

A DON SIMPSON - JERRY BRUCKHEIMER PRODUCTION

TOP GUN

SCREENPLAY BY
WARREN SKAAREN

SECOND DRAFT-REVISED

JUNE 1, 1985


REGISTERED, WGAW.

A handwritten signature or mark, possibly the initials 'JS', written in black ink.

CHARACTER NAMES

MAVERICK-PETE MITCHELL
GOOSE-NICK BRADSHAW
COUGAR-BILL CORTELL
MERLIN-SAM WILLS
STINGER-TOM OTOWACZECK
VIPER-MIKE METCALF
JESTER-DICK HETHERLY
HOLLYWOOD-RICK NEVEN
WOLFMAN-HENRY RUTH
SLIDER-RON KERNER
ICEMAN-TOM KAZANSKY
SUNDOWN-EVAN GOUGH
TOMBSTONE-SIG PRIESTLY
REDNECK-EMMETT JOHNSON
CHARLIE- CHARLOTTE BLACKWOOD (CIVILIAN)
PERRY SIEBENTHAL-(CIVILIAN)

1. EXT. TWILIGHT- THE PACIFIC IS ANYTHING BUT.

SUPER "U.S.S KITTYHAWK"
"OFF THE COAST OF NORWAY-AUGUST 1985" 

WINDS HOWLS- RAIN DRIVES HORIZONTALLY-The sea surges nearly to the flight deck of the CARRIER USS KITTY HAWK. The 93,000 ton behemoth plunges its bow into a wall of grey water. The deck pitches forward and back, rolls left to right and yaws in a corkscrew motion into A TYPHOON-DRIVEN SWELL.

2. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. LATE AFTERNOON

Something drops down out of the night. A ROAR. Silver wings flash by, a cockpit, fiery jet exhausts. A forty ton monster drops at 120 knots into an area the size of a tennis court in a CONTROLLED CRASH.

3. EXT. FLIGHT DECK-CLOSE.

A SHOWER OF SPARKS, A SCREECH OF RUBBER AND METAL as the gear hits the deck. The hook catches the three wire and the F-14 TOMCAT is slammed to a halt. It's the scariest thing you've ever seen, the most dangerous maneuver in aviation and just another day at the office for a Naval Aviator.

TITLES OVER

HARD DRIVING ROCK N ROLL-THE CARS-RIDE ME HIGH

4. FLIGHT DECK. THE LANDING SIGNAL OFFICER (LSO). TWILIGHT

He leans almost horizontally into the winds. He holds the pickle, controlling the landing lights and speaks into a mike. His calm professional commands belie the extreme conditions.

LSO

POWER, POWER ...DON'T CLIMB...
OKAY, HOLD WHAT YOU GOT.

5. EXT. ANOTHER TOMCAT FLIES OVER THE RAMP. TWILIGHT

It SLAMS in. The pilot hits full power, catches the wire, slams to a stop, throttles back his engines.

6. ~~INT. BRIDGE-TWILIGHT~~ 

Lots of scopes and electronic gear. The CARRIER CONTROL APPROACH OFFICER (CCA) watches a BLIP on radar. Reaches for his mike key. ~~SPINER~~, the Squadron Commander ENTERS.

RADIO OPERATOR

GHOST RIDER, THIS IS STRIKE,
CONTINUE YOUR VECTOR ZERO NINER ZERO, OUTBOUND
MUSTANG.

7. EXT. TWILIGHT'S LAST GLEAMING. (AERIAL) COUGAR'S F-14.

We float like gods, above the storm, above the cloud cover. From overhead, a probe slides into frame, then a graceful nose. The cockpit slides by, PILOT, then RADAR INTERCEPT OFFICER (RIO) barely illuminated by the orange glow of their instruments. The fuselage gracefully swells to two enormous air intakes, then variable angle wings, swept back for high speed flight. Twin tailbooms cant outward, horizontal stabilizers make constant adjustments. Enormous twin jet exhaust ports glow red in the moonlight.

7a. INT-BRIDGE-TWILIGHT. ~~X~~

Someone hands Stinger a piece of paper. He reads it, frowns. Reaches for a roster.

STINGER

Who's up there?

~~RADIO OPERATOR~~

Cougar and Merlin, Maverick and Goose.

STINGER

(not positively)

Great, Maverick and Goose. ~~X~~

8. INT. COUGAR'S COCKPIT. (AERIAL). TWILIGHT

We become aware of WIND WHISTLE, JET ENGINE SOUNDS, RADIO STATIC. The pilot, COUGAR is calm. MERLIN, his RIO in the backseat. A UHF transmission breaks in...

STRIKE (V.O. filtered)

GHOST RIDER, THIS IS STRIKE... WE
HAVE UNKNOWN CONTACT INBOUND,
MUSTANG. YOUR VECTOR ZERO NINE ZERO
FOR BOGEY.

Almost immediately the RIO picks up a target and responds.

MERLIN

CONTACT 20 LEFT AT 150, 900 KNOTS
CLOSURE.

9. EXT. ANGLE. SECOND F-14--115. MAVERICK, COUGAR'S WINGMAN.

10. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT.

ON THE COCKPIT-with "LT. PETE MITCHELL - MAVERICK" stenciled on side. In flight suit and oxygen mask, we can only see his eyes. They are confident. He is lean, hard, athletic. The archetype fighter pilot. His RIO- GOOSE, (Lt.JG. Josh Bradshaw) always an edge of humor in his voice, rides backseat.

MAVERICK

I'LL I.D. HIM, YOU HOOK 'EM.

GOOSE

And I'll clean him and fry him.

11. EXT. ANGLE. THE TWO F-14'S. TWILIGHT

Maverick peels off right, to high cover position: 5 o'clock.

12. INT. GHOST RIDER 117. COUGAR'S POV. TWILIGHT

HEADS UP DISPLAY (HUD) glows dimly on the windscreen. Directly in front of the stick, two CRT screens display data. The bottom screen shows a radar sweep. Wedged between the instruments is a snapshot of a pretty young woman with a 2 month-old baby.

MERLIN

Closing fast. MUSTANG, THIS IS GHOST RIDER ONE ONE SEVEN. CONTACT ONE BOGEY. 090 AT 15 MILES, 900 KNOTS OF CLOSURE.

COUGAR

Look for the trailer.

MERLIN

I don't see anything. MAVERICK, YOU HAVE A TRAILER?

13. INT. MAVERICK'S F-14. TWILIGHT

Flying in combat spread, 1 mile abeam, higher.

GOOSE

NEGATIVE, COUGAR. LOOKS LIKE HE'S SINGLE.

14. INT. 117 COUGAR'S COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

COUGAR

HANG BACK AND WATCH FOR HIM. HERE COMES...MIG ONE.

15. EXT SKY. TWILIGHT

Closing at 900 knots, the MiG is a speck, then a flash and a ROAR, a knife-edge pass at 300 feet. It rockets past his left wing tip and disappears.

16. INT. COUGAR'S COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

Cougar kicks rudder, whips the stick, screams into a tight turning roll and dives after him. He slams the throttle forward to ZONE 5 AFTERBURNER.

17. EXT. SKY. TWILIGHT

As Cougar screams after MiG One.

18. EXT. MAVERICK'S POV. TWILIGHT

Maverick sees a SECOND MIG drop from above onto Cougar's tail.

19. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

MAVERICK

BOGEY ON YOUR SIX. I'M ON HIS.

Maverick swings after him, lights it.

20. EXT. SKY. ALL FOUR JETS SCREAM DOWN IN A POWER DIVE.
TWILIGHT

They punch through cloud cover into the soup.

21. INT. COUGAR'S F-14. TWILIGHT

He is closing on the first MiG when a shocking BLIPBLIPBLIPBLIP tone breaks into their headsets.

MERLIN

(alarmed)

I've got a six o'clock strobe. Jesus, *
I think he's locked on us.

COUGAR

It's a MiG 23. They're not supposed to have radar missiles! *

MERLIN

Let's hope you're right!
What is he doing?

COUGAR

He's pissing me off!

22. EXT. ANGLE. COUGAR'S F-14 AND MIG ONE. TWILIGHT

Cougar swings mad gyrations, cutting back and forth across the front MiG's tailpipe, trying to break the lock-on. The TONE grows more insistent.

23. EXT. ANGLE. COUGAR'S F-14 AND MIG ONE. TWILIGHT

COUGAR

Damn it! I can't shake him.

MAVERICK (V.O.)

WHAT'S MIG ONE DOING?

COUGAR

Maintaining course. Straight for Mustang.

MERLIN

Stay with him.

The tone grows steady, BLIPBLIPBLIPBLIP.

