

"EMPIRE OF THE SUN"

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Second Draft
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Based Upon the Novel by

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FADE IN:

EXT. SHANGHAI (THE BUND) - DAY

Faintly heard, the SOUND of an English Boys' Church Choir. We are looking at the distant skyline of the Shanghai Bund seen across the expanse of the dirty, fast-moving Huangpu River.

Nearer, the surface glitter of the water is broken up by floating objects...which turn out to be, first of all, flowers, scattered singly and in garlands, flowing by with the tide. Then there are some more flowers caught up on floating boxes which we immediately see are coffins. A small armada of coffins, some of them showing their contents, garlanded with flowers, rocks along on little waves... and then tumbles about in the wash of the cargo ships and motorized junks which we have seen in the background.

Inside the shot, after we have seen the first coffin, there is a caption:

"In 1941 China had been at war with Japan for four years and a Japanese army of occupation controlled the area around Shanghai. Inside the city, thousands of Westerners lived in the diplomatic security of the International Settlement: their war was still half a world away. The day which was to change everything dawned at Pearl Harbor on December 7th, but in Shanghai, on the other side of the Pacific Date Line, that Sunday morning was still the last day of the peace."

EXT. SHANGHAI CATHEDRAL - DAY

We are still with the SOUND of the Boys' Choir.

The Europeans built the church and you wouldn't know you were in China. There is nobody walking around because anyone who belongs here is inside at worship. The WORSHIPPERS' cars and limousines are waiting to take them home. Each car has a CHAUFFEUR and it is the chauffeurs, when we see them, who show us that we are not in Surrey.

We start to take a special interest in one of the cars, a new Packard, and in its chauffeur, who is called YANG.

INT. SHANGHAI CATHEDRAL (CHOIR STALLS) - DAY

The SOUND TRACK "comes home" now as we see the boy CHORISTERS in full throat.

In good time for the "Amen" we come in close to one of the boys, and this is our introduction to JIM, aged 11. He is

hot and uncomfortable and not a very pious chorister. Singing mechanically, he shifts his gaze around and uses his fingers to loosen his collar. "Amen."

EXT. SHANGHAI RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

The Packard (Yang driving, Jim next to him) bowls along through the dust of a side-street. A feeling of happy release.

INT. MOVING PACKARD - DAY

Jim, in "Sunday clothes", is removing his school tie.

JIM
(pleading)
Go on.

Yang shakes his head.

JIM
Please, Yang. Just once more, show me how you did it in the films.

Yang looks around uneasily, shaking his head. Jim becomes suddenly bossy.

JIM
Go on, Yang, it's my car - you've got to do what I tell you.

Yang glances over his shoulder and then puts his foot hard to the gas.

EXT. SHANGHAI RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

The Packard picks up speed on the quiet tree-lined street, heading towards a small hump-backed bridge over a canal. The Packard takes the bridge at a leap and travels several feet in the air, and immediately takes the next corner in a four-wheel slide during which....

INT. MOVING PACKARD - DAY

We see Jim hanging on for dear life and shouting with pleasure...as Yang, with one foot on the gas pedal and the other controlling the steering wheel, karate-chops the air, disposing of imaginary enemies in the back seat. After which he gets the car under normal control with Jim cheering him on.

EXT. AMHERST AVENUE - DAY

The Packard continues, now avoiding bicycles and pedestrians as it passes the gateways of the European houses.

Each of the gateways is the territory of a CHINESE BEGGAR. This perhaps barely registers until we see the Packard turn into one of the gateways and we note the OLD DESTITUTE MAN who sits by the gatepost in rags, banging an empty cigarette-tin on the ground as the Packard sweeps by.

INT. MOVING PACKARD - DAY

Jim twists in his seat to look at the old destitute man.

JIM'S POV - OLD DESTITUTE MAN

from the moving car.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE (LAWN) - DAY

The giant shadow of a plane passes over him.

He waves.

JIM

Zero sen.

ANGLE ON PLANE

Jim knows his planes, it's a Zero.

ANGLE ON JIM

He sits on his bike next to the pool. The pool is a marble affair with mosaic on the bottom and lies in the middle of a vast green lawn. Yang fired Jim's imagination and he is carrying his air rifle, and when an imaginary gangster creeps up behind him, Jim whips around and fires. Jim gets on his bike and coasts down the slope of the pool, past the flower beds and the lily pond.

ANGLE ON GARDENER

He crouches by a flower bed and watches the boy ride past, towards the house, dispatching imaginary villains to a better world on the way.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE (ESTABLISHING SHOT)

It's Surrey in the sun, a wistful colonial re-creation of a manor house. Only the spiral of a Pagoda (in the BG) tells us that we aren't in England on a rare sunny day.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

JIM'S MOTHER, an English woman, smoking an English cigarette while listening to English music ("We're the girls every boy adores?") on an American radio, looks out the open doors.

JIM'S MOTHER'S POV - JIM

riding his bike on the lawn.

ANGLE ON JIM'S MOTHER

She smiles to herself and goes back to her magazine. We know she loves Jim very much because she is surrounded by pictures of him (Jim as a baby; Jim as a toddler; Jim on his first day of school; etc.). The MUSIC on the radio is interrupted by a news bulletin (WAR NEWS).

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (JIM'S BEDROOM) - EVENING

Jim's bedroom has quite a few trophies of a lucky boy's life; a beautiful kite, an air rifle, roller skates. But, it serves mainly as a shrine to the airplane. There are model planes everywhere; some hanging realistically from threads on the ceiling; others stand posed for take off on the dresser.

Jim sits behind a boys desk while the family Beagle devours Jim's dinner which he has put on the floor. Jim is writing furiously in a school book. After a few moments, he HEARS his parents getting ready for bed (the closing of doors and the running of water). Jim closes the book.

ANGLE ON THE BOOK

It reads in childish script, "Contract Bridge the James Harding Way".

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (HALL) - EVENING

Jim creeps through the hallway, his parents bedroom door is partially open.

CONTINUED

He SEES his mother behind her make-up mirror, removing her eye shadow with a piece of cotton wool. Rouge, powder, and lipstick are stripped away until her face looks blank. Then she opens her nightgown and, with a big powder puff, applies some talcum powder (against the heat) on her chest. The radio is on, playing WAR NEWS.

ANGLE ON JIM

He is fascinated by his mother.

The talcum powder billows around Jim's mother. She sees Jim in her mirror.

Quietly, Jim turns away from his parents bedroom and makes his way to his own room.

JIM'S MOTHER (OS)

Good-night, darling.

Convinced that his mother has supernatural powers, Jim freezes in the hallway.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (JIM'S BEDROOM) - NIGHT

ANGLE ON JIM

He wakes up.

He SEES his mother's cigarette glowing in the dark and, when she takes a drag, he can briefly see her whole face.

JIM'S MOTHER

Hello, Ace.

JIM

I was dreaming about God.

JIM'S MOTHER

What did he say?

JIM

(drowsily, like a little boy)

Nothing, he was playing tennis.

His mother laughs. Jim, irritated by the smoke, waves it away. His mother gets up and puts her cigarette out in the wash basin.

JIM

Will there be conjurers at the party?

CONTINUED

JIM'S MOTHER

I expect there well be. What's a party without conjurers. (pause) But you musn't show disappointment if there aren't any.

JIM

(thoughtfully)

No, that would be rude.

JIM'S MOTHER

How is your girlfriend?

JIM

Vera? (pause) She really isn't my girlfriend, you know. She says I am a lucky boy because we live in a big house.

JIM'S MOTHER

Well, you are a lucky boy.

JIM

Are you a lucky woman? Is my father a lucky man?

A wave of emotion comes over Jim's mother and she hugs her son.

JIM'S MOTHER

(whispers)

We are the luckiest people in the world.

She lets Jim go and walks to the door.

JIM'S MOTHER

Good-night, Jamie.

JIM

Good-night.

And she closes the door.

ANGLE ON JIM

His eyes are open as he HEARS the drone of the Japanese squadrons in the sky.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (SITTING ROOM) - DAY

We see that a wind-up gramophone is playing the scratchy MUSIC of a bygone England, and in the mysterious afternoon light, more mysteriously still, a Pierrot is dancing quietly and alone to the music.

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EXT. JIM'S HOUSE - DAY

The gramophone MUSIC continues faintly. We see Jim's house and the Packard parked outside the front door with Yang dozing behind the wheel.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (JIM'S BEDROOM) - DAY

Jim is dressed in a Sinbad outfit. Jim chooses a plane to take with him to the fancy dress party and he settles on a balsa-wood glider.

EXT. BUSY SHANGHAI STREET - DAY

We are immediately in a very crowded street scene. Car HORNS BLARE continuously as the traffic pushes slowly through the bicycles and rickshaws, going past shops, night clubs, gambling dens, and a hotel outside which GIRLS in fur coats sit in a rank of pedicabs, waiting for their customers.

The hotel is crowned by the free-standing letters of its name, against the skyline: PEACE HOTEL.

The pavements and roadway are crowded with a bewildering mixture of pedestrians - BAR GIRLS, GANGSTERS, BEGGARS, BODYGUARDS, WOMEN IN SEQUINED DRESSES, among the crowds of CHINESE PEASANTS going to market with burdens of fruit and vegetables and bales of cloth hung from yokes, and STREET VENDORS selling caged songbirds, live chickens, snacks of frying snake...and then, outside a cinema showing "The Hunchback of Notre Dame", a couple of dozen HUNCHBACKS in medieval costume welcoming the CUSTOMERS; who are also being solicited by a few neatly dressed EUROPEAN REFUGEES trying to sell small pieces of jewelry to the RICHER CHINESE and EUROPEANS entering the cinema.

Two or three JEWISH BOYS are being chased by a GANG of GERMAN BOYS with swastika armbands: this is happening in the thick of the melee, the pursuers jumping over the flower-decked coffin of a child lying in the street. CHINESE POLICE move in to separate the brawling German and Jewish youths.

The Packard is part of all this.

INT. MOVING PACKARD (SHANGHAI STREET) - DAY

Yang is driving. Next to him is Sinbad the Sailor. Yang glances into the driving mirror and sees a Pierrot and a

CONTINUED

Pirate with a black eyepatch (Jim's father) in the backseat. What he thinks about it all, we'll never know. Jim is holding his model glider.

EXT. BUSY SHANGHAI STREET - DAY

BEGGARS, variously maimed and uniformly destitute, are laying siege to the slow-moving vehicles. A small, destitute BEGGAR BOY jumps up at the window of the Packard with a cry.

BEGGAR BOY

No mama! No papa! No whiskey-soda!

The moving Packard shrugs him off and Jim turns to see the Beggar boy pick himself up in the dust behind and repeat the performance at the windows of the following car.

We are approaching a check-point dividing the International Settlement from the rest of Shanghai.

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET CHECK-POINT - DAY

The Packard is in a line of cars slowly moving through the checkpoint. This is a kind of frontier manned by BRITISH SOLDIERS and CHINESE POLICE. There is a BRITISH ARMY OFFICER perched on top of an armored car. He is supervising the Chinese police who are controlling the people passing through the checkpoint in both directions.

Ahead of the Packard is an open German tourer flying swastika pennants, evidently a party of IMPORTANT GERMAN CIVILIANS.

The Packard is waved through the checkpoint.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOUSE (ESTABLISHING SHOT) - DAY

This is an establishing shot showing where the Packard, among other cars, has arrived. It is clear that we are no longer "in town".

The Lockwoods' are well-off British residents and have an appropriately spacious house.

The CHAUFFEURS as usual, wait.

Faintly heard, the SOUND of children shrieking with laughter.

CONTINUED

The main point about the "Lockwood location", which may be clearer when we move to the terrace-side of the house, is that the house is at the edge of a disused airfield which is mainly grass.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOUSE (TERRACE) - DAY

The SOUND of children squealing and laughing OS. We pick up on the balsa-wood and tissue-paper model plane gliding into the water at the edge of a swimming pool. It is retrieved by MAXTED, a rakish figure in a sharkskin suit and a Panama hat with a distinctive band, a glass in his hand, a cheroot in his mouth. The plane is reclaimed by Jim. He is wearing the Sinbad outfit. He has run up to Maxted, who gives him the plane.

MAXTED

There you are, Jamie. Navigation problems?

JIM

Thanks, Mr. Maxted. You came as yourself.

MAXTED

(acknowledging his
own clothes)

Quite fancy enough. You're missing the conjurers.

JIM

I had them at my party.

ANOTHER ANGLE

This shows that at the other end of the terrace a group of CHILDREN, all in various fancy dress, are sitting down being entertained by CHINESE CONJURERS ~~and~~ ACROBATS. The terrace leads into the house through open doors and we are aware of the grownups inside, also in fancy dress; and one of these, dressed as Father Christmas, ~~but~~ with a monocle, comes out and calls to Maxted. (He is MR. LOCKWOOD)

LOCKWOOD

Max! - Do you want to hear the news?

Without waiting for an answer, Lockwood goes ~~back~~ into the house...joining the guests inside. We go with him.

INT. LOCKWOOD HOUSE - DAY

There are perhaps 30 GUESTS. Most of them are in fancy dress. There is an elaborate buffet, which is now being served to a bizarre collection of characters some of whom we will glimpse again at a very different "buffet" later on, and they will stay in our memory: a CHINESE EMPEROR, a FRENCH COURTESAN, an ALI BABA, a CARMEN MIRANDA, a CHARLIE CHAPLIN, and so on. MRS. LOCKWOOD, dressed as Britannia, is in charge. We take time to notice a large bowl full of bank notes and labelled "Spitfire Fund".

The guests who are not at the buffet are preoccupied with a RADIO BROADCAST delivering the BBC Overseas Newscast which competes with the babble:

RADIO (VO)

...have held up the German advance on the Eastern front. This bulletin will be followed by a report from our correspondent with the Russian army which is poised for a massive counter-offensive. Meanwhile, in Washington, the Japanese Ambassador has again been summoned to the White House for talks on the Japanese sphere of influence in the South Pacific. On his way to the meeting, the ambassador repeated assurances to reporters that Japan had no warlike intentions towards the United States. At home, the Minister of food...

The Pierrot and the Pirate are, of course, among the guests.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOUSE - DAY

MAXTED

I rely on you to keep me up to date on the war, Jamie. Especially military aviation.

END

Maxted looks up towards the drone of an airplane flying high.

MAXTED

Zero?

JIM

(squinting up)

Nakajima. Two machine guns. Which side is going to win, Mr. Maxted?

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CONTINUED

MAXTED

Ours, of course.

JIM

Oh, that war.

MAXTED

It's the war. Europe, North Africa...China isn't our war.

JIM

The Japanese will win. They've got better planes than the Chinese, and braver pilots. I'm thinking of joining the Japanese Air Force, actually.

MAXTED

They'll jump at you. I hear you've resigned from the Scouts.

JIM

Yes. I've become an atheist.

Jim looks at his mother through the open living room doors.

JIM'S POV - LIVING ROOM

Jim sees his mother and Mrs. Lockwood engaged in an animated conversation with a young Lieutenant (LIEUTENANT PRICE). Lt. Price is the embodiment of the Byronic officer. He is young, no more than twenty, extremely handsome (a la Rupert Brooke), and dashing. *

MRS. LOCKWOOD *

(flirtatiously)

We turn to you Lt. Price for the military opinion.

LT. PRICE *

I'm hardly qualified to give one.

(beat)

But I dare say the Japs feel about Shanghai the way I feel about that apple. **END**

Lt. Price reaches over to a fruit bowl and plucks a red shiny apple from it and he bites rather savagely into it. *

LT. PRICE *

It's very ripe.

Mrs. Lockwood and Jim's mother titter nervously. *

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOUSE (GARDEN) - DAY

Jim launches his plane across the garden, away from the pool and the house, toward the airfield. The plane is going to travel an impressive distance, and Jim runs after it.

MAXTED

(calling after him)

Where are you going?

JIM

(running, over
his shoulder)

See something!

Maxted turns to look at the magic show which is coming to one of its climaxes to appreciative squeals and applause; two of the acrobats, one on the other's shoulders, blossom into an eruption of red paper and turn themselves into a large red cockerel. Maxted evidently has seen it all before.

Jim's father approaches Maxted from the direction of the party. He is carrying his glass and a dish of snacks.

MAXTED

Your boy tells me he's an atheist.

JIM'S FATHER

I always thought he was. Chow time.

Jim's father offers a snack. Maxted takes one and nibbles.

JIM'S FATHER

Hitler's bogged down two hundred miles from Moscow. I give him three months.

MAXTED

Good show.

Glancing casually across the airfield, Maxted evidently sees something which causes him surprise and perhaps concern.

His POV shows us nothing untoward at first, but then some kind of movement in the distance briefly reflects the sun back to us.

EXT. ABANDONED AIRFIELD - DAY

The airfield is not in use, but derelict and overgrown, with an occasional blockhouse covered in turf and wild sugarcane and nettles. Carrying his plane, Jim wades

CONTINUED

purposefully across the field, passing a burial mound with rotting, lidless coffins protruding from the earth. Jim pauses to peer into the coffins, looking with interest at the yellowing skeletons and skulls embalmed in the rain-washed mud. He moves on and reaches a crashed Japanese fighter plane, partly stripped, with vegetation growing through it, the metal rusted. Jim walks around the tail, pleased to see the plane, and steps onto the wing-root. He puts his model plane on the wing and climbs into the cockpit.

INT. CRASHED FIGHTER (ABANDONED AIRFIELD)- DAY

Sitting in the cockpit, Jim examines and touches what is left of the instrument panel. He mimes lifting his goggles off his forehead over his eyes, looks sideways and raises his hand in a signal - And the sigh of the wind in the grasses turns into the SOUND of fighter planes warming up all over the airfield.

Jim adds his own voice to the SOUND, making the sound of the plane taxiing and then taking off. Quite soon, he decides that he is in aerial combat and starts making machine gun noises with this mouth.

EXT. ABANDONED AIRFIELD - DAY

Jim climbs out onto the wing-root, picking up his model plane and launching it. He jumps down off the wing and runs after it.

JIM'S POV - THE MODEL PLANE

sails quite a ways and lands on top of a ruined blockhouse. Jim runs after it and starts climbing up the slope. Halfway up, he comes across a fresh CORPSE - a Chinese peasant who has been bayoneted, the blood still quite fresh. From his vantage point, Jim sees a FULLY-ARMED JAPANESE SOLDIER looking up at him from a trench only a few yards away. Then he sees that there are MORE SOLDIERS sitting along the whole length of the trench...and that there is ~~a~~ second trench also full of JAPANESE SOLDIERS, sitting and smoking and glancing up at Jim. He has come across a company of Japanese infantry concealed on the old battlefield. As Jim watches, a JAPANESE SERGEANT gets to his feet casually picking up his rifle and stamping out a cigarette. The sergeant climbs out of the trench and, ignoring Jim, moves to start cutting off Jim's retreat. Sighing quietly to himself, the sergeant starts to climb up the slope toward Jim. Jim is now frightened. Jim's father's voice is HEARD calling from the distance.

CONTINUED

JIM'S FATHER (os)

Jamie!

The sergeant stops climbing and looks thoughtful.

We SEE Jim's father, still dressed as a pirate, anxiously searching the field and calling Jim's name. From where he is, Jim's father can see the Japanese sergeant and more Japanese infantry half-concealed in the grass. Then he sees Jim approach in the distance. Jim's father makes to start running. He is immediately stopped by Maxted's level voice.

ANOTHER ANGLE

We see Maxted has also moved into the airfield.

MAXTED

Stand still, John.

Jim's father holds his breath while Jim approaches, skirting another trench, watched by Japanese soldiers.

JIM'S FATHER

(frightened)

Hello, Jamie. Don't run.

Jim reaches his father and they turn and walk back hand-in-hand toward the house, Maxted also waiting for them on their way.

JIM'S FATHER

Come on, you're missing the party.

JIM

I left my plane.

JIM'S FATHER

Never mind. Finders keeper, eh?

They reach Maxted who now moves with them.

JIM'S FATHER

Thanks, Max.

JIM

The soldiers look as if they're waiting for something to happen.

JIM'S FATHER

Yes.

JIM

They didn't look angry or anything.

CONTINUED

JIM'S FATHER

No.

MAXTED

- It's not their anger, it's their
patience.

Maxted looks back uneasily. Then the three of them move
back into safety.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOUSE - DAY

The party is breaking up. We are at the front of the house
where the limousines are parked, some already leaving,
GUESTS in various fancy dress getting into cars, Mrs.
Lockwood bidding good-bye to people, the departing
children each with a present to take home.

Jim's father is standing talking to Lockwood who still
wears his Father Christmas outfit, but has taken off his
white beard.

JIM'S FATHER

You should move into Shanghai with
the rest of us, Harry.

LOCKWOOD

The Japs have been in control of
this countryside for years - they
leave us pretty much alone.

JIM'S FATHER

Well, something's up...

A departing car, Maxted at the wheel, pauses by the two men.

JIM'S FATHER

...Time to close ranks. What say,
Max?

MAXTED

I'd get Mary and the boy out
altogether.

He glances toward -

Jim and his mother (in her Pierrot costume) waiting in the
Packard, Jim in front, Yang standing by the car.

MAXTED

Somewhere safe. Singapore. Happy
Christmas, everybody.

CONTINUED

He puts his car into gear and moves off. He drives past the Packard, waving to Jim. We hold on the Packard, Jim waving.

INT. STATIONARY/MOVING PACKARD - DAY

Jim returns Maxted's wave.

JIM

Actually, it's been a rotten day altogether. Church in the morning, lost my plane this afternoon, Latin homework tonight. It's probably been the worst weekend of my life.

*

JIM'S MOTHER

Let's hope so. I'll help you with your Latin.

JIM

I'm giving up the choir anyway.

JIM'S MOTHER

No, you're not.

JIM

I have no choice, Mother.

Yang opens the passenger door as Jim's father arrives and gets into the car, saying -

JIM'S FATHER

Right, Yang.

EXT. STATIONARY PACKARD - DAY

Yang closes the passenger door and opens the driver's door, gets into the car, starts the engine. The car circles 'round past Mr. and Mrs. Lockwood who wave good-bye. Hands wave to them from the car.

INT. MOVING PACKARD (COUNTRY ROAD) - DAY

Jim's attention is directed through the windscreen and, as always, his attention is animated, self-sufficient. Next to him, Yang drives, dare one say, inscrutably. Then, Yang's eyes change a little and he glances over his shoulder toward Jim's father in the backseat.

CONTINUED

YANG'S POV FROM PACKARD - A JAPANESE ROADBLOCK

up ahead.

BACK TO SCENE

JIM'S FATHER

All right, Yang. Settle down,
Jamie, no talking.

He glances reassuringly at Jim's mother.

JIM'S FATHER

They're becoming a nuisance.

EXT. JAPANESE ROADBLOCK (COUNTRY ROAD) - DAY

There isn't very much to the roadblock. There is a pole across the road, with perhaps a couple of Japanese military vehicles in attendance, and a handful of SOLDIERS. Another European car with GUESTS from the Lockwood party, is just being allowed through the roadblock. The pole descends again. The roadblock has also held up an ELDERLY CHINESE PEASANT COUPLE, sharing a bicycle on the back of which is roped a large sack of cabbage leaves. The old man is standing with his head bowed, and the old woman is kneeling on the ground, wailing. This is because a JAPANESE SOLDIER is using his bayonet to rip through the sack looking for who knows what. Now the Packard arrives and halts. Another JAPANESE SOLDIER approaches Yang's window. Yang rolls down his window. The soldier attempts to open the car door, but it is locked.

END

INT. PACKARD (JAPANESE ROADBLOCK) - DAY

JIM'S FATHER

Stay where you are, Yang.

The soldier puts his head into the Packard's window and for a long moment gazes searchingly at Jim's father and Jim's mother. Jim himself looks with frank curiosity at the soldier. Yang stares straight ahead. Finally the soldier straightens up and gives the order for the pole to be raised. The Packard drives through the roadblock, passing the bicycle and the peasants.

INT. MOVING PACKARD - DAY

The conversation in the backseat, in low tones, is private without being secretive.

CONTINUED

JIM'S FATHER

We're going to move into the hotel
for a few days.

JIM'S MOTHER

Why, John?

JIM'S FATHER

...See which way things are going.
I don't want you and Jamie alone in
the house.

JIM'S MOTHER

The Japs aren't allowed into the
settlement.

JIM'S FATHER

The Japs weren't allowed into
Manchuria. The Japs can go anywhere
they like. If the war comes East
our yellow horde isn't going to save
us from their yellow horde.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE - DAY

The Packard, occupants as before, is pulling up outside the
front door. From "Our yellow horde" the CUT is perhaps to
two or three GARDENERS working outside the house, and then
to the HOUSE SERVANT opening the front door as the family
gets out of the car.

JIM'S MOTHER

(to Jim, crisply)

One suitcase, no aeroplanes. And
don't forget your Latin book.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (HALL) - DAY

Entering the house, Jim's mother goes straight up the
stairs, meeting a servant (AMAH) who presses herself against
the wall. Jim's mother speaks to her briefly in Chinese
(about packing Jim's suitcase).

