. The top envelope says: DEAREST

DAD.

GEORGE

I'm honored. That you'd leave
these with me.

AMELIA

Who else? If I do pop off, it's
your fault.
Said in her sunny way. But she's not kidding. It takes a
beat before he can offer...

GEORGE

I'll call them once you're safely
on your way.

AMELIA

Sam will handle that. They trust
him.
That registers.

GEORGE

I've figured out the Simpkin thing,

you know.

AMELIA

Have you.

GEORGE

Sure. There are so few books I haven't published, it was easy to find.

Well...?

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Beatrix Potter, the Tailor of Gloucester. He's a cat in a green frock coat.

AMELIA

But why is he you?

Oh.

GEORGE

He's brilliant, charismatic...

AMELIA

So you haven't actually read it.
Do you actually read?

H

20.

GEORGE

...neurotic, compulsive,
manipulative. Am I getting warmer?

She sighs.

AMELIA

P

ray I make it. Or the secret pops
off with me.

A held look. A friendly...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Well. See ya.

She walks off down the dock toward the Friendship.
e stands watching her go.

DISSOLVE

TO...

17

17

INT. SMALL HOTEL, NEWFOUNDLAND - MORNING

Amelia alone, leaving her hotel room in her flight
jacket.

Locking the door.

SUPERIMPOSE: FIRST STOP: CANADA

AMELIA (V.O.)

Our first hop was to Canada, to
start from as close as we could get
to Ireland. Just in case we
couldn't get the thing in the air
and had to row.

She walks briskly down the corridor.

AMELIA (V.O.)

The fuel was going to be so close,
every single mile counted.

Turns a corner. Approaches the dining room door.

AMELIA (V.O.)

George told me to keep to my room,
just in case there was a reporter
or two somewhere.

She enters the hotel dining room. Stops cold. Across
the
room a disgruntled Bill and a sheepish Slim stare at
her from

one. their breakfast, surrounded by 15 REPORTERS and PHOTOGRAPHERS. Holy shit. Half a dozen CAMERAS RISE as

It is a defining moment. And Amelia...
Cocks her head. Throws an effortless golden smile.

R

21.

AMELIA

Amelia Hi there, boys. How are the ham
and eggs?
The FLASHES EXPLODE as one. They keep POPPING as
makes her way to them.

BILL

The Don't blame us, lady. I think
somebody's starting to sell books.
The reporters are handing her their morning editions.
FOR New York Times front page headline: BOSTON GIRL STARTS

ATLANTIC HOP.

watched There beneath the headline, the glamorous PHOTO we
being taken on the Copley Hotel roof, Lady Lindy. Next
to it, an earlier photo of her as a demure social worker.

A

and melia is sifting through the other papers, grinning

shaking her head.

EPORTER

Say, Amelia. What have you got for
Mabel Boll to chew on?

AMELIA

Now why would a famous gal like
Mabel give a thought to someone
like me? I don't have a single
sweater made out of gold.

cracks a The boys ROAR, Slim louder than anyone. Even Bill
smile. They're shouting, teasing, YOU CAN'T KID US!

AMELIA (CONT'D)

chair. A Hey, not even silver.
The boys make room. Bill rises to hold Amelia's
friendly murmur...

BILL

The ham's a little tough,
Commander. But the bacon's swell.

18

18

INT. WALDORF-ASTORIA HOTEL - DAY

signature MOVIEZONE NEWSREEL footage, accompanied by their
jammed fanfare theme. Once more, the hotel conference room
coat, with press. Today Mabel wears a luxurious silver fox
Flashes shimmies up to a bank of microphones at the podium.
start POPPING.

22.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The Queen of Diamonds Mabel Boll,
upstaged by upstart social worker,
seems madder than a rich wet hen.
Hey Mabel, tell us about your
rival!

The sound switches to Mabel leaning her sultry voice to the
mikes...

MABEL

Well, how would any woman feel
about some tart who steals her man?
Reporters furiously writing, more flashes EXPLODE.

MABEL (CONT'D)

Bill Stultz and I were going to
make history together, until this
poor little social worker and her
sugar daddy, oh excuse me,
'publisher,' started throwing money
and I don't know what else at him.

R

REPORTER

Mabel, are you implying Miss
Earhart used her feminine charms on
your pilot?

MABEL

I don't know, Charlie, I never seen
her. Has she got any?
LAUGHTER, they're all calling out. She shows them a smoky
smile, but stays on message.

MABEL (CONT'D)

Well, she had to use something on
somebody to get from nowhere to
here. You figure it out, or wait
til George Putnam feeds it to you.
Two dozen questions at once. She's not even listening.

MABEL (CONT'D)

We're going to Canada, waiting for
some good weather on the Atlantic,
and then we'll kick Little Miss
Whoozis in the keester.

REPORTER

What makes you so cocky that she
won't leave first?

23.

MABEL

Rusty, we can carry enough fuel to
go to China. That thing they're
flying can't load enough gas to
make Yonkers. Tell that to
Putnam's girlie. And while you're
at it...

She snuggles the gleaming fox fur around her.

MABEL (CONT'D)

Tell her I do wear silver. So I'm
two up on her.

EXT. HARBOR, TREPASSEY, NEWFOUNDLAND - EARLY MORNING

19

19

bleak

unsuccessful

MOVIETONE NEWSREEL CONTINUES. We are looking at foggy,
Trepassey Harbor as the Friendship makes an
attempt to take off.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Eleven days of failure for plucky
Amelia Earhart and her crew. If it
isn't storms over the Atlantic,
it's the inability of the
seaplane's pontoons to lift from
the sea.

S

ERIES OF ANGLES. One failed take-off after another.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Perhaps it's for the best.
Remember, no woman has beat the
jinx of the Atlantic and three have
died trying. Including a princess
and the niece of former President
Woodrow Wilson.

on the The plane's engine SPUTTERS and STALLS. It floats
sea.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Maybe this one's not to be. Hey,
Mabel! How's your weather report?

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR, NEWFOUNDLAND - LATE NIGHT

20

20

room,
the
anger.

Amelia coming down the hotel corridor. She passes a
and hearing DRUNKEN LAUGHTER from a group of MEN within
room...
She stops. Stares at the door with more concern than

A

24.

21

21

INT. ROOM - SAME MOMENT

Bill, Slim and three of the REPORTERS are drinking up a storm.

BILL

EXPLORER, MY ASS. BYRD COULDN'T

FIND A PUBIC HAIR IN A WHOREHOUSE

T RUSH HOUR!

INT. HOTEL ROOM, NEWFOUNDLAND - LATER

22

22

men

Amelia curled up on her bed with CHARTS of the Atlantic spread everywhere. From next door, the sound of drunken

CONTINUE.

to...

Amelia looks down from her charts. Her mind going

FLASHBACK: EXT. HOUSE, ATCHISON, KANSAS - DAY

23

23

We

hair,

Seven-year-old KIDS dressed as cowboys and Indians are gathered on the front lawn of a white clapboard home.

CLOSE on a clear-eyed tomboy with war paint and tousled

the AMELIA at seven, looking up excitedly as a car pulls to
curb.

H
er FATHER climbs slowly from the car, WOBLES his way
across the lawn. The kids part to let him through, the
confusion and disappointment on every face. He ignores them all,
even Amelia. The front door opens...
...Amelia's MOTHER gazes at him with shame and disdain.
As she helps him stagger inside...

INT. HOTEL ROOM - EARLY MORNING

24
24
Amelia in her flight gear, sitting on the edge of her
bed, an open TELEGRAM lies beside her. Her elbows rest on her
knees.
Her hands are locked together. Her profile is stony,
determined. TILT DOWN to the telegram...
It reads: WEATHER PERMITTING, MABEL FLIES THIS
AFTERNOON.
She grabs her flight bag, leaves the room. She only has
to travel as far as the next door. POUNDS on it. Waits.
Pounds LOUDER with both fists.
Slim opens the door. Looking bad. Bill sits up
in bed, groggy, disoriented.

BILL

Christ, what time is...

25.

AMELIA

Time to fly. Get up, get dressed,
we're going now.

Slim She is calm and angry at once. A powerful combination.
pulls his pants off a chair.

BILL

Where's the weather report?

blinks, She goes to his bed. Hands him a slip of paper. He
still waking up. Reads.

BILL (CONT'D)

It's not good enough.

AMELIA

Great. Maybe Mabel will think so,
too. Because if she doesn't, she's
going to Paris and you're going
home. Today.

B

ILL

It's not good enough.

AMELIA

It's fine, there's a tail wind all
the way, we'll off-load to 700
gallons, which gets us off the
water and the wind gets us to
Ireland.

BILL

We've had better than this and we
haven't gone.

AMELIA

But this is the day Mabel's ready,
so we're going now. The weather
is going to get better and we'll
be there to enjoy it.

BILL

You're serious.

AMELIA

Just as serious as you're hung

over.
 (to Slim)
 You go now, get the late weather,
 we'll meet you at the plane.
Go. Now! Slim pulls on his shoes, grabs his jacket, his
bag. Looks to Bill, but the pilot is glaring at his
commander.

26.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

(QUIET)

 Slim, get out. I've got this.
A beat. Slim goes, the door shuts quietly. Amelia
sits on
 the edge of Bill's bed.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

 I've loved one person
 unconditionally, Bill. He is the
 most caring and generous and
 charming and flat-out funny guy
 I'll ever know. He's my father.
Her eyes are burning with this. And Bill keeps
quiet.
 Anyone would.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

 He's a drunk. And he's let me down
 all my life.
She leans closer.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

 Now you get out of that bed. And
 you fly that god-damned thing to
 Ireland. Or I swear to you,
 Bill...
Just above a whisper...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

 I swear to you I will. Or die
 trying.

Y

ou got that? Do you?

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And either way. You're going to be
living with it.

25

25

EXT. TREPASSEY HARBOR - LATER

beside
come
steps
It's dark and cold. Bill and Amelia stand at the dock
their plane. He's drinking coffee as they watch Slim
down the quay with a slip of paper in his hand. Amelia
forward to take it. Reads with neutral eyes.

AMELIA

onto a
engine
Good. Slim, start the engines.
She still hasn't given the paper to Bill. Slim steps
pontoon. Starts CRANKING up the propellers. As the
KICKS to life...

S

27.

Looks to She hands the weather report to Bill. He reads.
her eyes.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

You signed a contract. You've got
a direct instruction from me to go.
That report indicates some degree
of risk and it's a risk I'm taking.

BILL

Have a nice flight.

AMELIA

Thanks.
She motions to Slim, get on board. The navigator grins,
starts to climb up, looking back at Bill...

SLIM

Hey, I'm scared shitless of this
dame.
She climbs up after him. One look back...

AMELIA

engines Read tomorrow's papers, Bill.
 We'll both be in them.
And disappears. Alone on the dock, Bill hears the
REV. Jesus, God, she's going to do it. He takes a step
toward the plane, but her head appears in the hatch...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

So, to take off, you pull back
on the thing, right?
Her perfectly straight, innocent face. He BUSTS out
laughing. This fucking girl.

T

osses his coffee. Climbs aboard.

INT. FRIENDSHIP - MOMENTS LATER

26 26
26 WITH Amelia as she locks the hatch. For the first time,
we

for can see the inside of the plane. The cabin is too small
everything anyone to stand. The plane has been emptied of
pulls but two huge elliptical FUEL TANKS.
he wedges herself between the gigantic tanks. Bill
the throttle and the Fokker Tri-motor LURCHES forward,
STRAINING against the surface of the sea in a rattling,
throbbing desperately VIBRATING all-out attempt.

28.

as Amelia crawls to the tiny window, her face to the glass
WHINE chop and spray FLY PAST like shrapnel, and the engines
and PULSE louder...
...twenty seconds, thirty. Still on the surface. Forty
seconds, fifty, her eyes shut, her forehead bangs
against the glass, come on, sixty seconds, and at 67...

27
27

EXT. HARBOR - SAME MOMENT

...the seaplane LIFTS, struggles, then SOARS FREE.

INT. FRIENDSHIP - DAY/NIGHT

28
28

Amelia kneels at the tiny window. A kid on a rainy day.

STORM that
explosions.

be

between

seat, she

crawls

His face

Only outside this window is impenetrable FOG and a
ROCKS the plane like the shock waves of endless
As she braces herself against the hull...
...water DRIPS onto her from a loose seam. Could this
dangerous? She looks around. Through the opening
the elliptical fuel tanks...
...Bill and Slim at the controls. Bill is banging on
something beside the instrument panel. Beneath his
sees the TOOLBOX. The water drips on her faster. She
forward toward the boys, arriving to see...
...Bill POUNDING what we can now see is his RADIO.
is red, angry. She watches for a beat.

AMELIA

YOU OKAY?

BILL

BE BETTER IF OUR DAMN RADIO WOULD

JOIN THE PARTY!

impaired

beneath his

whiskey.

He never turns to her, but she studies him. Is he
or simply frustrated? She slips the toolbox from
seat and crawls back to the leak. But as she opens the
box...
...there, among the wrench and pliers, a BOTTLE of
She stares at it as we SNAP TO...

29

29

DAY

FLASHBACK: EXT. AMELIA'S HOUSE, ATCHISON, KANSAS -

from

RAPID SERIES OF ANGLES. War-painted Amelia looking up
the cowboy she's tied to a tree. The car pulling to the

curb. Out climbs...

29.

children. ...her FATHER glassy-eyed. Stumbling through the
room Her MOTHER at the door.
beneath ANGLE. Amelia still in war paint enters her parents'
into She knows just where to go. Opens a drawer, digs
him. crisply starched shirts. Finds the BOTTLE.
ANGLE. Amelia in the bathroom, POURING the bottle out
the sink. She looks up in the mirror to see...
...her father in the doorway. She turns straight to
MEETS his eyes, direct and unafraid.

30

30

INT. FRIENDSHIP

plane BACK to Amelia with Bill's bottle, as the battered
the lurches every which way in the storm. She lifts it from
plane toolbox. Hides it in the camera bag, as suddenly the
ceiling, DROPS fifty feet, and Amelia is SLAMMED against the
turned then crashes back to the floor. Dazed, she sees Bill
around...

BILL

HOLD ONTO SOMETHING FOR CHRISSAKE!

been
make

She GRABS the leg of the navigation table which has
bolted down. Stares out the window, wondering if she'll
it.

AMELIA (V.O.)

Dearest Dad. Hooray for the last
grand adventure. I wish I had won,
but it was worthwhile anyway. You
know that. I have no faith we'll
meet anywhere again, but I wish we
might.

HOLD on the gray eyes. DISSOLVE TO...
LATER. Amelia at the window, still opaque with fog.
Suddenly, the plane SWOOPS down toward a clearing in

the
our

clouds. There to the south, a FREIGHTER running across
path. No land in sight.

A

flight

melia SCRAWLS a note, ties it to an ORANGE from her
bag, and crawls back to the boys.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

HOW FAR TO LAND?

The boys are studying the freighter.

30.

BILL

RADIO'S STILL OUT. NO WAY TO
COMPUTE WINDSPEED AND DRIFT IN THE
FOG, SO GOD ONLY KNOWS WHERE
IRELAND IS.

Checks his watch.

BILL (CONT'D)

NINETEEN HOURS PLUS. WE'VE GOT

MAYBE AN HOUR OF PETROL LEFT.

PROBABLY LESS.

She shows him the note and the orange.

AMELIA

WESTERN UNION, SPECIAL DELIVERY.

Bill has to smile. Are you serious? As a heart attack.

Okay, he tries to get closer to the ship, but we're jerked and buffeted as we swing past and Amelia...

...DROPS the orange toward the freighter, watching the heavy winds CARRY it two hundred yards WIDE of the mark. Our three stare grimly.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

IF WE LAND NEAR THEM, WE'VE GOT A

RESCUE.

Their eyes are locked.