COUGAR

(alarmed)

That IS missile lock!

MERLIN

He better be kidding!

24. INT. MAVERICK'S F-14. TWILIGHT

GOOSE

Lordy Lordy! Eyeball to Asshole.
Hope nobody burps!

MAVERICK

I'LL LOCK ON THE MIG AT YOUR SIX, COUGAR.

COUGAR (VO)

TAKE IT EASY. I'M UP HERE TOO, MAVERICK.

MAVERICK

ROGER, COUGAR. (to himself and Goose)
Okay boys, drop 'em real slow
and nobody'll get hurt.

25. INT. COUGAR'S F-14. TWILIGHT

Up front, Cougar checks his gunsight...He gets I.R. lock...

COUGAR

We're locked on MiG One. Why doesn't he disengage? These guys are getting on my nerves.

26. EXT. COUGAR'S POV. TWILIGHT

Finally, MiG One turns away.

27. INT. COUGAR'S COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

MERLIN

GHOST RIDER TO MUSTANG. BANDITS
TURNING AWAY.

INTERCUT:

28. EXT. MAVERICK'S POINT OF VIEW. TWILIGHT

29. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

But Cougar presses forward, and MiG TWO stays on his tail.

MAVERICK

HE'S STILL ON YOU, COUGAR! COUGAR, BREAK
LEFT. TRY A HIGH G ROLL UNDERNEATH. BREAK
OUT THE BOTTOM.

Anger gives way to discipline. Cougar's Tomcat breaks left, dives into dense cloud. MiG TWO still follows.

COUGAR

I'M TIRED OF THIS SHIT!

INTERCUT:

30. EXT. SKY. MIG AND MAVERICK. TWILIGHT

31. INT. MIG COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

32. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT

MiG breaks out of cloud, looks around, startled. There is nothing, no F-14. He scans the sky frantically, while rolling the aircraft. ...Suddenly, he feels a presence. He looks straight up and behind him. A few feet away, an F-14 slides into position canopy to canopy, (inverted) an incredible feat of flying. Maverick and Goose stare at him. Maverick slides even closer, canopies nearly touching. The MiG pilot acknowledges them with a weak wave. Maverick stares for a moment, then flips him the bird.

The MiG pushes negative G, hard down and away. He heads for the deck.

GOOSE

ALLRIGHT! He's running for it.

MAVERICK

The thrill of victory. Agony of defeat.

GOOSE

Speaking of de-feet. We gonna' get ours wet unless we find a Texaco station. Our fuel's down to 4.0.

MAVERICK

COUGAR, THIS IS MAVERICK. I'M GETTING HUNGRY, LET'S HEAD FOR THE BARN. ...COUGAR, WHERE ARE YOU?

33. EXT. KITTY HAWK FLIGHT DECK. THE LSO. TWILIGHT

Stands on the plunging deck, peering into the ROARING night.

CCA (Filtered)

GHOST RIDER ONE-ONE-FIVE, THIS IS MUSTANG. WX THREE HUNDRED. ONE MILE VISIBILITY WITH HEAVY RAIN. FINAL INBOUND BEARING THREE-FOUR-ZERO. DECK IS MOVING.

34. INT. COCKPIT 117. COUGAR. TWILIGHT

ON COUGAR- He is transfixed.

MERLIN

What a way to make a living.

MUSTANG (V.O. filtered)

MUSTANG TO GHOST RIDER 115...110 SPIN, 42 LOCK. 5 MILES SAY YOUR NEEDLES.

35. INT. COCKPIT 115 - MAVERICK. TWILIGHT

MAVERICK

NEEDLES DOWN AND LEFT.

CCA (V.O. filtered)

CONCUR, FLY YOUR NEEDLES.

MAVERICK

NEEDLES CENTER.

35a. INT. COCKPIT 117. COUGAR. TWILIGHT

CCA (V.O. filtered)

ROGER. 3/4 MILES. CALL THE BALL.

COUGAR

Call the ball? I can't see the ship!

X

X

36. INT. COCKPIT 117. COUGAR'S POV. TWILIGHT

WIND BLASTS slam the airframe. Rain tattoos the canopy. A gust shakes the F-14, he straightens it, a gust shakes it again.

37. EXT. MAVERICK'S POV. TWILIGHT

The Carrier lights appear and disappear through the storm.

38. INT. COCKPIT 117. COUGAR. TWILIGHT

MERLIN

A walk in the park, hey Cougar?

Merlin is thrown about hard, as the wing dips, straightens, dips.

MERLIN

Bring it left. Bring it left!
You're high.Cougar...you with me?

COUGAR

(slight panic)
This is crazy!

39. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. LSO CONTROLLING 115. MAVERICK.
TWILIGHT

LSO

A LITTLE POWER...FLY THE BALL.
LOOKING GOOD... HOLD WHAT YOU GOT.

40. EXT. LSO'S POV. TWILIGHT

Maverick's F-14 on final approach.

41. INT. COCKPIT. MAVERICK. TWILIGHT

ON MAVERICK-TIGHT-He hears Cougar's chatter over the air.

COUGAR (V.O. filtered)

WE'RE UPSIDE DOWN! WE CAN'T LAND!

MERLIN

(VO)

NEGATIVE MUSTANG. WE'RE ALLRIGHT.

COUGAR

SOMETHING'S WRONG!

41a. INT. COUGAR COCKPIT-TWILIGHT

MERLIN

Negative. We're level. Look at the
instruments, we're right on the money!

ON COUGAR- He shakes his head.

COUGAR.

Yeah...I'm sorry ...I'm really screwed up.

42. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. TWILIGHT

Maverick's plane settles in over the ramp, suddenly, BLASTS FROM IT'S AFTERBURNERS... it ROARS over the deck without touching and off into the night. The LSO is shocked into comment.

LSO

WHERE THE HELL YOU GOING?

43. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT (AERIAL). TWILIGHT

MAVERICK

I...FORGOT SOMETHING.

GOOSE

What the hell're you doing?

MAVERICK

Helping the man in.

GOOSE

What makes you think we can get back in? We don't have the fuel for this.

MAVERICK

Just get me to him.

GOOSE

He's nine o'clock high. We're two thousand pounds low!

INTERCUT:

44. EXT. SKY. THE TWO F-14'S. TWILIGHT

45. INT. COUGAR'S COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

46. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. TWILIGHT

Maverick's plane pulls up off the wing of the Cougar's aircraft. His voice is calmness itself.

MAVERICK

HEY, ANY OF YOU GUYS SEEN AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER AROUND HERE?

Cougar looks over, surprised.

COUGAR
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

MAVERICK
EVERYBODY'S GOT TO BE SOMEWHERE.
...RIGHT NOW WE'RE WITH YOU.

Nothing happens.

MAVERICK
COUGAR, THIS IS MAVERICK. YOU'RE LOOKING
GOOD. PUT IT DOWN.

Cougar's plane straightens.

MERLIN
We're on vapor, Cougar, you got
to put it down.

COUGAR
It's crazy, man.

MERLIN
MAVERICK TELL HIM, WILL YOU TELL HIM?
OUR INSTRUMENTS ARE OKAY.

MAVERICK
The Mig brought him up a little short. *
YOU'RE STRAIGHT AND LEVEL, COUGAR. STAY ON
MY WING. I'LL DROP YOU OFF.

Maverick pulls up wing tip to wing tip, inches apart.

46a. INT. COUGAR'S COCKPIT

ON COUGAR-He is processing all of this.

46b. EXT. MAVERICK'S F-14.

MAVERICK
COUGAR?

NO RESPONSE.

MAVERICK
COUGAR, WATCH MY WINGTIP.

COUGAR
YOU BETTER NOT BE RAGGING ME...

MAVERICK
NO JOKE, COUGAR. ON THE LEVEL.
EVEN I WOULDN'T DO THAT TO YOU.
COUGAR, YOU'RE ON THE BALL.

COUGAR

IF I BASH THIS LANDING, AND I LIVE. I'LL
HAVE YOUR BUTT!

GOOSE

Lordy boys, this is NO time to
talk butts!

47. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. TWILIGHT

All eyes are on the approach of the two planes. Maverick drops Cougar off at the pattern and circles. The LSO watches the approach. The Tomcat drops a wing, straightens, drops the wing, straightens... the approach of a shaken pilot as Cougar tries to satisfy his inner ear.

LSO

LEVEL...YOUR WINGS...EASY...
YOU'RE SETTLING...FLY THE BALL.

A wind shear just off the ramp drives the plane suddenly down.

LSO

POWER...POWER!...POWER!...
WAVE OFF! WAVE OFF WAVE OFF!