Jim's father enters a ground floor room through whose door
we might see him pick up papers from a desk and put them
into a briefcase. But we stay with Jim who moves through
the front hall, stripping off his Sinbad tunic, tossing it
inaccurately at a chair so that the tunic slips untidily
to the floor. Jim disappears towards the kitchen as the
servant picks up his tunic from the floor.

END

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INT. JIM'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - DAY

Jim enters the kitchen of the house, and goes straight to the refrigerator. When he opens the refrigerator we SEE that it is full of good things. Jim drinks from a bottle of milk, replaces the bottle, closes the refrigerator, and "steals" a tasty morsel from under the busy hands of a CHINESE COOK.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (JIM'S BEDROOM) - DAY

Amah is packing Jim's suitcase. Jim enters the bedroom, hurrying.

JIM

Thanks, Amah.

As he takes off his shirt, the Amah is carefully folding his school blazer, with the badge of the Cathedral School on the pocket, into the suitcase. Jim's father appears in the doorway, half-dressed.

JIM'S FATHER

Come on, Jamie, get a move on.

The Amah picks up a balsa-wood plane, perhaps because it is lying on top of the school cap which she needs to pack.

JIM

Don't touch it, Amah, or I'll kill you!

JIM'S FATHER

Jamie! Don't ever say that! You're not going to kill anyone!

He has moved toward Jim as though to strike him, but at the last moment, embraces him tightly.

JIM'S FATHER

You must be kind. Everything going to depend on kindness now.

He releases Jim and relents.

JIM'S FATHER

You can take one plane. A small one.

FADE OUT

FADE IN:

INT. PEACE HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT/DAWN

The "small plane" is a pocket-sized, metal die-cast, single engine Japanese fighter. It is lying on a bedside table which we haven't seen before.

Jim is in pajamas, lying in a hotel bed. An AIRPLANE FLIES somewhere by, surprisingly close. Jim opens his eyes.

JIM
(murmurs)
Nakajima.

Jim gets out of bed and goes to the window.

JIM'S POV - THE RIVER

some shipping moored, the lights of a gunboat on the move. Nothing is yet distinct or identifiable.

Jim now moves back from the window and touches the switch on the bedside light.

EXT. PEACE HOTEL - DAWN/DARK

The light goes on in the 10th floor window. A faint glow in the generally dark facade of the hotel.

INT. PEACE HOTEL - DAWN

Jim is dressed for school. He is tying up his shoe and notices that one of the soles is starting to come loose. From beside the bed, where rests the small model plane, he takes a book, Kennedy's Latin Primer. He opens it, but is attracted to the window again.

JIM'S POV

It is now dawn and a Japanese gunboat is signalling (a flashing light) toward a British naval vessel flying the White Ensign.

Jim returns to his bedside and picks up a flashlight.

EXT. PEACE HOTEL - DAWN

Jim is at the window, enjoying himself, laughing quietly as he blinks the flashlight. An EXPLOSION tumbles Jim off the window sill, cracking the glass of the window and igniting the room in a brief glare. Then another explosion, and the war seems to have started outside on the river. As Jim picks himself up fearfully from the floor, the connecting door into the next room is flung open and Jim's father dashes in, in his pajamas.

JIM'S FATHER

Jamie!

JIM

I didn't mean it! It was a joke!

JIM'S FATHER

Get dressed!

JIM

I am.

JIM'S FATHER

We're leaving!

Jim's father goes back through the door. Jim cautiously approaches the windowsill, where his aghast face is lit by flames.

INT. PEACE HOTEL STAIRCASE/ELEVATORS

A mob of GUESTS are banging on the elevator cage.

Jim's father and mother, dragging Jim by the hand, are fighting their way down the staircase. Jim is holding his school cap and his airplane. The plane almost gets torn from his grasp in the crush. He stuffs his cap and the plane into his blazer pocket. In the confused hubbub and SHOUTING, a few phrases can be distinguished...

VOICES

...The whole damned American fleet...on the radio...at the bottom of Pearl Harbor...

JIM

Do I have to go to school?

JIM'S FATHER

Come on -

JIM

I haven't done my Latin.

CONTINUED

The three of them, hand in hand, push through the mob and disappear down the stairwell.

EXT. PEACE HOTEL - EARLY MORNING

The road outside the hotel is full of PANICKING PEOPLE, some of them pushed aside by a Japanese armored car which makes matchwood of a rickshaw on its way.

A platoon of Japanese infantry, with bayonets fixed, is trotting towards them along the Bund. Jim's father hurries his wife and Jim along past the parked cars till they reach the Packard. They get into the car, which then moves out into the stream of people.

INT. PACKARD - DAY

JIM'S MOTHER

What are we going to do?

JIM'S FATHER

We have to get out - perhaps there'll be a boat...

(he glances over his shoulder at Jim)

I'm sorry, you two. Max was right.

The car can't move for people. Other cars have moved in behind and in front.

JIM'S POV

Shows a Japanese tank not far behind them.

BACK TO SCENE

An ENGLISHMAN in shirt sleeves raps on the driver's window. Jim's father opens the window.

ENGLISHMAN

There's men in the water...
British...

The Englishman moves away, struggling through the crowd toward the river.

JIM'S FATHER

Jamie, look after your mother.

CONTINUED

Jim's father forces his way out of the car and follows the Englishman. He is hardly gone before the whole car is given a tremendous blow: the car behind has been pushed into the Packard by a Japanese tank.

JIM'S MOTHER

Jamie, out of the car!

Jim picks himself up off the floor in the back and climbs into the front seat when he finds that his door won't open. By the time he gets out of the driver's door, his mother has left the car and become part of the CROWD OF CHINESE being shoved across the road by ARMED JAPANESE SOLDIERS.

JIM'S POV - HIS MOTHER

is being buffeted by the panicking mob. He sees her desperate, scared face searching anxiously for him.

Jim shouts and waves, trying to attract her attention, but his view of her is already being obscured as the crowd flows around the Packard.

JIM

Mother! Mummy!

JIM'S POV - HIS MOTHER

being pressed back behind the crossed bayonets of rifles held by Japanese soldiers.

Jim is knocked off his feet. Struggling to get some space for himself, he finds himself on the edge of the crowd, the river in front of him. He runs towards the river, and towards the direction taken by his father, and when he gets there, we catch up on the situation.

EXT. SHANGHAI (THE BUND) - DAY

The ship's cutter from the British vessel is sinking in shallow water, full of WOUNDED MEN. There is RIFLE FIRE from the Japanese gunboat. BRITISH SAILORS, mostly wounded, are also swimming and wading from the direction of the cutter. The British vessel (The Petrel) is sinking in mid-stream amid smoke and steam and flame.

Jim's father is among several BRITISH MEN who have stripped off their jackets and are wading through the mud to meet the wounded SAILORS who are drifting and struggling towards the shore.

CONTINUED

In the shallows the sailors collapse helplessly in the mud as the quickening tide ripples around them bringing the funeral flowers around their shoulders.

The reverse shot shows Jim struggling free from the chaos of the Bund where JAPANESE OFFICERS and SOLDIERS are screaming orders and lashing about, and already there are DEAD BODIES with bayonet wounds lying on the wharf.

Jim jumps down into the mud and staggers towards his father who is attempting to pull a BLOODIED YOUNG SAILOR out of the water. Jim lends a hand and the effort exhausts both Father and Jim.

JIM'S FATHER

Good lad, Jamie - we brought them out.

Jim and his father collapse on the mud. Jim's father sits holding the sailor against his chest. The sailor's uniform is burned and his face is blood stained.

The first debris from The Petrel is reaching them; life-jackets and pieces of planking, a section of canvas awning with its trailing ropes.

Jim's father looks towards the sinking British boat.

JIM'S FATHER

She's going.

A final explosion makes a fog-bank in the mid-stream. More debris showers down from the exploding boat. The White Ensign, still attached to its broken spar, splashes down into the water a few yards downstream.

Jim wades downstream but the flag drowns before he reaches it. Smoke and steam drift to the shore, enveloping him. He loses touch and sight and his sense of direction. He can't see his father anymore. He wades up towards the embankment wall. The smoke thins for a moment allowing Jim to SEE a line of Japanese infantry drawn up on the wharf with bayonets fixed. Jim struggles to reach the roadway. A CROWD OF PEOPLE are pushing along the road above his head. Jim pulls himself up and is given a helping hand by a woman in a black robe. We see then that she is a YOUNG NUN. Japanese soldiers are shoving the people away from the water's edge. The Nun pulls Jim away with her. Jim looks back towards the river.

JIM

(to the Nun)

Is the war over now?

CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - THE SMOKE

is clearing in mid-stream, and only the super-structure of The Petrel is showing above the water. Beyond, on the opposite shore, the red disc of the rising sun balances on the eastern horizon.

EXT. AMHERST AVENUE - DAY

We recognize the tree-lined street where Jim lives. Jim wearily walks up the street towards his gates. The beggars at the gates have disappeared. By Jim's gate there's only the abandoned cigarette-tin to remind us of the beggar.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE - DAY

A scroll of paper with Japanese characters is fixed on the door. Jim tries the door and finds it locked.

JIM

Amah!

He walks around the house, aware now of the deserted feeling. The garden is unkempt. The water level in the pool has dropped a foot and the water is not clean. Jim HEARS a military vehicle approaching and hides briefly as a Japanese armored car goes by the gate. There is a garbage flap set into the wall of the house near the kitchen. Jim lifts the flap, takes off his cap and starts to squeeze himself through the opening.

EXT./INT. JIM'S HOUSE (GARBAGE CHOPPER) - DAY

The shot is of Jim squeezing between the blades of the electric garbage-chopper inside the chute.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - DAY

Jim squeezes his way into the kitchen which is empty. He throws his cap on the table.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (HALL AND STAIRS) - DAY

Jim comes into the hall.

JIM

Mother!

He goes to the stairs.

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INT. JIM'S HOUSE (PARENTS' BEDROOM) - DAY

The bedroom door is opened carefully by Jim who then looks in and comes inside. The room has been disturbed, perhaps looted. - Scent bottles and powder boxes have been swept off the dressing table. Clothes are in disarray on the unmade bed. The polished parquet floor is covered in powder on which there are confusing footprints. The dressing mirror has been splintered. Jim sniffs the air, grimacing. He comes forward and examines the footprints on the floor, puzzled by them. There are the dainty footprints of a woman and the large prints of soldiers' boots. It looks like the footprint patterns in a dance manual, and Jim experimentally tries to follow the dance, placing his feet into the prints until he can't make it work. He is standing against the bed. He sits exhausted on the bed and picks up his mother's nightdress, bringing it to his face and taking comfort from its smell. He lies down holding the nightdress to his face. OS he HEARS footsteps on the stairs.

JIM

(hopeful)

Mother?

His Amah enters the room. She carries a small chest that she has obviously stolen from the house.

JIM

Hey! What are you doing?

His Amah puts down the chest and slaps him across the face. She picks up the chest and walks down the stairs.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (DINING ROOM) - DAY

Jim is eating a meal, alone. He has laid his place carefully at the part of the table where (we assume) he always sits. The meal is a cold meal but evidently the house has been left with food in the pantry.

There is a clock on the sideboard. We become aware of it in the moment that the TICKING stops ~~and~~ good.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE (SWIMMING POOL) - DAY

Jim stands in the empty pool, examining the objects which have been caught in the outlet. There is a surprising number of them - a wine glass, a hair slide, a rubber sandal, a marble, several copper coins and finally an English half-crown and a pair of sunglasses, both of which he pockets.

CONTINUED

Jim's appearance has begun to change. He is starting to look unkempt, a bit haggard.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - DAY

Jim is trying to drink from the kitchen tap, but only an occasional drop emerges from it. The fridge, its door open to reveal that it is bare, is standing in a pool of water. Jim shuts off the tap, superfluously, and then goes to the fridge and finds a piece of cheese rind which he nibbles. He drinks from the ice-tray. His cap is on the table.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (HALL) - DAY

The empty hall. Suddenly Jim appears on his bicycle, riding out of one room and into another.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (DINING ROOM) - DAY

Jim bicycles slowly 'round the dining room table and out again.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (FATHER'S STUDY) - DAY

Jim enters the study at some speed, expertly circling the desk, then knocking over a lamp and swerving through a door into -

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (DRAWING ROOM) - DAY

Jim cycles in, zigzagging among the furniture, passing the wind-up gramophone which still has a record on the turntable.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (HALL) - DAY

We follow him on his bicycle out of the drawing room and across the hall, enjoying himself, pedalling right into the swing door of the kitchen and through it.

INT. JIM'S HOUSE (KITCHEN) - DAY

Jim cycles around the kitchen table on which his cap is still lying. He scoops it up as he goes by. As he leaves through the swinging door, again we see that the front door of the house is open to the garden.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE - DAY

Jim, his cap on his head, rides his bicycle out of the front door and down the front steps and along the drive through the gate into the street.

EXT. AMHERST AVENUE - DAY

Jim rides briskly in and out of the trees, dodging the people in the street and ignoring the Japanese Patrol which marches by. He cycles away from us, ringing his cycle bell, until he is nearly out of sight.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - DAY

Jim cycles past the gates of a handsome house, and out of frame, and then back into frame and through the gate.

INT. HANDSOME HOUSE (KITCHEN) - DAY

Jim is in the kitchen of the "handsome house". The place is looted, the cupboard doors hanging open. Among the objects thrown to the floor is a cookery book in glorious color. Jim picks it up and flips through the glossy pages, tormented by color photographs of roast meats and iced cakes...he throws the book down and opens the pantry door. Jim recoils from the putrefaction inside, disturbing a dense cloud of flies.

EXT. SHANGHAI CHINESE STREET - DAY

Jim is cycling past a row of poor-looking shops. Inside one of them he sees TWO JAPANESE PRIVATES abusing the CHINESE SHOPKEEPER and sweeping everything off the shelves. Jim turns his bicycle towards the shop and comes to a halt. He calls to the one of the Privates.

JIM

I surrender!

The Private comes out of the shop and pushes Jim and his bicycle sprawling into the road. Jim picks himself up.

JIM

(shouts)

I surrender!

The Japanese Private comes forward to bar his way. Jim takes a small model airplane from his pocket and holds it up to the Private.

CONTINUED

JIM

(Shouts)

Zero sen.

This throws the Japanese soldier off and Jim slips by him.

An escorted lorry full of CAPTURED BRITISH SOLDIERS passes by. Jim pedals furiously after the lorry. In the back of the lorry the British prisoners notice him and CHEER him on, SHOUTING encouraging remarks.

JIM

(shouts)

Wait! Wait!

But he soon falls behind.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - DAY

Jim rides his bike. The street is loud and excited, in the grip of a celebration of the overthrow of the European occupation of Shanghai. But now there is a new occupation: Japanese army lorries loaded with SOLDIERS are prominent in the traffic. A party of JAPANESE OFFICERS stroll through in their smart uniforms with white gloves. A giant poster of Chiang Kai Chek is being stripped from a building. Coca Cola bill boards are pasted over with slogans and pictures of the leader of the puppet regime. (This was Wang Ching-Wei). Jim, wearing his school uniform, including the cap, is making his way through this. Jim hurries past the entrance of a cinema where "Gone With the Wind" has been playing in a pirated Chinese version. The partly dismantled faces of Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh rise on their scaffolding, and there is also a huge life-sized replica of Atlanta in flames. Behind it are the real flames and smoke of burning buildings.

We note a CHINESE YOUTH in a leather jacket who approaches Jim.

CHINESE YOUTH

American boy?

JIM

(Improvising)

English. I'm waiting for my chauffeur.

The Chinese youth looks sceptically at Jim's bike. Jim rides away quickly.

CONTINUED

CHINESE YOUTH
English boy. You come now.

JIM

No.

Jim moves away more quickly, followed by the youth. Trying to escape the youth, Jim rides across the street, dodging the rickshaws and the PEOPLE. He looks back and SEES that the youth is also crossing the road, dodging through the traffic. Jim hurries along the gutter of the road, looking over his shoulder. He sees the youth keeping pace with him. The road opens up into a square full of people. Jim hurries into the crowd and changes direction and looks over his shoulder again.

JIM'S POV

Among the bobbing heads, Jim sees the youth looking this way and that, the trail lost.

Jim makes his escape through the crowd and he continues across the square until he comes up against the back of a dense crowd which is silently watching some kind of spectacle in the open space...and, as Jim dodges and cranes to get a glimpse, we see that it is a public execution: a young man in quilted peasant clothes is kneeling on the ground, about to have his head severed. Then Jim's view is closed off again. The executioner's sword appears briefly above the heads of the crowd and then sweeps downward, out of sight. The crowd sighs quietly in unison and at the same moment...a hand grabs Jim's wrist, closing over Jim's wristwatch, and a knife blade sweeps towards Jim's wrist which he pulls away just in time. The knife is held by the youth we have seen before.

Jim kicks at the youth and starts riding his bike as fast as he can, with the youth in pursuit and a few paces behind him, both of them twisting and dodging through the crowd. Jim is very frightened, looking over his shoulder. He turns into an alley and loses the youth.

EXT. CROWDED CHINESE STREET - DAY

JIM'S POV - THE STREET

is narrow and so crowded that Jim, on his bicycle, is barely making way. CHINESE PEDESTRIANS turn to look at him with curiosity and no friendliness. Jim has started to get nervous - with good cause: the Chinese youth pops up out of nowhere and has brought along his friends. He stops the bicycle gripping the handlebars. Jim

CONTINUED

is immediately surrounded by scavenging CHINESE BOYS who remove his school shoes and then his socks. Hands are already clawing at his blazer as Jim jumps off the bike and fights his way clear. Terrified, he swerves and dodges into a narrow alley, pursued by the boys. The alley opens out into another street.

EXT. ANOTHER STREET - DAY

Jim bursts barefoot out of the alley and into the street and is nearly killed by a lorry. The lorry brakes and Jim falls, unhurt. The driver of the lorry, a big young American called FRANK, jumps out of the cab and approaches Jim. The pursuing Chinese boys are intimidated by him and they leave Jim to him.

FRANK

Hello, kid. You alright?

JIM

Yes, I think so.

FRANK

Who belongs to you? Where do you live?

JIM

13 Amherst Avenue
(he gets to his feet)
I'm waiting for my mother and father. They've been...delayed.

FRANK

Delayed? Some kind of crazy British kid. What's your name?

JIM

James Harding. I've written a book on contract bridge.

FRANK

Yeah? Looks like you nearly lost your shirt.

JIM

They took my shoes.

Frank picks Jim up and easily places him on the driver's seat of the lorry. (From now on Jim is barefoot until he is a resident of Nantao Camp.)

FRANK

I'll give you a ride, maybe find your pa.

CONTINUED

JIM

Alright. I expect my father will give you a reward. He once gave a taxi driver five dollars for bringing me home from Hankow.

FRANK

Is that right?

Frank is wearing the working clothes of an American merchant seaman. Jim slides scross into the passenger seat and Frank gets up into the cab.

JIM

Are you with the American fleet?

FRANK

(shaking his head)

Just wait till Basie sees this.

He starts the engine.

EXT. SHANGHAI SHIPYARDS - DUSK

The lorry, Frank driving and Jim next to him, talking, works its way through what seems to be an abandoned and derelict dockyard towards the looming hull of a decrepit, dry-docked cargo ship.

EXT. BASIE'S SHIP (ESTABLISHING SHOT) - DUSK

The lorry parks close to the ship and Frank and Jim get down. Frank leads Jim into the ship through the gap left by a missing plate in the hull, Frank carrying a canvas sack, heavy. Jim is still talking, animatedly, but we can't hear.

INT. BASIE'S SHIP - DUSK

Inside there is a raised bamboo platform onto which Frank and Jim climb and along which they walk towards a steel ladder further on in the gloom.

JIM

...And probably my parents are on a ship somewhere, on a boat to Hong Kong, and then they'll send for me and...

FRANK

Kid, you're getting on my nerves.

CONTINUED

He sends Jim up a ladder and follows, with his heavy sack clanking.

INT. BASIE'S SHIP (CABIN) - DUSK

The steel door is pushed open and Frank shoves Jim forward through it and follows himself. Jim is standing in a small steel-walled cabin up near the top of the ship, with a charcoal stove sending its smoke through an open skylight. The floor is littered with rags and bits of scrap metal, engine parts, brass portholes. There is a cot and a couple of canvas chairs. A man, BASIE, is tending to a cooking pot on the stove. Frank drops his canvas bag heavily on the floor. Evidently it contains more scrap metal. Jim sways, faint with hunger. Basie looks up. When he speaks we realize he is, like Frank, an American.

FRANK

I found him running around, but I'm sorry already. I don't know whether he's hungrier or crazier...

BASIE

(kindly)

Come in, boy. You look like you need to lie down.

JIM

My father has a cotton mill at Pootung, he'll be ingratiated to you.

BASIE

Ingratiated? Fine word.

JIM

He once gave a taxi driver...

He half-faints and sits on the cot.

BASIE

In a minute. Your tongue's ~~flapping~~ away. Let's have a look at ~~it~~.

Gently, but efficiently, he exposes Jim's gums and teeth and examines Jim's mouth with his fingers as impersonally as a dentist.

BASIE

That's a well-kept set of teeth. Someone paid a lot of bills for that sweet little mouth. Frank, you'd be surprised how some people neglect their kids' teeth.

CONTINUED

FRANK

(angrily)

Basie! I didn't sell one of these goddam portholes and those Hongkew merchants are charging ten dollars for a bag of rice!

BASIE

(fingering Jim's blazer)

Cathedral School, too.

FRANK

Cathedral? Is he some kind of priest?

BASIE

Frank, the Cathedral School. That's a school for taipans.

(to Jim)

You must know some important people. What do they call you?

JIM

I once met Madam Sun Yat-Sen. She didn't call me anything. I was only three and a half.

BASIE

Madam Sun?

JIM

I was presented.

BASIE

Pre...sented!

FRANK

We'll be sitting here up to our necks in junk eating rats when the Japs walk in...

BASIE

The Japs aren't looking for us, Frank. Nantao Creek is full of cholera, they've more sense

FRANK

And if I sold every one of these things there isn't enough to get us a sampan up river to Chunking. We'd have to strip the Queen Mary

(to Jim)

And we don't have enough rice for you, kid.

CONTINUED

During this dialogue Basie's fingers have been busily exploring Jim's pockets, delicately but persistently. Without fuss he removes Jim's wristwatch. Like a music hall pickpocket, Basie comes up with Jim's comic book, which he looks at briefly and replaces in Jim's pocket, then with Jim's model plane, with which he does likewise, then a pair of sunglasses, which he puts on, and the half crown coin which he holds up in front of Jim's eyes between finger and thumb and conjures out of sight.

BASIE

Leave him alone, Frank.

(to Jim)

What did you say your name was, boy?

JIM

Jamie.

BASIE

Jim. A new name for a new life.
I imagine Jim's folks got themselves
picked up with all the other Brits
and now Jim's looking for them.

He turns his attention to the cooking pot, produces two tin plates and carefully starts to dole out two portions of rice and fish, Jim's eyes following every move with intense interest. Basie affects not to notice Jim's suspense.

BASIE

Tell me, Jim, have you met any other
Chinese big names? How about Chiang
Kai Chek?

JIM

His name isn't really Chiang Kai
Chek, it's a corruption.

BASIE

Corruption ?

JIM

My mother told me.

BASIE

A well-spoken woman, Jim. Good with
words. Are you interested in words,
Jim?

JIM

A bit. I like planes.

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CONTINUED

BASIE

Words are more important. Put aside a new word every day. You never know when a word might be useful. Collation. Do you know that word?

JIM

No.

BASIE

We had that on the menus on the Cathay-American Line. A collation of cold meats. This is more of a fish stew.

He hands Jim a plate of food.

JIM

Thanks!

BASIE

Frank always eats after me, don't you Frank?

FRANK

I always eat after you, Basie.

BASIE

That's because I think for us both. Frank has weight, but it's loose cargo. Straight to the bottom in the first squall. Chew your food. Chew every mouthful six times. Get the benefit.

Jim rapidly pushes the food into his mouth with a tin spoon while Basie watches him. Basie lets his food cool, meanwhile puffing delicately on a cigarette.

FRANK

You try going out there.

BASIE

Frank, we've got my lungs, you know that. I can't be crawling around those hulks with a monkey wrench.

He extinguishes the cigarette, leaving the rest of it to smoke later. He starts eating.

FRANK

Without me you'd be in a camp right now along with his mummy and daddy and all the taipans who were riding this town before it rolled on 'em.

CONTINUED

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BASIE

(pausing thoughtfully)

Yes, there'll be rich pickings in those camps, Frank. Maybe we shouldn't leave Shanghai in a hurry.

Jim, with his empty plate on his lap, has fallen asleep.

BASIE

You're a tired boy, Jim.
Shanghai Jim.

Basie carefully takes the plate and spoon away from Jim.

FRANK

(cynically)

You find any gold teeth in there, Basie?

BASIE

Buying and selling, Frank. You know. Life.

INT. LORRY CAB (SHANGHAI STREET) - DAY

The lorry is in a busy street which is more or less a market. Frank is driving and Jim is sitting between him and Basie. Jim is ill and looks it, having trouble staying awake.