BILL

THINK THOSE RIDICULOUS SKIS COULD

HOLD US UP IN THIS KIND OF SEA?

She's been wondering the same.

BILL (CONT'D)

YOU SAID WE WERE GOING TO MAKE IT.

ARE YOU A LIAR?

AMELIA

NOT ON THIS OCCASION.

A rare smile...

BILL

WELL, THEN.

And SWOOPS back on course. Amelia's hand squeezes his shoulder. DISSOLVE TO...

LATER. Amelia crouched behind Bill's seat. Fog starting to

break up.

A

31.

Her face drawn, she almost seems to be holding her
breath. Something down below. As we drop, we hear the engines

A

SPUTTER.

MELIA

WHEN'S THAT HOUR OF FUEL RUN OUT?

BILL

EIGHTEEN MINUTES AGO. WHY?

She glances over to Slim, who is busy unwrapping a
sandwich. She can't believe this. He takes a healthy bite.

AMELIA

THE LONGER I OBSERVE MEN THE MORE

I AM AWESTRUCK. BY THEIR CAPACITY

FOR DENIAL.

She crawls back to the navigation table. As she looks
out her window, a SANDWICH SAILS past! She WHIPS
around...Slim's arms raised in jubilation. Down below...
Land.

EXT. SHORE, BURRY PORT, WALES - DAY

31

31

in for

WORKERS

hundred

WAVES

back.

workers

on

her

The little plane sputtering, shuddering, as Bill drops

a splashdown. We PAN to the shore...

...a rural railroad dock. Deserted except for THREE

who glance up as the Friendship taxis to a buoy a few

yards offshore. Amelia at the hatch, tiny in distance,

a towel...

...one friendly worker takes off his coat and WAVES

Then all three guys go back to work. SNAP TO...

REVERSE ANGLE. From the Friendship, we watch the

ignoring us. Bill and Slim HOLLER and jump up and down

the pontoons. Nobody cares. Amelia sits in the doorway,

legs swinging free.

AMELIA

Out of gas. May have to swim for

I

t.

LATER. Amelia alone. Six pages written by her side.

Still

working, as a rowboat pulls up. Bill stands in the bow.

Calls to her...

BILL

Mr. Putnam phoned. He says there's

fella coming from London. Hilton

Railey.

32.

AMELIA

Oh, yeh. Very important man. More
important than any of us.
Really? Yep.

BILL

He says ya mustn't come ashore til
he gets here. No matter what.
Great. She doesn't like it, but there it is. She waves,
so
long.

BILL (CONT'D)

Some kind of royalty, is he?
She nods.

AMELIA

Public relations.
Goes back to work. DISSOLVE TO...
LATER. Amelia sits with her papers in her lap, dangling her
feet from the hatch. Alone. Hear the BUZZ of...
...a PLANE dropping slowly from the sky, gliding onto the
water on its pontoons. She stares at it. Gathers up her
things.
LATER. Amelia sitting in a tiny dinghy, behind her the
Friendship in distance. She is being rowed to shore. Our
VIEW is over the back of the man rowing. Amelia is staring
past him, vaguely apprehensive.
REVERSE ANGLE. She's looking at TWO THOUSAND WELSHMEN
swarming the docks. You can't even see the sand.
The crowd is silent and staring. No cheers. As if they were
staring at an alien or an animal in the zoo. Bill and Slim
help pull the dinghy to the rocky shore. But when Amelia
jumps out, the crowd...

.
...begins to soberly APPLAUD, and slowly CLOSES IN around
her. At first she seems pleased, trying to shake every hand
thrust toward her. She doesn't see that Bill and Slim have
been shunted to the back. Suddenly...
...people get BOLDER. CLAPPING her on the back, reaching to
TOUCH her, someone SNATCHES her scarf, she looks around
frantically for Bill and Slim as...
...a SHERIFF and three DEPUTIES muscle their way to her

using
billy clubs to push people back. They surround Amelia, begin
to escort her to the station...

33.

SHERIFF

Sorry Ma'am. Shoulda brought
more men.

AMELIA

No, really, this is very sweet,
it's an honor. I'm actually
enjoying it.

SHERIFF

That's a good thing.
She looks at him as they are jostled along.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Because you're stuck with it.
From here on.
She is brought to a smiling avuncular HILTON RAILEY,
standing
beside the closest thing Burry Port has to a limo. She
throws an affectionate arm around him, kisses his
cheek.

AMELIA

Hullo, Hilton.
Railey stands back as FLASHBULBS catch the moment.
He's
brought photographers with him. And more.

R

AILEY

Amelia, say hullo to Allen Raymond
of the New York Times.
A hearty handshake. She holds out her sheets of
paper.

AMELIA

I believe you've come for these.
Both men regard the pages as if they were gold bullion.
Come

for these indeed.

EXT. SOUTHAMPTON - DAY

32

32

PEOPLE
the
BLARES
FLASHES
center of
MAYOR of
she
of the
Sydney
story

MOVIETONE FOOTAGE of Amelia being welcomed by a SEA OF
on the dock at Southampton. A mob . Folks spilling into
water. Ships circling, fireboats spray, every craft
its horn. Police hold back the screaming throng as
EXPLODE and NEWSREEL CAMERAS CHURN. Amelia at the
the storm. Welcomed by AMY GUEST and the lady LORD
Southampton.
Throughout, we see SUPERIMPOSED IMAGES of the article
gave Railey, displaying her byline, on the front pages
London Times, New York Times, the Times of India,
Morning Herald, the Toronto Star, Le Monde, as her
echoes around the world. These IMAGES CONTINUE OVER...

34 .

the
gallery at

QUICK SERIES OF ANGLES. Amelia cheering animatedly at
races...watching tennis at Wimbledon...front row
the House of Commons, as...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

A whirlwind week for Boston's

3

Amelia Earhart, our own Lady Lindy.
Races at Ascot on Gold Cup
day...watching Helen Wills Moody
play at Wimbledon...Lady Astor's
guest at the House of Commons...

INT. HYDE PARK HOTEL, LONDON - DAY

3

33

gathered
bank
steps to

MOVIETONE NEWSREEL CONTINUES. The British press are
in a huge Victorian parlor. Dark woods, rich leather, a
of microphones, an electric expectancy...
Bill and Slim stand next to a seated Amy. Amelia
the microphones...

AMELIA

I was a passenger on this journey.
Just a passenger. Everything that
was done to bring us across was
done by Wilmer Stultz and Slim
Gordon. All the praise...

REPORTER

(calls out)
But you can fly, can't you?
Amelia stares at the man. Conflicting agendas.

AMELIA

This flight was solely to the
credit of Bill and Slim. Women
should know, however, that I have
had 500 hours solo flying and once
held the women's altitude record.

REPORTER

So you could have done it yourself!

AMELIA

This particular flight, under these
conditions, I wonder if anyone but
Bill Stultz could have pulled it
off. But certainly, one day a
woman will do this. As easily, as

skillfully, as professionally as
any man.
Such calm self-possession. Such confidence in that.

Y

3

S

35.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Aviation is clear today for the
pioneer. And if the pioneer has
good ideas nobody will ask whether
P the pioneer is a man or woman.
olite applause. Mostly from women. She looks

around the

room.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I hear your doubt. That doubt is
our challenge. This is where our
Atlantic flight, or any other good
flight by a woman can help...

She nods. To them, to herself.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

It starts women thinking.

EXT. BROADWAY, NEW YORK CITY - DAY

34

34

streets,

Ticker tape PARADE down Broadway, crowds lining the
leaning from windows to welcome Amelia home.

UPERIMPOSE: NEW YORK CITY

WAVING to
the

Amelia sits in an open car between Bill and Slim,
everyone. In the front seat, George and Dorothy share
moment.

EXT. RECEPTION HALL - DAY

5

35

Amelia flanked by George and Dorothy, coming out of a
reception hall. Amelia glances to George...

AMELIA

Guess you can burn those letters.
Dorothy wonders. Letters?

GEORGE

I saved them for your book.
One simple shake of Amelia's head. A soft...

AMELIA

The book's yours. The letters are
mine.

He smiles. Bows in submission.

GEORGE

ou're the boss.

36.

DOROTHY

Hey, that's my job.
(to Amelia)

Do you think there's enough of him
to boss for the two of us?

Amelia still looking at George. Laughs.

AMELIA

Barely enough for one.

A battery of reporters and flashbulbs wait by our motorcade.

REPORTER

Miss Earhart, can you tell us some-
thing about your future plans?

S

he likes this question. Fixes the man with that clear,
honest gaze.

AMELIA

Well, being a social worker by
trade and passion, I'll be going
back to work at Denison House when
all this fun is over.

She sends the guy a smile, and a dozen FLASHES catch it.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

...if I haven't been fired.

George holds the door of their limo. She looks up to him
with a mischievous smile. And with no warning...

...Amelia bypasses the limo, climbs into the SIDECAR of a
cop's motorcycle, and SMACKS its side. The cop looks up to
George, who...

...nods, go for it. And the cop DOES, wheeling out into traffic, opening up the SIREN, as everyone laughs or cheers or darts into the street desperate for a fleeting photo. George watching her go. Dorothy watching George.

REPORTER

Mr. Putnam, sir. How did a social worker like Miss Earhart become comfortable as a celebrity so quickly?

George smiles. His eyes still following Amelia.

GEORGE

The truth is, she was a celebrity on smaller stages all her life.

(MORE)

37.

GEORGE (cont'd)

This is just when the rest of us discovered her.

And Dorothy. Watches this, too.

36

36

EXT. PUTNAM HOME, RYE, NEW YORK - DAY

a
her
Amelia in a sunlit garden ringed by trees. She sits at folding table, writing longhand. A large dog lies at feet.

AMELIA (V.O.)

So they took me home with them to Rye. And I lived there, while I wrote my book.

an
window.
PULL BACK to see our view has been George's. He sits at antique writing desk, watching her through a picture

He rises slowly. We see that he has been reviewing a CONTRACT, which he takes with him.

A

NGLE. Amelia writing, looking up to see George coming
down
the back porch steps to the garden.

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

I thought he'd be a tyrant and that
I would have to manage him.
He smiles as he approaches. She goes back to work.

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

Instead he was kind and generous.
And only picked the fights he
needed to win.
He drops the contract on her table. She looks at
it.

GEORGE

Lucky Strike endorsement. I wrote
the copy myself.

AMELIA

What does it say? 'I don't smoke
but you should?'

GEORGE

It says Lucky Strikes were the only
cigarettes aboard the Friendship.
That's true.

AMELIA

True and misleading. Why would I
sign that?

GEORGE

So Bill and Slim get paid.

38.

Oh. His smile simple, comfortable.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

If you're too proud to take tobacco

money, donate it to Byrd's expedition, and we get great publicity.
She stares at him with hard eyes. His smile just becomes
sign
her.
more relaxed. An easy win, no big deal. She begins to
the contract. He places a stack of letters in front of

GEORGE (CONT'D)

This week's marriage proposals.
The top one's the most creative.
It's from Sing Sing.
She starts to read. Her eyes widen. Goodness.
AMELIA (reads)
'...in the prison yard, so everyone
can watch and share in our...'

(

looks up)

Did you write the copy on this one,
too?

DOROTHY (O.S., approaching)

Have you no shame, George? No
sense of the scandal you create?

They look up. She has a tray of lemonade and cookies.

DOROTHY (CONT'D)

You make her work for nothing. At
least you can feed her.

(to Amelia)

Are you done yet? If not, make him
write the rest, he will anyway.

INT. AUDITORIUM, BARNARD COLLEGE, NEW YORK - NIGHT

37

37

A women's college. The hall is packed.

GEORGE (V.O.)

The lecture and publicity schedule
was fierce. I was with her pretty
much all the time.
Amelia and George alone in the wings.

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

This was the moment of opportunity.
 Could we launch her into Lindbergh
 status as a permanent icon, before
 her name fell out of the news-
 papers.

He re-ties her scarf. Checking out the effect.

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

We had separate agendas. For her,
 it was the advancement of aviation
 and of women.

He very slightly rearranges her hair, as if every lock
 matters.

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

As for me, I liked to tell myself
 it was about the money. Though
 there was never much of that left
 over.

She stands for inspection, with her trace of a teasing
 smile.

He holds out his hand and she gives him her note cards.

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

Really, it was about the chance
 to be around her.

He flips through the A

cards, frowning as he goes.

MELIA (George imitation)

This will never do, A.E., simply
 unacceptable.

He looks up. She starts pacing around, gesturing as he
 would...

AMELIA (George imitation)

You need more ammunition in these
 cards, and where's the goddamned
 humor, for Chrissake? By which I
 mean something actually funny!

He's trying to look annoyed. It isn't easy.

AMELIA (George imitation)

And please remember not to turn
your pretty little backside to the
crowd when you use your pointer,
it's your face they're paying to
see. Well, most of them.
She WHIPS around. He's deadpan.

40.

AMELIA (George imitation)
And another thing. Your hats.
Are a menace.
Staring at each other.
GEORGE (softly)
Everything about you. Is a menace.
The stare holds. Because this is the moment.

AMELIA (V.O.)
I remember the first kiss.
It is only one step. Her hand goes to his chest.
Her eyes
close, as...
And deep.
She brings her mouth to his. Tender and strong.
It is an act of decision.
from
A held look. No one smiles. We hear her name ANNOUNCED
the podium. But she keeps looking at him. And as the
APPLAUSE CONTINUES, she finally...
...turns. STRIDES onto the stage, with one graceful
wave,
she brings the applause to a crescendo.

AMELIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Of course, I knew all the stories
T
hat Dorothy had been having a
torrid affair with Fred Upton.
Everyone did.
She steps to the microphone. The crowd quiets.

AMELIA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But I didn't kiss him because I

AMELIA

Relax, George. I meant a Coke.
As she leads Elinor into the sitting room of their suite,
the
girl's eye falls on the door to the bedroom. It is slightly
ajar, revealing an unmade double bed. Unseen by the others,
the kid reacts. Oh, my.

L

ATER. Tea in the sitting room. Elinor leaning forward,
guileless, eager...

ELINOR

They're saying you get \$500 a week
on the lecture circuit.

GEORGE

On a bad week.

AMELIA

On a good week.

The girl looks from one to the other.

AMELIA

All depends. On whether you want
the sell or the real.

ELINOR

Oh, I don't underestimate the value
of selling. It's why I'm here.

GEORGE

A 16-year-old girl sets an altitude
record, then makes headlines
illegally flying under the four
bridges of the East River. You
don't seem to need much help
selling yourself.

ELINOR

Well, actually Mr. Putnam, I was

hoping you could do to me what
you've done to her.
Inadvertently, her eyes flick to the bedroom door.
Catching
Uh- this, our couple shares a dry smile. The kid sees that.
oh.

ELINOR (CONT'D)

What I mean is. It's a good thing.
That's why I want it.
Now our couple is trying not to laugh.

GEORGE

Just so we're clear, young lady.
What is your primary ambition?
ELINOR (straight back)
To take Amelia's place as the
number one female pilot.
The honesty, the suddenness, leave George atypically
dumbstruck.

AMELIA

Well, good for you! I would have
expected nothing less. You want
a tip?

ELINOR

I do.

AMELIA

Keep doing what you're doing.
The girl nods, seriously. Okay.

A

MELIA (CONT'D)

And don't let anyone turn you
around.

INT. PUTNAM HOUSE - CHRISTMAS DAY

39
39
everywhere.

Holiday party in progress. Christmas decorations

is
with
the
as

A small crowd around the living room bar where George
telling a story.
Now we see Dorothy standing, drinking, watching George
hard eyes. She turns on her heels and walks OUT into
garden. George sees this, excuses himself, follows her,
we PAN to...

43.

seen it

...Amelia standing with a group of guests. She's
all.

40

40

EXT. GARDEN - MOMENTS LATER

fuming.

Here she comes along the roses, still drinking, still
A figure comes up behind her. Falls in step.