AFTERBURNERS BLAST, but the F-14 horrifyingly settles tail low toward the deck. The deck crew pulls up a thick emergency net to prepare for flying debris, as the plane wallows in toward them. The LSO'S turn, take a few steps and throw themselves into the night, off the flight deck. They are caught by safety nets hung off the sides.

48. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. THE PLANE. TWILIGHT

Settles, settles, standing on its engines, trying to arrest its downward momentum. The hook raises sparks as it skids across the deck... The plane hangs for a moment, about to blast back up, when the hook catches the last wire... plucking 45,000 pounds of fuel, metal and men out of the air and SLAMMING it all to the deck. Right wheel flies up the deck and over the side. The gear SCREECHES and collapses. Crew scatters as the plane slams into the net in cloud of fuel vapor and steam.

49. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. SILVER SUIT. TWILIGHT

The SILVER SUIT runs up.

LSO (over mike)

COUGAR, MERLIN... COME IN COUGAR!
SHUT YOUR ENGINES DOWN, YOU'VE
ARRIVED.

AIR BOSS (FILTERED VO)
GHOST RIDER! ACKNOWLEDGE!
GHOST RIDER! ACKNOWLEDGE!

Crash and fire crews leap into action. The man in the aluminized-cloth suit springs up to the cockpit. No one moves inside. He hits the canopy release. The canopy pops open. He grabs at the rear seat harness release.

SILVER SUIT
Merlin, can you hear me? Sir!

Nothing for a moment. Then the RIO'S helmet moves. He tears the mask away from his face, looks up at Silver Suit. His head clears.

MERLIN
Yeah...Let's get Cougar out of there.

Silver Suit grabs him under the armpits, drags him out of the plane. Merlin shakes his head to clear it.

Other crew members help Cougar out. He seems stunned.

Merlin spots Cougar being helped out. He pulls away, reaches back into the cockpit and grabs Cougar's snapshot of wife and kid. Crew leads Merlin away as firemen blast the aircraft's hot spots with foam.
50 and 51 OMITTED

52. INT. PRI-FLY. TWILIGHT

AIR BOSS
Clear the flight deck.

53. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. TWILIGHT

A TILLIE, a four wheel mobile crane, slams up to Cougar's plane and slings its lifting harness.

FLIGHT SURGEON arrives and helps Cougar off.

54. OMITTED

55. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. TWILIGHT

Maverick's Tomcat approaches-

GOOSE (VO)

(like a stewardess)

On behalf of your Captain and your crew, I want to thank you for flying VF114. And next time your plans include a tornado in the middle of the goddamn ocean in the dead of the night, I hope you'll think of...Naval Aviation.

Tomcat slams onto the deck, clearing the wreckage by inches.

GOOSE (VO)

Great BALLS of fire!

56. OMITTED

57. OMITTED

58. INT. 03 LEVEL. BELOW DECKS. OFFICER'S COUNTRY. NIGHT.

The usual CLANGS, WHISTLES, ENGINES of Navy life sound FORLORN ECHOING through the dim, deserted passage. From the distance, a single figure passes in and out of the glow of the overhead lights. Cougar comes closer, hobbling unsteadily. He reaches a door, pulls himself erect and knocks on the sign:

Commander Tom Otawoczek
CO VF 114
STINGER

59. INT. STINGER'S CABIN. NIGHT.

The skipper works at his desk, responds without looking up.

STINGER

Come in.

He looks up. Cougar stands in the doorway, a strange, dazed look on his face.

STINGER

Cougar, you should be in sick bay.
What's on your mind?

He walks over to the skipper's desk. His eyes are glazed, but his jaw is firm.

COUGAR

My wife and kid.

A determined movement. Hand to chest.

Something metal hits the desk, skids across the polished surface and clangs up against the coffee mug: gold wings.

60. INT. 03 LEVEL. PASSAGEWAY. NIGHT.

Cougar comes out of Stinger's room, bumps into Goose, and Maverick. He turns the other way.

GOOSE

Cougar!

He stops, turns to them.

COUGAR

Thanks Maverick.

Looks at them, walks away.

MAVERICK

(puzzled)
Cougar?

STINGER (O.S.)

Maverick, Goose... Come in here.

61. INT. STINGER'S OFFICE. DOORWAY. NIGHT.

Maverick appears, followed by Goose. They stand at attention.

MAVERICK

Sir?

The Skipper is looking away, says nothing. Maverick sees the wings on the desk. He cuts his eyes to the wings to direct Goose's attention to them. Goose sees them and is puzzled.

STINGER

You just did an incredibly brave thing.
(turning to them)

What you should have done was land
your plane. You don't own that plane,
the taxpayers do. Maverick lets not
bullshit. You had some shit on your
shoes when you came in the Navy. *
You need to be doin' it BETTER and CLEANER,
than the other guy.
(exasperated)

What is it with you?

Maverick tenses up, shifts a bit on his feet.

MAVERICK

(Small smile)

I just want to serve my country and
be the best pilot in the Navy Sir. *

Maverick's not sure what's next. Stinger stares at Goose.
Then at Maverick.

STINGER

Don't screw around with me Maverick. *
You're a hell of an instinctive pilot.
Maybe...too good. You've never really
stepped in it yet. So I'm gonna' give
you a chance. I'm gonna give you your dream
shot. You both are going to Top Gun
Training.

Maverick and Goose are surprised.

STINGER

For five weeks you're going to
bust your ass against the best of the best *
Naval pilots. You were number two.
Cougar was number one. Now he's not.

Goose and Maverick exchange looks. Stinger moves slightly,
to stand now, directly in front of Maverick and speak eye to
eye at four inches.

STINGER

But remember one thing- you are representing this squadron. That is all. Tell me about the MiG some other time...

MAVERICK AND GOOSE

Yes Sir!

Maverick and Goose turn to leave.

STINGER

(to their backs)
Gentlemen!

MAVERICK/GOOSE

Sir?

His facade cracks just slightly.

STINGER

Good luck Gentlemen.

62. INT. PASSAGEWAY 03 level - NIGHT.

A gauntlet of YOUNG OFFICERS. Maverick, Goose, are the center of attention. They are notorious. Guys grab at them...questions...the MiGs?...What happened up there? How close did they get? What did the MiGs do? One word is heard over and over..."TopGun".

CULVER, a lieutenant, raises a toast.

CULVER

To the Ghost Riders -- the meanest goddamn mother-lovin' sons a bitches in the world. -- and to Maverick and Goose. Kick Ass and take names!

Some raucous CHEERS and LAUGHTER. Maverick and Goose push through and down the passageway. They move faster and faster. Like kids stealing watermelons.

GOOSE

Jesus H Christ on a stick!
Can you believe this shit?
In one day we suck two bogeys out of nowhere and then Top Gun training?

*
GOOSE

Me? Josh Bradshaw from Buck Holler
Tennessee? I'm going to Top Gun? I've got
to tell someBODY!

Maverick grins and smashes open a hatch door.

63. EXT. CARRIER DECK. NIGHT AND STORM.

A hatch slams open on the side of the carrier. Maverick and
Goose pop out onto the stormy catwalk cantilevered high over
the breaking sea. They plunge forward to the bow of the ship
and stand on the very peak. The NOISE of the green mountains
of water is incredible. They YELL into the showering winds.

TIGHT ON MAVERICK-He raises his fist in celebration to the
night.

The foaming slope of the wave rushes up, changing color as
it DISSOLVES TO:

64. DESERT SAND WHIPPING BY.....

EXT. MOJAVE DESERT A WEEK LATER. DAY

SUPER "MIRAMAR CALIFORNIA SEPTEMBER 1985"

A big bike, a REAL big bike, a turbo, rockets across the
desert. REAL fast. Aviator shades low across the
handlebars--Maverick. It cranks faster.. pulls closer.
ENGINE SCREAMING. HIGHER-its going to explode. It can't go
faster, but it does. IT SCREAMS HIGHER. It ROARS under, by
and away, leaving dust...

65. EXT. THE BIKE. STILL. DAY.

SILENCE. Just the HISS AND POP OF METAL COOKING. Maverick
sits on it, staring out past us.

CAMERA WIDENS--WE SEE the gate of the MIRAMAR NAVAL STATION.
A GUARD watches from his guardhouse under a
sign: FIGHTERTOWN, USA.

SOUND OF ORDNANCE AND EXPLOSIONS ON A SOUNDTRACK- *

66. OMITTED *

PAGE 18 omitted *J*

PAGE 18

67. omitted



68. EXT. AERIAL COMBAT. VIETNAM ERA. F4'S, MIG 17'S.
STOCK. DAY.

THE DOORS on the soundtrack. Jets swoop, missiles fire, a plane explodes. Gun camera views of MiGs, SAMS, flak, bombing runs...