BASIE

Are you sickening, Jim?

JIM

I'm all right, Basie.

BASIE

Good boy. Look alive, a sound commodity. Everything else is garbage and you know what we do with garbage..

JIM

Don't throw me out, Basie. I'm a sound commodity.

FRANK

We've been feeding him for three days and it ain't paying.

JIM

Don't give up, Basie, you'll sell me soon, I just need feeding up a bit.

CONTINUED

FRANK

Thinks he's a smart kid.

BASIE

Shut up, Frank.

Basie gets out of the cab (the lorry is travelling at walking pace) and Frank stops the lorry.

EXT. SHANGHAI STREET - DAY

Amid the teeming mass of PEOPLE, Basie has evidently seen the person he is looking for. He strides along to greet a CHINESE MERCHANT presiding over a stall of indeterminate scope. The merchant greets Basie, but without pleasure and even skepticism. Basie engages him in conversation, glancing once or twice towards the lorry.

INT. LORRY CAB - DAY

JIM

Frank, what does Basie want to buy with me?

FRANK

He doesn't care. He'll buy anything he can sell.

JIM

Why can't he sell me?

FRANK

Nobody wants you. You're worth nothing. You're skin and bone. Soon you're going to be sick all the time.

JIM

(giddy with
hunger)

If they did buy me what would they do with me? They couldn't eat me, I'm skin and bone.

He is interrupted by Basie's return to the cab.

BASIE

(disgustedly)

I thought war was supposed to be good for business.

JIM

Is this the commodity market, Basie?

CONTINUED

BASIE

Sure is, Jim.

JIM

Is the war going to end soon?

BASIE

Don't worry, Jim. I give the Japs three months.

JIM

That's quite a while.

BASIE

It takes time to stop a war. People have big investments to protect. Like me and Frank and this lorry. Right, Frank?

Frank nods.

FRANK

That's right, Basie.

Basie is still standing by the open door of the cab. He considers Jim for a moment.

BASIE

Well, I don't know. This is your town, Shanghai Jim. Maybe you know how to sell these desirable grade A brass mountings. There's millionaires who started with less, Frank and I are holding you back.

JIM

(not buying it)

Basie...I...first I could show you where there's rich pickings... hundreds of houses left empty...

BASIE

Is that right, Jim?

JIM

I can show you some houses I lived in before Frank found me. They were luxuriant.

BASIE

Luxuriant? All right, we'll go and look at some of these big houses.

He climbs up onto the cab and slams the door.

CONTINUED

BASIE
Go, Frank.

Frank starts up the lorry which moves forward. Basie fishes Jim's half-crown coin out of his pocket and starts playing nervously with it.

JIM
Thanks, Basie!

BASIE
You had good sense being born there, Jim. I admire a boy who appreciates the good things in life. I imagine there was a lot of good living.

JIM
There certainly was good living, Basie. There was opulence.

BASIE
Opulence?

JIM
(selling)
They had liqueur chocolates, white pianos, cocktail cabinets...

EXT. BRITISH SETTLEMENT STREET - DAY

The lorry is cruising.

INT. LORRY CAB - DAY

Jim is peering through the windows, pointing this way and that way.

JIM
That one has whiskey and gin and a white piano. That has whiskey and gin - no, just whiskey and a radiogram. That has a cinema and martinis.

BASIE
Never mind the drinks - Frank and I aren't planning to open a bar.

JIM
That one has a dance floor made of mirrors and a radiogram and a fountain and crystal chandeliers.

CONTINUED

BASIE
Crystal chandeliers?

JIM
I think they were crystal.

BASIE
You're tired, Jim.

FRANK
How about cash?

BASIE
That's right, did you see any money,
Jim?

JIM
I did see some money, Basie. Piles
of notes on the dressing table. I'm
taking you to that one. Turn left
here, Frank.

Basie glances suspiciously at Jim as the lorry turns into
Amherst Avenue.

EXT. JIM'S HOUSE - EVENING

The lorry turns through the gate.

INT. LORRY CAB - EVENING

JIM
Wait out here... I'll go and...

He breaks off, his face lighting up as he looks towards the
house. This is because he can distinctly HEAR the sound of
his mother's favorite record on the wind-up gramophone.

JIM'S POV - THE FRONT DOOR

of the house is open and there is the yellow light of a lamp
inside, and in the lamp light there is, apparently, a female
figure, dressed in white.

JIM
I knew she'd come back!

Ignoring the startled Basie and Frank, he reaches across
Basie's lap to open the door of the cab. Basie looks at
the house, puzzled.

CONTINUED

BASIE'S POV - ANOTHER FIGURE

in white, has joined the first and we see now that the figures are TWO men, JAPANESE OFFICERS in fact, in white kimono's. There is the quiet sound of the music of the gramophone. Then a Japanese soldier appears in the twilight garden, coming towards the lorry.

JIM

Basie, they're Japs!

Frank tries to put the lorry into reverse. The two figures in kimono's... Japanese Officers... come running out of the house, followed by TWO MORE UNIFORMED PRIVATES. The soldiers carry bamboo staves. The lorry stalls. A soldier starts lunging at Frank through the open window of the lorry. Frank is shouting. The other door of the cab is opened and Basie and Jim are pulled into the driveway by the other soldier. Basie kneels in the gravel, accepting the punches and kicks of the officer. Frank lies on the ground being beaten relentlessly by two soldiers. Jim sits on the ground, looking up at a Japanese Officer who looks back at him, puzzled. The MUSIC from the gramophone still plays.

INT. DETENTION CENTER - EVENING

ANGLE ON THE SCREEN

(Screenwriter's note: The audience ought to think that the movie has gone to black and white.)

There is a car chase taking place on the screen. One of the cars makes a expert four-wheel slide. We are now inside the car. The driver, who might be Yang, is controlling the steering wheel with his foot while a couple of Chinese gangsters who have evidently (we might as well say it) shanghaied him are getting the brunt of the driver's karate chops. The driver manages to ram one of his passengers against the car door which bursts open. *

Suddenly we see the back of Jim's head.

JIM

(Shouts)

It's Yang.

ANOTHER ANGLE

We see that we are in an open air cinema, which is occupied by about 30 PRISONERS. Most of the prisoners, a bedraggled line of exotic and incongruous characters lined up, in the

CONTINUED

act of receiving the remnants from a cooking pot, a meager meal of boiled potatoes being doled out into their proffered mess tins...the remaining guests at Lockwood's party must have been rounded up soon after we last saw them, and we recognize the French Courtesan, Charlie Chaplin, the Chinese Emperor, part of their costumes missing, the party long past peak. Some are already scraping the last of their potato from their mess tins, others are waiting to receive their share. Father Christmas (Mr. Lockwood) is among them, beardless now.

ANGLE ON JIM

He stands in front of the screen pointing excitedly at the images.

The projector breaks down.

ANGLE ON THE PROJECTION BOOTH

TWO JAPANESE GUARDS tinker with the broken down projector, while a THIRD GUARD stands in front of the beam and throws shadows on the screen.

ANGLE ON JIM

He turn towards the gates.

ANGLE ON THE GATES

JAPANESE SENTRIES open the gates, and a WHISTLE BLOWS and the apathy of the detention center turns into something like activity. The lorry is ancient with a closed cab and an open back. In the back of the lorry are a number of PRISONERS, mostly elderly men and women, who are variously in a bad way. *

EXT. DETENTION CENTER (GATE) - DAY

At the end of the whistle, the occupants of the detention center begin to congregate near the gate. They include a faded English couple, MR. and MRS. PYM, MR. PARTRIDGE supporting his wife, both of whom are elderly, MRS. HUG and her father, and MR. LOCKWOOD. Meanwhile, the two or THREE SOLDIERS attending the lorry have put cotton masks over their mouths and noses. The lorry is delivering PRISONERS to the detention center. Two or three of these prisoners are STRETCHER CASES, carried by CHINESE ORDERLIES.

CONTINUED

Not all of the prisoners on the lorry are made to disembark but those who do, limp, or are carried through the gates into the detention center and each one of them there is handed a mess tin.

The JAPANESE SOLDIER who is handing out the mess tins places one on each of the stretchers as they go by. One of these stretchers contains a fairly young ENGLISH WOMAN whose two sons, PAUL and DAVID, walk with her. Another arrival is an EMACIATED SOLDIER judging from his boots and shorts which constitute his only clothing. He has been badly beaten up. The new arrivals include an English couple, MR. and MRS. VINCENT. Mr. Vincent is a slight, dark, ill-looking man with a tanned, thin face. Mrs. Vincent is attractive in an understated way, blonde and small-boned, an arresting face. The Vincents have evidently been rounded-up recently--their clothing and their general state show fewer signs of deprivation than their companions. Mrs. Vincent carries a quite smart leather purse (handbag) the kind which has a flap with a press-stud, no handle. Meanwhile, each of the prisoners, including Jim, who are hoping to be picked to depart on the lorry, stand quietly holding their mess tins, ready to hand them in. The choice is being made by SERGEANT UCHIDA who walks along the line as though inspecting it. Jim stands shaking and breathing heavily, watching everything with an attention which is like a twitch.

LOCKWOOD

Try to stand still, Jamie

JIM

We'll soon be on our way to the camps. I bet my mother and father are there waiting for me.

LOCKWOOD

That's the spirit.

JIM

I should have stayed with them. The Japanese will look after us, (beat) won't they?

LOCKWOOD

Quiet, Jim, or you won't get on.

The prisoners who have been picked by Sergeant Uchida walk or limp or stagger towards the lorry, handing in their mess tins to the Japanese soldier on their way. Sergeant Uchida nods at Mrs. Hug for her to leave. She attempts to take her father with her, but Uchida pushes the father back so Mrs. Hug remains. Mrs. Partridge has sat down on the ground, her husband unable to raise her to her feet. Sergeant Uchida passes by them as well as the Pymys and

CONTINUED

picks another couple, and then finally picks Lockwood. Lockwood walks toward the lorry without a glance. Uchida stands in front of Jim, looking at him. Jim smiles at him and bows, which unbalances him and he sways. Uchida turns away from Jim and shouts for the gates to be closed. The soldiers and orderlies are helping the last of the prisoners onto the lorry.

The tailgate is closed. Mr. Lockwood, sitting inside the tailgate, looks at Jim and then looks away. Jim is close to tears.

JIM

Thank you for the party!

The gates close as the lorry drives away. Jim turns aside and goes back under the shadow of the raked benches which make a half-covered area, mats on the ground indicating that this is where the prisoners sleep. Jim goes to his mat. There is a quiet moaning sound coming from one of the stretchers which have been dumped on the ground under the seats. Jim notes it and goes over to investigate, and discovers that the stretcher contains Basie, his face bruised and bloody, stuck all over with the remains of paper bandages.

JIM

Basie! It's me!

Basie opens his eyes and moves his lips, but can't say anything.

JIM

It's Jim!

He gets up and runs a few yards to a water butt with a ladle hanging from it. He fills the ladle with murky-looking water and brings it back to Basie. Jim wets his fingers in the water and touches Basie's lips with them.

JIM

Don't worry, I'll look after you!
Everything's going to be all right.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. DETENTION CENTER - DAY

There is an insistent tinny banging NOISE, an amplified version of a sound we have heard before. This time it is

CONTINUED

the Europeans. They have been turned into beggars. They bang their mess tins against the ground, against benches, against the walls.

The general view of the detention center shows the prisoners standing, lying or sitting, all of them still, apart from banging their tins, all of them staring silently in much the same direction... which we see is the door of the guard hut. Sergeant Uchida comes out of the guard house with a small sack which he tosses in a general direction of the cooking-fire, where TWO EURASIAN WOMEN, one of them being MRS. BLACKBURN by name, have also been waiting. With the appearance of the sack of potatoes, only large enough to hold one potato for each prisoner, the prisoners cease rattling their tins. This has been CROSS-CUT with...

INT./EXT. DETENTION CENTER - DAY

In the "interior", under the seats, Basie, sitting on his mat and looking somewhat better and somewhat more mobile, is listening to the RATTLING of the tins. Basie LOOKS at Jim asleep on his mat some little distance away from Basie's mat and Mrs. Partridge, who is lying on the mat next to him and who, we can now SEE, is dead. Basie also SEES Mr. Vincent pacing up and down, and Mrs. Vincent sitting quietly on her sleeping mat with a dainty pack of cards, playing Patience. She is calm and absorbed and comparatively well-groomed, pondering the cards as though she might be passing the time in the corner of a club lounge. Inside, the SILENCE of the mess tins registers with Basie, who now rouses himself and calls to Jim.

BASIE

Chow time, Jim! Get in line.

Mr. Vincent stops pacing and picks up his mess tin and his wife's mess tin and goes toward the exterior. Mrs. Vincent continues to play Patience. Jim gets himself painfully and tiredly to his feet. He is still barefoot. He picks up his mess tin and comes across to Basie to get Basie's mess tin.

BASIE

You should make yourself useful to Mrs. Blackburn. Ingratiate yourself a little. A woman always needs help with her fire.

JIM

Right, Basie.

He picks up Basie's mess tin. Basie produces a third tin and hands it to Jim.

CONTINUED

BASIE

Get Mrs. Partridge's potato while
you're there.

Jim looks at Basie, surprised. He glances over towards the
Partridges.

JIM

(gently)

She died, Basie.

BASIE

(levelly)

She died, Jim, but she didn't hand
in her dinner pail.

(Screenwriters note: and thus begins Basie's basic survival *
course.) Jim approaches the body with a great deal of
trepidation. He bends down to take the tin from Mrs.
Partridges cold, stiff fingers and looks over his shoulder.

ANGLE ON BASIE

BASIE

(Hisses)

Take it!

ANGLE ON JIM

He gathers his courage and snatches the cup from Mrs.
Partridges lifeless hand.

BASIE

Don't forget to bow to Sergeant
Uchida.

JIM

I always bow, Basie.

Jim goes out into the sunlight. Basie limps over to Mr.
Partridge. He gently removes the brush from Mr. Partridge's
hand.

BASIE

(piously)

She's with God now. He doesn't mind
her hair.

From inside his shirt Basie produces a small, corked bottle
of water. He removes the cork and offers the bottle to Mr.
Partridge, who takes a sip.

CONTINUED

MR. PARTRIDGE

We have a son. I hope George and his wife are all right.

BASIE

George Partridge...? I did hear something when I was in Shanghai jail.

(face lights up)

Yes, that's right-- he's in one of the camps and is looking forward to seeing you. I'll try to find out which one if you like.

MR. PARTRIDGE

You're very kind.

BASIE

We have to share what we can.

MR. PARTRIDGE

Perhaps you would like to have the hairbrush. It's silver-backed.

BASIE

Very nice.

Basie puts the hairbrush inside his shirt and accepts the bottle of water back, corks it.

BASIE

I'll have some news in a day or two.

MR. PARTRIDGE

How is the war, do you know?

BASIE

I give it three months.

Mr. Partridge looks pleased.

BASIE

The Japs have occupied Hong Kong, Manila, the East Indies, Singapore--it'll be business as usual in no time.

It is clear from Mr. Partridge's change of expression that that is not what he meant. Mr. Partridge picks up his mess tin and leaves. Basie approaches Mrs. Vincent who does not look up.

BASIE

(amiably)

Red Jack on Black Queen.

CONTINUED

MRS. VINCENT

Go away.

BASIE

Just going.

EXT. DETENTION CENTER - DAY

Jim is busily sieving for small bits of coal and placing them on Mrs. Blackburn's fire. He blows the fire, coaxing a flame out of it as Mrs. Blackburn supervises the boiling of the potatoes.

INT. DETENTION CENTER

Jim arrives at Basie's mat with the three mess tins, each containing a potato in its share of the potato water. Basie takes two of the mess tins.

BASIE

You helped Mrs. Blackburn?

JIM

I ingratiated myself. I made myself very useful.

BASIE

And you got a fair ration as a result.

Basie halves the third potato with his fingers and hands one half to Jim.

JIM

Thanks, Basie!

BASIE

That's it. If you can help people you'll live off the interest.

Jim puts his mess tin to his lips and drains the water from it. Unsatisfied, he eyes Basie's little bottle of water. Basie shifts the bottle slightly, moving it away.

BASIE

We don't drink that, Jim. We don't drink from the water butt. Only potato water that's been boiled I told you.

He watches Mr. Partridge shuffle past, carrying his mess tin back to his mat from the direction of the fire.

CONTINUED

BASIE

I'm looking after you, Jim.

JIM

I know, you are, Basie.

BASIE

Your dad would appreciate that.

Perhaps I'll still get that reward.

The entire meal has now been eaten. Basie lies down and Jim picks up a piece of torn cardboard and fans him.

JIM

Basie, when you were in Shanghai Central, did anyone talk about my mother and father?

BASIE

I think I did hear something, Jim. Good news. They're in one of the camps and are looking forward to seeing you. I'll find out which one for you.

JIM

Gosh, thanks, Basie. I learned a new word today.

(hesitates)

I forget what it was.

BASIE

Never mind. I'm keeping up your education.

EXT. DETENTION CENTER - DAY

In the open air, Basie sits on one of the benches in crisp clean clothes. He is making an origami bird out of a cigarette packet. Elsewhere, Mrs. Blackburn is brushing her hair with the silver hairbrush. She catches Basie's eye and throws him a smile. Basie manipulates the little cardboard bird and then tosses it away. Elsewhere, Jim moves among the other prisoners, going from one to the next, greeting each by name but seldom getting a response. When he reaches the HALF-NAKED BRITISH SOLDIER, who is lying slumped against the perimeter wall in the sunshine, holding his mess tin in one hand, Jim discovers that he has died. Jim eyes the now available mess tin. He hesitates. He looks round towards Basie. Then he decides to take the tin and he stoops to pick it up and continues.

INT. DETENTION CENTER - EVENING

We probably see the screen first: at any rate there is a movie flickering on the screen. Perhaps it is a Thirties swashbuckler. The Japanese are giving themselves an unexpected treat. There are only three or four GUARDS in charge of the detention center.

Some of the prisoners are sitting on the benches but they have their backs to the screen. The prisoners face the Japanese guards who are watching the screen. One of the LITTLE EURASIAN BOYS who is sitting with his mother on a bench forgets himself sufficiently to peek over his shoulder when the scratchy soundtrack indicates a particularly interesting moment, but one of the guards shouts at him and the boy's mother cuffs the boy. Jim is nowhere to be seen. This is because...

ANOTHER ANGLE

Jim is under the seats, looking at the movie through the narrow slot which is all that his view allows him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Jim is standing watching the movie in the "sleeping quarters".

Paul and David are sitting on either side of the sleeping mat on which their mother lies. Jim jerks his head at them, inviting them to share the view, but Paul and David seem to be in a stunned state. Then Jim realizes why: their mother is dead. She is lying on her mat, shod in plimsolls, sticking out over the edge. Jim approaches and takes his "Wings" comic book out of his pocket and offers it to one of the boys. The boy takes it automatically but doesn't look at it.

JIM

I'm sorry.

EMP

ANOTHER ANGLE

Basie looks up with interest from his sleeping mat. He is interested in the dead woman, or rather as we now find out, in her plimsolls. Basie comes over to the three boys.

BASIE

Looks like your size, Jim.

Basie starts to untie one of the shoe laces but it is knotted. He has some difficulty.

CONTINUED

BASIE

(to Paul and David)

She's with God now. He won't mind
her having no shoes.

One of the boys starts to cry silently. His brother
stretches out a hand to comfort him.

JIM

I don't want her shoes.

Basie has given up trying to untie the lace. He pulls at
the shoe which won't come off the woman's foot. He jerks
at it and the corpse jerks towards him. Jim grasps Basie's
wrist.

JIM

Don't Basie! - I don't want them!

BASIE

Somebody will.

Basie struggles with the shoe and Jim struggles with
Basie's wrists.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Mrs. Vincent who has been sleeping on her mat wakes up and
looks over towards them.

BACK TO SCENE

Jim and Basie struggle briefly, Basie starting to swear at
Jim.

There is the SOUND of the whistle which announces the
arrival of the prisoner's lorry. Jim freezes for a moment
and then lets go of Basie and jumps up.

JIM

It's the lorry!

BASIE

Lorry?

JIM

Come on! - come on - don't you see?
- This place is to see who dies!

Jim pulls Paul and David to their feet.

CONTINUED

JIM
 (to Paul and David)
 Come on!

Jim runs to his sleeping mat as the other prisoners start getting to their feet. They all start gathering up their meager possessions.

EXT. DETENTION CENTER (GATE) & JAPANESE LORRY - DUSK

The last stage of the line-up. The ritual which we have seen before. Soldiers and orderlies masked, are bringing in stretchers and walking wounded prisoners. The gates are open and the lorry is outside. But the CUT is to Sergeant Uchida, passing along the line of prisoners. Mr. Partridge and others are rejected. Among those who are motioned to get into the lorry are Mr. and Mrs. Vincent, the Pym's, two elderly couples, Mrs. Hug and her father, and then Paul and David. Each prisoner hands in a mess tin as before. Basie is next, and next to him is Jim. Sergeant Uchida gives the nod to Basie who follows Paul and David without a backward glance.

JIM'S POV -THE PRISONERS

climbing up into the lorry, joining two or three people who came with the lorry and remained on it.

BACK TO SCENE

SERGEANT UCHIDA stops in front of Jim, who does his best to look bright and healthy, somewhat against the odds. He seems about to let Jim leave when he glances, instead, over his shoulder at the lorry, evidently to see if there is room for one more. Basie is just wedging himself into the remaining space on the bench, next to Paul and David. The JAPANESE SOLDIER who is going to stand guard in the back of the lorry, puts the tailboard up and starts to haul himself up over the tailboard. Uchida pushes Jim back by the shoulder. Jim staggers and falls and picks himself up and shouts desperately at Basie.

JIM
 (shouts)
 Basie!

JIM'S POV - BASIE

Ignores Jim and is showing Paul and David a little conjuring trick with Jim's half crown, and gets a hesitant

CONTINUED

laugh out of them. Mrs. Vincent, sitting next to her husband, glances towards Jim. She looks at him with a sudden concern.

Jim runs to the gate as the CAMP GUARDS start to close it. The DRIVER of the lorry, a new young driver, gets out of the cab and comes to the guards who are closing the gates, brandishing a canvas wallet map and evidently asking for directions. *

DRIVER

Nantao.

Sergeant Uchida strides furiously through the open gate and abuses the driver. Uchida snatches the map and looks at it. Jim comes through the gate towards the lorry.

JIM

Straight on! Nantao it's over there! I was at the country club.

Uchida and the driver look in the direction of Jim's outstretched finger. Uchida returns the map to the driver. He starts to cuff Jim as the driver returns to his cab and starts up the lorry.

JIM

Basie! I'll work for you!

Uchida cuffs Jim again, and kicks him. And then, suddenly changing his mind, glad to be rid of this troublesome boy, he picks him up bodily and throws him over the tailgate of the lorry as the lorry begins to move forward. Jim extricates himself from the legs of the prisoners on the lorry and clambers forward until he reaches the back of the driving cab where the guard has positioned himself. Jim reaches his position at the back of the cab and stands there looking over the top of the cab with the wind blowing into his face, which is bloody but triumphant. He turns back towards the tailboard.

JIM

Basie! I told you everything will be all right.

They all sit there, looking at Jim, with none of his exhilaration. We SEE them all: Mr. and Mrs. Vincent, Basie with Paul and David, Mrs. Hug and her father, Mr. and Mrs. Pym, the elderly couples, perhaps a dozen altogether, and finally, a young Englishman with a bruised face. This is RANSOME.

EXT. SHANGHAI OUTSKIRTS (MOVING JAPANESE LORRY) - DUSK

The lorry passes through a landscape of war, burned-out buildings and vehicles, doors and windows open to cloud and sky; - with military traffic occasionally passing the lorry. Jim is at his post, standing behind the driver's cab. Next to him is the guard. As the lorry rumbles and sways along the road, Jim holds onto the guard's belt to steady himself. He is mildly hysterical and bangs on the roof of the cab with glee. Mrs. Hug reaches out a hand to grip him.

MRS. HUG

Be quiet, Jim.

JIM

I can't help it, Mrs. Hug. Don't you think it's funny?

MRS. HUG

Concentrate on the road. Where are we?

JIM

Chapei.

MRS. HUG

You know it here?

JIM

(shaking his head and chuckling)

I couldn't come here before the war. An English boy would have been killed for his shoes. You see, the Japanese are our only friends.

MRS. HUG

But now you have no shoes.

JIM

(laughing at that)

I know!

Jim laughs and bangs the cab again and shouts down to the driver, pointing out the road.

JIM

Nantao.

The driver sticks his head out of the cab and shakes his finger angrily at Jim. Ransome looks at Jim with interest. The other people in the lorry are mostly in a stupor. Paul and David are being entertained by Basie, who is deftly going through their pockets. Mrs. Vincent is regarding Jim with something close to amusement.