GEORGE

Lovely party, huh?

DOROTHY

Depends on your point of view.
I've been listening to some idiot
brag about his girlfriend.
Still walking. She never looks at him.

GEORGE

Well, in that case, for your
information, it is a lovely party
indeed. Anything on your mind?

DOROTHY

It's not so much that my husband is having an affair with his meal ticket. It's just a pity we can't have one honest conversation about it.

GEORGE

What's wrong with this one? A promising start, I'd say, in the honesty department.

She finishes her drink. Throws the glass away. From our ANGLE we can now see D

Amelia in the window, watching them.

DOROTHY

If this is what you call an honest talk, I'd say you need some practice.

GEORGE

Great. Let's try one about you and Fred Upton.

She stops walking. Turns in shock, to see his easy smile.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Well, I'm waiting for our practice conversation. Hoping I'll learn something. About honesty.

44 .

She GLARES at him, and storms off. He lets her go. Hear a car engine TURN OVER. Dorothy PEELING OUT. George reflects. As he walks back toward the party, he now sees Amelia in the window. He stops. Their look holds.

INT. KITCHEN - LATE NIGHT

41

41

late. A

Followed by

George at the kitchen table in dim light. It's very
HAND places a steaming mug of coffee before him.
a slice of pie. A fork. He smiles. And softly...

GEORGE

Dorothy and I are through.
She sits beside him. Very close.

AMELIA

For a long, long time.

GEORGE

It's different now.
She looks at him. Squints. How?

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Marry me.
Oh. A breath.

AMELIA

I can't do that.

GEORGE

If you give it a chance, you'll
learn to love me.
He seems so sunny and strong. What can he be
feeling?

AMELIA

I already love you. That's why I
can't marry you.

GEORGE (a murmur)

Well, that explains it. For a
minute there, I thought you were
stuck for an excuse.

S

he comes close enough to kiss.

AMELIA

I know me. And you don't. Not
really.

GEORGE

What if I promise not to learn?

45.

AMELIA

The day will come. When I will run
away. And when it does...
He stops her with a kiss.

GEORGE

If you love me. I'll take my
chances.
He stares in her troubled eyes. There is no answer.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Race you to bed.

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY - NEWSREEL

42

42

Amelia and nearly 20 WOMEN lined up in front of planes.
Waving, smiling, talking to each other.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Amelia Earhart and a bevy of lovely
competitors say hello to the press
announcing the First Women's Air
Derby, racing from Santa Monica to
Cleveland. Dubbed by Will Rogers
'the Powder Puff Derby,' these gals
certainly know how to capture our
attention.

The next ANGLE shows Amelia watching some of her
colleagues
bouncing playfully on a see-saw. She smiles tolerantly,
but

taste. maybe there's a little too much cheesecake for her

INT. RECEPTION AREA, PUTNAM'S - DAY

43

43

year

poised.

The crowded waiting room. We CLOSE on a young woman we scarcely recognize. It is Elinor. Though less than a

has passed, she seems much older. Sophisticated,

ANGLE. A secretary leads Elinor down the corridor to George's office. As they enter, George is pacing on the phone.

G

GEORGE (into phone)

Because Amelia invented the Powder Puff Derby for female pilots. Then the men running the damn race suddenly decide every woman has to carry a male navigator, and start from east of the Rockies so they won't crash into the mountains!

Listens, impatient.

46.

GEORGE (into phone)

I'll tell you why it's a front page story. Because Amelia pulled every woman out of the race. So the organizers had to roll over and give in, or they'd have lost their shirts. You want me to write your headline?

He glances over. Elinor in the doorway.

GEORGE (into phone)

Call you back. I've got a very important guest.

He hangs up, gesturing graciously for her to sit. As she

does...

ELINOR

Wish I was important enough for
you to manage.

GEORGE

Well, I've just got one client.
And most days she's more than I
can manage.

Even Elinor's smile seems older, more capable of subtlety.

ELINOR

Get in line behind the boys she
smacked around on the Derby.

He grins back. You bet.

ELINOR (CONT'D)

Some of the gal flyers had their
doubts about her...well, her skill
level. But she's everyone's
champion now.

GEORGE

And both of those things. Are the
S reasons I called you.
trange words. He has her attention.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I think it would be huge for women
flyers if Amelia won the Derby.
The publicity would put the race,
and all of you, up there with the
boys.

47.

ELINOR

I'm not sure she has much of a
chance, Mr. Putnam.

GEORGE

Well, the one shot would be putting
her in a far more powerful plane

than anything she's flown. We're
thinking the Lockheed Vega.
The girl's shock. He really means this.

ELINOR

Sir, I've test piloted the Vega.
It's way more than she could ever
handle. It wouldn't be safe, let
alone successful.
He smiles.

GEORGE

That's why I'm thinking of you
flying with her. You could handle
the cross-country flying, the more
difficult bits, and I'd pay you \$75
a week.
Elinor WHISTLES low.

ELINOR

Well, I think that's the most
generous opportunity I've ever
been offered.
He stares at her.

GEORGE

There's just one thing. Obviously,
it has to appear that Amelia did
all the flying. So when pictures
are taken, you'll stand off to one
side.
Her eyes narrow. He's completely serious.

ELINOR

In that case, I'll get my own plane
and win the race myself.

GEORGE

You haven't changed.

N

o smile at all.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Unfortunately for you, neither
have I.
The look in his eye is not to be ignored.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You can't win if you can't get a
plane to enter. Let me predict
that you won't.
The voice calm and low and riveting.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

In fact. If you reject my
generosity, you may come to regret
it. For a long, long time.

ELINOR

That's a threat.

GEORGE

I'm an intensely loyal person,
Elinor. And this is what my
loyalty requires.
She's glaring. Reeling. Trapped.

ELINOR

She's the one who said I shouldn't
let anybody turn me around.

GEORGE

She probably meant me.
So honest, the words confuse her.

ELINOR

Obviously, she doesn't see me as
a threat.

GEORGE

Oh, sure she does.
A straight smile...

GEORGE (CONT'D)

She just doesn't care.
...which silently fades.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

My job. Is to care for her.

DISSOLVE TO...

Y

S

W

49.

44

44

INT. OAK ROOM, PLAZA HOTEL, NEW YORK - NIGHT

tonight.

Amelia to

LONG ANGLE. Sophisticated watering hole. Crowded
PAN to find George alone, waiting. A waiter leads
the table. George stands, smiling. But the smile is not

returned. We CLOSE as they sit...

GEORGE

A

What's wrong?

MELIA (clearly furious)
What could be wrong? I had such a lovely afternoon with Elinor Smith.

Oh.

GEORGE

He told you that I shut her out of the Derby. And that's true.

AMELIA

And when were you going to tell me?

GEORGE (calm, straight)
Never. I knew you'd go crazy. And I felt it needed to be done.

She can scarcely believe this.

AMELIA

What? You think I wanted it done, but just let you do the dirty work?

GEORGE

I didn't say that.

AMELIA

Because I'm no angel. Business is competition and competition is rough, and I thank my stars that you're there making this life happen for me, but...

GEORGE

You're making your life hap...

AMELIA

But this is different.

It is.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

If women are going to stab women in the back, then women are going nowhere.

F

T

50.

Are you listening?

GEORGE

From here on, I'll just stab men in
the back. A

MELIA

You didn't do this for business,
anyway. G

GEORGE

I did it for fun?

AMELIA

You did it because you love me.
That stops him.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And when we're married, you mustn't
ever...
Now she stops. Because his eyes are wide.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

What's the big shock? I thought
you wanted to get married.

Full beat.

GEORGE

did. I do.

AMELIA

Well, then.

His eyes moving over her face.

GEORGE

What about what you said? The day
S will come when you run away.
he nods. It will.

AMELIA

You'll be destroyed. And part of
me will, too. And I think we both
know it.

And yet.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Sometimes things happen that way.
You're not better safe than sorry.
Tears stand in his eyes. He is so happy.

51.

AMELIA (a whisper) (CONT'D)

Yes?

GEORGE (a whisper)

Hell yes.

45

45

INT. GEORGE'S MOTHER'S HOME, NOANK, CONNECTICUT - DAY

Through a window, a dry, wintered garden. Snow falling,
at once soft and heavy. Beyond, Morgan Point Lighthouse,

fishing

Fisher's Island Sound, Long Island Sound. One lonely
boat braves the cold water. PULL BACK to see...
...Amelia at the breakfast table in a windowed room.

She is

writing, and as she does...

S

UPERIMPOSE: WEDDING DAY. CONNECTICUT, 1931.

...her eyes are swimming with tears. She brushes at
them.

Stares down at her work. Continues.

ANGLE. The parlor. George, his MOTHER, the MINISTER, a
small number of close FRIENDS. From the doorway, Amelia
beckons George. The letter is in her hand.

EXT. HOME - MOMENTS LATER

46

46

into the

him

to

Amelia holds tight to George's hand, leading him out
falling snow. She turns, fixes him with a look. Hands
the letter. And steps back. As if giving him space.
At first, he smiles. What is this? She gestures for him
read. As he begins, there is nothing for a few seconds.
Then...

AMELIA (V.O.)

...I want you to understand I shall
not hold you to any medieval code
of faithfulness to me. Nor shall
I consider myself bound to you
similarly.

Snow falling. Absolute silence.

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

If we can be honest I think the
difficulties which may arise may
best be avoided should you or I
become interested deeply, or in
passing, with anyone else.

looks

She gazes intently, her heart in her eyes. He never

up.

M

52.

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

Please let us not interfere with
the other's work or play, nor let
the world see our private joys or
disagreements.

And then...

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

I

must exact a cruel promise. And
that is you will let me go in a
year if we find no happiness
together.

He stops on this. His thoughts unreadable.

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

I will try to do my best in every
way. And give you that part of me
you know and seem to want.

He folds the letter carefully. Places it in his
pocket. And
smiles.

GEORGE

y Amelia. Brutal in her frank-
ness. Beautiful in her honesty.
He steps to her. Looks in her eyes. They kiss.

47
47

INT. PARLOR - LATER

witnesses
George's

LONG ANGLE. The minister reading the vows. The
standing silent. Two black cats rubbing against
ankles.

DISSOLVE TO...

INT. KITCHEN, RYE - MORNING

48
48

ignored

George at the breakfast table. His eggs and toast
for the moment, he's reading a magazine article. PAN to
Amelia, sipping her coffee. Watching him.

GEORGE (reads aloud)
'Why I Believe Women Pilots Can't
Fly The Atlantic. An outspoken
warning by Lady Heath.'

(READING)

'...pure suicide for any woman
today...it is madness for them to
attempt it and...'
He looks up to her.

53.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

'...at least the first dozen will
be drowned.' And we're reading

A

this, because...?

MELIA

I might fly to Paris.

Silence.

GEORGE

Which is actually across the
Atlantic.

AMELIA

Hence, the article.

Ah. He nods.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I'm thinking of doing it solo.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Would you mind?

He butters his toast.

GEORGE

Not at all. When would you like
to go?

EXT. GARDEN, RYE - DAY

49

49

plants

CLOSE on Amelia as she kneels, carefully putting new
into the ground. We see patience, concentration.
Contentment. After a moment...

AMELIA

I'm surprised you're all right with
this...

planting

WIDEN ANGLE. George kneeling beside her. Happily
his own.

GEORGE

Really.

AMELIA

Mmm-hmmn. I was braced for the
lecture. Five years since
Lindbergh, no one's made it solo,
so many of them died.

He looks at her work. Reaches over. Starts packing the
earth HARDER around her plant. She just watches,

then...

D

W

54.

GEORGE

ell, they were only men. This is
different.

She reaches to his plant and starts LOOSENING the

soil...

AMELIA

I was waiting to hear that I'm only
doing this because I was just a

food
George

passenger last time, and I'd rather
die than go on living as a fraud..
No one cracks a smile. It's like Laurel and Hardy in a
fight where each lets the other take his best shot.

A

reaches now, starts REPACKING her soil...

MELIA (CONT'D)

But you don't think that, do you,
ear?

GEORGE

Of course not. But if I did...
She SMACKS his hand. He just keeps working. She finally
grins, smacks him HARDER. He doesn't seem to notice.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

...all the more reason to say yes.

EXT. TEETERBORO AIRPORT - DUSK

50
50
crew
not
She

AERIAL ANGLE. In the sun's last light, two figures walk
slowly, far below us. The Vega waits.
CLOSE ANGLE. They stand beneath the wing. Her ground
in far distance, giving them their moment. Her look is
breezy and cavalier this time, but tender and intimate.
knows the fear beneath his easy smile.
He produces a RING, a band of black fibers.

GEORGE

Elephant hair, I think you wear
it on your toe. It's good luck.
He puts it in her hand.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Anyway. That's what the elephant
told me.
Amelia looks at the ring. Turns it in her fingers.

55.

AMELIA

I think luck has rules. And I try
to respect them. My favorite is...
She glances up.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

We make our own luck, you and I.
Remember that.
He will remember that. And more.

GEORGE

Do you have money?

AMELIA

No.
He pulls out a twenty dollar bill. Hands it to her.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

All this? G

GEORGE

Sure.

AMELIA

Thank god, I thought you were going
to tear it in half.

GEORGE

I spent our money on ocean liner
passage to go bring you back. It's
non-refundable. So try to do your
part.
She nods. She'll try. He doesn't want to leave her yet.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

So the Simpkin thing. What was all
that?

AMELIA

I put it in a letter. Which you'll
get if I don't make it. So...mixed

emotions, huh?
He shakes his head.

GEORGE (very soft)
Either way, something to look
forward to.
She puts her hands on his face. She doesn't want to leave
him either.

56.

AMELIA (murmurs)
Stake up the peonies, huh? They're
messy when they bloom on the
ground, and...

And.

AMELIA (a whisper)
I want to see their heads high.
When I come home.
She leans up to kiss him. And again. Feeling in her
eyes
that he will never forget.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
See ya.

INT. VEGA - NIGHT

51

51

Amelia alone. Starry night. 12,000 feet below are
ICEBERGS.
A single fishing boat.

AMELIA (V.O.)
The weather report wasn't perfect.
But we knew our real chance was to
take weather that others wouldn't.
Ahead, towering CLOUDS in moonlight. Too high to fly
over.

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

5 I closed the deal by choosing May
20, five years to the day from
Lindbergh's flight. It was too
good a sell for George to resist.
What we didn't know...

EXT. VEGA - LATER

2

52

darts

A terrifying STORM BATTERS the plane, which bobs and
and dips like a leaf in a gale.

AMELIA (V.O.)

...was that my altimeter would conk
out. Never to return.

INT. VEGA - SAME MOMENT

53

53

SHAKEN.

Amelia fights for control as the plane is TOSSED and

AMELIA (V.O.)

The only way to have any sense of
altitude, was to keep dropping
toward the sea.

(MORE)

57.

AMELIA(cont'd)

When the engines sputtered, that
was my low-level limit.
A sudden JOLT knocks her OUT of her seat. She scrambles

back, as we see WHITECAPS A FEW FEET BELOW. She JERKS the nose UP, the engine COUGHS...
...and CLIMBS.

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

I was too busy to grasp how
impossible the situation had
become. The joke was...

LATER. Flying in and out of cloud cover.

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

All those months flying only with
instruments, I should have been
practicing without them.

PAN to the windshield. A small GLOW at the surface of a
vibrating engine. Amelia hasn't noticed.

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

I started to wonder if luck was
paying me back. For thinking I
knew the rules.

A small BLUE FLAME LICKS out into the night.

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

Then I smelled burning oil.

She sees it now. The flame coming through a broken weld in
the manifold ring. A

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

A bad weld, already a small flame.
It would be hours back to Canada,
trying to find an unlit field,
landing with a heavy fuel load.

She stares at the little flame. Is it growing bigger?

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

I told myself, push on. After all,
if it was a stupid choice...