JESTER (V.O.)

During the Korean War, the Navy kill ratio was twelve-to-one. We shot down twelve of their jets for every one of ours. In Vietnam, this ratio fell to three-to-one. Our pilots depended on missiles. When they went into the war, they had lost some of their dogfighting skills.

F-14's fighting with F-5's. Music becomes current.

JESTER (V.O.)

Top Gun was created to teach ACM. Air Combat Maneuvering...Dogfighting. Richthofen, Rickenbacker, Galland, Rudel, Bong would envy us. We do just what they did, but we do it past the speed of sound.

69. INT. TOP GUN ORIENTATION ROOM. DAY.

JESTER, A tough-looking, confident leader in a blue flight suit, stands before a video-game monitor. Behind him, on the monitor, the dogfighting continues.

JESTER

By the way, by the end of Vietnam our kill ratio was back up to twelve to one.

He turns on the lights. As everyone's eyes adjust, WE SEE VIPER-the Commanding Officer of Top Gun. He is a tough, quiet man. He commands, just standing there.

JESTER

Now I'd like to introduce our
Commanding Officer at Top Gun-
He is a Mig killer six times over.
He was the first man to win the
Top Gun trophy. You will not find
a better fighter pilot in the world.
His name is Mike Metcalf. Call sign
"Viper".

Viper walks slowly to the front. Audience in F.G. He speaks
carefully and quietly.

VIPER

You're here because you are the top
one per cent of all naval aviators.

THE CLASS-- Sixteen young men-- eight flight crews-- sit at
attention. They are trim, fit, and confident-- high school
heroes, college jocks.

VIPER (V.O.)

You're the elite, the best of the
best. We're gonna make you better,
because your job is damned important.

ANOTHER ANGLE--THE MEN

The CAMERA MOVES among them, hold on one of the men; cool,
steady, sizing up his competition. TOM KAZANSKY-The ICEMAN. ✕

VIPER (V.O.)

You'll be moving every minute here.
Flying at least two combat missions
a day, attending classes and evaluations
of your performance in between.

Ice is not looking at the speaker, but in our direction.
Hollywood, a blond, good-looking pilot, WHISPERS something
to him, and gestures. Ice is getting the lowdown on
someone. He nods and smiles. The CAMERA MOVES and we see who
that someone is, as Maverick enters the frame.

VIPER

In each sequence you'll face a different
combat challenge. Every combat session
will get more difficult. We'll teach you to
fly right to the edge of the envelope.
Faster than you've ever flown. And ...more
dangerous.

Maverick feels the stare of the other man and glances in his
direction. Their eyes meet. Ice smiles coldly.

ANGLE- VIPER

VIPER (Con't)

In case any of you gentlemen think think this training is not current. On August 19, 1981 at 1:20 am above the Gulf of Sidra, Two Libyan SU 22 fighters attacked. Naval aviators met them and downed them. The battle lasted a fraction under 60 seconds. The maneuvers that downed those attackers were learned sitting in these chairs. Both Naval pilots were Top Gun graduates.

~~X~~ We are not at war today. But we must always act like we're at war. We are the tip of the spear. We had best be sharp.

Maverick has turned to look at Ice. Ice glances back in his direction. Maverick looks around the room. Goose is looking up front...Where Viper has stopped. Goose nudges Maverick.

GOOSE

(whispers)

What are you DOING?

MAVERICK

(musing to himself)

...Just wondering...(turns back)
...who is the best.

He's shocked to find Viper staring right at him. He's caught a naughty schoolboy.

VIPER

(smiles)

If you want to know who's best.
We've got that plaque on the wall...with
the hottest driver and his RIO
from each class ends up on that plaque.
You think maybe your name's gonna be on it?

Maverick knows he's in trouble, considers the social alternatives, then tells him the truth.

MAVERICK

Yes sir.

A couple of ooh's and aahh's from the guys.

ON ICEMAN- stares at him with amused interest.

The instructors stare a challenge at him. He's a bit uncomfortable.

VIPER

That's a pretty arrogant attitude...
considering the company you're in.

Others LAUGH lightly.

MAVERICK

(somewhat chastised)

Yes sir.

VIPER

(after a beat)

I like that in a fighter pilot.

(bigger LAUGHS from the guys)

You have to think you're King Kong
to want to try to land on carriers.

Just keep in mind, when the battle out
there is over, we're all on the same team.

Viper gathers his notes, the lecture is over. Viper turns
back for one more thought. Everyone freezes.

VIPER

Gentlemen, this school is about combat.

Remember, there are no points

for second place. Dismissed.

Viper WALKS OUT. Maverick and Goose join a few pilots
milling around the Top Gun plaque.

GOOSE

Look at that sucker. Stairway to the
stars. The winner can get asked to be an
instructor. Get to FLY EVERY DAY.

ICE ✖

(sarcastic)

The plaque for the ALTERNATES is down in
the ladies room.

Iceman smiles.

Maverick winks confidently at Goose as they move closer to
examine the names on the plaque.

GOOSE

(staring into the future)

That's TWO "O"s in Goose.

70. EXT. "O" CLUB. NIGHT. ✕

Fast cars in the driveway, fast music BLARES into the night. It's Wednesday; Animal Night.

71. INT. WOXOF BAR. NIGHT.

entire "O" club is changed.

HARD ROCK MUSIC. Low ceiling, plaques of the squadrons line the walls. It's a "steam releaser" for people under pressure. Nevertheless, there is a control to it all, there are none of the usual bar types, just pilots and Naval Officers.

Maverick and Goose ENTER. Pilots talk flying and hustling girls.

Hollywood and Wolfman are at the bar as Goose and Maverick approach. INTROS-Goose shakes hands and so does Maverick.

WOLFMAN

So what are you telling me? You had TWO sets of sisters in the same night? Buullshit!

HOLLYWOOD

You do this every time Wolfman. You ask me about my weekend-I tell you-then you get pissed off because I had a better time than you did.

WOLFMAN

Hey Tokyo is MY TOWN. I had a great weekend.

HOLLYWOOD

Yeah-You and both your hands.

GOOSE

The way you guys fight you oughta get married.

WOLFMAN

(to Goose)

You're a walking damn scar on the Fighter pilot's motto. It's better to die than look bad.

GOOSE

You are messing with the King of the skies. Let's count scars in five weeks Wolfman!

Goose glares at him like a mosquito. Exchanges friendly punches with another passing pilot. Maverick is a bit reserved. He scans the room for ladies. Goose orders beer. He nods toward KELLER a lanky dark-haired pilot.

GOOSE

That's Keller, Black Lion Squadron. He's damn good.

MAVERICK

Is there anybody in the Navy you don't know?

GOOSE

You forget I am a Bona Fide RINGKNOCKER.
(knocking his ANNAPOLIS ring on bar)
I knew a lot of these geniuses at
Annapolis. Besides, I'm the RIO-
I gotta keep track of the competition.

Goose suddenly reaches out and grabs a guy moving past.

GOOSE

Slider-- they let you into Top Gun?
If you're the best in the Navy,
I tremble for the security of this
country.

SLIDER

Goose, whose butt did you kiss to get
here?

GOOSE

The list is long, but distinguished.

SLIDER

So's my Johnson.

GOOSE

Who's your pilot?

SLIDER

Tom Kazansky.

He indicates the end of the bar. Iceman looks up and walks
toward them.

GOOSE

(hiding his admiration
but very impressed)
No shit. The Iceman.

SLIDER

Mister The Iceman to you.

GOOSE

(to Maverick)
Another Ringknocker, I knew that
rich sonofabitch at Annapolis.
But damn he is good.

ON MAVERICK-He watches. Goose reads his mind.

GOOSE

You talk about the best of the best
well-you are lookin' at him.

GOOSE

It's the way he flies--ice cold. No mistakes. Wears you down. After enough time, you just get bored and frustrated, you do something stupid, and he's got you.

Ice arrives-orders a beer.

GOOSE

You think you can get it up twice a day to stay in the sky with us?

SLIDER

(looking at Maverick)
I think, yeah, we'll stumble along.

GOOSE

Oh, this is Pete Mitchell, he steers the thing.

ICE

(sceptically)
So I heard. Steers it pretty close.

Maverick is craning to see a girl through the dancers.

ICE

Sorry to hear about Cougar.
He and I were like brothers at flight school. He was a good man.

MAVERICK

Still is...

ICE

Yeah...That's what I meant.
(pause)
Figured it out yet?

MAVERICK

What's that?

ICE

Who is the best pilot.