EXT. SHANGHAI COUNTRYSIDE (JAPANESE LORRY) - DAY

The lorry is stationary in flat country. The lorry's engine is steaming. The Guard is resting on the ground, leaning on one of the wheels. The driver has spread his map over the hood of the lorry and is muttering furiously. On the lorry one of the elderly women is lying on the floor, attended by Ransome. Jim squats on top of the cab examining the horizon for a landmark. The driver is getting nowhere with his map and he looks up at Jim and harangues him loudly.

BASIE

Add that up any way you like and we're still lost.

JIM

Everything looks different. I was out here at the country club...

BASIE

We're going to the country club. Jim's in charge.

JIM

If we can find the railway I'll know where we are. Then it's either East or West.

BASIE

Either East or West. Where would we be without him?

RANSOME

Good boy, Jim -- you'll get us there. The Japanese have captured so much ground they've run out of maps.

ELDERLY PRISONER

Can't we go back to the detention center, Dr. Ransome? We're very tired.

The driver has got back into his cab and is attempting to turn the lorry around.

BASIE

They've got the same idea.

RANSOME

It might be for the best. At least there's water there.

CONTINUED

JIM

(urgently)

We mustn't go back - don't you see?

Nobody is taking any notice of him. Jim searches their faces, looking for an ally, and finds Mrs. Vincent looking back at him. So he addresses her.

JIM

All our friends will be in the camp.
They're waiting for us. My
parents...

Mrs. Vincent is jostled aside by the guard clambering up over the tailgate.

BASIE

(to Ransome)

You got picked up late. Doctoring
up-country?

Ransome nods.

BASIE

I was working underground for the
Kuomintang.

RANSOME

(mildly)

As a conjurer?

Jim has been trying to get someone's, anyone's attention.
He plucks at the guard's sleeve.

JIM

NANTAO!

The guard works his way to the front of the lorry and starts pushing Jim down roughly from the top of the cab. Jim is desperately searching the horizon and just in time sees something.

JIM'S POV - RAILWAY BUGGY

With TWO JAPANESE SOLDIERS on board is travelling magically along the featureless landscape.

JIM

(shouts)

There it is - the NANTAO line

CONTINUED

Jim excitedly shows the guard what he has seen and the guard shouts to the driver. The driver turns the wheel sharply and Jim tumbles off the cab into the back of the lorry. -

We see Mrs. Vincent's reaction: Jim is getting to her; she gives him a small smile for his success.

JIM

(happily)

I'll get you there, Mrs. Vincent!

We also see Basie's reaction: the argument over the dead woman's shoes had put Basie in bad humor with Jim but now he acknowledges Jim's success in spotting the railway.

BASIE

You're a sound commodity, Jim.

RANSOME

Good work, Jim. They'll have water for us. You've got sharp eyes, you should be a pilot when you grow up.

JIM

Yes, I want to fly a Zero.

Ransome looks at him bemused.

JIM

I've been in one already at Hungjao aerodrome.

MRS. HUG

Did it fly?

JIM

Well, in a way.

RANSOME

(smiling)

You've got bags of imagination, Jim.

Jim turns away the intended compliment, ~~is~~ smiling. Ransome drops the smile, and looks at Jim for a moment. The lorry is on the move again.

BASIE

(to Ransome)

I'm looking after him for his daddy.

RANSOME

You're American, aren't you?

CONTINUED

BASIE

Definitely.

EXT. NANTAO RAILWAY LINE & JAPANESE LORRY - DAY

The lorry is pulling up near a wayside halt, merely a short concrete platform along the railway line. A party of Japanese soldiers are concerned with laying signal wires. The railway buggy is standing on the line. The driver gets out of the cab and approaches the WORKING PARTY, which is gathered on the little platform, in the charge of a JAPANESE CORPORAL who sits drinking from a canteen of water. Ransome starts to lower the tailgate.

RANSOME

Come on, let's get you into some shade.

The guard immediately impedes Ransome, shouting at him. Ransome addresses the guard in tones of polite humility which is at odds with his words.

RANSOME

Look, you stupid, ugly, filthy little bastard, these women are getting dehydrated, so what's it to you?

Through this the Guard pushes and cuffs Ransome and continues to shout at him. Ransome holds his ground. Having made his point, the Guard lowers the tailgate and shouts at the prisoners to get down. The Guard turns away and goes to join the Driver.

RANSOME

Right, everybody out. Someone help me with these women.

The Prisoners begin to disembark. We see that Mr. Vincent is not holding up too well. Mrs. Vincent helps him to get down off the lorry. Jim has jumped over the side and come to help Mrs. Vincent. Mr. Vincent doesn't like to be helped.

MR. VINCENT

I'm all right.

For a brief moment Jim and Mrs. Vincent are collaborators.

The Prisoners lie in the shade of the lorry, thirsty. One of the Un-Named Old Women is close to death. Jim is drawing diagrams in the dust with a stick.

CONTINUED

A canteen of water is being passed among the Japanese Working Party who are sharing a meal with the driver and guard on the railway platform. The prisoners watch the water intently, the spilled drops and the dribbles catching the sunlight.

RANSOME

(quietly)

Christ, are they waiting for one of us to die?

JIM

They're waiting for you to ask, so they can hit you with their rifles. Then they'll give us water.

Ransome stares at him, rather angrily. Jim gets up and casually moves towards the platform. When he gets to the edge of the platform he climbs up, ignoring the Japanese. Ransome, Basie, and the others watch him with interest. Mrs. Vincent watches him with anxiety. Basie starts nervously playing with his lucky half crown.

The Driver notes Jim and is evidently talking to the Corporal in a good humored way about Jim, who bows steeply and then stands to attention, unsmiling. The Corporal laughs. The Corporal part-fills a bottle of water from his canteen and holds it up, calling to Jim, beckoning. The Prisoners are transfixed by the sight of the water shining in the sunlight. Jim walks to the Corporal.

RANSOME

(under his breath)

Good lad.

BASIE

(under his breath)

That's my boy.

Jim accepts the bottle, bows steeply, steps back three paces, wipes the neck of the bottle on his sleeve, and tips it into his mouth, draining it. Ransome's expression is puzzled and bitter. Basie smiles bleakly, more or less understanding. Mrs. Vincent does not understand and is hurt. The Corporal looks across at the prisoners' dismay and laughs. Jim laughs with him. Jim gives the bottle back to the Corporal, who now refills it to the top from his canteen. He gives it to Jim, who bows again and this time takes it to the lorry, standing in front of Ransome, who has got to his feet. Ransome stares briefly at Jim.

JIM

(matter of fact)

It was my water.

CONTINUED

Ransome takes the bottle, and Jim goes back to his place, sitting on the ground, leaning against one of the wheels of the lorry. Ransome tips a little water into the mouth of the Sickest Woman and then into the mouths of two or three Elderly Prisoners who can't move. Basie reaches out for the bottle but Ransome tips it to his own mouth first taking a couple of gulps; it seems he might take a third gulp, but finds Jim looking at him expressionlessly, and checks himself. Ransome passes the bottle on. Jim looks away again. When the bottle reaches Mrs. Vincent she first of all gives a drink to her husband.

A plane is passing high overhead. Ransome looks at Jim who is looking up into the sky. Jim removing goggles from in front of his eyes onto his forehead, and squints expertly up at the sky.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP AIRFIELD/JAPANESE LORRY - EVENING

Jim's small model airplane is flying against the night sky. The constellations jolt around behind it.

ANGLE ON JIM

He is lying on his back holding the plane in the slip stream of the lorry, comforting himself, he makes plane noises. In the distance he HEARS the sound of real planes (OS).

He SEES a Japanese airfield; several planes are taxiing towards the runway. In the background he SEES a tall pagoda against the evening sky.

JIM

Nantao airfield... that's the Pagoda.

The lorry dips and the Pagoda disappears below the horizon of an embankment.

EXT NANTAO CAMP AIRFIELD (EMBANKMENT) - EVENING

ANGLE ON THE EMBANKMENT

We HEAR the distant drone of planes. (If Bosch had been alive he would have painted this.) Clouds of white dust swirl up to the Shanghai moon. Burning tires have been placed inside oil drums and, by their hellish light, we see DOZENS of NEARLY NAKED CHINESE WORKERS scampering up and

CONTINUED

down the slope of the embankment while carrying rocks. The white ashy dust sticks to the coolies skin and so it appears that the Japanese are building their runway with an army of ghosts (which, of course, they are). SENTRIES patrol the embankment and their bayonets are silhouetted against the somber sky.

We see the outlines of the Nantao camp against a horizon. *

ANGLE ON THE JAPANESE LORRY

The lorry comes to a halt by a pile of rocks. Ransome jumps out first (always Johnny on the spot).

RANSOME

Right Jim...let's get everyone to their quarters.

But Jim doesn't pay any attention to Ransome. Instead he just stares at the slope and the planes he knows are hidden behind them (because he can HEAR them). Basie jumps down next to him.

BASIE

I don't see any camp.

Behind them the guard lowers the tailgate and the prisoners get out. Mrs. Hug seizes up the situation.

MRS. HUG

They want us to carry stones.

A GUARD hands Ransome a rock but he throws it down.

RANSOME

No...no...no

The guard clubs Ransome with a rifle and the good doctor falls down in the white dust. Basie takes the hint and grabs a rock. Jim only HEARS the distant drone of the planes. They are his siren song. He picks up a rock and climbs the embankment.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP AIRFIELD (RUNWAY) - EVENING

Jim reaches the top of the embankment and sees the runway the coolies are building. It's white, like it was made from the ground up bones.

CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - A GROUP OF PLANES

parked twenty yards from where they are building the runway. He drops the rock, staggers towards the planes.

ANGLE ON THE GUARD

He sees Jim and brings his rifle up to his shoulder.

ANGLE ON THREE PILOTS

The PILOTS in flying suits and helmets are strolling along. They see Jim and nudge each other.

ANGLE ON JIM

He reaches the first plane and leans against it running his hands over the smooth cowl of the engine.

ANGLE ON THE GUARD

He has Jim in his sights and cocks the hammer.

ANGLE ON JIM

He stands under the wing and SEES the three pilots approaching him. They look like the Emperor's personal samurai, their white scarves flap in the wind. They are the embodiment of everything brave and their eyes are tolerant for they recognize a fellow fan. Jim touches the blade of the prop and whispers.

JIM

Zero-sen.

And then raises his arm in a salute.

ANGLE ON THE GUARD

He lowers his rifle.

ANGLE ON BASIE AND RANSOME

They deposit their rocks on the runway and look up.

They SEE Jim and the three pilots. They are standing under the wing of the Zero, frozen in a salute.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON THE RUNWAY *

Dozens of Chinese COOLIES are working on the sides of the runway. *

DISSOLVE: *

EXT. NANTAO CAMP AIRFIELD (RUNWAY) - DAY

ANGLE ON THE RUNWAY *

The wind blows a fine dust over the runway which is so white it could be made of bleached bones. On the sides of the runway where the coolies once stood are now burial mounds. OS we HEAR the sharp clicking sound of bamboo stave against bamboo stave. (Screenwriters note: the sound is like rattling bones.) *

DISSOLVE:

INT. NANTAO CAMP (GUARD HOUSE) - DAY

With the dissolve, we SEE the image of two Kendo fighters circling each other with helmets, body armor, and bamboo staves, suspended over the runway. Suddenly, the taller fighter attacks. Before his shorter opponent can make a move, he has been beaten around the arms and head. The shorter opponent's helmet is knocked off his head, revealing the face of Jim; an undernourished, undersized, over experienced fourteen-year-old. The fight has taken place in the guard house, somewhere between an office and a recreation room. An audience of THREE OFF-DUTY JAPANESE GUARDS applaud as the victor takes off his helmet. This is SEARGENT NAGATA, a once strong farmer's son who is beginning to show the ravages of tuberculosis. *

Jim places his helmet on a desk. **END**

JIM

Thank you, Seargent Nagata. *

NAGATA *

Nagata teach Kendo. Boy teach English.

Jim slips into his clogs and points at them.

JIM

Yes, shoes.

NAGATA *

Shoes.

CONTINUED

Jim picks up a bottle with a cork in it.

JIM

Bottle.

NAGATA

Bottle.

Jim removes the cork.

JIM

Cork.

NAGATA

Cork.

JIM

Book...chair

NAGATA

Book..chair. Thank you. Hello.
Good-bye.

JIM

Very good.

NAGATA

Very good.

JIM

I have to go now.

NAGATA

Cheerio.

JIM

(laughs)

Cheerio.

Jim palms the cork and leaves the recreation room.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (GUARD HOUSE AND ENVIRONS) - DAY

Jim comes out of the guard house, rubbing his ear where Nagata had hit him and finding a little blood on his fingers. He looks in command of himself and of the situation, however, as he sets off at a trot toward the hospital, skittering along with his shirt-tail over his shorts, his clogs flapping and kicking up the dust.

CONTINUED

ANOTHER ANGLE

A game of marbles is in progress in the dust. Several of the BOYS from the camp are engaged in this. Others, the SPECTATORS, stand watching, each holding a thread on which a brilliant blue dragonfly is captive. Jim, on his progress, tears by. He is clearly an object of interest to all the other boys.

BOY 1

Jim! Where are you going?

BOY 2

Dr. Ransome's looking for you!

Jim ignores them as he hurries by. He turns the corner at a crossroads where two paths meet, and his flying clogs flash by the handwritten street signs which proclaim these paths to be "Piccadilly" and "Bond Street". As Jim runs through the camp toward the hospital, we get a view of the distant pagoda across the airfield which is separated from the camp by a wire fence.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Outside one of the huts there is evidently a "concert party" in rehearsal. In a grotesque parody of a mixed chorus line, a group of PRISONERS are learning steps and singing...

WOMEN PRISONERS

"We're the girls every boy adores."

MEN PRISONERS

(sing)

"You're the girls every boy adores..."

PRISONERS

(sing together)

"C.A.C. don't mean a thing to me..."

Jim tears round the corner, skidding round the chorus line.

JIM

Sorry!

Jim runs on without pausing.

PRISONER

That boy ...

PRISONER 2

Needs a good hiding.

CONTINUED

ANOTHER ANGLE

A GOLFER addresses himself to an old battered ball which he then hits a few ungainly yards towards a SECOND GOLFER who stands hopefully next to a cavity in the stony ground. It is not a good shot at all. The first golfer shakes his head in disgust. Jim runs by, laughing.

JIM

Use your iron!

The golfers evidently take their game seriously. They glare at Jim.

Jim continues his journey through the camp at his usual speed. This may be an appropriate moment to describe what the camp is like. The camp is surrounded by a wire fence which separates it from the nearest part of the airfield. (The nearest part of the airfield is on the fringe of any airfield activity and is in fact rather overgrown, apart from the runway itself, and conceals a narrow canal. The business end of the airfield is way across on the other side, near the pagoda).

The main entrance of the camp, guarded gates, gives onto a minor road which skirts the airfield and the camp. Part of the camp is evidently older than the war. There might be about 20, double-story, concrete structures large enough to sleep one-hundred people each. There is a larger structure, facing the airfield, which has been part-bombed. This is an assembly hall, with a balcony now open to the sky and standing in its own rubble. There are negotiable stairs up to the balcony, partly covered by debris. The dormitory blocks are regularly laid out between quite neat rudimentary paths. Their front doors, each approached by a few steps, look out upon a "parade ground". There are also some wooden buildings, evidently purposely built for the camp. There is a guard house which accomodates the soldiers who guard the camp. There is also a watch tower upon whose platform there is a Japanese soldier shaded by a tin roof. One of the houses is now the hospital. It has a verandah. The area outside the wire includes, near the hospital, a cemetery and modest kitchen garden. A smaller wooden shack, quite near the gate, is the kitchen hut which has a chimney and a serving hatch.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - HOSPITAL

We follow Jim until he runs up the steps of the hospital.

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INT. HOSPITAL (DISPENSARY & WARDS) - DAY

The first room is a dispensary of sorts. The men's ward and the women's ward lead off from it. In each ward can be seen a number of cots and mattresses, all occupied in the semi-gloom. The only person in the dispensary is a middle-aged woman, MRS. PHILLIPS. From her appearance and her activity in the room it is clear that she is not a visitor but belongs there. Jim speaks to her in an unnaturally loud voice.

JIM

Hello, Mrs. Phillips!

MRS. PHILLIPS

Ssh...

JIM

What?

MRS. PHILLIPS

Why are you shouting? What have you done to yourself?

She sees the blood on his ear.

RANSOME (O.S.)

Jim!

INT. HOSPITAL (WOMEN'S WARD) - DAY

Ransome's urgent voice has come from the women's ward. Jim enters the ward and finds Ransome bending over one of the cots which boasts the ward's only mosquito net. Ransome is tensely and energetically attempting to restart the heart of a woman patient, while hospital orderly, MRS. GILMOUR, is attempting mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on the patient.

RANSOME

Quickly, Jim!

Jim hurries closer. Lying on the cot is a young woman who is in fact dead from dysentery. Ransome is leaning over her, pumping her heart through the thin wall of her naked chest. Ransome, who is now bearded, is sweating, breathing heavily, tiring.

RANSOME

Can you do this?

Jim takes over pumping the heart. Ransome moves aside Mrs. Gilmour and takes over the job, mouth-to-mouth with the patient.

CONTINUED

RANSOME

(between breaths, rapping the words at Jim)

- Don't speed up -- keep the rhythm.

MRS. GILMOUR

(matter-of-fact)

She's dead, Dr. Ransome.

Mrs. Gilmour is a pleasant, middle-aged woman, like Mrs. Phillips in most respects.

RANSOME

Keep going.

(to Mrs. Gilmour)

Take over.

Mrs. Gilmour takes over from him and Ransome tries to listen to the young woman's heart. Jim keeps pumping with the heels of his hands. He looks down at the girl. As he looks at her, suddenly her open eyes swivel toward Jim, looking at him. Ransome straightens up.

RANSOME

All right, stop.

JIM

She looked at me! I got her back to life!

RANSOME

You pumped some blood into her brain, Jim, just for a moment.

JIM

No, she looked right at me! I can do it again.!

RANSOME

Stop shouting. Leave her alone.

He walks away exhausted.

INT. HOSPITAL (DISPENSARY) - DAY

Ransome continues into the dispensary where he sits down, alone for a moment in grief and a kind of anger. Jim comes into the dispensary, approaching Ransome cautiously. Ransome looks up at Jim, a little more warmly.

RANSOME

Come on then. Have you done your homework?

CONTINUED

EMP

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JIM

(loudly)

I think I've gone deaf!

MRS. PHILLIPS

Somebody's boxed his ears at last.

JIM

Sergeant Nagata gave me a Kendo lesson. *

RANSOME

(touching Jim's ear)

He gave you a lesson all right. Sit there.

He indicates a chair standing by a metal table in the dispensary.

RANSOME

You admire the Japanese?

JIM

They're brave, you know.

RANSOME

And that's important, Jim?

JIM

It's a good thing if you want to win a war.

RANSOME

But, we don't want them to win.

JIM

(confused)

No, I know.

RANSOME

Remember, we're British.

JIM

Yes, I've never been there. EMP

RANSOME

(to Mrs. Phillips)

Give the mosquito net to Mr. Radnik.

MRS. PHILLIPS

Poor man. COOTIC

RANSOME

(irritated)

Just give it to him, Mrs. Phillips.

CONTINUED

Ransome comes to Jim and starts to examine the ear, wiping it with a swab.

JIM

Is that what you do? -- Give the mosquito net to whoever's dying next?

RANSOME

Sit still. 'They were being loved.'

JIM

Amabantur.

RANSOME

'I shall be loved.'

JIM

Amatus eris.

Ransome straightens up from his examination of Jim's ear and announces his prescription.

RANSOME

I'm taking you off games.

Ransome picks up Jim's Latin text book and flips through the pages, settling on Jim's next homework. He hands the book back.

RANSOME

For tomorrow: gerunds and gerundives.

Jim's attention, in his eyeline, is now with Mr. Radnik, around whose cot Mrs. Phillips and Mrs. Gilmour are placing the mosquito net.

RANSOME

Are you paying attention?

He notices Jim's distraction, then sees that Jim's eye is on an almost new pair of white golf shoes put neatly at the end of Mr. Radnik's cot.

RANSOME

Jim, can you hear me?

JIM

Yes, it's coming back. Do you ever save anybody, Dr. Ransome?

RANSOME

I think they'd have to be Lazarus.

CONTINUED

JIM

Well, anyway, it's fewer to feed.

RANSOME

You're a pragmatist, Jim. What about your English prep?

JIM

(rapidly)

"If I should die think only this of me that there's some corner of a foreign field that is forever England there shall be in that rich earth a richer dust concealed a dust which England bred - "

RANSOME

(interrupting curtly)

Yes, but try to learn it as a poem, it's not just a string of words.

JIM

Hotsy totsy.

RANSOME

I beg your pardon?

JIM

It's a new word Basie taught me. He said you'd know what it means.

Ransome leans forward and takes two tomatoes out of Jim's shirt pocket.

JIM

(unashamed)

They're for Basie.

RANSOME

I know.

JIM

I have to give him something everytime I see him.

RANSOME

It's alright. It's a good thing you're friends with Basie. He's a survivor.

JIM

That's because he only drinks boiled water.

Ransome offers the tomatoes.

CONTINUED

RANSOME

Eat these. I've got something else
for you to give Basie.

JIM

Thanks.

RANSOME

Eat them now.

Jim eats them.

JIM

It's a good thing I'm friends with
you, too.

From his pocket Ransome produces two condoms which he gives
to Jim.

JIM

See you tomorrow! I've got some things
to do!

Jim gets up and runs out of the dispensary, stuffing the
Latin book inside his shirt.

INT. HOSPITAL (MEN'S WARD) -DAY

Mrs. Phillips, standing at the door of the men's ward,
watches him go, bemused and even bewildered by him.

MRS. PHILLIPS

He keeps busy, doesn't he?

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (WASHLINE & PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

Jim has arrived at the washing line which is a crude affair
behind one of the dormitory blocks. He rapidly unpegs a
shirt, pants, and socks, and runs past the fence towards the
American dormitory.

JIM'S POV - A MODEL GLIDER

sailing on the breeze on the other side of the fence. A
JAPANESE BOY, a year or two older than Jim, runs after it.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The plane sails over the perimeter fence and crash lands
near Jim. Jim runs over to it and picks it up (after
placing the laundry carefully on the grass).

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JAPANESE BOY

He runs to his side of the fence and he looks at Jim, wondering what he is going to do with his plane.

ANGLE ON JIM

Jim looks carefully at the glider and smiles at the Japanese boy.

ANGLE ON JAPANESE BOY

He is worried about his plane.

ANGLE ON JIM

He launches the glider back across the fence.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The Japanese boy shouts his thanks and runs after the glider. He picks it up.

Jim waits to see if the boy will launch the glider back at him. But the boy launches his glider away from Jim and runs after it.

Jim picks up the laundry and runs through the camp. He notices a lorry, the food lorry, coming down the road towards the camp gates.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The lorry creates a stir of interest. Here and there, PRISONERS note the lorry's arrival. An ~~ALMOST~~ NAKED MAN is standing between the shafts of a simple two-wheeled cart. He has apparently been waiting for the lorry. He stands up and we recognize, perhaps only just recognized Mr. Maxted.

MAXTED

(shouts)

Jim! The caterers have arrived!

Jim, carrying his washing, runs along toward what we will know to be the men's dormitory.

JIM

Don't worry, Mr. Maxted! I'll be there!

CONTINUED

MAXTED

Come on, Jim! It won't taste the
same without you!

We stay with Jim and see him run up the steps of "E-Block",
the men's dormitory.

INT. BRITISH AND AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY/LOBBY - DAY

The building contains two separate dormitories, one for the
British men, one for Americans. Jim goes to the door of
the British dormitory.

INT. BRITISH MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

He addresses himself generally to the OCCUPANTS The
dormitory has a thoroughly demoralized atmosphere. It is
full of listless men, many of them ill, groaning and sweating.

JIM

The food lorry's here!

BRITISH PRISONERS

(morosely)

Sod off!

JIM

(cheerfully)

There isn't any other news.

He leaves.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

The doorway of the American dormitory is decorated with
signs and American symbols. One sign says "You are entering
the United States." Another says "So get them off." Jim
enters the American dormitory. This large room has been
partitioned off so that every bed is in its own cubicle.
The partitions are homemade from any material which has come
to hand; sheets, bits of wood, and packing cases, etc.
There is a central corridor into which some of the cubicles
open. Some of the front doors are "closed" and others are
"open". TWO AMERICAN PRISONERS, a pitcher and a catcher,
are throwing a baseball up and down the corridor. It's
clear that Jim is popular here, in his own way. As he
negotiates the corridor, he is greeted on every side by the
American prisoners. One of whom (TIPTREE) is playing a
harmonica.

CONTINUED

AMERICAN PRISONERS

It's Shanghai Jim.

Hey, Jim.

Hot water and shave over here.

Get me a left-handed screwdriver and a bucket of steam.

DAINTY

Would you like a Hershey bar?

JIM

Oh, yes please, Dainty!

DAINTY

So would I, kid. Have you got one?