LATER. Flying in blackness. Rising, as the engines seem
sluggish.

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

...no one would ever know.

Suddenly, a FILM of SLUSH on the windscreen.

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

With seemingly no warning, there
was ice. The controls froze.
And the Vega DIVES into a DIZZYING SPIN.

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

Through the spin I had one thought,
it would be warmer lower, the ice
would melt, I just had to regain
control...

54

54

EXT. VEGA - SAME MOMENT

The SPINNING plane PLUNGING...

AMELIA (V.O.)

...before I hit the water.
And ARCING at last to SWOOP above the whitecaps. Way
close
for comfort. SMASH CUT TO...

INT. VEGA - SAME MOMENT

55

55

Amelia REELING in her seat, her fingers FUMBLING in her
flight bag, for...

AMELIA (V.O.)

...or passed out.
...SMELLING SALTS, she inhales, again, blinks, starts
to
climb...

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

The ice happened twice more, and I

began to lose heart. Then I
remembered Lindbergh's book saying
the same thing happened to him.

T

he sea DISAPPEARS below. Only cloud.

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

So I figured, if he's twice as
good, I just have to be twice as
lucky...

DISSOLVE

TO...

through

HOURS LATER. Amelia seriously fatigued. She breaks
cloud into DAZZLING SUNLIGHT, and blinks, blinded.

59.

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

I'd read that part in George's
reception room that first day.

Bless him for keeping me waiting.

The FUEL GAUGE reads EMPTY. She switches on the RESERVE
TANK. And as she DROPS back down into opaque clouds...
...she feels something. Her fingertips go to her left
shoulder, and come away...
Wet. Slick.

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

The cockpit gauge was defective.

There was a steady trickle of fuel
down my neck.

She looks around helplessly for a way to stem the
dripping.

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

Toss-up whether the bigger danger
was running out of gas or going up
in a fireball. I had my answer in
less than an hour, when...

DISSOLVE

TO...

some-
screen to
startlingly

LATER. Amelia beyond exhaustion. Staring fixedly at
thing we can't see. Until we PAN through the wind
the leak in the manifold weld. The BLUE FLAME is
LARGER, now LICKING its way along the surface of the
fuselage...

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

The manifold weld began to
separate. I gauged the likelihood
of explosion at somewhere between
probable and inevitable.

5

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - DAY

6

56

slept
The

Arms folded, George stares out his window. He hasn't
or eaten. PAN to his desk. The phone is OFF the hook.
door opens softly...

SECRETARY (O.S.)

he

Mr. Putnam? Line three.
He turns and looks at her. The girl's eyes go down and
BOLTS to the phone, SNATCHES the receiver, SLAMS the
button...

GEORGE (into phone)

Putnam.

60.

A full beat.

VOICE (O.S.)

Sir, this is Douglas McGuire of the Press Association. I'm sorry to tell you that Miss Earhart's plane has crashed in a field, short of Le Bourget airport.

SMASH CUT

TO...

EXT. SKY - DAY

57

57

SOUND

A plane swooping downward through cloud and fog. The of George's call CONTINUES...

GEORGE (O.S.)

Is she all right?

MCGUIRE (O.S.)

If the crash is as reported, sir, I'm afraid not. There were terrible flames.

LOWER, it's dropping fast, maybe too fast, WOBBLES in a crosswind, here comes the GROUND, and...

GEORGE (O.S.)

Are they completely sure it's her plane?

MCGUIRE (O.S.)

Yes sir, absolutely.

landing

rolls

engines,

...the Vega RIGHTS itself and GLIDES in for as fine a as a bumpy meadow could allow. COWS look up as she past, toward...
...one lone astonished FARM WORKER. She cuts her leans from the hatch...

AMELIA

Excuse me, sir. Where am I?
A blink. The truth...

MAN

In Gallagher's pasture.

O

ne more beat.

MAN (CONT'D)

Where are ya supposed to be?

61.

AMELIA

When I left, I was aiming for
Paris.

Oh.

MAN (very sad)

Ya missed, y'know.

(POINTS)

It's over there.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR- DAY

58

58

York

MOVIETONE NEWSREEL FOOTAGE of Amelia arriving at New
Harbor to an overwhelming reception.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

Amelia Earhart arrives to a tumultuous New York reception after her whirlwind tour of Europe, in which our Queen of the Skies danced with her royal counterpart the Prince of Wales, before meeting both Benito Mussolini and the Pope.

an

The MAYOR, the GOVERNOR, every dignitary that could get
invitation is there to greet her.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

The second human to fly the
Atlantic solo, she is the only one
ever to fly it twice. And she set
the record, man or woman, for the
fastest crossing. Fourteen hours
54 minutes.

As she waves to the crowd...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Now it's America's turn to show our
girl what we think of her!

DISSOLVE

TO...

NIGHT

INT. BACKSTAGE, CONSTITUTIONAL HALL, WASHINGTON, D.C. -

59

59

the

we

her

We are standing in the wings. Through the curtains, we
GLIMPSE the eager, packed house in an auditorium. From
stage, a speaker DRONES, but backstage...
...George peeks out at the throng. When he looks back,
see Amelia, her troubled face. The folded newspaper in
hand.

G

W

W

62.

AMELIA (reads)

`Only an average flyer, she has
pushed herself to the front by
following the tactics of the
feminists...

She looks up to him.

GEORGE

ell, I'm glad someone besides me
finally noticed.

His smile is light. Her eyes watching him. Then...

AMELIA (reads)

`Using a man-made perfect machine,
tuned by men mechanics, trained by
men flyers, on a course laid out by
a man. By a lucky break she just
managed to make the hop.'

She stares at the paper. His voice comes gently...

GEORGE

hy would you even read that
garbage?

AMELIA

Well, it reminds me how much I owe
to the men of this world. Keeps me
humble.

GEORGE

ood. And remembering how little
you owe me keeps me humble.
And softly...

GEORGE (CONT'D)

He's a crackpot. Let it go.
He points to the packed hall...

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Cheer up. They're crazy about you.

AMELIA (quiet)

Well, they're crazy about
something.

She looks down. Self-doubt flickers.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

What have we really done?

63.

GEORGE

You've made them feel like this.

AMELIA

That's not enough.

GEORGE

Most of them are women. And for
them, it's very much enough.
She shakes her head.

AMELIA

The World Telegram said, 'a
magnificent display of useless
courage.'

GEORGE

The question is. Can any magnif-
icent display of courage be use-

less? A

MELIA

The point is. Men do it every day.
And no one throws a parade.

Ah. Well...

GEORGE

One day closer, then. To the day
when they won't think to throw one
for you.

She doesn't turn. She doesn't smile.

AMELIA

Reasoning with me. A magnificent
display of useless courage.

He nods to himself.

GEORGE

And. It's fun.

From the stage...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. THE

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

HAIL TO THE CHIEF strikes up. We hear the deep applause.
George begins to straighten Amelia's outfit, touching her
hair, as he did long ago on the Copley Hotel roof.

64.

PRESIDENT HOOVER (O.S.)

**THE GOLD MEDAL OF THE NATIONAL GEO-
GRAPHIC SOCIETY WAS LAST AWARDED
FIVE YEARS AGO TO COL. CHARLES**

LINDBERGH.

George murmurs close to her ear...

GEORGE

If a bomb goes off tonight, the
whole government of the United
States is out there...

PRESIDENT HOOVER (O.S.)

**IT HAS NEVER BEEN AWARDED TO A
WOMAN...**

GEORGE

Some dog catcher will have to
become President.
She smiles. Just for him.

PRESIDENT HOOVER (O.S.)

UNTIL TONIGHT.

GEORGE (a whisper)
Boy. Imagine if you'd actually
done something.

AMELIA (a whisper)
Imagine.

PRESIDENT HOOVER (O.S.)

**IT IS MY HONOR TO WELCOME TO CONSTI-
TUTION HALL, A ROLE MODEL FOR
LADIES EVERYWHERE...**

AMELIA

Ladies.

PRESIDENT HOOVER (O.S.)

MISS AMELIA EARHART.

M

GEORGE

iss.
She's through the curtain, and the crowd CRACKLES with
APPLAUSE as...
...George stands in the wings. Proud. And concerned.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

compartment
her.

A train rumbles through countryside. A private
finds Amelia staring out the window. George studying

GEORGE (V.O.)

The irony is, I'd finally put that
wedding day letter out of my mind.
Stopped watching every beautiful
accomplished man who crossed her
path.

door, a
their

REVERSE ANGLE. Through the glass of our compartment
crowd stands jouncing against each other. Gazing at
Queen of the Skies.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I had a call from the Byrds.
They've asked us to dinner
Thursday.

AMELIA

through the

Thursday, I'll be in Boston.
Meeting Gene Vidal and Paul
Collins.
Said lightly. Not even looking at him. While
glass, it's become quite a tussle.

GEORGE

Don't tell me Gene wants to
resurrect Transcontinental?

AMELIA

No, he's starting a shuttle
service. Washington, New York,
Boston...

her One woman goes flying from view, as a younger one gets
place.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Could be a money maker for us. Get
me off the lecture grind.
He stares in her eyes. Almost as if looking for
something.

GEORGE

Gene's a dashing guy. He could
talk anyone into anything.
Their look holds.

66.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

S
ounds like a great idea.

DISSOLVE

TO...

61 61

INT. RESTAURANT, BOSTON - NIGHT

fire- PAN the dark, elegant restaurant. In a corner by the
served place, Amelia and her dinner companions are being
she lobsters. GENE VIDAL leans to Amelia as he speaks, and
hangs on every word.

GENE

Transcontinental was too ambitious.
Too many hops, too tough on the
ladies. But the shuttle...
A lean athlete's body, easy grace in every movement.
Strikingly handsome features that convey not only
intellect,
but kindness and decency.

GENE (CONT'D)

Washington, New York, Boston. I
think it's the future. Will you
go there with us?
She's trying to crack her lobster, but can't take her
eyes
off her host.

AMELIA

What on earth would you need me
for?
She's making a real mess of the lobster. Gene
notices. PAUL
COLLINS doesn't...

PAUL

Hasn't George taught you anything?
Lady Lindy, the queen of the air,
the best known woman in the entire
U.S. of A?
Gene reaches over, as if it were his own plate, and
begins
cracking her lobster for her. She looks in his eyes and
tries to concentrate.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Gene on the poster with you.
Legendary athlete at West Point,
two events in the Olympics, a top
pilot who should be running the
skies for Roosevelt when he wins...

67.

Gene looks up at Paul, as if to say: Enough. Now he smiles
at Amelia. She blinks, what? Don't you want your lobster?

G

Oh. She starts eating...

ENE (looking only at Amelia)
Thanks, Paul. I think you've even
talked me out of it.

DISSOLVE

TO...

LATER. Paul has gone. Gene and Amelia are at the bar,
huddled over his beer and her Coke.

AMELIA (V.O.)

Gene had a terrible marriage and
was separated from his alcoholic
adulterous wife. But he was too
kind to humiliate her with a
divorce...

Gene drains the last of his beer.

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

As a result, he was basically a
single parent to their young son,
Gore.

He glances at his watch. Wow.

GENE

I'm rattling on here, and you've
got a morning train.
But she's just staring in his eyes. This could be her last
chance to ask...

AMELIA

How's Nina doing?

GENE

Oh, fine.
Really? He smiles, gently.

GENE (CONT'D)

Actually, she hasn't been feeling
her best. She'll probably summer
in Newport. So my kid's stuck with
Dad again.

AMELIA

If you two get bored, I could tag
along sometimes.

GENE

You suggesting you're less boring
than I am?

AMELIA

Well, yeh.
He smiles first. Hers is slower, but here it comes.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Any given meal, I can eat a lobster
and have you boys in stitches.
A full beat. He's deciding.

GENE

Gore would love that. He has a
little crush, I'm afraid.

AMELIA

At seven?

GENE

He's eight.
Well, then. He breaks the look. Fishes out some cash for
the bar tab. G

ENE (CONT'D)

Listen, Paul and I would be
thrilled to rope you into our
shuttle.

AMELIA

Are you kidding, it's a godsend.
No matter how hard George and I
work, how many lectures we cram in,
there's never enough money for the
next adventure.

He looks at her. Lets the silence sit there. His eyes
seem to convey a depth of understanding.

GENE

The next adventure. What is it?
She shrugs. No idea.

GENE (CONT'D)

Because we're running out of
oceans.

AMELIA

Wish you'd do something about that.

69.

GENE

I'm serious, Amelia.
Her soft smile.

AMELIA

I know. Always.

GENE

The only way you can stay where you
are. And be who you are...
Serious indeed.

GENE (CONT'D)

fear she
Is to keep feeding the beast.
She can't smile anymore. Because this is the very
lives with.

GENE (CONT'D)

And the beast always needs
something larger, greater, more
daring...

AMELIA (quiet)

He costs money, too.

GENE

The price of fame, literally. Do
you and George talk about this?
Silence.

AMELIA

We don't have to.

GENE

With all respect. Yes, you do.

62

62

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - LATER

Walking together down the hallway of her hotel. No one
speaks. Their thoughts are their own. She reaches her
room,
finds her key. Opens the door, and...
...turns to him. A brief, direct look. She
reaches one hand
gently behind his head. Leans up.

K

isses his mouth.

AMELIA (a whisper)

Thank you.

His eyes question.

T

T

H

70.

AMELIA

For understanding.
There is no smile. Without a word, she goes into her
room.
CLOSES the door behind her.
e stands alone. Do I knock on that door? Then,
smiles to
himself, and simply...
Walks away.

DISSOLVE

TO...

INT. BANQUET HALL, WASHINGTON - NIGHT

63

63

Crowded hall, each table ringed by diners in formal
dress.
At a table of honor, George sits next to Elinor Smith,
chatting comfortably. PAN to the head table...

GEORGE (V.O.)

After Roosevelt won, his wife
Eleanor brought the advancement of
women to national attention with
stunning success.
CLOSE on ELEANOR ROOSEVELT, eating heartily, chatting,
laughing with a companion we don't see until...

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

A gutsy gal who rode a bobsled in

he Winter Olympics, spent hours
each morning on horseback, and
carried a pistol on car trips.
She possessed boundless energy, a
towering intellect...
...we reveal Amelia in a formal satin dress at her
side,
girlfriends.
dishing with the First Lady like the closest of

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

...and was Amelia's idol. As it
happened, she was obsessed with
flying, making Amelia her absolute
heroine. A

MELIA

So he hasn't actually forbidden
you.

ELEANOR

Franklin doesn't forbid. He just
feels it's a waste of my valuable
ime to learn. Since I can't
afford to buy a plane.

I

I

T

O

71.

They share a look of such mutual understanding, neither has to smile.

AMELIA

The wrong Roosevelt got elected.

ELEANOR

And it will take at least four
years to correct the mistake.
Keeps eating.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

I did ask about aviation, but he
hasn't decided on the structure
yet. It might be under the Bureau
of Commerce.

AMELIA

I think the structure may be less
important than the man chosen to
run it.
Said casually, looking at her plate.

ELEANOR

My hearing is failing. I missed
the words 'or woman,' which you
undoubtedly added after, or per-
haps before, the word 'man.'

AMELIA

his could be one of those rare instances. When the most accomplished candidate. Turns out to be male.

Glances up for the reaction.

ELEANOR

How exciting. I love finding the exception that proves the rule. Is it a name I know?

Amelia's straight gaze. Her small smile.

AMELIA

How do you feel about flying at night?

Eleanor's eyes register the change of topic. Rolling

with

it...

ELEANOR

I've never done it. Franklin finds it dangerous.

72.

AMELIA

Outstanding.