MAVERICK

I think I can work it out on my own.

ICE

You like to work alone. I've heard that about you.

MAVERICK

I've heard about you, too. You like to mess with people's minds.

Ice smiles.

SLIDER

You must have soloed under a damn lucky star. First, the MiG, then you slide into Cougar's place.

Maverick sips his beer.

GOOSE

It's not Cougar's place. It's ours.

SLIDER

Guys fly their whole career without seeing a MiG up close...You're lucky and famous.

ICE

(walking away)

You mean notorious.

Slider and Ice leave. Goose shakes his head. Maverick smiles confidently. He checks out a pretty lady. Then sees someone across the dance floor, partially obscured by dancers. He cranes.

ON GIRL-sitting at a table, reading something, she is a beauty.

ON MAVERICK-he moves to look again.

GOOSE

Ok it's my turn isn't it?

MAVERICK

(nodding reluctantly)

Ok, your turn.

GOOSE

(thinking)

Ok... let's see. Sooo. The bet is \$20.00. and the gag is: You gotta' have carnal knowledge...of a lady.

Maverick shrugs, "no problem".

GOOSE

ON THE PREMISES.

MAVERICK

IN the bar? C'mon Goose!

Goose nods his head emphatically.

GOOSE
Deal's a deal. It's my turn to say.

Two beauties walk in the door.

MAVERICK
Goose that is just not fair...to you I mean. In this target-rich environment. Make it \$50.00!

Maverick starts walking toward girl.

ON GIRL-an officer comes up to her MOS asks her to dance-she smiles and shakes her head.

Maverick puzzles a bit, gulps his beer, then crosses to Goose. MUSIC TAKES A BREAK.

MAVERICK
I'm gonna need some help "Brother".

Maverick points to the girl at the table. Goose frowns.

GOOSE
Which one? That one?

Maverick nods.

GOOSE
Aw come on. Haven't you even tried to talk to her? Maybe we don't need to do this?

MAVERICK
No she already waved off one guy.

Goose follows Maverick over to the girl.

ON GIRL-reading something. She looks up.

Maverick is staring. Goose walks up behind him.

GOOSE
(for the benefit of the girl)
Oh No, No, leave her alone.

ON GIRL-she is surprised.

ON MAVERICK-He stares at her dramatically. Then he points at her.

MAVERICK
You ... never close your eyes anymore ...when I kiss...your liiips.

GOOSE

(apparently trying to stop Maverick)
No, No, No...
(suddenly turns, singing to the shocked girl)
There's nooo tenderness like before in your finger tiips.

OTHERS NEARBY STOP AND LISTEN to the new Righteous Brothers.

MAVERICK

I'm trying hard not to show it...

GOOSE

(plaintive)
He's trying hard not to show it.

MAVERICK

But Baby, believe me I know it.

GOOSE-

Believe me he KNOOOOOWZ it.

PAUSE. Goose turns to the gaping tipsy flyers. Leads them.
(No drunk in the world can resist finishing this song)

GOOSE

(with chorus)
You've lost that LOVIN' FEELING-
wwohh that LOVIN' FEELIN'

MAVERICK

(now a drunken chorus behind
him)

You've lost that lovin' feelin' now its
gone, gone, gone woohohohhhh.

ALL OTHERS CLAP. Other guys appreciate the risk Maverick has
taken. Will it pay off?

ON GIRL-no hint, she looks around,

OTHERS WATCH FOR HER REACTION-

ON GIRL- She looks up at Maverick and spontaneously explodes
in a big sunshine LAUGH. She pushes back a chair. Everybody
CLAPS. Maverick sits down with a relieved sigh. She LAUGHS
HARD. Goose leaves in pursuit of a girl.

GIRL

You are one lucky guy.

MAVERICK

I hope so.

GIRL

I love that song. God I have NEVER seen
that approach. How long you guys been doing
this act?

MAVERICK

Since--I guess...(thinking)

CHARLOTTE

Puberty?

MAVERICK

(smiling)

Yeah, just about then. Little hairs on the
face...

CHARLOTTE

(forthright-shakes his hand)

I'm Charlotte.

MAVERICK

Maverick.

CHARLOTTE

Mongrel?

MAVERICK

Not Mongrel!MAVERICK!
Pete Mitchell.

CHARLOTTE

MAV er ick? Did your mother not like you?

MAVERICK

No, its my code name.



CHARLOTTE

Oh. I see. So you're a pilot?
Well I think I shou...

MAVERICK

(interrupting)
A NAVAL pilot.

She smiles and nods. She returns to her writing.

CHARLOTTE

(indicating the song)
Tell me. Aren't you afraid some
girl's going to get embarrassed and run
out crying?

MAVERICK

Nah, embarrassment's good for the brain
cortex. Keeps blood in the cheeks.

Charlotte nods and LAUGHS:

MAVERICK

To tell you the truth,
we've only done it twice.

Looking at him directly.

CHARLOTTE

How'd you do?

MAVERICK

(remembering)
Crashed and burned on the first one...

CHARLOTTE

(looking up)
...and the second one?

MAVERICK

(wry smile)
I'll tell you tomorrow. But its looking
good so far.

Charlotte LAUGHS heartily.

ON ICEMAN-he watches.

BACK TO MAVERICK AND CHARLIE

CHARLOTTE

Listen, I really appreciate talking to you. But my friend has arrived.

Maverick looks up. PERRY SIEBENTHAL is approaching. He is quite a bit older than Charlotte. Dressed in a suit.

CHARLOTTE

Let me ask you, are you a GOOD pilot?

MAVERICK

...Yeah...I'm ...OK.

CHARLOTTE

Good, then I won't have to worry about you making a living as a singer?

MOS Perry ARRIVES. Maverick stands, handshakes. Charlie smiles. Maverick reluctantly walks to the bar. Orders another beer. Charlie and Perry talk intently look over some papers.

ON MAVERICK-TIGHT

Drinking his beer. He glances back at Charlie. Smitten.

Maverick's POV. He sees Perry gather some papers and prepare to leave. Goose goes back to Mary Anne.

Maverick's POV- Charlotte is gathering her things. Glances in his direction for a fraction of a micro-second. She heads across the floor alone.

Maverick downs his beer in a massive gulp and strides after Charlotte.

Goose spots Charlotte.

ON CHARLOTTE- Walking- she is even more beautiful.

Maverick walks by Goose. /

72. INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE BAR. NIGHT.

Maverick breaks out, looks around, sees Perry EXIT alone, doesn't see Charlotte. Someone disappears around a corner. He follows.

CORNER-- A door slams shut. Impulsively, before he realizes what he is doing, he's through it.

73. INT. WOMEN'S ROOM. NIGHT.

Charlotte is standing by the mirror, with her arms folded. Waiting for him.

He has no idea what to say. She looks at him with an amused smile.

CHARLOTTE

Long cruise, was it Sailor?

She leans over the sink, puts on lipstick, sees his eyes cover her. She laughs. But she's instinctively attracted.

CHARLIE

Hold this.

She hands him a compact. Rummages for another lipstick, hands him an old one. Finds right one and begins redoing her lipstick. He stares at her...She looks up, amused.

CHARLOTTE

What did you want to do, just drop down on the tile and go for it?

MAVERICK

No, that's not what I had planned.

CHARLIE

Come on-It isn't?

MAVERICK

No, well...I thought we could use my coat.

CHARLIE

That would be comfortable.

MAVERICK

I...I came to save you from a big mistake with that older guy.

CHARLIE

(laughing)

And on to a bigger one with you?

MAVERICK

Yeah, most likely.

She takes the compact out of his hands, snaps it closed.

CHARLIE

I'm really flattered, Lieutenant, but I think I've done enough damage here tonight- I've got to go to work early in the morning.

MAVERICK

(to Charlie)

Then what are you doing here?

TOILET FLUSHES- A hefty black girl SLAMS OPEN THE DOOR from a toilet enclosure, steps out. Looks at Maverick angrily. She straightens her skirt, shakes her ample bosoms at him.

BLACK GIRL

Hold on sucker! In case you ain't noticed YOU are in the LADIES ROOM.

The question is what are YOU doing here?

Charlotte tries to keep a straight face as she WALKS OUT of the bathroom. Black Girl look at him expectantly. A beat. He just stands there, then realizes he's holding her lipstick.

MAVERICK
I'm here to talk about a new
concept in cosmetics.

He sprints out with the lipstick.

74. INT. WOXOF BAR. NIGHT.

Charlotte strides past the gaping Goose.

CHARLOTTE
Your friend was magnificent.

Goose is wide-eyed.

Charlie EXITS bar.

Maverick strides by Goose.