Jim makes his way down the corridor. Along the way he passes SIX AMERICANS playing poker. They are using condoms as chips. Jim is heading for a corner cubicle. This is guarded by an American prisoner called DEMAREST. Seeing Jim approaching with the laundry, Demarest moves aside the curtain closing off the corner cubicle to speak to someone inside.

DEMAREST

It's the kid.

He jerks at Jim to enter.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

The cubicle is a corner one, with two windows giving Basie a clear view of the entire camp. He is sitting on his bunk, dressed in a long sleeved cotton shirt, faded but neatly creased. The cubicle is like a general store; clothing, pots and pans, tennis racquets, stacks of old magazines. Jim enters in his usual state of panting excitement. Basie sits on the bed, absently playing with the half crown coin which he slips in his pocket when Jim arrives; not to hide it, but Jim merely replaces the coin as something to occupy him.

DEMAREST

Stop breathing so much. There ain't enough air as it is.

BASIE

Come in, Jim. You're alright. There just isn't enough air for you in the whole of Nantao, isn't that it?

CONTINUED

JIM

That's it, Basie. Here are your clothes?

BASIE

You're better than a Shanghai laundry.

Basie smiles warmly at Jim. He reaches under his bed for a tin box from which he takes a potato and gives it to Jim.

JIM

Thanks, Basie. I got you a cork.

Jim hands over the cork from the guardhouse.

BASIE

(pleased)

This will do fine.

JIM

(acting like Basie)

What do you want for it, Basie?

BASIE

(ignoring him)

Did you get the sewing needle?

Jim finds the needle in the hem of his shorts. Basie takes it from him and examines it.

BASIE

Good boy.

Basie fiddles with the cork and needle. He lays the needle flat on the cork seeing how it will work as a compass.

Demarest is folding the laundry Jim brought and placing it under Basie's mattress.

Jim licks the last of the potato from his fingers.

JIM

(anxious)

You've got to give it back.

BASIE

Got to? What do you mean, got to?
Are you going to give me the potato back?

Jim is taken aback. Demarest smiles at Jim's discomfort, but Basie's pendulum is still swinging. He snarls at Demarest.

CONTINUED

BASIE

What are you laughing at?

And he jerks his head at Demarest, indicating that he should leave, which he does.

Basie is feeling expansive. Jim always makes him feel powerful. He stares at Jim, looking him over as if he is going to remake him.

BASIE

Jim, would you like to become an American?

JIM

(almost beside himself)

Oh yes, Basie. I would love it.

Basie gets up from his chair and indicates that Jim should sit there. Basie should play this like some grand magician who is about to reveal a great secret to his pupil. Behind Jim's back, he rummages through his baskets. Jim doesn't dare to look behind him. Basie comes up behind him. He has something in his hand, but we can't see what. Basie cuffs Jim affectionately on the head.

BASIE

Put your chin on your chest and don't move.

Jim does as he is told. He HEARS the quick snipping of scissors. He sees his long English locks fall to the floor.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Basie is giving Jim a crew cut and it's obvious by the quick, confident way he goes about his business, that Basie cut hair in another life.

BASIE

(making conversation
like a barber)

Did you see the Mustang yesterday?

JIM

(nodding happily)

It's the Cadillac of the sky, Basie.

BASIE

(as an aside)

Keep your head down. You'll see plenty of them soon. And B-29s.

EMP

0019

CONTINUED

JIM

B-29s?

BASIE

The Superfortress, Jim.

JIM

Where from, Basie?

BASIE

The Mariana Islands, Saipan, Guam.
 Yeah, the Marines took the Marianas
 with the infantry; the 27th and the
 77th. That means that Tokyo is
 going to be in bomber range.

JIM

Tokyo!

BASIE

It'll be time to think of going home.
 (aside)
 Turn your head to the left.

Jim dutifully turns his head to the left.

JIM

(uncertain)

We'll have to leave the camp.

BASIE

That's the idea. First one side
 feeds you and the other side is
 going to get you killed. Then it's
 the other way around. It's all
 timing, Jim.

JIM

Will you tell me when it's time?

BASIE

Sure.

JIM

Promise?

BASIE

(sharply, almost cross)

I promise.

And he pushes Jim's head to the right rather roughly. As
 he starts to work on Jim's right side.

BASIE

How's your friend, Dr. Schweitzer?

CONTINUED

JIM

I brought Amy Matthews back to life
for him. Just for a minute.

BASIE

Yeah? That's worth a Reader's
Digest, Jim.

JIM

Thanks, Basie.

BASIE

I'm increasing your word power, Jim.

JIM

I got a new one today. Pragmatist.

BASIE

Pragmatist? That's a good one. Did
Dr. Ransome teach you that one?

The only indication of Basie's anger is the quickening of
his scissors. Jim nods.

BASIE

Your mother and father are going to
be pleased, coming back with all
these new words.

JIM

You'll meet them, Basie.

BASIE

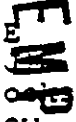
I don't want you going over there
anymore.

JIM

What about my Latin?

Basie walks around Jim who has a complete crew-cut now, and
he seems satisfied with his work.

BASIE

You can get up now, 
(beat as he looks at Jim)
You're an American now. Americans
don't need Latin. They've got
something much more important.

Jim feels his new hair, his new identity.

JIM

What's that, Basie?

CONTINUED

BASIE

Know how, Jim...know how.

Jim smiles and hands Basie the two condoms Ransome gave him. Demarest sticks his head through the curtain.

DEMAREST

Food truck is here.

Jim takes his Reader's Digest from the pile and is about to leave while Basie picks up a broom and sweeps up his hair, WHISTLING between his teeth.

JIM

Basie, where's the radio? I won't tell.

BASIE

What radio is that? If I had a radio, I wouldn't be talking to you. I'd be listening to Charlie McCarthy.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

Jim leaves Basie's cubicle and jerks his head at Demarest, who scowls at the deliberate impertinence and goes into Basie's cubicle.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

Jim runs up to join a gaunt Mr. Maxted who is standing with his cart, dressed in a pair of shorts, about to be served from the kitchen hatch. Other carts are returning laden to different dormitory blocks, while a few more wait their turn. Jim runs up, breathlessly, just in time to help Maxted receive a bucket of boiled potatoes and some mush, grains of wheat. Mr. Maxted is either too kind or too oblivious to notice Jim's hair.

JIM

Sorry, Mr. Maxted. 

MAXTED 

Good boy, Jim. The rations get heavier as they get smaller. Interesting. I must write to the Times.

JIM

(looking around)
The others should help.

CONTINUED

MAXTED

Some work and some watch, and that's
all there is to it.

And they pull the cart towards G-block.

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - DAY

Jim sits on his bunk with his plate. From his wooden box he takes a tin spoon and stirs the wheat around.

ANGLE ON WHEAT

It almost contains as much weevils as wheat. Jim uses his spoon to separate the weevils from the wheat, putting them neatly around the edge of his plate.

BACK TO SCENE

Jim shares his room with Mr. and Mrs. Vincent. Mr. Vincent is not present. The room is divided by a makeshift partition consisting mainly of bits of curtain, etc., hanging from a line attached to nails in the walls. The division is more or less equable in the sense that the Vincent's have twice as much of the room as Jim. Apart from the two cots, there is little to note in the Vincents' part of the room. (If there is a window, the Vincents' have it). Jim's cot is inside the partition in a cubicle hardly bigger than the cot. He has pasted photographs of shiny cars, Battle of Britain pilots standing by their Spitfires, a crashed German bomber, St. Paul's Cathedral... one photograph, torn from a magazine, shows an identified couple standing arm in arm outside the gates of Buckingham Palace. Jim's only real possession is a make-shift wooden suitcase or box. In this box he keeps his treasures.

JIM'S POV - THE PARTITION

made up of various bits and pieces strung ~~and~~ pinned together, is full of little gaps. They offer Jim a tantalizing view of Mrs. Vincent, who is looking at her face, critically, without vanity, in the small mirror set into the inside of the flap of her purse.

Jim watches her steadily for a few moments, with sympathy but also with great curiosity. His eyes switch slightly to take in the line of her body.

CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - MRS. VINCENT

although there is nothing more provocative revealed of it than the V at the neck of her shirt, which she instinctively and unnecessarily closes as she becomes suddenly aware of Jim's gaze.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Mrs. Vincent pulls the curtain open and watches Jim, but doesn't see him or notice his haircut. She looks tired and frayed, but still attractive.

MRS. VINCENT

Have you seen my needle, Jim?

JIM

No, I haven't, Mrs. Vincent.
May I borrow your mirror?

Mrs. Vincent hands him her purse. Jim opens the flap and looks in the mirror at his new haircut. Only then does Mrs. Vincent react.

MRS. VINCENT

(horrified)

Jim, what did you do to your hair?

JIM

(proudly)

I am an American now.

MRS. VINCENT

No, Jim, you're British.

JIM

No, I'm not, Mrs. Vincent. I...am
a citizen of the world.

And he hands her purse back.

MRS. VINCENT

You shouldn't work for Basie. The
things that go on in that American
dormitory.

JIM

Have you ever been there, Mrs.
Vincent.?

Mrs. Vincent gives Jim a look, but he is innocent of the implication.

CONTINUED

JIM

They've got wonderful things there;
 Zippos, bongos, lipstick, flick
 knives, harmonicas, tie pins,
 binoculars, Vargas girls,
 flashlights...you'd really like it.

MRS. VINCENT

Perhaps it's time you moved into the
 men's dormitory. You're not eleven
 anymore.

JIM

(overacting anguish)

Oh no, Mrs. Vincent. Not the
 British dormitory. It's so boring
 there. I'm only a boy. Please
 don't, Mrs. Vincent. I'll tell my
 father you looked after me.

MRS. VINCENT

(mocking him gently)

Do you think I'd get the reward?

JIM

(embarrassed)

What reward? I never said....

MRS. VINCENT

You told everybody.

JIM

Well, I was much younger then.

Mr. Vincent enters the cubicle with two plates of food,
 one of which he hands to his wife. He takes two spoons out
 of his pocket and they use them to separate the weevils
 from the wheat.

While Mrs. Vincent was lecturing Jim he was counting
 weevils, and now he reaches in his box for a pencil.

JIM

Eighty-seven weevils today Mr.
 Vincent.

And Jim writes down eighty-seven on the wall of his bunk
 along side a row of similar numbers. Lots of them are over
 one hundred.

JIM

It's above average, but the trend
 is down.

CONTINUED

Mr. Vincent doesn't reply. Instead, he and his wife watch Jim balefully. Jim stirs the eighty-seven weevils back into the wheat and then takes a couple of rapid spoonfuls. Mrs. Vincent almost gags at the sight.

MRS. VINCENT

Must you, Jim.

JIM

Sorry. Dr. Ransome says some of us will die two days before we are saved, perhaps two hours. So use everything. We have to beat them, you see.

MRS. VINCENT

The Japs?

JIM

It's how we win. By refusing to die.

He keeps on eating the weevils and the wheat.

MRS. VINCENT

You'll miss this camp when the war is over.

JIM

(surprised)

Will I?

(thoughtfully)

I suppose I like the entertainment. Why did the Japanese close the school?

MRS. VINCENT

(with heartfelt sigh)

Because they wanted to punish the grown-ups. I wonder how you'll take to school in England when the war is over.

JIM

(starting to eat
the potato)

It might be a bit strange.

He picks up a stray weevil on his finger and eats it.

JIM

All the same, Mrs. Vincent, the best teacher is the university of life.

Mrs. Vincent separates the weevils from the wheat with more force than necessary.

CONTINUED

MRS. VINCENT

Could we finish our meal? We've heard your views on the university of life.

JIM

Right. But we should eat the weevils, Mrs. Vincent.

MRS. VINCENT

(wearily)

I know, Jim. Dr. Ransome told you so.

JIM

He said we need the protein.

MRS. VINCENT

Dr. Ransome is right, we should eat all the weevils.

Nevertheless, Mrs. Vincent continues to separate them.

JIM

(thoughtfully)

I can't remember a single meal before the war, and I can remember every one since.

(then brightly)

Mrs. Vincent, do you believe in vitamins?

MRS. VINCENT

(pausing in despair)

Strange child.

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - NIGHT

Jim is awake; he is looking through his collection of pictures torn from magazines.

ANGLE ON THE PICTURES

These pictures ought to reflect his longings and his eccentricity. There are winter landscapes, whiskey advertisements, old Norman Rockwell ads that celebrate the American family, a couple standing in front of the White House, Buick ads, etc.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

Bored with the pictures, he looks through the gap in the curtain..

He sees Mrs. Vincent lying on her back, in a fitful sleep. Her husband lies on his side facing the wall. Suddenly the light of a distant explosion is cast over her features. A split second later, he HEARS the hard rumble of a distant explosion (the light of the explosion always travels a little faster than the sound in the scene).

ANGLE ON JIM

He moves from the curtain to the window.

JIM'S POV - THE SKY

over Shanghai flickers with the light of the explosions. He HEARS the distant drone of high flying bombers.

ANGLE ON JIM

Standing by the window, he looks through the gap in the curtain.

JIM'S POV - MRS. VINCENT

the sheet hugs the contours of her body, one leg is bare.

ANGLE ON JIM

He looks out the window.

JIM'S POV - THE SKY

over Shanghai is red.

ANGLE ON JIM

He presses his face against the window.

JIM
(whisper) EMP 0019
They're bombing the Shanghai docks.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON MRS. VINCENT

The red glow of the distant fire casts Mrs. Vincent in a faintly pornographic light. Her hair seems more full and blond, the sheet around her more white. Her breasts rise and fall with the rhythm of her slightly uneven breathing, and her lips are parted.

ANGLE ON JIM

He might be touching himself, but the room is too dark to be sure.

ANGLE ON THE WINDOW

The sky over Shanghai is in flames and dotted with Japanese flack. The ground shudders because of a huge, distant explosion and the cubicle sways.

ANGLE ON MRS. VINCENT

She moans and rolls on her side as if she is offering her body, from which the sheet has partly slipped, to Jim. OS the DRONE of a B-29 grows closer.

ANGLE ON JIM

He tears his eyes away from Mrs. Vincent and searches for the B-29. His lust for the plane is as great as his lust for Mrs. Vincent. OS he HEARS Mrs. Vincent moan.

ANGLE ON MRS. VINCENT

A hand caresses Mrs. Vincents's stomach and she responds. OS the sky is as bright as lightning and the SOUND of the explosion rolls over the camp.

ANGLE ON JIM

He is in a trance.

ANGLE ON MRS. VINCENT

The hand caressing her belly belongs to Mr. Vincent and he looks at Jim through the gap, with all of the possessive anger of a man who has just discovered a competitor.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

His hand flutters away from his groin and, to hide his embarrassment, he shouts out.

JIM

They're bombing the Shanghai docks!

OS the DRONE of the B-29 has turned to a ROAR, and he bolts from the room.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP/FAMILY DORMITORY AND ENVIRONS - NIGHT (MOON)

Jim rushes out of the dormitory, watching the sky. His expression is transcendent.

JIM

All the way from Guam...

A JAPANESE GUARD on the watch tower is shouting down at the guards on ground level, some of whom have emerged from the guard house, whose windows are lighted.

ANOTHER ANGLE

An anti-aircraft gun positioned on the top platform of the Nantao Pagoda opens up. The reason is that a B-29, jettisoning bombs as it goes, is passing over the airfield, from the direction of Shanghai and towards the camp. Prisoners and guards start running for cover. Jim alone continues to watch. At the height of the NOISE of the plane, an immense black shadow passes over Jim.

JIM

(awed)

My God...

Then he is flung aside by an explosion as a bomb hits the ground not too far away. Then the noise ceases and Jim picks himself up. The Japanese soldiers are shouting to each other. The bomb has dropped just inside the camp, causing indirect damage, by unlucky chance, to several windows of the guardhouse. The watch tower, is also now at a tilt but the soldier at the top, comically spared, is clinging safely to the ladder.

ANGLE ON JIM

He looks down the bomb crater like he once looked down his pool.

EMP

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON THE CRATER

In the moonlight, we SEE that the explosion has unearthed some ground water. We SEE Jim's reflection in the water.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The JAPANESE COMMANDANT, in uniform, arrives at the guardhouse where he is met by Sergeant Nagata who salutes. There ensues the usual brief one-sided shouting match.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - NIGHT

Basie is watching out the window.

BASIE'S POV

Out of the window.

BACK TO BASIE

Basie is not amused.

BASIE

Jesus, those Coney Island pilots...

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (GUARD HOUSE) - MORNING

The guardhouse is a mess. PRISONERS have gathered at windows and on doorsteps. When they realize what has happened, they start cheering and jeering.

A DOZEN GUARDS organized by Sergeant Nagata, each with a bamboo stave, come rushing out of the guardhouse and begin to scatter through the camp. The prisoners, immediately quiet down and move back, nervous as sheep.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Ransome is watching from the hospital window.

RANSOME'S POV

Out of the window.

EMP

0010

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

Jim is also backing off, towards the hospital. The guards, in pairs, move around the camp and start smashing prisoner's windows, over CRIES of protest.

ANOTHER ANGLE

TWO GUARDS are running towards the hospital.

INT./EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Ransome moves out onto the steps of the hospital to meet them. Ransome SHOUTS a protest in Japanese. The first guard brushes past him and smashes the first window. Ransome grabs the bamboo stick from the soldier and flings it aside. It rolls towards Jim who is running up. Jim picks it up. The guard starts attacking Ransome, hitting and kicking him. The second guard is Sergeant Nagata. He uses his stick to club Ransome down. He is about to join the first guard in kicking Ransome when Jim, holding the stave in Kendo style, leaps the hospital steps, onto the little veranda outside the doorway.

JIM

Sergeant Nagata.

Nagata turns. The first guard is also distracted. Jim bows to Nagata and takes up the Kendo stance. Nagata faces Jim. Jim makes a feint with his stave, and then tries a stroke. Nagata faster than one can follow the movement, parries the stroke and smashes Jim in the ribs and on the side of the head. Jim falls down. Nagata waits. Jim climbs painfully to his feet and bows to Nagata who bows back. Ransome, groggy and on his knees, has watched all this. Jim walks to the other guard, who has also been watching and presents him with the stave, bowing. The guard looks at Nagata for instruction. Nagata turns and walks away from the hospital. The other guard follows him. Ransome gets to his feet.

RANSOME

(to Jim)

Where does it hurt?

Jim touches his ribs and head. Ransome touches Jim's ribs with his hands looking for fractures.

INT. HOSPITAL (MEN'S WARD) - DAY

Jim is seated on the metal table, holding his ribs. Ransome examines Jim's skull.

CONTINUED

JIM

Dr. Ransome, the B-29's fly at 320 miles an hour. I timed their shadows across the camp with my heartbeat. To hit the airfield they have to drop their bombs about a thousand yards away. But the Japanese are shooting them down over the runway after the planes have already dropped their bombs.

RANSOME

Well, we mustn't tell them.

JIM

(starting to gabble excitedly)

If they want to stop them bombing the runway, they have to shoot them down a thousand yards away -

RANSOME

(calming him)

Jim...

JIM

(calming down)

Dr. Ransome...what will happen when the war ends?

RANSOME

(almost suspiciously)

Do you want it to end, Jim?

JIM

Yes, of course. But as long as we stay in Nantao, the Japanese will look after us.

RANSOME

I'm not sure that they will. We've become an embarrassment to them. They can't feed us much longer.

JIM

What will happen when the Americans land at Nantao?

RANSOME

They probably will land at Nantao, Jim. I've always said you ought to be at McArthur's headquarters.

JIM

If they do, the Japanese will fight.

CONTINUED

RANSOME

Jim, they'll fight. As you have
loyally maintained, the Japanese
soldier is the bravest soldier in
the world.

JIM'S POV - THE MOSQUITO NET

is no longer around Mr. Radik's cot, or inside anywhere.

BACK TO SCENE

JIM

Mr. Radik's dead?

RANSOME

Yes. Dysentary. Ironical isn't it?
He was the chef at the Peace Hotel,
you know.

The corpse is still on the bed. The golf shoes are still
placed neatly under the bed.

JIM

My father's company had a suite at
the hotel.

Ransome moves away from the table and Jim sits up and climbs
down off the table. Ransome comes back with the golf shoes.

RANSOME

If you were a customer ~~he~~ probably
would have liked you to have his
golf shoes. There you are, ^{the} hardly
worn.

Lost for words, Jim takes off his homemade clogs and puts
on the golf shoes and stands in them, seeming moved rather
than elated.

RANSOME

Do they fit?

Jim nods, brushing away his tears.

JIM

Thank you.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

ANGLE ON THE WHITE SHOES

We SEE Jim's feet in the white golf shoes that he coveted. He is standing on the edge of a large rectangular hole (Mr. Radik's grave) with freshly dug earth around the edges. A spade deposits some dirt on Jim's shoes. His hand reaches down and he wipes the dirt from his shoes with a rag. We stay on the white shoes as Jim walks away (whistling tunelessly) and carefully avoids a puddle.

TIPTREE

Hey, kid.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Tiptree stands outside the American dormitory and jerks his head towards it.

TIPTREE

He wants to see you.

And Jim follows Tiptree towards the dormitory.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

Jim enters and, as usual, runs the gauntlet of greetings and sarcasm from the American PRISONERS.

AMERICAN PRISONERS

Hey, it's Ben Hogan.
Hole in one Jim.
I'll trade you for the shoes.
Wanna play chess, Jim?

They flick towels at him and pretend to trip him.

We take time to notice that Cohen is BANGING away on his bongo drums.

Jim arrives at the far end and enters Basie's cubicle which is unguarded because...

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Demarest is in there busily strapping a razor. Basie waits to be shaved, sheet around his neck. Dainty is also there, crouched over a map and compass; the compass is the homemade one made by Basie with Jim's cork and needle; the map is a guide book of the Shanghai area.

CONTINUED

JIM

Hello, Basie.

DAINTY

(snaps)

What kept you?

JIM

(cheerfully)

Mr. Radik is dead. There isn't any
other news. *

From the way the other men look at him, and the way Basie ignores him, Jim deducts that he is in disgrace.

After what seems to be like an eternity, Basie deigns to look at Jim, and then at the golf shoes which he regards with a particular hatred.

BASIE

That was another fine way to get
yourself killed, Jim.

(with a last,
withering glance
at the shoes)

I thought you were an American. *

Jim is close to tears, but then Basie's mood changes and he thrusts the Yardley soap towards Jim.

BASIE

Have a smell....Yardley's, prewar.

Jim smells the shaving soap appreciatively.

JIM

How'd you get that?

DEMAREST

(admiringly)

Four tens over a full house.

BASIE

This camp is like Macy's under the
rug. You wouldn't believe the stuff
people are saving for a rainy day...

DEMAREST

You're their rainy day, Basie.

Jim ogles the map and compass that Dainty is working with.

JIM

What are you doing, Dainty?

0019
CONTINUED

DAINTY

Nothing to you.

JIM

Where did you get the map?

BASIE

Silence is a good friend to a boy,
Jim.

Jim picks up the compass.

DAINTY

Put it down.

JIM

(impressed)

You made this with a cork and a
needle? A real compass that works?

Dainty takes it from him and puts it back on the map.

DAINTY

The river's pretty much due East.
You could work up the bank, or you
could steal a sampan and work up the
middle, otherwise you could go
North of East but there's a couple
of canals to cross, and this map
doesn't tell you if it's buildings,
paddyfields or what...

Jim takes all this in and becomes excited.

DEMAREST

What about the fence?

DAINTY

What about it?

DEMAREST

They've got to have some bouncing
bettys around there, right?

BASIE

Naw, they aren't that efficient.

DEMAREST

I guess you'll find out the hard way.

JIM

Basie, is it time?

CONTINUED

BASIE
No, Jim. I'll tell you when it's time.

JIM
You won't forget?

DAINTY
Fat chance.

By now Demarest is expertly and rapidly shaving Basie.

BASIE
Mmmmm...I'm beginning to feel human.

DEMAREST
Keep still or I'll cut you.

BASIE
You'd like that, Demarest. I should have a mirror. Can you find me a mirror, Jim?

JIM
I'll try, Basie.
(but he is still concerned)
Basie, without me you wouldn't even have a compass.

BASIE
Without you, Jim, I wouldn't have a needle. Without me, I wouldn't have a compass.

DAINTY
I think the river's best. Maybe even cross the river. There'll be fewer Japs..

BASIE
Leave it, Dainty.

Suddenly, there is the sound of SHOUTING, in Japanese, coming from the American dormitory.

DEMAREST
(in a panic)
Japs!

EMP

Basie and Dainty react smoothly, but the dialogue is fast.

BASIE
Door, Jim.

CONTINUED

Jim goes to the "doorway" of Basie's cubicle.

JIM

Right, Basie.

Dainty is folding the map up into quarters, and it becomes a double-sided chess board.

DAINTY

Radio search.

Demarest, meanwhile, has folded the razor and tossed it out the window.

BASIE

Demarest, you dumb...

DAINTY

(interrupting)

Your compass, Basie....

Dainty tosses the compass to Basie who hands it to Demarest.

BASIE

Lose it - not out the window.

JIM

(from the doorway)

It's Cohen.