64

64

INT. CONDOR AIRLINER - LATER

Raucous party in the small cabin, hosted by George and fueled

.

by champagne. PAN slowly to...
dress ..the cockpit. Amelia at the controls in her evening
awestruck and formal gloves. Eleanor in the co-pilot's seat,
moved by by the brilliant starry night. Amelia glances over,
her friend's almost childlike wonder.
AMELIA (softly)
Put your hands on the wheel.
Eleanor looks over. Are you serious?

AMELIA
It's dual controls. No one will
ever know.
Hesitation.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Don't you trust me?
And slowly, Eleanor's fingers close on her wheel.
Amelia's hands come away from hers.

ELEANOR
Dear God.
The Condor purrs along through the night air. The moon
bobs slightly off to one side. Eleanor's eyes are swimming
with the thrill of this.

AMELIA
I feel like a Coke. Can I get you
something?
And stands up. Only the trace of her smile as the
pilot's eyes WIDEN in absolute shock.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Do try not to hit the ground.

DISSOLVE
TO...

INT. WHITE HOUSE PRESS ROOM - DAY

65

65

ANGLE

A sea of press, quiet, poised, attentive. REVERSE
to...

Y

73.

...CLOSE on a seated Roosevelt before a bank of
microphones.

ROOSEVELT

Today, we proudly announce an
appointment critical to America's
commerce, and to its role as
technology's leader in the
Twentieth Century.

PAN to Gene at his side. Sober. Distinguished.

Proud.

ROOSEVELT (O.S.) (CONT'D)

G

ene Vidal is an obvious and
perfect choice as our first
Director of Commerce's Aeronautics
Branch. His extraordinary
credentials include...

DISSOLVE

TO...

EXT. PUTNAM HOME, RYE - EVENING

66

66

yard

Amelia

his

smile

waist,

reach

as

A taxi slowly pulls up to the home we know. Warmly lit, music playing from within. Gene climbs from the cab, as

lights go ON.

As Gene starts up the path, the front door opens and

BURSTS into the night, RUNNING to Gene, JUMPING INTO

arms, HUGGING him in her delight. We PULL BACK to... George watching it all from the doorway. His easy

seems comfortably in place, as...

...Amelia walks Gene up the path, her arm around his

talking excitedly, flushed as a schoolgirl. As they

the door...

George is the picture of calm and dignity. He beams and CLASPS Gene's hand. Throws an arm around his shoulder

Amelia leads them inside.

The door closes. We hear laughter.

EXT. GARDEN, RYE - DAY

67

67

happy

her.

Amelia on her knees, tending to her garden. She seems

and filled with energy. George comes and kneels beside

Starts weeding.

AMELIA

Have I told you what a perfect job
ou did on the peonies? They're
miraculous.

M

I

74.

GEORGE (working)
You have, actually. Twice.

AMELIA

Sorry.

GEORGE

It's all right. You've been
distracted lately.
No spin on that. If G
anything, the tone is kind.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Listen, I've put together a month
in Europe. Close some foreign
licensing deals, open new
markets...
She doesn't look up.

AMELIA

When are you leaving?

GEORGE

Thing is. I'd like you to come.

She stiffens only slightly. Can he sense it?

AMELIA

I don't really see how I can.

GEORGE

I've talked to the promoters,
they'll switch some lecture dates
for us.

Now he's looking at her profile. Saddened, if not
surprised,
by what he sees.

AMELIA

Well, it's not just that. There's
y work on the shuttle, we're at a
critical stage, and...I've just
started as Gene's consultant at the
Aeronautics Branch...

She knows he's watching. Shakes her head. Keeps on
working.

GEORGE

Normally, I'd be worried about
leaving you here alone. But I
suppose that won't be a problem,
will it?

She stops now. Looks up at him. If he wants a direct
conversation, he can have it.

B

AMELIA

What are you trying to say?

GEORGE

I think I've just said it.

on both A long held look. Neither backing away. Sadness
sides.

GEORGE (softly)

Is there anything you want to say?

with She sighs. Her fingers reach out, rub his hand
affection.

AMELIA

I can't think of anything helpful.

He nods. Well, then. Rises slowly...
forgotten. Walks back toward the house, his garden tools
She
stares after him.

H

e disappears into the house. She's still
staring.

DISSOLVE TO...

EXT. LOS ANGELES COLISEUM - DAY

68

68

100,000 MOVIEZONE NEWSREEL FOOTAGE introduced by its theme. A
stadium in brilliant sunlight, filled with more than
people.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

every Los Angeles, California. The Tenth
Olympics of the modern era kick
off, as movie stars mingle with
ordinary Joes.
On the track, WOMEN RUN the 100 meter high hurdles as
throat CHEERS.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Here's the gold medal run of the

all

world's best woman athlete,
abe Didrickson. Cheered on by
the most celebrated woman of
today...
TIGHT INSERT of Amelia with Gene and 8-year-old GORE,
applauding excitedly.

G

G

76.

They

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
...that's right, Amelia Earhart.
Hollywood glamor, American winners,
and wait til our boys warm up for
their action.
The camera lingers as Amelia says something to Gore.
look like a family.

INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE, NEW YORK - DUSK

69

69

door,

CLOSE on George alone in his office. He goes to the
LOCKS it. His face is drawn, grim.

GEORGE (V.O.)

By this time, I had a side job as
chairman of the editorial board of
Paramount Pictures. So Amelia and
I bought a little place in Los
Angeles.

He goes slowly back to his desk. On it, sits a large
cardboard CARTON.

GEORGE (V.O.)

She was out there, preparing for a
flight, when our home in Rye burned
to the ground.

objects,

We SEE that the contents of the box, papers, small
have been SINGED or CHARRED. He stares into it.

GEORGE (V.O.)

We both cried when I called to tell
her. She asked to come be with me.
But I insisted she stay there, to
keep on schedule for her flight.

He reaches into the box...

GEORGE (V.O.)

So many treasures lost. Letters
and poems she'd written. I poured
through the rubble...

INT. LOS ANGELES HOME - DAY

70

70

home.

Amelia curled up on the sofa of a cozy, pleasant little

The doors are open to the patio and yard. Winter is
different here. Tropical flowers, fruit trees in bloom.

The

George.

phone RINGS and she picks it up quickly, knowing it's

G

77.

AMELIA (softly)

Hi.

(BEAT)

Yeh. What's today been like? You
still okay?

window,

Like

INTERCUT George at his office. He's standing at the
phone in one hand, single sheet of paper in the other.
the other objects in the box, it is partially singed.

GEORGE

I found something you'd written.
Draws a breath. Reads...

G

GEORGE (reading)

`To touch your hand or see your
face today is joy. Your casual
presence in a room recalls the
stars that watched us as we lay.

BACK to Amelia. Tears fill her eyes.

GEORGE (reading)

I mark you in the moving crowd
And see again those stars a warm
night lent us long ago. We loved
so then. We love so now.

INTERCUT George. His eyes are dry.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Thank you for writing that.
A beat. His voice still softer...

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Even though I'd never seen it.
HOLD on him. The pain of what that must mean.

And...

BACK TO LOS ANGELES

71

71

Her lips are parted. She's searching for words.

AMELIA

I suppose I thought. It was too
revealing.

WIDEN ANGLE. Gene enters the room with a drink in his
hand
and sits down next to her, concerned by her obvious
distress.

AMELIA (into the phone)
I'm so glad you have it now.

(LISTENS)

(MORE)

S

78.

AMELIA (cont'd)
Of course. Me, too. I'll call
you later.

looks at

She hangs up slowly. The tears begin to fall. She
Gene helplessly. Then stands without a word.
Walks out into the yard.

DISSOLVE

TO...

72

72

EXT. NEWARK AIRPORT - NEWSREEL FOOTAGE - NIGHT

as Spectators at Newark Airport. A plane CIRCLES the field
Arcing FLOOD LIGHTS FLASH ON, and the crowd begins to CHEER.

A

in now for a landing. Smooth trajectory.

NNOUNCER (O.S.)

As The odyssey began in Honolulu when
police he became the first person, man
or woman, to fly solo over half the
Pacific to California.
Touching down, the cheering CROWD held back by police.
Amelia taxies to a stop, the crowd BREAKS THROUGH
lines and SURGES toward the plane.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

She is Then, the first human to solo from
California to Mexico City. Followed
by her daring solo across the Gulf.
As she passed over Washington,
D.C., she eclipsed the time of a
certain previous flight, from 27
hours to 13 hours.
Amelia hops down from the plane, grinning and waving.
surrounded by adoring fans.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

The pilot of that previous flight?
Some guy named Lindbergh.

police
beaming,

The JOSTLING of the crowd gets out of control, the
can't protect her as she is SWEPT ALONG by the mob,
laughing, enjoying it all.

INT. MAYFLOWER HOTEL BAR, WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

73

73

her
in

Dark little piano bar. They sit in a quiet corner, comfortable in silence. Gene with his martini, Amelia with Coke. She's shelling peanuts from a bowl, popping some her mouth, passing a few over to him.

T

79.

GENE

If you don't drink, why do you come
o bars?

AMELIA

Must be the ambience. And the
nuts.

GENE

What worries me is, in some of these bars the nuts are the ambience. Specially when they make a pass at you.

S
he chews, staring at him.

AMELIA
Any guy would have to be nuts to do that. I'm considerable trouble, if you haven't noticed.

GENE
You keep advertising that, but I'm still waiting to see it.
She looks down at her fingers as they shell. Barely audible...

AMELIA
You'll see it.

GENE
Well, here's your chance. I'm taking Gore to the conference in Bermuda. He wants you to come.

AMELIA
Gore, huh?

GENE
Sure. I'm completely indifferent.

AMELIA
I wish.
Do you?

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Would make life simpler.
She throws a peanut which BOINKS off his face. He smiles
a suddenly goofy, very non-elegant smile.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Actually, I'll be in Indiana.
Edward Elliot of Purdue wants

(MORE)

A

AMELIA(cont'd)
me to build a women's careers
department there.
Really? He likes that.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
I'll be back and forth. When I'm
there, I've asked to stay in the
dorm with the girls.

GENE
That's a wonderful idea.
Especially now.
Something in the way he said that.

AMELIA
What's special about now?

GENE
A good time for some positive press
about you as a role model.
Her eyes harden. Whatever do you mean?

GENE (CONT'D)
You don't read the papers?

AMELIA
Not unless someone makes me.

GENE
Well, someone should. Because
they're all saying you took
recklessly dangerous solo flights
for no earthly purpose except
publicity. Meaning, money.
Dead. Silence. G

ENE (CONT'D)
They also harp on a growing list
of products that you commercially
endorse.

AMELIA

How thoughtless of me to be doing
ll this in a society where no one
else is interested in making money.
Present company included.
He's not afraid of her.

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81.

GENE

Look, George had you taking money
rom the sugar cartel for the
Hawaii flight, the Mexican
Government for theirs, he's selling
commemorative stamps which you
carried on the flights...

AMELIA

If this is about George, just say
o. Because we made those calls,
nd we includes me.

GENE

I'm sorry I said it that way. This
s actually about you, because I'm
picking a fight, apparently a
useless one, for the benefit of
someone I care about.

AMELIA

And what's your point? Women are
held to some higher standard?
Bankers and industrialists are ad-
mired for succeeding, but women are
just considered selfish and
grasping?

ENE (quietly)

Of course they are.

AMELIA

Well, let's change that, shall we?
Or would you just prefer to adopt
it, since groveling would be
easier.

Staring at each other.

GENE

If you want to make money, my guess
is that people viewing you as Lady
Lindy, America's Sweetheart of the
Skies, the wife/mother/daughter
they all wished they had. Would be
helpful.

AMELIA

Thanks for the tip.

GENE

Thanks for not being defensive.

Full beat.

T

AMELIA

Well, I'm an open-minded girl. And
o prove it, I'm hereby resigning
as your consultant at the
S Aeronautics Branch.
he throws some money on the table for the drinks.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

The public linking of our names
does more harm to that image of
mine than everything else put
together.
She stands up.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Next time you read the papers. Try
reading between the lines.
Walks out. Gene makes no move to follow. He's
said his
piece.

DISSOLVE TO...

EXT. ROSE GARDEN, WHITE HOUSE - DAY

74
74

Against
WOMEN
MOVIETONE NEWSREEL FOOTAGE introduced by its theme.
a backdrop of flowerbeds, Amelia is flanked by four
with conservative hats and middle-aged gravitas. The
photographers edge closer.

AMELIA

I came to Washington today with the
National Women's Party, to ask the
President for his aid in passing
the Lucretia Mott Amendment for
equal rights.
She waits for the press to quiet.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

And that's because I haven't needed

it.
The winsome smile.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I'm the lucky one. Our Department
of Commerce shows no prejudice in
issuing licenses to fly. A pilot
is a pilot.
And now it fades.

83.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

How about giving the rest of our
women. The ones who can be
productive for their families and
for our nation an equal break?
She is not defiant. Gentle and strong.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

They are your sisters and your
daughters. They are your wives.
And fellas...
The smallest shake of her head.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

You've no excuse. And you know it.

75 C

75

INT. WOMEN'S DORMITORY, PURDUE UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

nightgowns.
curl
o-Eds gathered in the common room in robes and
They fill the old couches, the mismatched easy chairs,
up in blankets on the floor. PAN TO...

piano,
hands.

...Amelia in flannel pajamas, sitting on the grand
pointing to the next question among the many raised

CO-ED

Okay, it's all well and good to
tell us to study whatever we want,
and work at whatever we want, and
not give a darn about what the
world of men think...

AMELIA

...including them wanting us to say
darn instead of damn.

crucial

Laughter. The girl flushes a little, her point is a
one...

CO-ED

But what about those of us who are
getting married when we graduate?
What advice do you have for us?

AMELIA

Don't.
She meant that. And no one is laughing now.

W

W

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Build your career first. And,
surprisingly, that's the best thing
you can do for your eventual
marriage.

So many eager faces, so many disturbed ones.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Look. It starts with a strong
sexual attraction, that the
oman assumes must be love.

Some heads are nodding. Some eyes suspicious.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Everything works until the first
financial crisis jars the man's
confidence and threatens the
oman's security. Why...?

She looks from one to the next.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Because she can't help. All she
can be is dependent. Because that

I

s what she's been trained to be.

A phone RINGS. One of the girls snatches it up to cut off
the interruption.

CO-ED #2 (hushed)

Common room. Oh. Sure.

(hand over phone, to

AMELIA)

He says he's the man in your life.

Amelia hops off the piano. There are plenty of curious
faces.

AMELIA

Trust me. Only a husband talks
like that.

In their laughter, she goes to the phone. EVERYBODY

hangs on

every word of...

AMELIA (into the phone)

Yes? Yes. Yes...

(hand over phone, to the

GIRLS)

They love when we say `yes.'

Laughter.

(

85.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I'm flying in Tuesday. Yes, of course, I'll make time.

BEAT)

Me, too.

(BEAT)

Me, too. Thanks for the roses.
She hangs up. Turns to her adoring pupils, and drops a curtsy. Ta-da! They APPLAUD. She stares at them. As if deciding whether to say...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Can you women keep a secret?
They can. And boy, do they want to hear one.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Well, it's no secret that I'm a bit driven, some might say obsessive, about my little flying adventures...
They are nodding, wide-eyed, go on.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I've decided to embark on easily
the most exciting, possibly cra-
ziest, ever...
They hold their breath.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

into I'm going to fly. Around the
world.
A frozen beat for them to even absorb this. They BURST
WILD APPLAUSE, Amelia beaming, as we DISSOLVE TO...

7

EXT. PARK AVENUE, NEW YORK - NIGHT

6

76 Amelia and George, bundled against the cold, walking
Park Avenue hand in hand. Christmas decorations, bright
lights.
A good mood prevails.

AMELIA

Are you going to tell me your
surprise, or do I have to get
physical?

GEORGE

Boy, that is the last thing I'd
want.
Well, then?

86.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I only thought that if you're
serious about this around-the-world
nonsense. It might be handy to

have a plane to fly in.

AMELIA

Except it would have to be an
Electra, and they cost...