GOOSE
God do I really owe you \$20.00?

Maverick runs up. Watches as she leaves. ✂

MAVERICK
Nope. You owe me Fifty! ✂

*
75,76,77,78 OMITTED

79. INT. TOP GUN. NEXT MORNING.

JESTER
In the back of this room stands your
enemy. Your instructors.

CAMERA TRACES the relaxed, poised, mean faces of the guys in
blue flight suits. An occasional TOPGUN cap.

JESTER
Photographs of all of them are stored
in the war room of the Kremlin. Let me
assure you. They fly dirty.

Maverick turns back to his notes.

JESTER

You will be trained and evaluated by a few civilian specialists as well. These civilians are here because they are the very best sources on enemy aircraft as well as...

SFX footsteps... door opening. Jester looks up to back of room door.

JESTER

Hi, Charlie. Good, our TAGREP's here. Charlie's the most qualified to get into P subs and curves, and VN diagrams.

Goose turns to see the TAGREP walk forward. He stares and then fixes on Maverick. Maverick looks at Goose's stare and then turns to see the TAGREP. He freezes as she passes without acknowledging him. He is flattened with embarrassment.

JESTER

Charlotte Blackwood-- code name Charlie-- she's a Ph.D. in astrophysics. She's a civilian contractor, so you don't salute her, but you'd better listen to her, 'cause The Pentagon listens to her--about YOUR proficiency. Is that clear?

She walks to the front and starts her dazzlingly technical talk on MiG tactics and technology. Maverick tries to hide by looking straight ahead. Goose chuckles.

CHARLIE

* Hello. We will be dealing with F-5's and A4's, as our MiG simulators. As most of you know, the F-5 does not have the thrust to weight ratio of the MiG-23--it also does not bleed energy below 300 knots like the MiG-23. Now the MiG-23 has a problem with the inverted flight tanks. It won't do a Negative G push over.

A SNICKER from the audience. She hesitates--then goes on.

CHARLIE

The latest intelligence shows that the most they will do in operation is one... is there something wrong, Lieutenant?

MAVERICK

* I don't think you're data is current. ... about the MiG, that is.

She stops-- some of the pilots look at him. Viper ENTERS at the back of the room. Jester glares. Time's wasting.

CHARLIE
How's that Lieutenant?

MAVERICK
I saw a MiG do a 4 G negative dive.

GOOSE
(pointing at Maverick)
We- Maverick and I...

Charlie smiles, walks over.

CHARLIE
(She doesn't believe him)
Where did you see that, Lieutenant?

Maverick looks past her.

MAVERICK
(a beat)
It's classified.

Nervous buzz in the room. Jester goes rigid. Charlie can't believe it.

CHARLIE
It's what?

MAVERICK
It's classified.
(long pause)
I could tell you, but then
I'd have to kill you.

The others CHUCKLE.

JESTER

Lieutenant, talk to the lady!

She stops Jester with a glance. She can handle herself. She is not overbearing. Doesn't want to embarrass him, but she is fascinated by the information.

CHARLIE

Lieutenant, I have a top secret clearance. The Pentagon sees to it that I know more than you.

MAVERICK

Not in this case.

CHARLIE

Where were YOU?

MAVERICK

On his six. At first, then I levelled out and I was directly above him.

Stifled LAUGHS. She stares at him for a moment, then she has him. She goes for the kill.

CHARLIE

If you were directly above him, how did you see him?

ON ICEMAN-he shakes his head in dismay.

MAVERICK

(a beat)
I was inverted.

A real buzz in the room. Ice LAUGHS in disbelief.

CHARLIE

You were in a 4G INVERTED dive with a MiG-23? (She can't believe it.)
At what range?

MAVERICK

Two.

CHARLIE

Two miles.

MAVERICK

Two meters.

Chuckles, barely suppressed. Goose pipes up.

GOOSE

One and a half, actually. I got a polaroid.

CHARLIE

(flatly.)

Lieutenant...What were you doing there?

MAVERICK

(a beat)

Trying... to communicate with him.

Charlie waits.

MAVERICK

Giving him the bird.

Open LAUGHTER. Charlie stares questioningly.

GOOSE

You know. The finger.

Goose prepares to show her, but she turns to him. (FLIPS/NO FLIPS)

CHARLIE

I know the bird. Goose!

The room breaks into laughter. She stares at Maverick.

CHARLIE

So YOU'RE the one.

Jester looks at his watch. Taps it at Charlie.

CHARLIE

Come on, you've got a hop to take.
Men the hard deck for this hop is 10,000 feet. No engagement below that altitude.
Go get 'em.

80. INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE LECTURE HALL. DAY.

Charlie is near the exit. Maverick has to walk by her. She stops him.

CHARLIE

Lieutenant.

He is conflicted as hell. They speak low, and manage a private conversation.

CHARLIE

Lieutenant why didn't you tell me
you were a famous MiG insulter? *

MAVERICK

Would it have made a difference?

CHARLIE

Not in the ladies room.

MAVERICK

What would?

CHARLIE

Look. I'm an instructor at this school. I see
sixteen new hotshots every eight weeks.
You figure it out. Let's just have a cup
of coffee. I'd really like to hear about
the MiG.

MAVERICK

(smiling)

Nah, I got to work in the morning.
You've got the security clearance.
You can read about it.

ON MAVERICK-walking away. He is smiling.

ON CHARLIE- she smiles too, shakes her head.

Maverick moves down the corridor. Ice comes into the
corridor, and walks just in front of him.

ICE

Tell me, who was covering Cougar
while you were showboating with this MiG? *

MAVERICK

(not amused) *

He was doing fine.

Ice smiles and shakes his head. Walks on ahead. *

Maverick looks after him, smolders a bit.

INTERCUT

81. EXT. SKY. LATER THAT DAY.

82. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

83. INT. JESTER'S COCKPIT. DAY.

At twenty-eight thousand feet, the two planes circle each other, going in opposite directions. As they jockey for position, they snap past each other like ends of bullwhips. The earth spins, the horizon appears and disappears. With each hard turn, Maverick and Goose can be heard "grunting" to keep blood in their brains, to keep from passing out.

The fight is hard, physical, and exhausting. The extreme G forces--6.5--flatten them against their seats, causing their heads to weigh over one hundred pounds. Maverick strains to turn his head and track the other jet as it streaks past at Mach One.

MAVERICK

I've lost him-- where is he?

GOOSE

On your six-- coming hard. Four hundred, losing airspeed! He's on your six and closing fast! Hard left! HARD LEFT!

Maverick jerks the stick left, and the F-14 takes an astonishing turn. Jester ROARS past into a wide arc.

GOOSE

Great move. Great.

MAVERICK

He should've had me.

GOOSE

Take it down. Let's bug out of here. Call for a draw.

MAVERICK

No way. I'll nail him this time. Going vertical.

THE PLANE EXPLODES INTO AFTERBURNER -- rocketing toward space.

Jester is left in direct line with the sun, and his canopy is sprayed with a blinding glare.

GOOSE

He's blind -- you got him!

JESTER

NO JOY! NO JOY! WHERE ARE YOU?
I'VE LOST SIGHT.

GOOSE

He's out of energy! You got
control? Unload!

The F-14 peels over the egg, in a backward dive. It rockets down the outside, gaining energy. Over the ROAR of jets, the SCREAM of the wind, Goose SHOUTS DATA, but it is muffled, a distant voice in a typhoon. Through the canopy, WE SEE Jester, and he hangs in the air like a sparrow in the path of a falcon.

PILOT'S POV-- HUD in windscreen-- a diamond in a box. Maverick lines up the diamond with Jester, and we hear the high pitched tone BEEPING.

JESTER

WE'RE BELOW THE HARD DECK.
KNOCK IT OFF!

GOOSE

He's right. We're at ten thousand.

MAVERICK

What a Chicken-shit maneuver.
No way. I got you, sucker.
You're going down.

Jester maneuvers, but Maverick keeps him in the gunsight. The BEEPING is louder, faster.

MAVERICK

In the envelope. FOX TWO.
YOU'RE GONE, JESTER, DEAD!

There is an edge of anger in Jester's voice.

JESTER

ROGER FOX TWO. GET YOUR BUTTS
ABOVE THE HARD DECK. RETURN TO
BASE IMMEDIATELY.

They are brought up short for a moment, then the thrill of victory gets the best of them. Goose lets out a WAR WHOOP. The F-14 sweeps up, rolls into an Immelman...

MAVERICK

We did it!

GOOSE

Look, Ma, top of the world!

84. EXT. MIRAMAR. LANDING PATTERN. DAY.

85. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

Maverick's Tomcat breaks hard and high, rolls over on its side, wings perpendicular to the ground. Goose sees the world go sideways.