Basie is folding up the sheet.

BASIE

Why Cohen?

DAINTY

Why not? It's his turn, and I'm sick of his goddamn drum!

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

The situation is that all the prisoners are standing by their beds while Sergeant Nagata is overseeing TWO JAPANESE SOLDIERS who are tearing Cohen's little cubicle to pieces, and coming up with Cohen's bongo drum from under his cot. One soldier brings this triumphantly to Nagata. Nagata takes the soldier's rifle and with the butt, smashes the bongo drum to bits. There is nothing inside. Cohen, involuntarily, steps forward to try to save his drum but he is too late. Grief stricken, he rightly accuses not the Japanese, but his fellow prisoners in general.

COHEN

You bastards!

CONTINUED

The second soldier knocks Cohen to the ground.

Nagata, frustrated, looks around and pauses, looking at the closed curtain leading to Basie's cubicle, watched nervously by the other prisoners. Nagata enters Basie's cubicle.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

The "chess board" has been placed on a box or packing case. Basie and Dainty are playing chess. Jim and Demarest are watching them play. When Nagata enters, they all get to their feet and stand politely. Nagata walks in carefully. There are now five people in the cubicle and one of them stands out: Basie is spruce, tidy, smoothly shaven, and wearing nice laundered clothes. Nagata, Dainty, Demarest and Jim have more in common, they are variously unshaven, bedraggled, dirty, sweaty and ragged. Nagata sniffs the air delicately. He takes in Basie's appearance and resents it. He puts his grimy face next to Basie's clean one and sniffs the Yardley's. He touches Basie's clean white shirt and looks down at Basie's dapper shoes. He looks at his own army boots with their laces broken and knotted. Nagata casually kicks over the "table" sending the chess pieces scattering. The bowl of shaving soap and the enamel mug have been placed on the floor under the box and are now revealed. The mug is still foamy, with the shaving brush stuck in it. Nagata takes out the shaving brush and looks at it thoughtfully and drops it on the floor. Demarest, particularly, is scared, his eyes on the mug full of foam.

Nagata turns his attention back to Basie. His back is now to Jim and Demarest. Nagata says something to Basie in Japanese (we don't have to know what, but it could be, "Have a nice shave?"). Basie bows to Nagata.

Demarest catches Jim's eye, switching his eyes to the shaving mug. Jim looks at the shaving mug.

JIM'S POV - THE COMPASS

in the mug. The foam is disappearing fast and the compass is already visible.

Now we see that Basie has seen the compass.

Dainty also sees it.

The scene comes in TIGHT on Nagata and Basie.

CONTINUED

NAGATA
(in Japanese)
You have a radio.

Basie stands rigid.

NAGATA
(shouts)
We know you have a radio!

He smells Basie's face again.

Nagata turns back to look at the shaving soap and the mug. He stoops. He picks up the mug and peers into it. He tips it over and nothing but soapy water comes out.

A tight CLOSE UP of Jim's expressionless face leads down to Jim's closed fist, still wet with winking soap bubbles.

We see Basie's surprise and relief.

Nagata turns back to Basie, holding the mug. Basie smiles and bows to him but it's the wrong move and Nagata hits him hard with the mug. Nagata loses control and lays into Basie with his fists until Basie goes down, when Nagata starts kicking him.

ANGLE ON BASIE

As Nagata's boots do their work on him, he looks at Jim (the only person he trusts).

BASIE
(gasping)
Take care of my things.

Basie loses consciousness and Nagata could easily kick Basie to death.

Jim watches in agony. He is about to interfere, but Dainty warns him with a slight shake of his head not to move. Finally, Nagata stops and walks abruptly out of the cubicle.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

Nagata walks down the "corridor". The prisoners are still standing quietly. The two Japanese soldiers are also waiting. They fall in behind Nagata and leave with him.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) 0019

Demarest is watching Nagata leave.

CONTINUED

DEMAREST

Okay.

Basie is unconscious. On Demarest's word, Dainty and Jim come to Basie's aid. Dainty tries to lift him to put him on the cot. Jim interferes.

JIM

Don't move him. I'll get Dr. Ransome.

Jim leaves. *

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - EVENING

JIM'S POV THROUGH WINDOW - THE HOSPITAL

A faint light flows from the men's ward, but that's the only sign of life.

ANGLE ON JIM

With a fretful expression on his face, Jim turns away from the window and sits on Basie's bunk. OS he HEARS the voices of the Americans echoing through the dormitory, somebody plays the harp and somebody curses. Jim pushes the wooden box that contains his belongings under the bed.

JIM'S POV - THE THREE WICKER BASKETS

hold Basie's greatest treasures.

ANGLE ON JIM

He approaches the wicker baskets with caution and respect. He looks over his shoulder to make sure no one will disturb him and lifts the lids of the baskets, expecting to find a hoard of gold.

JIM'S POV - CONTENTS OF THE BASKET

Several pairs of women's slacks and blouses, a pair of khaki shorts, several nonmatching shoes, aluminum pots and pans, a stack of out-of-date, dog-eared Lives, Reader's Digests, and Colliers, a tin filled with condoms, and a Zippo.

0019
CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

He tries the Zippo, but it doesn't work. Jim is disappointed with the extent of the hoard. He replaces the lids with a great deal less care than when he opened them, and settles down with a Popular Mechanics.

Demarest sticks his head through the curtain and looks rather balefully at Jim as if to say, "Are you still here?".

JIM

Any news?

DEMAREST

(perfect Basie-esque delivery)
I give the Jap's another three months.

JIM

I meant about Basie.

DEMAREST

Oh...naw.

Jim goes back to his Popular Mechanics but, seconds later, Tiptree enters the cubicle. He walks up to one of the wicker baskets and takes a Reader's Digest from it.

JIM

(uncertain)
I think Basie would want you to trade something for that, don't you?

TIPTREE

I'll work it out with him, alright, Jim?

JIM

(uncertain)
Yes, I suppose so.

TIPTREE

Have you gone to see him yet?

JIM

No, I haven't. He asked me to watch his things.

TIPTREE

That's funny.

And Tiptree is about to leave the cubicle.

0019
CONTINUED

JIM

(anxious)

What do you mean, Tiptree?

TIPTREE

Well...Dainty went to see him
and...he said Basie was kind of in a
bad way, and asked for you.
But...you know Dainty.

And, on that note, Tiptree leaves the cubicle.

Jim jumps off the bed and paces up and down the room,
looking out the window at the hospital. Then, he makes up
his mind. He takes the wicker baskets, hides them under
the bed, and runs out the cubicle.

INT. HOSPITAL (MEN'S WARD) - EVENING

Jim enters the men's ward.

He SEES a bed shrouded by mosquito netting. Certain that
his friend is dying inside the shroud, he forces himself
towards the bed. He pulls the netting aside. He SEES Basie
lying in the bed. He looks frail, almost wispy, under the
sheets.

ANGLE ON JIM

If his tear ducts hadn't atrophied, he'd cry.

ANGLE ON BASIE

He opens his eyes and reads the anguish on his friend's
face. With a sleepy smile, he indicates the mosquito
netting.

BASIE

Ransome..is..on the take.

It takes him a few moments to realize what Basie means
and, when he does, his reaction is complex. He feels joy
that his friend is alive, and sadness because he thought
even the privilege of dying is for sale (and, in that
case, everything is for sale). Jim touches the mosquito
net.

JIM

(rather sadly)

You're so clever, Basie.

0019

CONTINUED

BASIE
Yeah, it only cost me two batteries.

JIM
How are you feeling?

BASIE
I've had worse. I got beaten by a stoker once.

JIM
(remembering)
On the Cathay American?

BASIE
That's right.

JIM
Were you a stoker?

BASIE
Ship steward on the Shanghai/Frisco run.

JIM
Why did he beat you?

BASIE
Shanghai/Frisco will be the trip now, eh Jim?

JIM
(as if the thought occurred to him for the first time)
Where do you live, Basie?

BASIE
Here.

JIM
I mean, after the war.

BASIE
I'll live somewhere else.

JIM
(as if he already suspected as much)
So, you don't have a home.

BASIE
Did I say that?

CONTINUED

There are a few moments of silence (if there was a grandfather clock, we could hear it ticking).

JIM

Why don't you come and live at Amherst Avenue? I'd like you to come meet my parents. We'll fill up the pool and we'll eat three times a day.

Basie smiles at the prospect, but then his smile turns into a scowl.

BASIE

Hey, you're not feeling sorry for me, are you?

JIM

Nobody feels sorry for you, Basie.

BASIE

That's right.

JIM

(dutifully, as if to an aging champion)
And you always eat first.

BASIE

You said it, kid.
(beat)
Now, I've been thinking 'bout going up river.

JIM

I know.

Basie just gives him a look, and then continues.

BASIE

The plan is to take a sampan up the Yangtze estuary and rendezvous with some Hakka friends of mine.

JIM

(eyes big as saucers)
Pirates?

BASIE

(with a wink)
Let's just call them gentlemen of fortune, shall we? Tell me, Jim, did you ever see the Hell drivers in Shanghai?

CONTINUED

JIM

Sure, I did. I saw them crash right through a burning wall.

BASIE

(pleased)

Well, that's what I'm going to call our little outfit, the Hell drivers. With two fifty calibres in the hold, we're going to be lords of the Yangtze. Come to think of it, not a bad name.

Basie smiles to himself.

JIM

But, what about Shanghai?

BASIE

After this war, you can bury Shanghai with a teaspoon. There is going to be nothing there but six million starving coolies. They'll cut off your foreskin before you can say "bubbling well road". No, the smart money is on the estuary, Jim. That's ringside for the next war.

JIM

The war against the communists?

BASIE

Of course.

JIM

And after that?

BASIE

After that I am retired, start a barber college. (beat) Now I'm going to be straight with you, Jim. It's between you and Dainty.

Jim almost trembles with excitement.

JIM

(blurts out)

Take me!

BASIE

Tell me... why... and ~~MP~~ take you.

0019

CONTINUED

Jim knows that everything is riding on his answer, and he considers several ones before dismissing them. Then, he comes up with the only answer he could give.

JIM

Because I am your friend.

Basie responds with a wheezing laugh.

BASIE

(with a certain warmth)

What are you doing here, anyway?

JIM

You asked for me.

BASIE

Said who?

JIM

Dainty.

BASIE

(narrows his eyes)

You've been had, kid. I didn't ask for you....and I never would.

Jim realizes what happened, and runs from the men's ward.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - NIGHT

Jim stands in the doorway of Basie's cubicle. He is out of breath.

JIM'S POV - BASIE'S ROOM

has been ransacked, the wicker baskets lie on their sides and the lids are off.

ANGLE ON JIM

He has to fight back the tears and then busies himself with trying to minimize the damage. He gathers up the blouses, the slacks, the nonmatching shoes, and the Mah Jongg set which is broken and puts them back in the baskets. But the tin that held the condoms is empty, and the one tennis racket and the magazines are all gone.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - NIGHT

Jim walks through the American dormitory with the box that holds his belongings clutched to his chest.

CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - THE MEN

lying on the cots while reading Reader's Digest, Life, Colliers, and Popular Mechanics. When some of the men see Jim, they look away.

JIM

Could you please put those back,
they belong to Basie.

But, the men ignore him.

Jim walks up to Dainty, Tiptree, and Demarest. They are playing poker and using Basie's condoms as chips (neatly stacked like in Vegas).

JIM

(frantic, points
at the condoms)

When you're done playing, could you
put them back in Basie's spot, please.
I was supposed to watch his things
and he is going to be awfully mad.

DAINTY

Basie ain't coming back, kid.

Demarest starts to shuffle the cards.

JIM

No, Basie is coming back. Honest he
is.

But, the men ignore him as Demarest deals the cards, and Jim walks away with the box clutched to his chest, fighting back the tears.

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - DAY

In his absence, the Vincents have colonized Jim's part of the room. There are still three cots, but things have been rearranged with some of the Vincent's possessions placed on Jim's cot, and his photographs have been taken down from the wall.

Mr. Vincent is lying on his cot, and Mrs. Vincent is sitting on hers. As Jim hesitates in the doorway, she and Jim look at each other. She makes neither objection nor welcome. Then, Mr. Vincent sits up and sees Jim.

MR. VINCENT

Oh no, you can't.

CONTINUED

And he gets up to bar Jim's entry. Mrs. Vincent gently pushes her husband back on the bed. She walks to Jim's cot and takes their possessions and places them on her cot. She looks at Jim, and then takes his photographs and starts putting them back on the wall.

ANGLE ON JIM

He starts to cry.

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Jim waits for Basie on the steps of an abandoned barracks that lies opposite the hospital. He has been sitting there all morning and wipes the sweat off of his forehead every once in awhile.

ANGLE ON THE HOSPITAL

Basie emerges from the hospital and stands in the doorway. He blinks his eyes against the sun like a big, white mouse, and then walks down the steps with a slight limp.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Jim runs up to Basie, but he ignores Jim.

JIM

(with false cheer)

How are you feeling, Basie?

Basie just keeps on walking.

JIM

Now, about your things.

(scrapes his throat)

Dainty and Demarest borrowed some of them, and so did some of the other fellows, as a matter of fact, but I told them, put it all back. I'm sure they did.

Basie just sends Jim a withering glance and shuffles on. Jim gets the message and stops walking, while Basie shuffles on. The wind gusts between the barracks, and Basie almost disappears in a cloud of dust.

JIM

(shouts after him)

They're stronger than me, Basie.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE & AIRFIELD)- DAY

Jim walks past the perimeter fence. We see that the camp is deteriorating. There are broken windows, the paths are pitted and the street signs broken.

Jim is lonely and there is something aimless about his walk.

JIM'S POV - THE AIRFIELD

across the fence, a pathetic, little ceremony is taking place. A Zero airplane is ready for take off. The JAPANESE PILOT a Kamikaze dressed in ceremonial silks, bows to the THREE PEOPLE who comprise his "guard of honor". There is a Japanese corporal and a Japanese private who are probably on ground staff, and the Japanese boy that we have seen with the glider. (We need to put the first glider sc in the first day.) The Japanese pilot shouts the name of the Emperor and salutes.

ANGLE ON JIM

He salutes and shouts as loud as he can.

JIM
(shouts)
Zero-Sen.

ANGLE ON THE JAPANESE HONOR GUARD

They look over their shoulder.

They SEE a crazy English boy holding a salute on the other side of the fence.

ANGLE ON THE JAPANESE

The pilot climbs into the Zero, after several false starts, sputters towards the runway.

ANGLE ON JIM

Still frozen in the salute, he SINGS the solo of the hymn that they used to sing in the choir.

JIM
"He who would valiant be
'Gainst all disaster,"

EMP

1019

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Dr. Ransome is examining Mrs. Vincent behind a screen in the infirmary. OS they HEAR Jim's voice. They rush to the window. They see Jim standing by the fence in a frozen salute, while singing.

JIM

"Let him in constancy
Follow the master."

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

Mr. Maxted is scrubbing out a huge pot. It's hard work and his face is drawn and grim. OS he HEARS Jims' solo. Mr. Maxted smiles and stops scrubbing the pot.

JIM

"There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent."

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Basie is lying on his cot, watching the smoke of his cigarette trail towards the ceiling, when he HEARS Jim's song through the open window. One can't tell what he thinks about it, because his expression stays the same.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE & AIRFIELD) - DAY

The Zero has lumbered into the air and the honor guard can now hear Jim's song. The private and the corporal just glance over their shoulders, but the Japanese boy turns all the way around. Jim, still holding his salute, following the Zero with his eyes, singing the last verse of the song. A tall American approaches him from behind.

JIM

"No foes shall say his might,
Though he with giants fight;
Then fancies flee away!
I'll fear not what men say."

Jim sings his last notes and grows tired of holding the salute, but he is watching the Japanese boy watch him.

DEMAREST (os)

Hey, Caruso..he wants to see you.

CONTINUED

Jim stops singing, turns around, looks at Demarest and follows him to the American dormitory. He looks over his shoulder.

JIM'S POV - ACROSS THE AIRFIELD, THE JAPANESE BOY

follows the corporal and the private, but he too looks over his shoulder.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Basie, Dainty, and Tiptree are standing by the window. Basie points towards the airfield.

BASIE

You go out through near the block house. The nettles are high enough, for Christ's sake, and you're on the airfield.

DAINTY

Yeah, right, if you don't hit a mine.

BASIE

And I am telling you..that there're no mines.

Demarest pushes Jim into the cubicle.

Jim doesn't know what to expect. Is this his return from exile, or is he to be punished?

Basie looks Jim up and down, but doesn't say a word.

JIM

(very softly)

Hello, Basie.

Basie produces an almost new Life magazine and casually opens it.

Jim SEES all the pictures and color ads.

JIM

(licks his finger

like an addict

I've never seen that. What year is it?

BASIE

Forty-five.

CONTINUED

JIM

Forty-five?

BASIE

June 14.

JIM

(bewildered and delighted)
How did you get that? I thought
everything was...

BASIE

I subscribe.

Dainty and Tiptree laugh.

BASIE

I dipped into my Swiss bank account,
Jim. Would you like to read it
after me? It's got Packard,
Studebaker, Jello. You know
(with a slight wink),
things from home.

JIM

(rubs his crewcut)
Yes, please, Basie.

BASIE

We'll see, first things first.

Jim feels like an American again, back in the land of the
living. And, he watches Basie put the magazine aside and
pick up a wire noose attached to a stake.

BASIE

Look at this.

JIM

What is it?

BASIE

It's a pheasant trap. Do you know
what Thanksgiving dinner is, Jim?

JIM

(insulted)
Of course I do.

BASIE

Well, as an honorary American, we
thought we'd invite you. But what
is Thanksgiving dinner without
pheasant?

And Basie dangles the noose.

0019
CONTINUED

JIM
Have you seen pheasants, Basie?

BASIE
Sure, one or two.
(puts his finger in
the wire noose and
pulls it tight)
It's like a noose, see? Neat. I've
seen them just outside the wire.

JIM
Outside the wire?

BASIE
Right by the edge of the airfield,
across the little canal. You can do
it, easy. You're too smart for the
Japs.

Jim finds Dainty, Demarest, Tiptree and Basie looking at
him.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

Jim walks casually along the perimeter fence. He is
wearing his shoes and carrying the pheasant trap.

The fence isn't formidable at all. Up to now, there hasn't
been much cause to worry about prisoners trying to leave
the security of the camp. Jim glances up at the watch
tower and passes out of view behind a ruined block house
on his own side of the wire.

INT. AMERICAN DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Basie, Dainty, Tiptree, and Demarest are at the window.
The fence and the overgrown wilderness beyond it, bordering
the airfield.

ANGLE ON DAINTY, DEMAREST, TIPTREE AND BASIE

TIPTREE
He's doing good. He's ~~at~~ ⁱⁿ the fence.

DAINTY
I lay odds he hits a mine.

BASIE
There's no mines. I bet you could
walk through anywhere.

0019
CONTINUED

DAINTY

You got a bet.

BASIE

With what, Dainty?

DAINTY

My reserve.

He produces three cigarettes from his pocket.

DAINTY

(with malice)

But, what are you going to bet with, Basie?

Basie holds up the Life magazine.

BASIE

My Life.

TIPTREE

I think there are mines. I bet my harmonica.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

Jim, barefoot now, is worming his way back under the bottom strand of the fence. He crawls, disappearing into the nettles, and emerges on the edge of the canal, into which he crawls, keeping flat.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Bedlam! At least FIFTEEN PEOPLE are crowded into Basie's cubicle and trying to look out the window. This is obviously the most fun they've had for weeks. Then, Tiptree (he's got a good seat) sees something.

TIPTREE

Nagata.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

Sgt. Nagata is standing by the fence, suspicious, holding his rifle in both hands. He stares through the fence, apparently alerted to something. Nothing shows.

0019
CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

Jim emerges carefully out of the water of the canal. He is keeping as flat as possible, but beginning to feel braver. Soaking wet, he moves forward in a crouch, glancing back over his shoulder.

JIM'S POV - NAGATA

still on the camp side of the wire, his head turned away from Jim, searching the terrain.

ANGLE ON JIM

He drops flat.

ANGLE ON NAGATA

He HEARD something and moves carefully along the fence.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Everybody is jammed around the window.

TIPTREE

He's seen something.

BASIE

Forget it. Jim's lucky. He's a black cat.

TIPTREE

That's a dead boy, Basie. I'll give you odds, my harmonica, and my next meal against your....

All the men watch Basie. They know he has nothing to bet with except his Life. Basie crouches down, lifts a piece of floorboard, and pulls a small linen sack from under it.

BASIE

(to the others)

My Swiss bank account.

(he opens the sack

and takes out a watch)

You're on Tiptree.

0019

This initiates an orgy of betting.

AMERICAN I

A cigarette the kid gets it.

CONTINUED

AMERICAN II

I'll cover that.

AMERICAN III

Bet you two rubbers, Basie.

Cohen presses the button of a flick knife.

COHEN

What about this?

Basie digs in his sack again, and produces a gold (dental) crown, which he shows to Cohen. Cohen examines the crown (it ought to have some old, dried blood around the rim)

COHEN

You got it, Basie.

AMERICAN IV

I bet my wife's picture.

BASIE

(snaps)

No market.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

We SEE Jim's face. He's lying in the nettles.

JIM'S POV - NAGATA

working his way along the fence to a point opposite Jim. Nagata, searching around, SEES something white and half hidden in the grass on the camp side of the fence. Unhurried, he investigates and finds Jim's shoes. Nagata looks at the fence again, and starts to work his way through the wire.

ANGLE ON JIM

Jim, breathing rapidly with fear, crawls sideways.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

We SEE the intent faces at the window. Basie looks tense. Everybody is staring, fascinated.

AMERICAN II

Keep going, Sarge.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

Nagata starts to wade across the little canal.

NAGATA'A POV - THE GRASS

and the nettles have been flattened.

ANGLE ON JIM

He SEES Nagata wading through the water.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

The Americans all turn to Basie

DAINTY

(with relish)

You're looking at a busted flush,
Basie.

TIPTREE

That's my watch, Basie.

COHEN

Fork it over.

AMERICAN PRISONERS

You owe me two rubbers.

Pay up, Basie.

You're washed up.

BASIE

(intense)

Shut up!! I'll double all bets and
I want all my old magazines back.

AMERICAN PRISONERS

You got it.

Two meals.

Four rubbers.

TIPTREE

Three meals and my harmonica. Got
another watch?

EMP

Basie shakes another watch from his little linen sack.

BASIE

You're going to lose some weight, my
friend.

CONTINUED

AMERICAN II
I'll bet these field glasses.

Basie turns the sack upside-down and a wedding ring falls into his open palm. American II nods his head.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

ANGLE ON NAGATA

He stands no more than five yards from the place Jim is hidden.

ANGLE ON JIM

He sees Nagata looming nearby.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

ANGLE ON BASIE'S FINGERS

He nervously flips the familiar half crown.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

Nagata takes another step towards Jim, his boot is but a step away from Jim's hand.

OS somebody SHOUTS something in Japanese.

ANGLE ON NAGATA

He looks up.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

AMERICAN PRISONERS

(at the window)

Jesus Christ.

What's going on?

Who the hell is that?

0019

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE) - DAY

ANGLE ON JIM

He looks over his shoulder.

JIM'S POV - THE LITTLE JAPANESE BOY

He is pointing at what appears to be Jim.

JIM'S POV - NAGATA

appears to be looking at Jim, and smiles. He walks forward.

ANGLE ON JIM

Expecting a rifle butt against his head, Jim covers his head with his arms.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Nagata veers away from Jim at the last moment. His eyes are fixed on something in the grass. Nagata bends down and picks up the boy's glider and launches it back towards the Japanese boy.

ANGLE ON JIM

He rolls sideways behind a bush.

ANOTHER ANGLE

The Japanese boy catches the glider and bows towards Nagata. Nagata bows back with a grin and, still chuckling, makes his way back to the fence.

ANGLE ON JIM

He watches Nagata cross the canal and step back into the camp through the fence.

Jim turns towards the Japanese boy.

ANGLE ON THE JAPANESE BOY

He salutes Jim.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

He salutes the Japanese boy and crawls quickly back towards the fence. In the BG, the Japanese boy launches his glider, and runs after it.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Basie smiles and snaps his fingers.

BASIE

Demarest.

Demarest moves to the door, barring anyone from leaving.

BASIE

Nobody leaves till the bets are settled.

He thrusts his hand out to one side.

BASIE

My binoculars, if you would be so kind.

American II hands over the binoculars.

Basie puts the binoculars against his eyes and watches Jim through the window.

BASIE

Good boy.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - MOMENTS LATER.

Although the air is blue from cigarette smoke, most of the prisoners are gone. Demarest and Tiptree are still there helping Basie put his loot on the shelf.

Jim enters the cubicle, wet and out of breath.

JIM

I set the trap, Basie.

BASIE

I know you did, Jim. I saw you.

And he hands Jim the Life magazine.

0019

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

He settles himself on Basie's bunk and opens up the Life. He glances at the shelf.

He SEES (on Basie's shelf) Cohen's flick knife, a pair of binoculars, Tiptree's harmonica, the tin of condoms, and at least a pack worth of loose cigarets.