GEORGE

...\$36,000. After a generous
discount from Lockheed.

AMELIA

May as well be a billion.

GEORGE

...not to mention at least another
36 to get it modified and ready.
She glances at him. He looks awfully smug.

AMELIA

And your surprise is, you robbed a
bank.

GEORGE

Actually. A university.
They stop. What on earth...?

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I've sort of persuaded Ed Elliot to
create an Amelia Earhart Fund for
Aeronautical Research at Purdue.
And suggested a budget item of...
He shrugs.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

...oh, eighty grand. For a
suitable 'flying laboratory.'
Her eyes just bug out. No! He nods, slowly. Uh-huh.
And she...
...THROWS her arms around his neck, KISSING him hard enough

G

to startle passersby. It only makes him chuckle.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

As I said, I've sort of persuaded
Ed. There are a bunch of trustees
and donors, tho. We have to get
them on board.

87.

AMELIA

Think I could help?
He looks in her eyes.

GEORGE

Nah.
She grins.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

By the way. That's not the
surprise.
It's not? Uh-uh. And he glances to...
...the window of the GALLERY they've stopped at. She
sees a
magnificently carved CHEST. On a crest in the front:
AE.
We PAN the surface, to see planes, oceans, a shamrock
for the
Londonderry landing, dozens more symbols of her
triumphs, and
in a bottom corner, looking up at all of this in
wonder...
...a small cat. In a long frock coat.
GEORGE (a whisper)
Merry Christmas.
Her tears just come. She's standing on Park Avenue and
she
can't do anything about it. He reaches a tender hand...
...and strokes her hair. He is her hero. See it
in her
eyes.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Can't wait to see what you got me.
She sniffles.

AMELIA

Cat food. A whole case.

INT. HOME, RYE - DAY

77

77

She begins

Amelia at her writing desk. Determined, focused.
to write...

AMELIA (O.S.)

Dear Mr. President: Some time ago
I told you and Mrs. Roosevelt about
my confidential plans for a world
flight. The chief problem is the
jump westward from Honolulu...

A

s she writes, DISSOLVE TO...

88.

78

78

and

risen

INT. DINING ROOM, PURDUE UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

A glittering table surrounded by high rollers. George
President Elliot sit on either side of Amelia, who has
to speak.

AMELIA

As President Elliot has said, it
would be a shining adventure,
beckoning with new experiences.
Making me more useful to the
program here at Purdue.
She looks into the eyes of each in turn...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

It is much more. I believe that women should do for themselves what men have done - and occasionally what men have not.

Yes?

AMELIA (CONT'D)

This might encourage other women toward greater independence of thought and action. And I know how deeply you gentlemen desire that. There is gentle laughter. Amelia reacts in mock surprise.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I know, of course, from my chats earlier in the evening. With each of your wives. More laughter. Applause from a wife, then the others, then all.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

In that spirit, I want each of you to reach for your checkbooks... She regards their amusement. And losing none of the warmth of her own smile...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I mean that quite literally. This is an opportunity for me to exhibit the quality my husband admires most.

G
eorge and Amelia gaze at each other.

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89.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

The capacity. To be relentless.

79

79

INT. HANGAR - DAY

with
a

The LOCKHEED ELECTRA, a sleek state-of-the-art aircraft
its gleaming metallic surface, nose up in the center of

by a

huge space. Its engines are on hoists, being worked on

team of MECHANICS.

Eight-year-old Gore gazes up, as if he has never seen anything quite so wondrous. Amelia and Gene watch, with barely suppressed smiles. He's in a suit. She's in

grease-

stained overalls from working with the mechanics.

GORE

So you'd be the first one, right?
ou always like that.

First one?

GORE (CONT'D)

To fly around the world.

AMELIA

Well, there's Magellan, 400 years
go. Actually, he didn't make it.
And he died. And he used a boat.

GORE

So it's almost the same, except
it's completely different.

AMELIA

Pretty much.
He glowers at her. She glowers back.

GENE

There are men who say they flew
around the world, but they didn't
ly around all of it.

GORE

Because at higher latitudes, it's
short trip. At the North Pole,
ou just spin in a circle and
you've gone around the world.

AMELIA

So why are you asking? Just to
show how smart you are?

GORE

Pretty much.

T

90.

Now he's grinning. She just glowers harder.

G

ORE (CONT'D)

The only way to really fly around
the world is to fly the entire
circumference of 27,000 miles.
Like at the equator.

AMELIA

No one's tried it. You think I
should?

No answer.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Dare me.

GORE

Okay.

AMELIA

Okay.

Is she serious? She seems to be.

GENE

Ask her about the Pacific. The

maximum range of the Electra is
4000 miles. And the closest land
est of Honolulu is farther than
that.

Gore looks to her. Well?

AMELIA

I'll have to refuel.

GORE

Where?

AMELIA

In the air. One plane to another.
The boy is staring at her now. Staring.

GORE

You're really going to do all this,
aren't you?

AMELIA

Well, don't you think I can?

A beat.

GORE

I guess we'll find out.

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Another.

AMELIA

Pretty much.

HOLD on Gene. He smiles at his kid...

GENE

Go out to the car and get Sara.

Ask if she'll take you for an ice
cream. Okay?

The boy knows he's being dismissed. Looks from his dad to
Amelia, who steps forward to give him a hug and a kiss.

AMELIA

We'll play some cards before you
leave.

Okay, then. He waves. One more glance at dad, and Gore
goes. Gene gestures for Amelia to come with him, away from
the mechanics. What's up? But he's already walking to...
...a little folding table, off in a corner. She follows.
Sits. Well...? G

ENE

You can't refuel in the air.

Just like that.

AMELIA

s that an opinion or an order?

His rueful smile.

GENE

The only good thing about losing
our former relationship is I feel a
little freer to tell you when
you're being completely crazy.

AMELIA

Oh, I bet there are more advantages
than just that.

No one's backing down on this.

GENE

You're not a good enough pilot to
o mid-air refueling. You will

not be able to control the Electra
or that docking maneuver for that
amount of time.

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92.

AMELIA

I've taken bigger risks.

GENE

I've noticed. Don't be so proud
of it.

He reaches into a pocket. Pulls out a folded sheet of paper.
It opens to reveal a MAP of the Pacific. A dot is CIRCLED in
red.

GENE (CONT'D)

This is Howland Island. It's half-
way between Honolulu and New
Guinea. It has no elevation, no
trees, it's a mile wide and a mile
and a half long. Hardly anyone

knows or cares that it exists.

AMELIA

It's your vacation home.

GENE

We're colonizing it, because when the Japanese make their move, we're going to need a refueling strip there.

She blinks. The Japanese.

GENE (CONT'D)

Try reading the newspapers between the lines. We haven't started building the runways yet. Maybe if someone I knew could get the President's attention...

She stares at the map. The dot.

GENE (CONT'D)

It's really tiny, a grain of sand in the middle of a thousand miles of nowhere.

Her eyes are clicking through a calculus of their own.

GENE (CONT'D)

F

You'd need a first-class navigator or that leg. Which means the trip can't be entirely solo.

And softly...

GENE (CONT'D)

Can you handle that?

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No answer. He waits without saying a word.
 AMELIA (softly back)
Don't rush me. I'm thinking.

80

80

EXT. COAST GUARD STATION, LOS ANGELES - MORNING

woman A Coast Guard station overlooking the Pacific. A lone
 leans on a railing. From the station, a MAN emerges, he
 has...
coffee ...a thermos and two large mugs. He pours steaming
 into each, and brings them to the woman at the rail.
She has turned to study him as he approaches.

AMELIA

 Hullo, Fred. It's good to meet
 you.
shake She holds out her hand. He juggles the mugs, so he can
 it. Strong look in each other's eyes. Hands her a
mug...

FRED

I hear you like your coffee black.

AMELIA

 This time of day, I like it with
 bacon and eggs.
His slight grin. A handsome guy.

FRED

Be right back.

AMELIA

Over easy on the eggs. Your job

could depend on it.
Silence between them. Comfortable smiles.

FRED

Are we sizing me up?
And, of course, this is exactly what she's doing.

AMELIA

I'm told that mid-air refueling
would be beyond my abilities.

FRED

Maybe, maybe not. 20% it works.
0% you crash. 60% you don't get
he fuel, so you're cooked anyway.

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94.

AMELIA

Better odds of hitting that island?

F

RED

How do you feel about 100%?
Watching his eyes as he says that. Evaluating.

AMELIA

Even with cloud cover?

FRED

I've crossed the Pacific by air 18 times. Pan Am told you I'm the best celestial navigator they've ever seen.

AMELIA

They did.

FRED

Someone else told you I have a drinking problem. Which is a big art of why we're here, yes?

No answer.

FRED (CONT'D)

Pan Am will tell you. Everyone I ever worked for will tell you. Nothing's interfered with my performance. Not once.

AMELIA

My dad drank. He lied all the time. Rest his soul.

FRED

You trusted Bill Stultz. That worked out. Rest his soul.

AMELIA

Bill just had to find Europe. We're looking for something less than two miles long, with nothing higher on it than 18 feet.

He shakes his head.

FRED

That's what you're looking for. I'm looking for coordinates on a map. And if it doesn't work...

He spreads his large hands...

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FRED (CONT'D)

Money-back guarantee.
She holds the look.

AMELIA (softly)
Hey. How can I lose?

81

81

INT. BARCLAY HOTEL, NEW YORK - DAY

Amelia at a bank of microphones, smiling, modest, comfortable. George and Fred stand back to one side. FLASHBULBS go crazy, NEWSREEL cameras churn.

AMELIA

Did I pressure the navy to build a
landing strip at Howland Island?
How exactly would I do that?
L Threaten not to enlist?
aughter in the room. More flashes.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

The airstrip has been planned for a
long time. I was thrilled to learn
it will be ready in time for my
flight. The navy has been
wonderful, as always.

REPORTER #1

Amelia, what do you say to the
charges that your husband is
pulling the strings, pressuring you
into this around-the-world flight
to make a financial killing?

wife George BOLTS forward to the microphones, looks at his
with astonishment...

GEORGE

Wait a minute, you're flying around
the world? Don't you know a
woman's place is in the home??
The press ROARS with laughter.

REPORTER #2

George, why don't you go along this
time? Watch over the little woman.

GEORGE

I begged to go. But it seems that
between 185 pounds of husband and

1

85 pounds of fuel, I lost out.

T

T

Gazes at his wife.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

At least, I think that's what all
he laughter meant.

He gives her a kiss. Thirty FLASHES record it. As he
steps
back...

REPORTER #3

Experts are saying that this
'flying laboratory' is a sham.
There's nothing to be learned for
aviation, and you're just in this
for the money.

The place gets really quiet.

AMELIA

Who am I to argue with 'experts?'
I'll just give you my plain old
common-sense thinking on this...

Pens come up, cameras jockey for position. This is what
they're waiting for. She holds up one finger. First...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

We may not learn much about the
plane, but we will about the pilot.
Endurance over a month's journey,
flying nearly every day. Response
o stress, crises. I think that
will make a contribution.

Holds up a second finger. Two...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I'm a working stiff like all of
you. I don't apologize for the
fact that I need money to live.
And to keep financing my flying,
which is what I love. I think
that's a positive example for
women.

Third finger. Three...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I'm not doing this as a scientist.
I'm a flyer, boys, pursuing my
passion. For the fun of it. The

fun of it. Something I recommend
as a healthy motive for women.
A wink. A shrug...

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AMELIA (CONT'D)

...and maybe even some men.

8

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82

EXT. LUKE FIELD, HONOLULU - SUNRISE

humming.
The Electra ready to go in first light, engines
Amelia walking alone toward the plane.

SUPERIMPOSE: LUKE FIELD, HONOLULU. MARCH 20, 1937.
he waves goodbye to crew and press. Climbs the steps
welcomed by Fred's hand gently pulling her aboard. The
CLOSES. We see Amelia and Fred in the cockpit. He
gauge.

FRED

Lovely. We've got so much fuel we
can't possibly get off the ground.
Much safer than flying.

AMELIA

Well, we need enough for a third
pass at Howland. After you miss it
the first couple times around.
Ah.

FRED

Good thinking.
he runway lights go ON, and...

GEORGE (V.O.)

We were, all of us, fearful about
that landing. No one guessed...
Amelia ROARS OFF, gathering SPEED.

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

...it would be the take-off.
The Electra SUDDENLY VEERS TO THE RIGHT, and we SMASH
CUT

TO...

INT. ELECTRA

Amelia THROTTLING DOWN the left engine. The plane
SWINGING WILDLY to the left, as...

N

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84
84

EXT./INT. ELECTRA

...the RIGHT WHEEL COLLAPSES, the plane SPINS TO THE
LEFT and we INTERCUT between the cockpit and the runway as the
Electra...
...CAREENS MADLY for a thousand feet, Amelia CUTTING
THE SWITCHES to the engines, fighting for control,
PROPELLERS SMASHED by the concrete runway, SPARKS FLYING IN EVERY

DIRECTION...

waiting. INTERCUT. Oakland Airport. George and his retinue
freezes, A phone RINGING. Someone takes the call, his face
.
he looks wildly around to...
..George, who's there, SNATCHING the receiver.

VOICE (O.S.)

Have you heard? They crashed, the
ship's in flames.
SMASH CUT to the cockpit, the Electra SPINNING crazily
on its belly, SPARKS EVERYWHERE, the plane suddenly comes...
...to a BONE-JARRING STOP. The right MOTOR is pushed up
INTO its wing, which itself has BUCKLED, the stabilizer
BENT, the left wing extends UPWARD from scraping the runway, the
landing gear no longer exists.
SIRENS SCREAM as fire trucks and ambulances race toward
them.
Amelia is ashen, disbelieving. Next to her, a gentle...

FRED

Good reaction, cutting the switch.
You saved our ass.
She doesn't even hear, THROWING open the cockpit,
WAVING to signal they're all right, we SMASH CUT TO...

EXT. OAKLAND AIRPORT - DAY

85

85
George wandering numbly on the airfield, as someone
RUNS LIKE CRAZY from the office, shouting...

MAN

NO FIRE! NO FIRE, FALSE REPORT!

O ONE HURT!

George alone on the tarmac. Stops in his tracks.
Now he can cry.

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86

86

EXT. GARDEN, LOS ANGELES HOME - ALMOST SUNRISE

Two figures in a garden, walking in light so spare they
are silhouettes. Her head is down. His hands are in his
pockets. We CLOSE on them as she fingers a blossom, we
now see she is miserable, fighting absolute despair.

GEORGE

Three weeks, she'll be good as new.
It's a remarkable crew. The best

T

hat...
He stops. Realizing where he was going. She never
looks up.

AMELIA

...the best that money can buy. I
just can't believe I've done this
to us. All the money wasted that's
never coming back.

GEORGE

You cut the engines. It would have cost a bundle more to replace a burned-up plane. Not to mention pilot.

She shakes her head. No.

AMELIA

I overreacted. The plane was too heavy, I should have used the rudder pedal instead of the throttle.

Tears stand in her eyes. She is so ashamed and remorseful.

He lets it stay silent as they walk. Then...

GEORGE

It's only money, we'll figure it out. We always do.

AMELIA

I'll make it back and more, I promise. The book sales, the lectures, this flight will keep us going another three years.

GEORGE

Maybe. Or...

AMELIA

No, it will. Our prices, our sales, are going to double.

(MORE)

W

A

100.

AMELIA(cont'd)

This showed them how dangerous it
all is, they were taking it for
granted...

(SNIFFLES)

They thought I was competent.

GEORGE (softly)

I meant. Or maybe we can quit.

She looks over. Not sure if...

AMELIA

You mean after.

GEORGE

Or. Even now.

A strong smile. He nods. We could.

AMELIA

So my exit would be a stupid crash.
nd withdrawing from a world-
publicized attempt to finally do
something no man had done before.