GOOSE

Ahhh...A little high on the left, don't you think?

MAVERICK

Right.

He aileron rolls another quarter turn. Inverted, they pass right down the runway. Goose looks out and insouciantly watches the world go by at 300 knots, upside down.

GOOSE

Right. Much better. ...Ahhh... what do you call this?

MAVERICK

It's a victory roll.

GOOSE

I wouldn't call it victory. It's more like.. self abuse! Great BALLS of Fire!

86. INT. CONTROL TOWER. DAY.

Controllers work. Officers watch the landing activity. One old salt, REDNECK Johnson, turns from the coffee machine, a cup of steaming java microns from his lips. A ROAR. VABOOM! The Tomcat roars over. He yelps as hot coffee flies all over his shirt.

87. EXT. MIRAMAR LANDING PATTERN. MAVERICK'S F-14. DAY.

They complete the roll, bank left, zoom right by the tower, level with the observation window.

88.EXT. CONTROL TOWER. F-14'S POV. DAY.

Controllers look out at the F-14, mouths drop open.

89. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. ANGLE GOOSE. DAY .

He waves jauntily.

GOOSE

Hi...Hi there. Good morning!How ya doing in there? Mav... Ahhh... you know, at one point I did want a Navy career.

MAVERICK

Come on, relax...Now they know who we are.

GOOSE

I hope "Redneck" Johnson wasn't in there. He was just made Air Boss of the Kitty Hawk! We might need to go back there sometime ya know.

89a. INT. CONTROL TOWER-DAY

Commander Johnson is being wiped off by two underlings.

MAVERICK

Come on, we won! How many times in your life do you get to do a victory roll?

GOOSE

Just once, if they take your plane away.

90. EXT. MIRAMAR. LANDING PATTERN. MAVERICK'S F-14. DAY.

They roll out, break over the runway.

91. EXT. FLIGHTLINE. DAY.

Maverick and Goose walk by parking Tomcats... Ice is unstrapping, Slider is climbing down. Ice looks at Maverick.

ICE

You guys really ARE cowboys

Jester, glares at them from his A4.

MAVERICK

Hard deck my ass. We beat the Son of a Bitch!

Wolfman and Hollywood walk up. Goose suddenly flashes a thumb's up sign with a grin. The guys react with clenched fists, ad libs, high fives, victory punches.

WOLFMAN

You won?!!!

GOOSE

Didn't everybody?

"Oooo" -- they all go "ooo" and laugh.

HOLLYWOOD

No, we... got our butts kicked.

WOLFMAN

(using his hands)

Thirty seconds. We went like this, he went like that. I say to Hollywood: Where'd he go? Hollywood says: Where'd who go?

HOLLYWOOD

And he's laughing. Right over the radio, he's laughing at us.

Ice and Slider walk by. Slider gives a brief dramatic pause, then flashes thumbs up and smiles. The students celebrate Ice's win. Ice handles the attention with the easy composure of one who is used to it. Maverick ignores him. Ice moves toward hangar.

HOLLYWOOD

Maverick and Goose won too.

Ice, over his shoulder.

ICE

That's not what I heard.

GOOSE

(insistent)

We won!

Slider turns back.

SLIDER

Below the hard deck doesn't count. Remember, no points for second place!

Maverick moves to Iceman.

MAVERICK

What is your problem Kazansky?

ICEMAN

(just below angry)

My problem is I don't like flying with you. Its too dangerous for the people around you. You are dangerous!

*

Maverick grins. Jester walks by.

MAVERICK

(screwing with Ice's mind)

That's right. I AM dangerous.

*

JESTER

Maverick, Goose. Viper's office. Now!

92 Omitted

93. INT. TOPGUN CORRIDOR OUTSIDE CO'S (VIPER'S) OFFICE. DAY.

SCREAMING AND YELLING- muffled by the door.

46A.

94. INT. ANTEROOM. DAY.

ENLISTED YEOMEN and CHIEFS go about their clerical duties in acute embarrassment mixed with curiosity. Behind the CO's door, someone is screaming his head off.

BOOM! The door bursts open. A big, brawling Officer. Redneck Johnson, the new Air Boss-- blasts out, nearly smashing into a FEMALE PETTY OFFICER. She almost spills her coffee. Johnson looks right and left in fury too stong for words. He looks like he wants to smash something. They move out of his way, but he just blasts through the door and disappears down the hall. The enlisted men turn to Viper's office.

95. INT. VIPER'S OFFICE. THEIR POV. DAY.

Jester stands inside stonefaced. Maverick and Goose are rigid. Viper...with excess calm deliberation, softly walks over, grasps the doornob. He glances in their direction. The glance is totally without expression, and even scarier for that.

96. INT. ANTEROOM. ANGLE ENLISTED MEN. DAY.

In a flash, each man finds something totally engrossing in his work, or something terribly important to do elsewhere. Slowly, steadily, Viper swings his door closed.

97. INT. VIPER'S OFFICE. DAY. ** whole scene changed*

He moves over to face Maverick. There is a SILENCE like after a train wreck; nothing but the POPPING of sprung metal and the low GASP of escaping steam. Viper speaks quietly, like a funeral director consoling the living. Makes you want to scream.

VIPER

Well...gentlemen you had a hell of a first day. The hard deck on this hop was 10,000 feet- you knew it, you broke it- and followed Lt. Candela below, after he lost sight of you and called "no joy". Why?

Maverick is exhausted. It's been a long, rough day. His voice is a hoarse whisper.

MAVERICK

Sir, I had him in sight , he saw me move in for the kill, then he went below the hard deck. We were only below 10,000 for a few seconds. I had the shot-there was no danger-so I took it.

Viper looks at Jester very briefly.

VIPER

Right, you took it- and...you broke a major rule of engagement. Then you broke another one with that 360 degree circus stunt roll. Lt. Mitchell, the Top Gun rules of engagement exist to protect you and your team. They are not flexible and neither am I. You either obey them or you are history. Is that clear?

MAVERICK

Yes sir, perfectly clear.

Viper measures him for a moment.

VIPER

Dismissed.

Maverick and Goose leave the room.

97a. INT. HALLWAY. DAY

Maverick is not happy. He walks along the hallway and past a room where Charlie is evaluating a pilot's performance. He glances in. Charlie looks out at him for a second.

98. INT. VIPER'S OFFICE-DAY.

Viper looks at Jester, who picks up Maverick's fitness report. Looks at Viper.

JESTER

I don't know what to say, Skip.
His fitness report says he's a wild card.
Seat of the pants... Completely
unpredictable--nothing by the book. All
over the sky.

VIPER

He got you didn't he?

Jester nods.

VIPER

"Maverick!" I flew with his old man.

JESTER

Yeah. I don't think I've ever
heard the whole story on that.

VIPER

(waves him off casually)
Tell me one thing.
...If you had to go into combat,
would you want him with you?

Jester walks slowly around the room. The walls are lined with pictures; planes, pilots the glorious history of jet fighters.

JESTER

I don't know Skipper. I just don't know.

99. INT. MAVERICK'S ROOM-NIGHT

Whole scene changed.

He is studying hard. MUSIC. Slide rulers and graph papers. He leans back in the chair. Chews his lip a bit. Goose sticks his head in.

MAVERICK

I think that equipment's a little slow at the top end. Could you tell Coogan to check compression on 2?

GOOSE

Sure. Don't worry about it. We'll get 'em.

MAVERICK

We were right Goose. We had him.

Goose nods.

MAVERICK

Tell me about Viper.

GOOSE

The Prince of Darkness.
He's a born flawless flying weapon.
He's a Mig Killer-
but almost all he's done is classified.
No one knows much about anything except
he is ... Mr. Death.

MAVERICK

Will he fly against us?

GOOSE

Rarely, maybe against the Top Gun.

MAVERICK

I'll be proud to fly against him.

Goose EXITS. Maverick takes out his wallet. Lies down on bed.

ON WALLET TIGHT-he takes out a tattered picture. On back WE SEE "JULY 15, 1965"

ON TABLE- Maverick sets up the photograph next to one of his mother.

TIGHT ON PHOTO-A smiling young Maverick on his father's shoulders next to an F-4. CAMERA HINGES right to see A NAVY CROSS on a chain.

TIGHT ON MAVERICK-lies back, thinking hard.

100. OMITTED

101 omitted ✕
102. INT. LIBRARY-AFTERNOON

Maverick is studying hard. Graphs and maps spread out on the table. One guy is across the room studying.

CHARLIE (vo)
Here's your simulator evaluation. ✕

Hands him a paper. He is surprised.