Dainty enters the room with all of Basie's old magazines. He doesn't see Jim sitting on the bed.

DAINTY

(to Basie)

I got to hand it to you, Basie...I really thought that fence was alive.

JIM'S POV - BASIE

is frantically making a shut-up sign to Dainty, but Dainty doesn't see him.

DAINTY

And hell, that brat was all over the place, so it isn't like he missed any.

ANGLE ON JIM

He puts it all together and bolts from the cubicle.

BASIE

(to Dainty)

Dainty..you asshole.

(jerks his head to Demarest)

Bring him back.

Demarest runs after Jim.

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - DAY

Jim sits on his cot. He studies the Life magazine with the same intensity as his Latin Primer.

Mrs. Vincent stands by the door; she is speaking to Demarest who stands on the other side of the partially drawn curtain, and is out of view.

EMP
MRS. VINCENT

No, Jim doesn't want to see you

OS we HEAR Demarest's unintelligible mumble.

CONTINUED

MRS. VINCENT

Well then, why doesn't Mr. Basie
come over himself?

Again we HEAR Demarest's unintelligible reply and his heavy footsteps walk away.

Mrs. Vincent draws the curtain with the same force as if she was closing a kitchen door.

She has a new Collier's in her hand (that Demarest gave her for Jim from Basie). She sits on her cot opposite Jim.

MRS. VINCENT'S POV - JIM

with his eyes tightly shut. He recites the new words he has just learned from the Life magazine.

JIM

Von Runstedt; Belsen; GI Joe;
Okinawa; Bazooka; Bacall.

OS somebody calls.

ENGLISH PRISONER

Food lorry is here.

Jim grabs his mess tin and follows Mrs. Vincent out the door.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

The food lorry is surrounded by prisoners.

ANGLE ON THE FOOD LORRY

The rations have been cut in half, the lorry load of sacks is smaller and the sacks themselves are half empty. We SEE the prisoners taking in this fact, and they start calling to each other in anger and despair. One PRISONER shouts the news to the camp.

PRISONER

They've cut the rations.

JIM'S POV - MR. MAXTED

is about to lose his place in the queue.

CONTINUED

ANOTHER ANGLE

Jim runs over to help Mr. Maxted, for there is a riot going on outside the serving hatch. The other carts, with their attendants, are jostling for position, and there is a lot of shouting. Jim and Maxted are fighting for their place. Blows are exchanged and then a couple of guards wade into the scrum, hitting the prisoners with bamboo staves.

ANGLE ON THE SERVING HATCH

The two Japanese orderlies responsible for doling out the cooked potatoes from a cauldron (about the size of a garbage can) simply give up. Faced with the fighting, surging mob of a hundred prisoners, they tip the potatoes onto the ground.

Jim looks around.

JIM'S POV - MR. AND MRS. VINCENT

lapping around the edges of the mob. He knows they aren't strong enough to fight with the others.

ANGLE ON JIM

There is an immediate scrum into which Jim hurls himself. On the ground, Jim grabs a potato and stuffs it in his mouth. He manages to grab two more potatoes which he puts inside his shirt. Jim struggles free of the mob, and when he gets clear, he sees Mr. Maxted sitting on the ground against the over-turned cart.

JIM

I got yours, Mr. Maxted.

Jim takes a potato from inside his shirt, and hands it to Mr. Maxted.

MAXTED

(dazed)

My God, what have we come to?

Maxted takes the potato from Jim. The rioting prisoners separate them, knocking Jim over.

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - DAY

Jim enters the room, looking as though he has been in a fight, which of course, he has. Mrs. Vincent stands at the window with her back to him and she doesn't turn. Jim

CONTINUED

hesitates, glancing at her, and then goes into his cubicle, drawing aside his curtain and letting it fall back into place.

Jim sits on his bed. From inside his shirt, he takes his remaining potato. As he is about to take a small bite out of the potato, he HEARS Mr. Vincent come in. Jim pauses.

Mr. Vincent has just entered. He is holding his mess tin. He looks broken. Mrs. Vincent turns to him.

MR. VINCENT

The rations have been...like animals. Sorry.

Mr. Vincent suddenly starts smashing his tin against the bed rail. Jim's curtain is pulled aside by Jim, who stands there with the potato in his hand, held out.

JIM

(brightly)

Hello, Mr. Vincent... I've got yours.

Mr. Vincent and Mrs. Vincent turn to look at him. Jim offers the potato.

JIM

I got you one to share, but it's a good one.

Mr. Vincent shakes his head and walks out of the room. Mrs. Vincent holds her gaze on Jim.

JIM

It's all right... there's no weevils. Almost.

He corrects slightly, flicking a weevil off the potato.

MRS. VINCENT

You got it for yourself.

JIM

Well, I can change my mind. I've already had one.

MRS. VINCENT

That's stealing.

JIM

I know. I'll probably go to hell if I eat it. You'll go too, if you make me.

CONTINUED

MRS. VINCENT

Well, at least I'll have you there.

JIM

You don't want to go to hell with me, Mrs. Vincent.

MRS. VINCENT

Do you believe in hell, Jim?

JIM

I don't know, Mrs. Vincent. Do you?

MRS. VINCENT

No, I believe in vitamins.

Mrs. Vincent takes the potato out of his hand, breaks it in half and gives half back to Jim. She sits down on her bed and takes a small bite from her half of the potato. Jim does the same. They sit looking at each other, nibbling their potato. It only takes a few moments for them to eat what they have. Jim is left with a large crumb of potato on his lip.

JIM

I hope my parents have got an extra potato...wherever they are.

MRS. VINCENT

(noticing it)

You've got a...

She reaches out a hand towards Jim's face, and with her index finger pushes the crumb of potato into Jim's mouth. Mrs. Vincent leaves her fingers in his mouth for a half a second longer than necessary, holding his look, not provocatively, but tenderly.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

Jim loiters through the camp.

He sees Paul and David.

JIM

Would you like a Hershey bar?

PAUL & DAVID

Oh, yes please.

JIM

So would I, have you got one?

EMP

0019

CONTINUED

And he walks on. He HEARS (with his finely tuned ears) the very distant drone of a squadron of planes. He runs towards the block house.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (BLOCK HOUSE) - DAY

Jim is clambering up the steps to the balcony. He has to clamber over the broken masonry which has fallen on the stairs. He gets to the top and sits in the balcony looking at the airfield, getting himself under control. The air raid siren sounds from the direction of the pagoda. Repair gangs on the runway start running for cover. Jim looks up at the sky. The gun on the Nantao pagoda opens up, firing at nothing. Jim looks round at the camp.

JIM'S POV - THE CAMP

is emptying itself. Children are being lifted up through the windows and pushed through doorways. People are hurrying indoors until, very quickly, the whole place looks deserted.

BACK TO SCENE

Suddenly a shadow crosses the block house towards the perimeter fence. There is a tornado of NOISE. A single engine fighter, a silver fuselage, stars and bars, 30 feet above Jim's head, a Mustang, hurtles across the perimeter fence, along the runway, six feet from the ground, leaving the dust boiling behind it. From around the airfield anti-aircraft guns open up towards the camp. The tiers of the pagoda crackle with light.

A second Mustang sweeps over the paddy fields to Jim's left. A third plane, so low that Jim is looking down into the cockpit, and so close that he can see the oil spraying from the engine exhausts, screams by his shoulder and away towards the airfield, machine-gunning planes on the ground. The wash from the engine tears corrugated iron sheets from the roofs of buildings in the camp. A shell explodes high above the assembly hall, stunning the air, covering Jim in white stone-dust. The violence of the raid obliterates all Jim's other feelings: he is on his feet, his face alive with excitement. The hangars near the pagoda are burning. A Mustang is on fire, wheeling to the ground, catching a wing-tip and exploding and exploding.

Below the block house, Basie is the only person in sight. He looks up at the block house and sees Jim.

CONTINUED

BASIE

Jim.

Basie starts hurrying up the staircase of the block house.

EXT. BLOCK HOUSE (ROOF) - DAY

Jim is drunk on the war. He stands in the middle of the roof.

JIM'S POV - THE MUSTANGS

skimming over the Nantao airfield and releasing their bombs to render it inoperable.

Basie climbs onto the roof.

Jim HEARS the rolling thunder of the Japanese anti-aircraft guns.

A Mustang races low over the roof. The plane is so low that Jim can see the PILOT. He waves at him. Behind a pair of goggles, we see the flash of a grin and a wave of a hand.

ANGLE ON BASIE

Afraid to step onto the roof, he stands on the last few stairs that lead up to it.

BASIE

(Shouts)

Jim!!! Get down!!!

Jim turns towards Basie.

But he is drowned out by a burst of Mustang machine-gun fire. And, Jim's eyes are on the sky as he practically dances across the roof.

Basie gathers his courage, and steps onto the roof.

BASIE

(shouts over the din)

Jim!!!

ANGLE ON JIM

His eyes are glazed. Another Mustang roars over them, its underbelly pock marked from shrapnel and flak.

0019
CONTINUED

JIM
 (points at the planes)
 P-51. Aren't they beautiful, Basie.
 - I can almost touch them. Smell them.
 (breathes in).
 Oil and cordite.

Basie, who isn't at all intoxicated by aerial warfare, tries to pull Jim down, but he slips from Basie's grip and stands all the way on the edge of the roof.

JIM'S POV - A MUSTANG

trailing black smoke in the sky.

JIM
 They're so brave.

The Japanese fire off another barrage of flak.

BASIE
 Heroes are gonna get you killed.
 (mutters under his breath)
 Goddamn Coney Island pilots.

Basie takes a deep breath and makes it out to the edge of the rooftop (like a man on a tight rope).

BASIE
 Now, calm down, come on down with me.

They see the Mustangs veering away from the airfield and heading for home. Only the winged Mustang remains, and it begins to spiral towards the burial mounds, but the Pilot manages to bail out. His parachute unfurls with the snap of silk in the wind.

JIM
 I'm a Hell Driver aren't I, Basie?

BASIE
 Sure you are, Jim. So, let's get on with our jobs.

And he guides Jim towards the stairs

Jim suddenly hugs Basie, who isn't used to being hugged, and stands there with his hands stiffly by his side.

JIM
 (confessing a sin)
 I don't remember what my parents look like. I used to play bridge with my mother in her bedroom.

CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - OVER BASIE'S SHOULDER

The AMERICAN PILOT floats no more than thirty feet from them. He is black and looks like an exotic American god. He waves at Jim.

JIM
(murmurs while watching
the pilot)
We'll set the Yangtze on fire, and
leave our wounded behind.

BASIE
(softly)
That's the plan, boss.

Two rifle shots ring out and the pilot twitches in his harness before going slack.

ANOTHER ANGLE

At the SOUND of the shots, Basie hugs Jim.

Ransome climbs onto the roof and sees them there. Basie takes Jim and pushes him gently into Ransome's arms.

BASIE
Jim's tired.

Jim hugs Dr. Ransome, his face is streaked with tears.

JIM
Amatus sum, amatus es, amatus est.

JIM'S POV - CHINESE PEASANTS

stripping the still smouldering Mustang.

They climb down the stairs.

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - NIGHT

As usual, Jim is awake. On the otherside of the curtain we HEAR the labored breathing of the Vincents. Jim is looking out the window.

JIM'S POV - THE AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY

and, more specificly, Basie's window.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

He is about to doze off and shakes his head violently in order to stay awake.

JIM'S POV - THE AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY

which is quiet as a grave.

ANGLE ON JIM

He pinches himself, but falls asleep with his head against the window never-the-less. *

ANGLE ON THE AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY *

Two shadows slip from the American men's dormitory in the moonlight. We SEE Basie and Dainty making their way under the fence; the place Jim cleared for them. *

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (GUARD HOUSE) - DAY

There is unusual activity here. Soldiers are coming out of the guard house in full marching order and lining up outside. Orders are being shouted by Sgt. Nagata. The soldier on the watch tower is climbing down to join them.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (FAMILY DORMITORY) - DAY

Jim sees this activity. He moves forward towards the guard house. When he realizes what is happening for certain, he makes a break for the men's dormitory block. He runs up the steps of the block.

INT. BRITISH & AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY/LOBBY - DAY

Jim arrives in the little lobby separating the British and American dormitories. He barges into the British Dormitory.

INT. BRITISH MEN'S DORMITORY

The scene inside is much as we remember it. Though conditions and morale are even lower

JIM

(excitedly)

The guards are leaving!

He turns and immediately leaves.

CONTINUED

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

Jim enters the dormitory, hardly noticing that the AMERICAN PRISONERS are getting ready to leave. A few of them call to him.

PRISONER
Hey, bellboy! Jim!

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY (BASIE'S ROOM) - DAY

Jim enters. Basie is not there. Demarest is standing looking stunned, in tears.

DEMAREST
(in tears, really crying;
he suddenly seems young
to Jim)
He's gone. Him and Dainty.

JIM
He's escaped?

DEMAREST
Left everything. Walked out on
three year's work. How could he do
that?

JIM
(disbelief and disappointment)
He can't have...he promised he
would...

DEMAREST
(ignoring him)
Didn't it mean anything to him?

JIM
(collecting himself)
I suppose not.

Jim goes to the window and looks out of it, blinking back his tears.

JIM'S POV - THE PERIMETER FENCE

He looks at the part of the fence where Basie and Dainty broke through.

Jim turns to Demarest.

JIM
He knew it was time. We'll all have
to leave now, Demarest.

END
CONTINUED

DEMAREST

(going crazy)

I can't leave! I got all this stuff!

JIM

(hesitantly)

...Did Basie leave a message for me?

DEMAREST

Why the hell would he leave a message for you?

Jim blinks back a tear, nods and leaves.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

Jim retraces his steps. We see Tiptree among the prisoners preparing to leave.

TIPTREE

Hey, Jim...

(reaches into his pocket for a coin)

...Basie said to give you this.

Tiptree flips the coin at Jim, who catches it.

CLOSEUP - COIN

It is the English half crown that Basie took from Jim at their first meeting.

WIDER ANGLE

JIM

(happier)

Thanks, Tiptree.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

All the GUARDS, kitted out to march, are drawn up outside the wire, on the road. The camp gates are open. We see Sergeant Nagata among the guards. He looks dejectedly towards the wire.

REVERSE SHOT

Shows that he is looking at Jim who smiles back at him. Nagata sees Jim's buffed golf shoes. He looks at his own ragged boots.

CONTINUED

NAGATA

Boy...difficult boy.

The scene is not quiet. Many of the prisoners, particularly women, are jeering and spitting at the Japanese guards. One HYSTERICAL WOMAN comes forward tearing her dress in her rage and flinging a piece of it down at the feet of the guards, spitting at them. Maxted is next to Jim.

JIM

The war must have ended.

MAXTED

Ended again, Jim? I don't think we can stand it.

JIM

If only the Americans had stayed in Honolulu.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (GATE) - EVENING

Jim, Mr. Maxted, the Vincents, and other Prisoners are standing by the wide open gates. There isn't a guard in sight anymore, they have all left. The prisoners are silent and uneasy with their recent freedom (if one can call it that).

A fire breaks out in one of the barracks by the airfield and the red glow of the flames is reflected on the prisoners, the camp, and the burial mounds outside. Jim SEES something OS. He points his finger.

JIM

Look!

Jim and the prisoners see THREE HORSEMEN riding up to the camp. Zigzagging between the mounds, they look like the embodiment of the apocalypse.

ANGLE ON THE LEADER

Jim recognizes the leader of the riders; it's LIEUTENANT PRICE, the handsome young officer who enthralled the ladies at Mr. Lockwood's party. But now, Lt. Price is white as chalk, his chest puckered with cigarette burns, and his wrists wrapped in bloody bandages. He ~~holds~~ ^{carries} a rifle across

CONTINUED

his shoulders and his eyes are completely deranged. The two other men in his party are heavily armed Eurasians and they look like they were born deranged. Lt. Price steadies his shaggy pony which is frightened of the fire in the barracks.

LT. PRICES'S POV - JIM

and the prisoners staring at him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

LT. PRICE

(shouts)

Hey boy, got any rifles in there?

ANGLE ON JIM

He stays mute.

LT. PRICE

Whiskey?

JIM

No sir, just Collier's, Life, Reader's Digest, and Popular Mechanics.

Lt. Price tries to control himself by lighting a cigarette and sucking hungrily on it. He looks at the prisoners with absolute disgust.

LT. PRICE

Christ. What kind of a war did you people have?

(shouts)

Well, don't just stand there, you're free.

EMP

He turns his horse around and takes the rifle from his back and fires a shot into the air.

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ANGLE ON THE PRISONERS

They cringe.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON LT. PRICE

LT. PRICE
(shouts over his shoulder
at the prisoners)
Follow me...everyone must die.

ANGLE ON THE PRISONERS

They slowly close the gates.

ANOTHER ANGLE

One of the Eurasians calls to Lt. Price and he rides his pony over to him. The Eurasian points at something in the distance. Lt. Price kicks his horse and they gallop away, specters chasing other specters among the burial mounds.

ANGLE ON THE PRISONERS

They see what chased off Lt. Price.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Headlights show a long way down the road. Maxted and Jim notice them. The prisoners also notice them. The whole crowd of prisoners then watch apprehensively as a very efficient MILITARY CONVOY roars down the road and sweeps up alongside the camp, with well-dressed and well-armed soldiers jumping out of the vehicles, pouring into the camp, threatening figures with bayonets fixed. The prisoners fall back, tripping over each other and panicking. Jim and Maxted, still trying to retain possession of their cart, move back among them. A JAPANESE SOLDIER kicks the cart aside. Jim makes a grab for the cart but Maxted pulls him away.

JIM
Are they going to kill us?

MAXTED
Steady, Jim.

JIM
It's alright.. they don't need to
kill us.

MAXTED
..Of course they don't, Jim.

EMP

0019

CONTINUED

JIM
We'll all be dead soon enough.

MAXTED
(rebuking him)
Jim! Remember your father.

ANOTHER ANGLE

A Japanese staff car drives through the camp gates, with an OFFICER standing in the back, shouting through a megaphone. The crowd of prisoners has quieted down. The word comes back, prisoner to prisoner, from those nearest the Japanese staff car. The prisoners in front of Jim and Mr. Maxted turn around and pass the word...

PRISONER
One suitcase! We leave in an hour!

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - DAY

Jim bursts in.

JIM
We're leaving.

The news has preceeded him. The Vincents are putting together their few possessions.

MRS. VINCENT
Not before time.

Jim gets busy, and there is little enough to put in his wooden box. He takes his best airplane picture off the wall and, after a moment's hesitation, the photograph of the unknown couple.

As a final gesture he impulsively tears down the partition, which has been re-erected.

JIM
(leaving)
I want to be at the front.

He takes a final look at the room where he has lived for three years and then abruptly departs.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (GATES) - DAY EMP

A Japanese jeep-type vehicle roars through the gates and goes straight to the hospital steps.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP HOSPITAL - DAY

The jeep-type vehicle halts and TWO JAPANESE SOLDIERS throw an unconscious, beaten-up, prisoner onto the hospital veranda. This is Dainty. Ransome comes out of the hospital doorway. The vehicle roars away. Ransome kneels down and turns Dainty over. Jim comes running up, carrying his box which he puts on the steps.

JIM

Dainty.

RANSOME

Help me get him inside.

Ransome and Jim, together, lift Dainty into the hospital.

INT. NANTAO CAMP HOSPITAL - DAY

Ransome and Jim half carry and half drag Dainty into the dispensary and then into the men's ward where they put him on a cot.

JIM

Dainty...where's Basie.

RANSOME

He can't talk, Jim.

PATIENT

Doctor!...The Japs will shoot us.

RANSOME

No they won't.

He is feeling Dainty for broken bones.

RANSOME

Jim, you get to your place. I'm putting you in charge of the march.

JIM

Aren't you coming with us?

RANSOME

Not yet...these people can't walk.

JIM

We're going to Nantao to get a boat up-country.

RANSOME

Maybe I'll see you there.

CONTINUED

JIM

I'll save you some rations at Nantao, Dr. Ransome.

RANSOME

Good. Just in case, keep up your Latin.

JIM

I will, Dr. Ransome.

Jim runs out of the hospital and Ransome pauses to watch him go.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (PERIMETER FENCE & AIRFIELD) - DAY

A Zero aeroplane is warming up. The pilot is in the ceremonial sashes of a Kamikaze.

The same pathetic little ceremony is taking place. A CORPORAL and a PRIVATE, not very interested, borrowed for the occasion from a nearby gang working on the bombed runway, are witnesses to the ritual.

Jim is watching from the fence. Then we realize, and we see that Jim realizes, that the pilot is the youth whom we saw for the first time flying his model glider, perhaps a year and a half ago. The pilot shouts the name of the Emperor.

Jim suddenly shouts and salutes. The pilot turns to look at Jim.

Jim stares back at the pilot, and waves.

The pilot waves back to Jim. The pilot climbs up into the cockpit of the Zero.

But the plane is having trouble. The engine starts and dies and starts again. The pilot shouts to the private (mechanic) who is already walking away with the corporal. The private comes back. The pilot gets out of the Zero. He starts hitting the plane with his fist.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP ROAD - DAY

The PRISONERS are drawn up to march. They are mostly burdened with a surprising array of chattels, including tennis racquets, umbrellas, boxes, baskets, bundles. The smaller children are being carried by their parents. Maxted is at the front of the column, behind the vehicle which is going to lead the march. The soldiers of the newly arrived convoy flank the column of prisoners on either side. Jim, struggling a little with his wooden box,

CONTINUED

comes hurrying along the line of the march. He passes some of the people we know: Mr. Lockwood, Mrs. Phillips, and Mrs. Gilmour. Jim arrives, panting, at the head of the column where Maxted has kept his place.

JIM

You haven't brought any luggage, Mr. Maxted.

MAXTED

No, Jim. I don't think I'll be needing any luggage.

With a final shouted order, the lead vehicle moves off. Jim puts his right arm up in the air like a U.S. Cavalry major and gives the signal, superfluously, to march. With the SOUNDS of hundreds of clogs clattering into a shuffle, the ragged cavalcade sets off.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (MARCH) - DAY

A wide shot of the prisoners on the march, armed guards at intervals on either side, one vehicle leading other vehicles behind. On the road the march passes some of the debris of war, burned-out vehicles, etc.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE (MARCH) - LATER THAT DAY

Maxted, still at the front with Jim, is tiring quickly, breathing heavily, beginning to stagger. Then he stops and Jim pauses with him. They begin to be overtaken by the march... Prisoners walk by with their burdens.

Maxted watches them go by, festooned with objects from the pre-war world, the tennis rackets, the parasols, the golf bags, the bundles of hoarded clothes and shoes. Mr. Maxted shakes his head in disbelief.

MAXTED

Where were they keeping it all?
They must have thought internment
would be another country club, under
new management.

JIM

We ought to keep going, Mr. Maxted.

MAXTED

You go on, Jim. ~~Get~~ back to the front.

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CONTINUED

JIM

I can smell the docks. We'll be at Nantao by dark.

MAXTED

Go on, Jim, make sure the Japs don't get lost.

JIM

I'll save your place.

They are well back in the march now, and Jim struggles to overtake the people in front. He finds himself alongside Mr. and Mrs. Vincent. Mr. Vincent seems to be in pain. Mrs. Vincent carries their suitcase, her eyes fixed ahead.

JIM

Mrs. Vincent...

MRS. VINCENT

Not now, Jim.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - DUSK

We hear the haunting song.

PRISONER

(sings)

"We are the girls every boy adores.
C A C don't mean a thing to me."

The SOUND is coming from the ALMOST NAKED SKELETAL FIGURE of a prisoner who, in better times, was one of the Nantao players.

ANGLE ON THE MARCH

The march has shed a kind of skin, a long line of abandoned luggage, and quite a number of dead and dying PRISONERS.

Jim stumbles over a body fallen down in the middle of the march. He SEES that it's Mr. Vincent, dead. Jim only hesitates for a moment and then continues to stumble on.

The march is passing by several burning and broken military vehicles. Some of the prisoners have dropped out to rest on the hoods and running boards. One of them is Mrs. Vincent. She scans the march as it goes by, looking for somebody.

MRS. VINCENT

Geoffrey...Geoffrey...Jim. Have you seen Mr. Vincent?

CONTINUED

Jim looks up. There is something Basiesque about the expression on his face and the inflection in his voice. *

JIM

- Good news Mrs. Vincent. He went to the head of the line to look for you.

Jim watches Mrs. Vincent walk as fast as she can (which isn't very fast) towards the head of the line. *

ANGLE ON THE MARCH *

The march stumbles on like a wounded Chinese dragon looking for it's cave. *

ANGLE ON JIM *

He marches along like an automaton reciting Latin nouns as if to absolve himself. *

JIM *

Domum, domi, domo.

EXT. STADIUM (TUNNEL) - NIGHT

The march is emerging out of the tunnel into a stadium. The stadium is open and rain falls into it. The GUARDS move into the stadium, forming a ring around the running track, the prisoners collapsing in the middle of the stadium, a football field, goal posts at either end. There is an air raid going on, and the scene is occasionally lit by flames and explosions.