GEORGE

Yeh. That. And it would be fine
ith me.

Her eyes overwhelmed A his offer.

by

Her voice soft

with...

MELIA

But that's because you're an idiot.

GEORGE

Lucky for you.

A held beat.

AMELIA

And what if it's not something I
have to show the world?

Hmmn?

AMELIA

What if it's something I have to
show me.
He has no answer for that. Takes her hand. They
head toward the house.

INT. HANGAR - NIGHT

87 **87**
Massive enclosed space. The rebuilt Electra in pieces
at various work stations, being perfected by teams of
mechanics.

T

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101.

table

The whirr and clang of tools. Amelia and George confer with one foreman, as George sees something. He touches her arm, points in our direction. REVERSE ANGLE as she sees...
...Gene has entered the hangar. Stands by the folding
we've seen before.

GEORGE

Have fun.

AMELIA

Who let you off the hook on this?
She takes his hand firmly and together they cross the hangar toward Gene. He smiles, unfolds a third chair. As they arrive, Amelia steps forward...
...kisses Gene on the cheek. George shakes his hand.

GENE

Thanks for letting me come.
As they sit, Gene looks from one to the other.

GENE (CONT'D)

I guess I'm already outvoted.

GEORGE

She'd outvote you all by herself.
he does it to me every day.
Gene's smile can't mask the concern in his eyes.

AMELIA

I don't have a choice. I have to
reverse my route and fly east. If
go west now, I'm risking
hurricanes in the Caribbean and
monsoons in Africa...

GENE

But you're flying Howland last,
when you're exhausted.
She knows this. In the silence...

G

GEORGE

Gene, this way our first leg is
Oakland to Miami. It's a shakedown

o make sure the plane is right.
That's crucial.
Gene nods, slowly. His eyes still locked on her.

102.

GENE

Maybe I'm obsessing on Howland
because it was my bright idea,
and I'd feel responsible if...

AMELIA

Well, if I do pop off, I'll try
to make it somewhere that's not
your fault.

GENE

I'd appreciate that.
Draws a breath.

GENE (CONT'D)

You miss that island. You'll be
out of fuel, with 2000 miles to go.

AMELIA

But I'll have Fred so I won't miss.
In fact, I'm taking Fred along for
this whole trip.
Surprisingly, he doesn't seem to like this. She smiles.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Giving up my little arrogance about
solo. Safety first, yes?
But he's still unhappy. She waits for him to say.

GENE

You and Fred alone for a month...

AMELIA

If you're worried about his
drinking, I'll deal with it.
Straight look.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I can handle Fred.
And now we get a sense of exactly what does worry him. He
glances to George...

GENE

How do you feel?

GEORGE

Tip-top. Every little girl needs a
man around. Even strong girls like
ours, hmmn?
A very direct gaze. Words neither said nor needed.

G

T

A

103.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

She can handle us. She can handle
Fred.
A full beat. The look holds between the men.

G

GEORGE (CONT'D)

And thanks for being here. You've
always had Amelia's best interests
at heart.

he look still unbroken.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

And, for that. I'm grateful.

88

88

EXT. MIAMI AIRPORT - DAY - NEWSREEL FOOTAGE

Amelia and George crossing the tarmac from the Electra,
waving to the crowd.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The legendary Amelia Earhart lands
in Miami, completing the first and
easiest leg of her around-the-world
equatorial flight. A feat no man
has ever attempted. That's hubby
George with her, he gets off here.

Behind them, coat slung casually across his shoulder,

is

Fred. Waving like he belongs.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

That handsome guy behind them isn't
a movie star. Nope, it's navigator
Fred Noonan, who will be Amelia's
sole companion on the exotic
odyssey...

CLOSE on the rugged smile.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Hey, where does a guy go to apply
for a job like that?

EXT. BEACH, MIAMI - DUSK

89

89

The pastel sky has darkened along the row of legendary
hotels. At first, we can barely find them at the

water's

quite
head.

edge. CLOSE to see her sitting where the surf can't
reach her toes. He's lying back, hands cradling his
Watching the stars come out. Nothing said. Then...

O

T

O

104.

AMELIA

I'll be flying sky no one's ever
been in. You made that happen.
She looks down to his easy smile.

GEORGE

Hate to think where you'd be
without me.
She smiles back. Tenderness we don't always see.

AMELIA

I'll try to make you proud.

GEORGE

You did that long, long ago. Only
ne person left to prove yourself
o. Just make sure you do it.

A

beat. The doubt comes.

AMELIA

And then what?

GEORGE

Then the best part. The future.
She stares in his eyes. Leans to him.

AMELIA (a whisper)

Oh yeh. That.

She brings her hands to his face. Her mouth to his.

Deep.

Longing. Her body sinks into him.

LONG ANGLE. Two alone. Only each other.

EXT. MIAMI AIRPORT - DAY

90

90

Amelia and
She

LONG ANGLE. From the open door of a hangar we see
George facing reporters in front of the idling Electra.
sits on the wing, he's just beneath her.

GEORGE (V.O.)

The radio problems crept up on us
ver time.

SUPERIMPOSE: MIAMI AIRPORT. JUNE 1.

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

The marine 500 kilocycle radio was
left in Oakland. Amelia said she

(MORE)

C

105.

GEORGE (cont'd)
and Fred were both amateurs at
Morse Code, so the radio wasn't
worth what it weighed.
Amelia has made the boys laugh. George laughs with them.

GEORGE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The 250 foot trailing auxiliary
antenna, she would leave behind
in Miami. Too heavy, not
important.
FLASHES now. And plenty of them. She reaches down to take
George's hand and HOPS down from the wing. More FLASHES...

GEORGE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Then, suddenly our remaining radio
ouldn't reach its designated
frequencies. Pan Am hurriedly
replaced the main antennae. And we
thought all was well.
Amelia and George coming toward us now, hand in hand,
leaving
the press behind. Into...
The hangar. In shadow here. The world far away, she
takes
his hands. A silence.

GEORGE (CONT'D)
Race you to California. I'll go
west. Five bucks?

AMELIA
If you'll fly the plane. Make it
twenty.
And then...

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Simpkin keeps many mice at one
time. Each under a different
teacup.
Wow. He's finally going to hear this.

GEORGE

We're saying he's cruel?

AMELIA

No.

GEORGE

Controlling?

AMELIA

Insecure.

I

T

106.

Ah. The light begins to dawn.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

He needs the illusion of activity
o feel comfortable. That he's
preparing for all contingencies.
George has to grin.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

That he has more irons in the

F

ire than anyone knows.

GEORGE

Especially the mice.

AMELIA

Exactly. Each poor mouse thinks
it's all about her.

Staring at each other.

GEORGE

And one of them. Is right.

AMELIA (a murmur)

She knows.

And then...

GEORGE

want you to give me something.

He's never sounded quite like this before.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Tell me this is your last flight.

Her eyes flicker. Look down. A whispered...

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Promise.

And when the eyes come up.

AMELIA

Don't you know I couldn't? Even if
part of me wanted to. Very, very
much.

The look holds.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

How can we be anything. But what
we are?

107.

There is no answer. She leans up into a slow kiss.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I do love you.
Something in her serious face makes him smile.

GEORGE

Well, I love you back.

AMELIA

Thanks.

slightly
Takes a step back toward the hangar door. One hand
up, stay here. Then, the smile he's waited for.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

See ya.

idling
He smiles back. She turns and heads out toward the
tarmac.
plane. She seems small, even fragile, alone on the

STAY with George. Watching her go.

SLOW

DISSOLVE

TO...

EXT./INT. MONTAGE

91

91

SERIES OF ANGLES, CROSSFADES, DISSOLVES, INCLUDING...

IMAGES FROM THE ELECTRA:

RAINFOREST.
- VIEW down onto an endless sea of triple-canopy
- VIEW of Brazilian CITY from ABOVE.
VIEW onto the ocean and African coast.
- VIEW of ANIMALS running beneath us.
- VIEW of the SAHARA'S sands

SUPERIMPOSE: IMAGES FROM STOPS:

- Children surrounding Amelia at an African airfield
- Amelia sleeping in the open desert
- being welcomed by turbaned dignitaries
- Amelia on a camel, suddenly kicks it into a gallop

SUPERIMPOSE: IMAGES FROM TRAVEL MAP

-

108.

Juan to - its RED LINE tracing our journey from Miami to San
Venezuela, to Brazil
West The RED LINE moving across the Atlantic, to French
Africa and North to the Sudan
of - The RED LINE moves from The Nile River across the tip
finally to Arabian Peninsula, through Persia, Afghanistan and
Calcutta.

SUPERIMPOSE: IMAGES FROM AMELIA'S ARTICLES

ARTICLE - HEADLINES from various installments of her daily
in the Herald Tribune, with her BYLINE.

FROM

DISSOLVE

TO...

MONTAGE

EXT. AIRPORT, CALCUTTA - EVENING

92

dry.

by the
over

Driving RAINSTORM as Amelia carries her gear toward the Electra. Fred waits. The umbrellas aren't keeping them

SUPERIMPOSE: DUMDUM AIRDROME, CALCUTTA

The buildings have thatched roofs. There are oxcarts
runway, abandoned to the downpour. Fred has to shout
the storm...

FRED

YOU'RE NOT REALLY TAKING OFF!

AMELIA

IT'S GOING TO GET HEAVIER AND

WE COULD BE STUCK HERE FOR DAYS.

EVEN WEEKS.

He just glares at her. Rain POUNDING all around them.

A

MELIA (CONT'D)

ONLY 700 MILES TO BANGKOK, IT'S

LIGHTER THERE.

He doesn't move.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

rain

Stay if you like.
And she climbs into the plane. He just stands in the
and glowers.

109.

93
93

EXT. AIRSTRIP - MOMENTS LATER

one The Electra ROARING down the runway. It's all alone, no
begins to else crazy enough to be out there. At last the plane...
...LIFTS INTO the rain. Wobbles just a beat. And

CLIMB.

EXT. ELECTRA - LATER

94
94

A wrenching battle, plane versus monsoon. The storm is heavier, deafening, actually STRIPPING PAINT from the Electra's wings.

95
95

INT. ELECTRA - SAME MOMENT

We think Amelia beyond exhaustion, but focused, fighting it.
she's flying alone. Until...
...Fred drops into the seat beside her. No words as he watches her struggle. Our plane is all over the sky.
The DIN is ungodly.

AMELIA

YOU THINK WE SHOULD TURN BACK, HUH?

FRED

NOPE. I THINK WE SHOULDN'T HAVE

COME.

An AIR POCKET DROPS them 200 feet.

AMELIA

HARD TO IMAGINE LANDING IN THIS.

FRED

I'VE GOT AN IDEA. LET'S NEVER COME

DOWN.

She glances over. For once, she's scared.

AMELIA

HOW COULD YOU FIND OUR WAY BACK?

FRED

SINCE I FORGOT TO DROP BREAD

CRUMBS, WE'LL HAVE TO USE DEAD

RECKONING.

Beat.

AMELIA

THAT'S IT? JUST A GUESS?

I

F

110.

FRED

US NAVIGATORS PREFER THE TERM `WILD-

ASS GUESS.'

Held look.

AMELIA

That's more like it.

She starts to TURN the plane around.

INT. ELECTRA - DAY

96

96

is no

accumulated

Amelia flying down through heavy turbulence, though it
longer raining. Her features tense. We see the
strain of the adventure.

F

beside

and the

red appears from the catwalk, slips into the seat
her. He's worried. Points, and we see...
...CALCUTTA below, sprawling and endless. Between us
ground, a huge gathering of FLYING SHAPES.

RED

Black eagles. If one of those
clips a propeller. Or flies into
the engine...
Her tired features form a smile.

AMELIA

've got an idea. Let's never
land. Better safe than sorry.
He takes her point. She turns back to work...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I'll wake you when the coffee's
ready.

THROUGH

And with cold-blooded nerve, she SWOOPS down, down,

the flock of eagles, scattering them as we arc in for a
perfect landing. She never turns to...

his

...Fred, who is still white-knuckling, trying to get

heart started. He can't believe what she's just done.
Rolling, rolling...

FRED

Cream, no sugar.

A

111.

97

97

EXT. GOVERNOR'S HOUSE, CALCUTTA - TWILIGHT

Night

Establishing shot of a graceful pillar of the Raj.
falling.

EXT. COURTYARD, GOVERNOR'S HOUSE - SAME MOMENT

98

98

RECEPTION, as
DIGNITARIES.
teak-
it

A fountain in an ornate courtyard. There is a
every evening for Amelia, attended by local
Fred, already a little drunk, leads Amelia to a massive
wood table. He breaks off the corner of a cracker, sets
down in the center of the table.

FRED

Howland Island.
He strikes a match. SNUFFS the flame. Puts the burned-
out
match head just by the scrap of cracker.

FRED (CONT'D)

B

lack smoke from the Navy ship that
could help us get a fix.
Points way across the marble courtyard.

FRED (CONT'D)

Now stand over there. That's what
it's going to look like, if the
weather's good.

SERVANT (O.S.)

Mrs. Earhart?
She glances up. He beckons respectfully.
NGLE. Alcove still with a VIEW of Fred and the
courtyard.
She lifts a telephone...

INTERCUT: INT. GEORGE'S OFFICE - DAY

99

99

fol-

CLOSE on a WALL MAP. We realize that George has been
lowing her odyssey on a map of his own. We PULL BACK to
reveal...

GEORGE

Mrs. Earhart? Mr. Earhart, here.
He looks elegant in crisp suit and tie.
INTERCUT: Amelia's eyes WIDE. She seems truly thrilled.
INTERCUT BETWEEN THEM now throughout...

.

R

S

T

AMELIA

Oh, my goodness. Simpkin, is it
really you?
George makes a PURRING sound. A sharp MEOW.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

This is insane. It's so
extravagant.

GEORGE

It gets worse, I bought a brand-new
suit and tie. Got a date with my
wife.

AMELIA

We can't possibly afford this.

GEORGE

ure, we can. It's Tuesday's call
o Lae that we can't afford.

AMELIA (delighted)

You hang up the phone this minute.
You'll bankrupt us and I'll have
to walk home.

GEORGE

easoning with me. A magnificent
display of useless courage.
Her eyes remember. A soft...

AMELIA

..and it's fun.
HOLD on her face. And MATCH DISSOLVE TO...

EXT. BAR, LAE - NIGHT

100

100

The

studying

...Amelia's FACE, as we left it in the first scene.
STORM PELTING all around the open-sided bar. Fred
her across the table.

FRED

the

A touching love story, really.
He's been drinking, we can hear it in his voice. SEE
bottle now. Nearly gone.

AMELIA

An honest one. It's what you
wanted.
He nods. That's right.

Y

113.

FRED

I wonder if it's honest enough for
George. If it's what he wanted.
ou know.

AMELIA

If you mean Gene, we're not
together anymore. In that way.
Not for a long time.

FRED

Whose choice was that?
She doesn't like his tone. Shifts in her seat.

AMELIA

It was mine.

FRED

Well, isn't it always? You choose
in, you choose out. Makes things
easy.

AMELIA

Anything but easy. Are you
disapproving of the way I live?

FRED

Hell, no. It's just like me. In
fact, it's like most guys I know.

His smile.

FRED (CONT'D)

Actually, I'd like a piece of it
myself. Right about now.

Her eyes harden. A

MELIA

If you have a point, Fred. Make
it.

FRED

Oh, I believe I have.

slicker She rises slowly. Zips her flight jacket. Takes her
from the back of her chair.

AMELIA

Allow me to cut you a deal, my
friend.

Steel in the spine of that.

114.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

You show up tomorrow morning.
You show up sober and you get
me to Howland Island.

Okay?

AMELIA (CONT'D)

head, goes And I'll forget you ever said that.
She WHEELS around and holding her slicker over her
OFF into the POUNDING RAIN.