INT. STADIUM - DAY

JIM'S POV - A BRIGHT MORNING

after the rain. We SEE the bright blue sky. A bomber is flying high overhead. We can HEAR the drone and possibly see a vapor trail.

ANGLE ON JIM

He is lying on his back on the grass ~~on~~ the stadium.

EMP

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CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - A CURIOUS FALLING SHINE

in the sky. Then a SOUND as the shower of hail patters all around Jim, all around the stadium. The DRONE of the bomber is fading away.

Jim leans up on one elbow. He is covered in a suit of shining ice crystals, which also covers the grass around him. He brushes ice from his face, out of his hair. He looks around and we see his surprised expression.

JIM'S POV - A LINE OF RADIATOR GILLS

of limousines, shining, the cars sparkling with the melting hail. The vision is like nothing he has seen for a long time, a vision of the past. The limousines are in fact laid up, parked in rows behind the goal posts of the football stadium. The stands are well filled with the spoils of war. Apart from the cars, there are stacks of furniture and other goods including a white piano in which somebody is PLAYING *
VIVALDI.

The PRISONERS are lying down on the grass of the stadium. They look as if they have dropped at random from the sky. Already the hail is melting into wetness in the sunlight. Pools of rainwater lie on the cinder track around the edge of the field. Jim gets up stiffly and limps to one of the puddles. He drinks from his cupped hands. OTHER PRISONERS are stirring and beginning to follow his example. The JAPANESE GUARDS form a group at the outside edge of the cinder track, where they have been breakfasting: a meager affair, but there is a small travelling canteen around which they are squatting and standing, just finishing their meal and getting ready to move out again. A JAPANESE OFFICER is hurrying them up, shouting orders, and from here onward the soldiers begin to organize themselves and the prisoners into a line of march. During this, Jim sees: Mrs. Vincent sitting up with her head on her raised knees. He is joined by Maxted who has come to share his puddle of water.

MAXTED

No breakfast again, Jim. The club secretary shall hear of this.

JIM

(looking around at the activity of the Japanese)

We're going on again.

0019
CONTINUED

MAXTED

Onward and upward.

JIM

Where are they taking us?

MAXTED

Upcountry.

JIM

Why? What is this "upcountry"?

Maxted avoids the question.

JIM

Will there be food there?

MAXTED

(shrugs)

There's none here.

One of the JAPANESE SOLDIERS is in their vicinity getting people to their feet. Some of the prisoners can't stand up and the soldier allows these to remain, since he has no alternative. He approaches Maxted and Jim, ordering them in Japanese, and the two of them get to their feet also.

MAXTED

Come on.

JIM

I'll get Mrs. Vincent.

Maxted allows himself to be herded along into the line of march. Jim returns the few yards to where he was lying near his box. He picks up the box and comes over to Mrs. Vincent. She is still sitting as we last saw her.

JIM

We have to go now, Mrs. Vincent.

Our rations are..

(he thinks better
of that one)

We're going upcountry.

Mrs. Vincent ignores him. Jim touches her shoulder. She ignores that, too.

JIM

Mrs. Vincent...

Mrs. Vincent looks at him. She shakes her head dumbly. Jim is uncertain what to do. He looks across towards the line of march which is just about ready to leave.

CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - MAXTED

looking towards him.

MAXTED

Jim!

BACK TO SCENE

Mrs. Vincent takes hold of Jim's hand and tries to pull him down towards her. Jim bends down.

MRS. VINCENT

Don't go. Better here.

She licks her lips which are dry. Jim looks towards the march again.

Maxted is looking towards him. Jim raises a hand by way of farewell. He sees Maxted return the wave just before a SOLDIER shoves him into motion. The march leaves the stadium through the tunnel. There are perhaps thirty or forty prisoners left on the grass, some already dead. Jim goes to the nearest puddle and returns to Mrs. Vincent with water in his cupped hands. He lets the water trickle into her mouth. Her lips close over his fingers, grateful for the water.

JIM

Mrs. Vincent, are you looking for God?

MRS. VINCENT

(not really hearing him)

Yes, Jim.

Jim lies down next to her and looks up in the same direction.

JIM

Do you mean that God is right above us?

MRS. VINCENT

(automatically)

Yes, Jim.

JIM

Above the 31st Parallel? Mrs. Vincent, wouldn't God be above the magnetic pole? You ought to look at the ground under Shanghai.

The thought makes Jim laugh.

2019
CONTINUED

JIM

Perhaps we've all died and this is just our souls. Yes, we'll stay here. Our souls can do the marching.

Mrs. Vincent doesn't move. Jim doesn't move either. He closes his eyes.

JIM

I've been thinking about being an atheist. Perhaps I was just bored by the choir.

MRS. VINCENT

Jamie.

JIM

Yes, Mrs. Vincent. It's me. Jamie.

Mrs. Vincent starts to shiver, quite noticeably, almost violently. Jim opens his box and takes out his blazer and spreads it over Mrs. Vincent's shoulders and chest. He lies down next to her, embracing her, and repeats his name, which amuses him and he starts to chuckle.

JIM

Jamie, Jamie, Jamie.

INT. STADIUM - EVENING

Jim and Mrs. Vincent are much as we saw them. Jim's eyes are closed and he now opens them. He moves his head slightly and SEES: the stadium horizon against the evening sky. Suddenly the sky seems to whiten a little bit. Jim's eyes blink, he frowns.

JIM'S POV - THE HORIZON EDGE

of the stadium glows, lit by a strange glare.

BACK TO SCENE

Frightened, he sits up. The white glare falls over his face and over the stadium. It heightens, becoming incandescent as though the whole world had become white hot, losing its detail in blinding light.

JIM

(frightened)
Mrs. Vincent?

CONTINUED

The white glare fades rapidly. He looks down and sees Mrs. Vincent's face.

It's so cold in the stadium that Mrs. Vincent breath is vaporized. Small white puffs of breath escape from her mouth and then stop. *

INT. STADIUM - DAY

Jim lies asleep. His head resting on the blazer which is still covering Mrs. Vincent. An airplane is HEARD flying low and noisily over the stadium. Jim wakes abruptly and sits up automatically searching for the plane, automatically identifying it.

JIM

Hayate.

Then he realizes where he is. He SEES Mrs. Vincent, dead. The blazer has slipped during the night. Jim carefully adjusts it. Then, looking around, he sees that his golf shoes are no longer on his feet. Jim gets up and looks around and sees a MAN, a civilian but a healthy one, a Eurasian dressed in good slacks and a clean white shirt. He is moving among the corpses, removing small articles. He holds Jim's shoes in his hands. Jim walks over to him. Jim points to the shoes.

JIM

Those are mine. Dr. Ransome gave them to me.

The Eurasian looks at Jim. He is bigger than Jim and furthermore he has a pistol stuck into his waistband. But Jim's stare is unflinching, he is beyond fear and the Eurasian succumbs to him.

EURASIAN MAN

(handing over the shoes)

That's okay, kid. I was keeping those shoes in case you turned up. Tell your ma and pa. Looks like you could use a couple of bags of rice. Ask around, kid - any wedding rings, charms, watches, we can work it together.

JIM

Is the war over?

0019
CONTINUED

EURASIAN MAN

That's for sure. They called time.
We're friends now. Anytime the whole
U.S. Navy is going to tie up at the
Bund.

JIM

It's never over.

EURASIAN MAN

Kid, they dropped the atom bomb.
Killed a million people. One big
flash.

JIM

I saw it.

EURASIAN MAN

Yeah?

JIM

A white light?

EURASIAN MAN

That's correct.

JIM

I thought it was Mrs. Vincent's soul
going up to heaven.

EURASIAN MAN

I guess you could say that's what it
was. Ask around - rings, bracelets...

Jim puts on his shoes and turns away, walking back to his
box, he picks it up, thinks better of it and puts it down.
He opens it and considers the contents. He picks up
"Wings", the comic book he had taken from his house on
Amherst Avenue, and his small model plane. He holds them
for a moment and then returns them to the box and walks
towards the tunnel.

EXT. STADIUM - DAY

Jim walks alone out of the tunnel. A few of the PRISONERS
have also wandered out into the car park and are looking
around in a dazed way. There's a long straight road ahead
of him. Jim starts to walk. Nearby a field of grass is
burning.

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EXT. PADDY FIELDS - DAY

Jim is still walking. There is aircraft NOISE overhead.
Jim looks up and SEES:

A four-engined Superfortress. *

The doors of the bomb bays open, revealing the silver cylinders ready to fall from their racks. The Superfortress drums past. The sky is filled with colored parachutes. Dozens of canopies float gaily on the air, as if enjoying the August sun. *

The parachutes sail past, falling toward Nantao Camp. A silver canister drag its collapsed parachute and plummets to the ground, striking a canal embankment two hundred yards away. *

The canister bursts on impact. Jim lowers himself down the slope of sunbaked earth and squats by the open mouth of the cylinder. Around him, on the floor of the culvert, is a ransom of canned food and cigarette packets. The canister has been crammed with cardboard cartons, and one has broken loose from the nose cone and scattered its contents over the ground. Jim crawls among the cans, wiping his eyes so that he can read the labels. There are tins of Spam, Klim and Nescafe, bars of chocolate and cellophaned packs of Lucky Strike and Chesterfield cigarettes, bundles of Reader's Digest and Life magazines, Time and Saturday Evening Post. *

The sight of so much food confuses Jim, forcing on him a notion of choice that he has not known for years. The cans and packets are frozen, as if they have just emerged from an American refrigerator. OS he HEARS a car. *

ANGLE ON THE BURNING FIELD *

Out of the wall of flames (like the Hell Drivers), a mud splattered Buick bursts through. It races at breakneck speed towards Jim. The car, once a staff car of a Chinese puppet General, is still adorned with the insignia and rice paper stickers of the General. *

A BEARDED EUROPEAN in a leather flying jacket leaps from the driver's seat and runs toward Jim. He is followed by a COOLIE carrying a bamboo stave.

The European punches Jim in the face to get him away from the canister. The Chinese coolie raises his stave for the coup de grace. Jim raises his hand.

CONTINUED

JIM

(recites)

I am a British prisoner.

I am going to Nantao camp.

I am a British prisoner.

The coolie is perplexed enough to allow Jim to live for a few more seconds. Jim addresses the European in the flying jacket who is rooting through the contents of the canister.

JIM

(points at stadium)

Lincoln Zephyrs, Buicks, white
Cadillacs.

BASIE

What's this talk about white
Cadillacs?

Jim SEES Basie sauntering towards him from the car.

JIM

(wiping blood from
his nose)

Basie, it's me, Jim...Shanghai Jim.

The cabin steward's wary eyes, with their sharp but modest focus, scan the contents of the canister. The coolie waits for a signal, with his stave raised.

Jim, in desperation, gathers the scattered magazines and holds them up like they were icons that could protect him.

JIM

Life Magazine; Reader's Digest.
I've kept the latest copies for
you. I've learned hundreds of new
words. Ardennes, Mauthausen,
Theresian stadt, Iwo Jima...

EXT. LAGOON & COUNTRYSIDE - DAY

The Buick speeds along the shores of an oil filled lagoon at a breakneck pace. The driver fires his pistol out the window.

INT. MOVING BUICK - DAY

Jim squirms between Basie and the bearded European (a Frenchman) in the backseat. THREE CHINESE BANDITS occupy the front seat. They are drinking rice wine and pass the

CONTINUED

bottle to the backseat. The contents of the canister are scattered all over the car; K-rations, cans of Spam, cartons of Chesterfields - a black marketeers dream.

JIM
(while eyeing a
can of Spam)
Are these the Hell Drivers, Basie?

FRENCHMAN
(thick accent)
Be still, you want more bloody nose?

BASIE
Jim, there's no room for wrestling.
Just sit quietly.

Basie takes a can of Spam, peels the cover back, and hands it to Jim.

Jim doesn't hesitate. He scoops out one third of the meat and wolfs it down. Basie shakes his head and takes the can away from Jim, feeding him much smaller amounts.

BASIE
You know what happens to people who
eat too fast, don't you, Jim?

JIM
(trying to chew
before he swallows)
Yes, Basie, they die.

The Frenchman takes another gulp of rice wine and fires his pistol out the window at a seagull that skims the lake.

Basie puts his arm around Jim in a protective reflex.

Jim glances at the Frenchman, and Basie feeds him more Spam.

JIM
Basie, has the next war effectively
begun?

BASIE
That's a good way of putting it.

JIM
There are still a lot of words I
haven't learned. I'd like to go
back to Shanghai. I might see my
mother and father today.

BASIE
You need more than luck in Shanghai.

CONTINUED

JIM
Will Uncle Sam be there, Basie;
every gob and GI Joe?

BASIE
(remarkably unenthusiastic)
He'll be there, and every GI Joe in
the Pacific.

The Frenchman thrusts the rice wine into Jim's hand. Jim
drinks from the bottle, washing away some of the Spam.

JIM'S POV - THE NANTAO PAGODA

on the horizon.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Jim passes the bottle to Basie.

JIM
Are we going back to the camp?

FRENCHMAN
Be quiet, boy...you mean nothing
to me.

Jim tries to keep silent, but he just can't.

JIM
Basie, did you see the atom bomb go
off? I saw the flash over Nagasaki
from Nantao Stadium.

Jim's nose is beginning to bleed again. Basie dips a rag
in rice wine and cleans the blood and the pulpy Spam from
his face.

BASIE
You saw the bomb?

JIM
(over amped)
For a whole minute, Basie, a white
light stronger than the sun covered
Shanghai. I suppose God wanted to
see everything.

The Frenchman turns to Basie.

FRENCHMAN
(incredulous)
Four years with him?

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EXT. NANTAO CAMP AIRFIELD

The bandit Buick tears along the edge of the airfield when the driver suddenly slams on the brakes. The rear passenger door opens and Jim tumbles onto the tarmac.

ANGLE ON BASIE

He sticks his head out of the window.

BASIE

Wait for me here, and keep your head down.

The car pulls away with SCREECHING tires and then lurches to a halt again. Basie motions to Jim. Jim runs up to the car.

ANGLE ON BASIE

BASIE

(with a grin)

Hey, kid...you want a Hershey bar?

Before Jim can reply, the car pulls away again and Basie throws something out the window.

ANGLE ON JIM

He runs to the object and picks it up.

ANGLE ON JIM'S HAND

It's a Hershey bar.

ANGLE ON JIM

He eats the Hershey bar like somebody is going to take it away from him, and licks the foil until his mouth and chin are covered with chocolate.

He SEES a stranded Kamikaze Zero near the edge of the airfield.

He walks over to the Zero and climbs into the cockpit.

CONTINUED

INT. ZERO COCKPIT (NANTAO CAMP AIRFIELD) - DAY

Inside the cockpit, he examines the instrument panel. Glued to the panel is a boy's glider that now serves as a mascot. Jim tugs at the glider and it comes off.

JIM'S POV - SOMEONE

moving through the tall nettles on the edge of the field.

ANGLE ON JIM

He ducks down until he SEES that it's the young Kamikaze pilot.

ANGLE ON THE PILOT

The young pilot is walking around in a state of demented despair, knocking nettles about with his bamboo stick.

EXT. ZERO COCKPIT (NANTAO AIRFIELD) - DAY

No longer fearful, Jim climbs down from the cockpit and moves towards the pilot with the glider in his hand. The pilot gasps and whimpers and, when he looks at Jim, Jim raises the glider to remind the pilot of the bond they once had.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP AIRFIELD - DAY

Jim comes closer, like he is trying to make friends with a wild animal.

The pilot turns away from Jim, but Jim moves with him. The pilot stops and takes a small, wrinkled mango from his flying suit and gives it to Jim. (OS we HEAR the Buick)

When Jim tries to follow the pilot again, the pilot, with a final gasp of self-loathing, pushes Jim away. Three quick pistol SHOTS ring out, and the pilot falls over.

JIM'S POV - BASIE

with a gun in his hand, is running from the Buick towards Jim.

CONTINUED

JIM

(in anger and anguish)

Basie!

Jim runs toward the fallen pilot. Basie catches up with him and watches how Jim crouches next to the pilot.

JIM

(screams)

He gave me a mango.

BASIE

(a little drunk)

I'll give you a whole damn fruit salad. Now, let's get out of here.

Jim turns the pilot on his back. The pilot is as good as dead, but Jim tries to bring him back the way he did Amy Matthews. Basie realizes that Jim is truly distraught.

JIM

(with a tear
streaked face)

He was my friend.

Basie sways a little, and looks over at the car. Somebody is trying to start the engine.

BASIE

(by way of apology)

Hey, kid, I just saw the shove.

He watches Jim pounding on the pilot's chest while keeping one eye on the car.

BASIE

(skeptical)

If he's not dead, you'll kill him.

ANGLE ON PILOT

His eyes roll open.

JIM

He looked at me. Maybe Dr. Ransome is still in the hospital.

BASIE

Ransome is gone, Jim. So is everybody else.

(indicates pilot)

He's dead...we've got to go... now.

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CONTINUED

Jim pounds on the pilot's chest with all his might, trying to keep his eyes open.

JIM
(concentrating on
the pilot)

You go.

The pilot coughs up some blood.

Basie looks at the Buick.

He SEES the Frenchman working under the hood while the Chinese driver keeps trying to start the engine.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Basie pleads.

BASIE
Come on, you've got to come with
me...I've got to look after you for
your daddy.

JIM
You've never looked after me.
I looked after you.

OS the Buick engine turns over, and Basie is talking fast now.

BASIE
Hey, come on. You're my boy. I got
to take you to your daddy. We'll
fill up the pool and eat three times
a day.

JIM
(cold as ice)
My father would never let you swim
in our pool.

Basie stops breathing for a moment, for he knows what Jim just said is true. He spins around and runs towards the car. He looks over his shoulder just before he jumps in.

BASIE'S POV - JIM

pounding on the chest of the Japanese pilot, in between the high nettles, on the edge of the runway they built, trying to keep the war going all by himself.

CONTINUED

ANOTHER ANGLE

Basie jumps in the backseat of the Buick.

ANGLE ON JIM AND THE PILOT

The pilot shudders and dies in Jim's arms. Jim gets up and runs towards the runway where the Buick is speeding away.

JIM'S POV - THE BUICK

He SEES Basie's face in the rear window of the disappearing Buick. Basie salutes him.

ANGLE ON JIM

Jim salutes the disappearing car.

INT. MOVING BUICK - DAY

Basie turns back from the window and slowly drops his salute, a single tear rolls down his cheek. The Frenchman stares curiously at him and offers him the bottle. Basie takes the bottle and wipes the tears away.

BASIE

Allergies.

ANGLE ON JIM

He holds his salute until the car is out of sight, then he takes deep breath and launches the glider towards Nantao camp.

ANGLE ON THE GLIDER

The shimmering heat pushes the glider over the burial mounds towards Nantao camp.

ANGLE ON JIM

He runs through the nettles in pursuit of the glider. He stumbles over something and falls to the ground.

ANGLE ON BIKE

Jim stumbles over a rusty, old bicycle.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON JIM

He watches the glider.

ANGLE ON A PLANE

The plane is white (like the glider) and high up in the air. Could this be the glider?

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

PLANE'S POV

We see Jim way down below, on his bicycle, in the middle of the parade ground of the deserted camp. He waves.

A giant shadow passes over him and the ROAR of the engines rattles the barracks.

Jim gets back onto the rusty bike, the wheels squeak and he is breathing hard. He essentially retraces his steps from the first day in the camp.

He drives from the guard house towards the family dormitory (Maybe we faintly hear, "We're the girls every boy adores".)

He carries his bike up the steps.

INT. FAMILY DORMITORY (JIM'S ROOM) - DAY

We are there before Jim, but we HEAR him coming. He is HUMMING a hymn, and the rubber wheels make the floor boards creak. Jim enters on his bike.

JIM'S POV - THE FEW PHOTOGRAPHS

left on the wall. They undulate and flap in the wind through the shattered windows. The curtain that once used to separate Jim from the Vincents, is no more than a dusty rag.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP (HOSPITAL & DORMITORIES) - DAY

Jim rides past the broken windows of the hospital.

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CONTINUED

JIM'S POV - THE COTS

and the infirmary flashing by.

Jim veers away towards the British & American dormitories. The door is open so he doesn't need to get off his bike.

INT. AMERICAN MEN'S DORMITORY - DAY

There is nothing left of Basie's great hoard but a broken tennis racket. Jim stands there for awhile as he looks at his childhood before riding away.

EXT. NANTAO CAMP - DAY

Jim shoots out of the men's dormitories back onto the parade ground, where the wind kicks up a fine dust. He throws his bike into a skid.

JIM'S POV - A RED ARMY GUERRILLA DETACHMENT

(about a hundred men) standing by the gate, watching him.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Their officer approaches Jim. He wears a red star on his cap.

JIM

I surrender.

ANGLE ON THE OFFICER

It's Yang. He is missing one arm and his empty sleeve is pinned to his neatly pressed uniform. He smiles at Jim.

JIM

(relieved)

Yang!

Jim hugs Yang and sobs with relief against his chest.

EXT. DISPLACED PERSON'S (CAMP SHANGHAI) - DAY

The displaced person's camp is somewhere in the international settlement. It consists of yet more barracks patrolled by RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS.

CONTINUED

ANGLE ON BARRACKS

A roomful of CHILDREN, ages five to eighteen, are leaning against the wall of a barrack. The war has made them tough and given them a feral look. Some sport wounds; a girl wears a Chinese tatoo; they look more like a gang than anything else. A boy, no more than ten years old, eats a bowl of rice with a pair of chopsticks which he uses as deftly as any native.

ANGLE ON JIM

He stands between dozens of other "Jims".

ANGLE ON A NURSE

A very ENGLISH NURSE walks up to the children and motions them forward. The children leave the safety of the wall with a collective groan. Then the nurse motions somewhere OS, and a GROUP OF ADULTS arrive. The adults, having a chance to return to their homes, look better than the children, although their fashions are mostly pre-war.

The adults walk slowly past the children, for they are searching for their sons and daughters.

ANGLE ON THE CHILDREN

They act, and are arranged, like they are in a line-up. They smirk and giggle defensively under the piercing, longing scrutiny of the adults.

A GIRL falls into the arms of her parents. A wave of jealousy ripples through both the parents and the children.

JIM'S POV

An endless array of white, unfamiliar faces peer into his before moving on. Suddenly, he finds his father's face staring into his. Then his father moves on. His mother looks at him briefly, is about to walk on, when something draws her back.

JIM'S MOTHER

Jamie?

Jim steps out of the line into his mother's arms. His father, mortified, rushes back and joins the embrace.

JIM'S FATHER

...it's your hair, you see...

CONTINUED

Jim walks away with his parents and the nurse. He looks over his shoulder.

JIM'S POV - THE CHILDREN

that haven't been found yet, looking at him.

EXT. SHANGHAI - (THE BUND) DAY

Shanghai is its old self. BRITISH and AMERICAN SAILORS are in command of the pavements, jostling aside the CHINESE as they sometimes drunkenly push their way through the crowd. More SERVICEMEN are being pulled by rickshaws and pedicabs, accompanied by laughing and squealing BAR GIRLS. This is seen from inside a moving car.

INT. MOVING CAR - DAY

Jim sits in between his parents in the backseat of the car which is driven by a new CHAUFFEUR. The car is moving among other cars, including military vehicles. Horns are blaring and there is a lot of bustle and noise. The noise is triumphant.

ANGLE ON JIM

Sitting between his parents, he suddenly seems much older, his eyes haunted like Lt. Price.

JIM'S POV - THE EXPRESSIONLESS FACES

of the CHINESE move past the window, unmoved by the celebrations of the winners.

Jim's mother turns to him.

JIM'S MOTHER
Darling, haven't you noticed something?

Jim looks at her with a blank expression in his eyes.

JIM' MOTHER
(proudly)
I stopped smoking.

His father pats his knee.

CONTINUED

JIM'S FATHER

We managed to get the pool filled,
you know.

JIM'S MOTHER

(annoyed)

That was going to be a surprise.

An awkward silence settles in the Packard. Jim's features are guarded. He turns around and looks through the rear window of the car.

He SEES the river and the harbor, the light twinkling in the dusk.

ANGLE ON HIS PARENTS

They are uncomfortable with Jim. His father clears his throat, desperate to make some sort of contact.

JIM'S FATHER

Tell me, Jim. Were you able to keep
up with your education?

Jim sags in the backseat and closes his eyes.

JIM

(no longer a
string of words)

If I should die,
think only this of me.
That there is some corner
of a foreign field,
that is forever England.

EXT. SHANGHAI (THE BUND) - DUSK

A child's coffin moves onto the night stream.

JIM (VO)

There shall be, in that rich earth,
a richer dust concealed,
a dust which England bred.

Its paper flowers are shaken loose by the wash of a landing craft carrying sailors from an American cruiser. The flowers form a wavering garland around the coffin as it begins its long journey towards the estuary of the Yangtze, only to be swept back by the incoming tides among the quays and the mudflats, driven once again, to the shores of this terrible city.

THE END

CONTINUED