Fred's smile is gone. He stares after her.

DISSOLVE TO...

EXT. RADIO HUT, LAE - LATER

101
101 hut. She Amelia down the path in her slicker toward a small
knocks. Opens the door to reveal...

INT. RADIO HUT - NIGHT

102
102 operator BALFOUR ...the radio receiver and transmitter. The
is a wiry Scot. He nods respectfully.
BALFOUR
Ready, Mum.
He stands and she takes his seat. He shows her the key
to press, then steps back toward the window. But she
makes no move to the radio. Just stares at him. He doesn't
understand.

AMELIA (gently)
Feel like stepping out for a
smoke...?

BALFOUR
I don't smoke.

AMELIA
...or something?
Oh. The monsoon beats down.

BALFOUR
If you need help, I'll be right

outside. In the rain.

AMELIA

Thank you. I'll only be a moment.

I

G

115.

Leaves.

He puts on his slicker. OPENS an umbrella.

She looks back to the radio. FLIPS the switch.

E AMELIA (soft)
arhart here.

INTERCUT: COAST GUARD STATION, LOS ANGELES - DAY

103

103

Pacific. George at a window, looking west. Over the
She's there somewhere.

GEORGE

You should be sleeping.
He smiles to keep his voice up. The eyes aren't
smiling. We
INTERCUT their conversation throughout...

AMELIA

You should be working.

GEORGE

I'm running a big adventure here,
'm a very important fellow.

AMELIA

You told me I was the star. And
you were no one at all.

GEORGE (soft)

I thought I was lying. Guess the
joke's on me.

Silence.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

How's Fred?

AMELIA

I'm mad at him. I'll be in
Honolulu on the 3rd, and with you
in Oakland for Fourth of July.
Okay?

GEORGE

Don't keep me waiting.

AMELIA

I won't dare. You're a very
important feline. Uh, fellow.

GEORGE

Talk to me about Fred.

116.

AMELIA

Fred is fine. He's calculating
head-wind speed versus fuel as we
speak.
CLOSE on his face.

GEORGE

You wouldn't sell a salesman would
you?

AMELIA

He's fine.

GEORGE

So what's that I hear in your
voice?

A beat.

GEORGE

Is he drinking?

AMELIA (soft)

I can handle it.

GEORGE

Call it off. Right now. I mean
it.

AMELIA

I can handle it.

And then...

AMELIA

I love you.

Silence.

GEORGE

After the Fourth. We're going
home.

AMELIA

Where's that?

GEORGE

For me? Anywhere you are.

She begins to cry. Both hands fly to her mouth and she looks
away. She swallows hard.

AMELIA

I'm going to like it there.

117.

And then...

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I'd better. Since this is my last
flight.

A long silence.

GEORGE

Well. If you insist.

She nods. She does.

AMELIA

t's late here. Guess I'll go
curl up under a teacup.

GEORGE

I'll go tell the world you're on
your way.

Neither wants to let go. We feel it so strong.

GEORGE (a whisper)

Sweet dreams.

A beat.

AMELIA (whispers back)

See ya.

And he's gone. She stares at the radio.

INT. AMELIA'S HUT - LATER

FLICKER of a kerosene lamp. Amelia writing at a
tiny desk.
Thinks now. Thinks.
Lost in it.

EXT. AIRFIELD, LAE - DAWN

105
105
light.
stops:
Amelia
at his
he
A sober, contrite Fred comes down the runway in early
As he reaches the Electra, he sees a pile of discarded
OBJECTS on the tarmac...
...metal containers, carton of oranges, parachutes.
Bedrolls, cold weather gear. Souvenirs from their
flags, a metal plaque, native crafts, a Welcome Miss
Earhart banner. As he studies the pile...
...a COFFEE POT comes FLYING out of the plane to roll
feet. Suddenly, a 10 pound coffee tin SAILS PAST, as
DUCKS. Amelia appears at the hatch, sees him.

G

118.

FRED

voice... You're finding the range. But it
might be easier to just shoot me.
She stares at him for a moment. A subdued

AMELIA
Traveling light, that's all.
dangling. Her She sits on the lip of the hatch. Her legs
eyes down.

FRED
Got room for 190 pounds of asshole?
never seen her No answer. She's still looking down. He's
like this.

FRED (CONT'D)

M
a'am, I am so sor...

AMELIA
It's fine.
Her eyes come up.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
Everything is.
She He doesn't understand, but he's glad to be forgiven.
the takes a LETTER from her pocket. Runs her finger over
envelope.

FRED
I can run into town before we go.
et that in the post for you.
She shakes her head slowly.

AMELIA
It's for my husband. I'm going to
hand it to him. So I can watch his
face as he reads it.
She sniffles slightly.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
It's our tradition.

EXT. RUNWAY, LAE AIRFIELD - MORNING

106

106

Gulf.

ANGLE

A RUNWAY that ends in a drop-off at the waters of Huon
The Electra, engines REVVING. Ready to go for it. Our
CLOSES on the belly of the plane. The ANTENNA MAST
supporting a trailing WIRE ANTENNA.

119.

GEORGE (V.O.)

Ten A.M., Friday July 2. They
lined up on the thousand-yard
runway. One thousand gallons of
fuel, enough for 20 to 21 hours of
flying.

STARTS its

PUFF of

the

yards

the

to...

surface

LONG ANGLE. Crew and onlookers watch as the plane
run, gathering speed, BOUNCING over uneven ground...
CLOSE now on the jouncing undercarriage, a momentary
DUST, and as the plane moves PAST, we may notice that
belly antenna mast seems to be GONE.
DOWN the runway it RUMBLES, still earthbound, only 200
to go. Then 100. Then FIFTY, then at the water's edge,
Electra RISES and...

.
..DROPS out of sight below the land, as we SMASH CUT
ANGLE. The Electra has FALLEN to SIX FEET above the
of the Gulf. The engines THROB at max, the propellers
THROWING SPRAY. The overloaded plane...
...RISING. Slowly, then faster, then...
...SOARING free.

in

PULL BACK to a VIEW from down the runway. The Electra
distance. RACK FOCUS to see something long and slender
GLINTING on the ground. Could it be a length of WIRE?

INT. COAST GUARD STATION, LOS ANGELES - SUNSET

107

107

Amelia.

We

Through the glass, the sun is disappearing toward
PULL BACK to George, staring at a CABLE in his hands.

HEAR...

BALFOUR (O.S.)

Mr. Putnam. Their headwinds are
stronger than they knew when they
took off.

Then...

BALFOUR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I recalculated their fuel. It will
cost them 9%.

BACK

George staring off. Assessing the consequences. PULL
to see an ENSIGN standing, waiting for instruction.

BALFOUR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I can't raise them, sir. I tried
voice, and Morse Code...

W

120.

George looks up. Calmly.

GEORGE

ire back. Tell him to forget the
Morse Code. They didn't bring the
receiver.

The young man looks concerned.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Just tell him to stay with voice.
He'll get them.

108 108 A

EXT. HOWLAND ISLAND - DAY

adrift in AERIAL ANGLE. A tiny, flat, nearly invisible speck
the endless Pacific. Howland Island. PAN to see just
offshore...

GEORGE (V.O.)

The U.S. Coast Guard cutter Itasca
had been anchored off Howland just
for us.
CLOSE on the ITASCA now...

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

slender Its radio would be her lifeline.
Its black plume of smoke would
reach for miles. More visible than
the island itself.
DISSOLVE TO NIGHT. The island visible only by its
LIGHTHOUSE. The ship illuminated in the darkness.
CLOSE now on a path by the sea. A lone figure with a
FLASHLIGHT approaches a SHACK. Enters...

INT. RADIO HUT - NIGHT

109
109

CIPRIANI,
been on
...a room filled with radio equipment. He is FRANK
in crisp naval uniform, relieving a SEAMAN who has
duty. As Cipriani sits at his station, he notices...

CIPRIANI

The direction finder. How long has
this been on?
The seaman turns back at the door. What?

EXT. ITASCA

110
110

CLOSE on the ship, illuminated. PUSH IN...

121.

111
111

INT. RADIO ROOM, ITASCA - NIGHT

The room is 9 x 20 with bare walls. At the
transmitter, LEO
BELLARTS the chief radio man. Short and square, an
unflappable air of quiet expertise. With him, his
assistant

At a
headphones
the

WILLIAM DALTEN, lean and young with dark serious eyes.
typewriter sits THOMAS O'HARE, barely twenty,
across his shock of rust-colored hair, telegraph at
ready.

S

spitting
human

UPERIMPOSE: 2:45 A.M.
Dalton adjusting the receiver which is suddenly
STATIC. Threading through the noise, what could be a
voice. Bellarts calls to O'Hare...

BELLARTS

typing

That's her on 3105. She said
'cloudy and overcast.'
O'Hare looks at him. Are you serious? Bellarts mimes
with his fingers. O'Hare starts typing into the log.

DISSOLVE TO...

SUPERIMPOSE: 3:45 A.M.
Radio CRACKLES. All eyes turn.

AMELIA (O.S.)

Itasca from Earhart. Overcast.
Static. Dalton leans to the mic...

DALTEN (into mic)
We are receiving your signal.
Please acknowledge ours. What is
your position? When do you expect
to arrive Howland?
No answer. Light static.

BELLARTS

begins to

Commander estimated 7:00. If she's
having trouble on voice
transmission, stay with Morse.
And begins to carefully pack his pipe. Dalton
transmit Morse Code. DISSOLVE TO...

SUPERIMPOSE: 6:45 A.M.
The radio. The static. The sudden voice...

K

122.

AMELIA (O.S.)

Please take bearing on us and
report in half hour. I will make
noise in microphone. We are about
100 miles out.

No The transmission cuts out. Dalten answers in Morse Code.
response.

DALTEN

She's got to stay on longer.
Bellarts dictating as O'Hare types...

BELLARTS

Earhart signal strength 4, but on

A

ir so briefly bearings impossible.

DISSOLVE

TO...

SUPERIMPOSE: 7:18 A.M.

DALTEN (to Bellarts)
Maybe her Morse receiver is out.
(into mic)
Can't take bearing on 3105. Please
send on 500 or do you want to take
bearing on us? Go ahead, please.
Silence. O'Hare typing: NO ANSWER.

SUPERIMPOSE: 7:30 A.M.

DALTEN (into mic)

Please acknowledge our signals on
ey. Please acknowledge.
CRACKLE. O'Hare typing: UNANSWERED.

BELLARTS

Tommy, intercom top deck, double
check the smoke stack...

INTERCUT: AERIAL ANGLE high above the ship. BLACK
SMOKE
PLUMES into clear sky...

BELLARTS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

They should be able to see it for
twenty miles, at least.

TILT ANGLE. In far distance, thirty to forty miles, a
gray

STORM.

A

123.

112
112

INT. RADIO ROOM - MORNING

back A few others enter now. Civilians, sailors, they hang
silently, watching as...

SUPERIMPOSE: 7:42 A.M.

AMELIA (O.S.)

KHAQQ calling Itasca. We must be
on you but cannot see you...
Glances are traded. It is the first moment of visible
concern. STATIC interrupts. Then...

AMELIA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Gas is running low. Been unable to
reach you by radio. We are flying
t altitude 1000 feet.

DALTEN (into mic)

You are reaching us. We are
sending on 3105 and 500 constantly.
Please acknowledge.

Massive BURST of static. Dalten frantically CLICKING a
message in Morse Code. DISSOLVE TO...

S

UPERIMPOSE: 7:58 A.M.

The room has nearly filled. COMMANDER THOMPSON stands

at

Bellart's shoulder. All eyes fixed on the radio...

EARHART (O.S.)

We are circling but cannot hear
you. Go ahead on 7500.

BELLARTS (into mic)

Itasca to KHAQQ. Your signal is
strong. Are you receiving this?

A breathless moment. A sharp CRACKLE.

EARHART (O.S.)

KHAQQ calling Itasca. We received
your signal, but unable to get a
minimum. Please take bearing on
us and answer 3105 with voice.

BELLARTS (into mic)

Your signal received okay. It is
impractical to take a bearing on
3105 on your voice. Give us a
longer signal, please. Go ahead.

Silence. Feet are shifting. No one speaks.

O

124.

BELLARTS (softly to Dalten)
Keep us at 7500, that's her only
acknowledgment.

THOMPSON

You've got her signal, dammit.
What about the direction finder?

BELLARTS

Cipriani reports the battery's
dead, sir. It was left on all
night.

Full beat.

THOMPSON (low)
I don't believe this is happening.

DISSOLVE

TO:

SUPERIMPOSE: 8:12 A.M.

BELLARTS (into mic)
Itasca to Earhart. Did you get
transmission on 7500? Go ahead on
500 so that we can take a bearing
on you, it's impossible on 3105.
Please acknowledge.

DISSOLVE

TO:

SUPERIMPOSE: 8:33 A.M.

No breath in this room. No one moves.

BELLARTS (into mic)

Will you please come in and answer
on 500? We are transmitting
constantly on 7500 and we do not
hear you on 500. Please answer on
500. Go ahead.

DISSOLVE

TO:

SUPERIMPOSE: 8:44 A.M.

Suddenly, a thin and anxious VOICE cuts through a burst of
static... A

MELIA (O.S.)

We are on the line of position 157-
337, will repeat this message on
6210 kilocycles. Wait, listening
on 6210 kilocycles. We are running
north and south.

B

F

BELLARTS (into mic)
 We hear you. We hear you. Can you
 receive this...?
 Silence. Silence. Silence.
 COMMANDER (softly)
 Mr. Bellarts. When did she say she
 was low on fuel?
 All eyes shift to Tommy. He scans the log.
 Stares.

O'HARE
 Um. An hour. And two minutes,
 sir.
 HOLD on this room. DISSOLVE TO...
 AERIAL ANGLE. The ship in clear daylight. The
 BLACK PLUME
 of smoke stretching to heaven.

DISSOLVE **SLOW**

TO...

INT. COAST GUARD STATION, LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

113
113
 The tiny room we've come to know. It is filled with
 people
 who stand motionless, staring somberly at one man. In
 turn,
 he stares at a telephone...
 Which RINGS. Mary reaches, but his hand goes UP and
 she
 pulls back. He lets it ring three times, four,
 gathering
 himself. Lifting it...
 GEORGE (into phone)
 Yes.
 There are no other words. His eyes tear up. He
 nods numbly
 at the phone. G

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

Looking back, the questions were obvious. Why would anyone try to find such a tiny target in a vast ocean, with barely an hour's leeway in fuel?

He draws a breath.

GEORGE (into phone)
Well, we're most grateful. With such an effort, of course they'll find it.

I

126.

CLOSE on him now. As he listens, as he responds graciously,

MOS...

GEORGE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
So I tortured myself. Why hadn't I
killed this plan on day one?
And then I realized...

DISSOLVE SLOWLY

TO...

EXT. GARDEN, LOS ANGELES - LATER

114

114

Alone. In a moonlit garden.

GEORGE (V.O.)

If I tried to count the insane and
reckless chances she took from the
first moment I met her. I wouldn't
know where to begin.

Slowly to his knees. By the plants they had tended
together.

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

It was the most tragic of endings.
The most cruel and senseless and
wasteful. And yet...

And yet.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

It's hard to imagine another.

SMASH

CUT TO...

EXT. BRILLIANT SKY, THE PACIFIC - DAY

115

115

Sun and cloud. The sea below.

AMELIA (V.O.)

My Simpkin.
We POINT toward the water.

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

I want to be married to you. The
way you've been married to me.
It begins to draw CLOSER.

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

As you read this. I am watching
your face.

And CLOSER.

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

I am hoping to see. That you know
how much I mean each word.

Gaining SPEED now...

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

All the things I never said, for
so very long...

HURTLING TOWARD the surface...

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

Look up. They're in my eyes.

SMASH CUT TO BLACK.

Hold.

ROLL END CREDITS.