CHARLIE
(starts to leave)
OK Lieutenant. I'm sorry.

He looks up surprised.

CHARLIE
Last night? I didn't tell you who I was?
Isn't that what you wanted to hear?

Other guy EXITS in BG. Maverick is gathering himself to get back in the chess game. He nods and smiles.

CHARLIE

Let me put it another way...
You deserved it...but I'm sorry.

MAVERICK

(confident smile)
I know.

CHARLIE

You know what?

MAVERICK

(leans back in chair, brightly)
You were tempted. You want to go to dinner?

CHARLIE

(smiling, anticipating him)
No-I never date...students.

Mimicking an arrow wound Maverick scrambles for position.
She prepares to leave. *

MAVERICK

(holding her attention)
Could you tell me the co-efficient for
this?

Charlie leans over, puts her hand on an open book.

CHARLIE

(thinking)
Try this one here.

MAVERICK

(double meaning)
Was I too fast?

CHARLIE

Yeah...Maybe...Too aggressive?

MAVERICK

Yep, when I see it I go after it.

She starts to move away. He gently traps her hand in the
book.

MAVERICK

(serious)
Look. I can see it's risky for you.
But if the government trusts me, maybe

She slips her hand out of the book, takes his evaluation sheet and writes something on it before she gives it to him.

CHARLIE

It takes more than just fancy flying.

He looks at it. She has written.

"503 Laurel Beach Road-7:00-casual and Classified!"

CHARLIE

(walking away)

But it does help.

On MAVERICK-smiling-once again-a happy man.

103.OMITTED *

104. omitted *

SMASH CUT TO:

105. VICIOUS VOLLEY BALL GAME. MIRAMAR BASE.

Goose and Maverick against Slider and Ice. It is a tough match which has degenerated into more than a game.

Slider sets it up for Ice, he spikes it into Goose. Goose sets it up and Maverick spikes it back, drills Slider and wins the point.

Goose jumps around happily. Maverick goes to side and checks watch and puts on shirt.

GOOSE

(Surprised, offended)

Hey what's happening? That evens it up, we got to destroy these turkeys.

MAVERICK

YOU got to, I got to blast out'a here.

Maverick runs to his bike and speeds away. Goose watches.

106. EXT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE-EVENING

Light is beginning to fade. Maverick has been RAPPING on the door. No answer. He goes around to a window. Table is set. Dishes wrapped in aluminum foil on the counter top.

He looks out on back deck over the beach-no one.

107. ON BEACH-with his bike he explores along the beach in one direction. No Charlie. Zooms past house toward other direction.

108. ON DECK-Charlie, dressed in a sweater, just sitting down in a lounge chair. Motionless, she watches him zoom by.

109. ON MAVERICK - TIGHT

He returns to the beach in back of the house and turns off engine. He sniffs the air. Steaks are broiling. MUSIC eases out from the deck. He parks the bike.

110. INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

She is re-fixing dinner. It is a good one. He appears in the open doorway. She doesn't look up but she's relaxed and not angry.

W/Make some changes

CHARLIE
No singing Lieutenant.

He smiles.

MAVERICK
I'm...

CHARLIE
(not angry)
No apologies Lieutenant. Sit down.

Instead, Maverick wanders a bit. Down a hallway. Looks into her study. It has two computers in it. Charts of aircraft on the walls. High tech. But flowers everywhere too.

MAVERICK
Could I take a shower?

She's shocked. She looks at him. He looks ok. She LAUGHS.

CHARLIE
Hell No. I'm hungry.

DISSOLVE TO:

111. INT. DINING ROOM-LATER

She has served a simple but finely detailed meal. Carved carrots, good bread. It's food art. He is overwhelmed. But she loves it even more than he does.

CHARLIE
Great Beans Charlie! I love them this way.

MAVERICK
Why can't I apologize?

CHARLIE
(LAUGHING)
No way!
Its like putting a muzzle on a man if he can't apologize for being late. A lady's got him. And SHE gets to talk. Besides-your being late gave me time to think.

(Pause-thoughtful enumeration)
I rent my house. I lease my car. I get my mail at a post office box. I move around alot because I like the independence. *

CHARLIE

I'm trying for a major promotion and if I work hard as hell I won't be HERE much longer.

I've probably got twenty IQ points on you and yet-
you are the first student pilot
I've ever let NEAR this place. ✖

Maverick smiles and chews his thoughts slowly, he thinks she's falling for him.

CHARLIE

But then I figured it out. Right there in front of me. So I thought. He's a savvy guy. I'll just tell him why I've got him here. ✖

He stops eating and looks at her.

CHARLIE

It's the MiG!

Maverick is shot down. Mouthful of food.

MAVERICK

The MiG!

CHARLIE

You are the only pilot I have ever talked to who has been up against that new machine. In my business, whole careers are made over great analyses of a new weapon like that MiG. If I can get something, ANYthing new about it, it'll help me do a better job. If I do a better job. I'll GET a better job.

Maverick slowly nods his head and smiles. The chess game is beginning.

MAVERICK

That's it? Got it all figured out?

She looks away and nods.

MAVERICK

Then where is the wine?

CHARLIE

Wine?

(jumping up)

Oh my God. I forgot the wine.

She gets a chilled bottle and fills his glass. He's back in the game.

MAVERICK

'You got any Bill Evan's music?

CHARLIE

How'd you know? Yes.

He nods at the records. She gets up to put it on.

Maverick gets up and stretches out on the couch with his wine.

ON CHARLIE-puts music on. She's a little apprehensive. She sits cautiously in a chair.

MUSIC PLAYS-he gets lost in it.

MAVERICK

You always get what you want?

CHARLIE

Well...not all ...yes.

ON MAVERICK-smiling.

MAVERICK

Well, then relax about the MiG.

She smiles lightly. He leans back and closes his eyes, listens to the music. She watches him a little nervously.

MAVERICK

My mother loved this stuff. Used to sit alone for hours and listen to it.

CHARLIE

(a beat. Asking in spite of herself)
Why...was she alone?

MAVERICK

I figured with your security clearance you'd know more about my father than I do.

CHARLIE

Didn't get that far.

He throws her the Navy Cross. She catches it, looks at it.

MAVERICK

Big mystery. He disappeared. In an F-4. The smell of it was- he screwed up. No way! He was a great pilot. But who the hell knows? It's all classified.

CHARLIE

Somebody must know.

MAVERICK

SOMEbody knows everything.

CHARLIE

(a beat)

Well I don't know why you are always second best up there?

A direct hit. Maverick looks at her.

MAVERICK

(uncomfortable)

Well you are direct aren't you?
(thinking)

I've got no money. Didn't go to Annapolis. I've got a way of flying. And some instincts...They don't always salute exactly when the parade goes by. I fly like I fly...because I...

CHARLIE

...don't know any better?

MAVERICK

God...I don't know if I like you or not?

CHARLIE

Look, I talk like you fly.
If I see it. I say it.
I tried it the other way. Like ladies do.
It didn't work out.
Here's how I see it. You and I are both too good to piss away our lives being second best.

Maverick rolls his wine around the glass. Thinks a long time.

MAVERICK

OK... you're gonna enlighten me.
What am I gonna do for you?

He looks straight at her.

CHARLIE

(flustered, a too-long pause)
...You are going to tell me about
your MiG.

MAVERICK

(still staring at her)
I'm sorry for being late.

Maverick leans over and takes back the Navy Cross.

CHARLIE

(flustered a bit)
Well I'm sorry for being direct.

He puts his finger on her lips. Straightens a falling lock of
hair.

MAVERICK

No apologies.

CHARLIE

(very softly)
Look, this is very complicated for me.

He eases away. An understanding smile. He stands.

CHARLIE

(a soft question)
Where are you going?

MAVERICK

(over his shoulder)
I'm going to take a shower.

She watches him, where is he going to take the shower?
He doesn't go down the hallway and to her shower. He goes
instead to the outside door. He sets the lipstick she forgot
in the "O" club- on a shelf.

MAVERICK

Thanks, I like being here.

He EXITS. Charlie lays back on the couch. SOUND OF BIKE
LEAVING.

CHARLIE

(whisper-dissolving)
Oh shit.

112. EXT. DESERT. TACTS RANGE. DAY.

An F-14 SWOOSHES over the desert, ROARS over an antenna
complex. In its missile rack, it carries a TACTS transponder.
The TACTS Range is an area of the desert completely
enveloped by computerized radar.

The computers calculate a number of aircraft's positions and velocities by means of transponders in the ships and ground stations that talk to each other thousands of times a second. Using this system, it is possible to track aerial combat instantaneously and give pilots directions and also to play back the combats for analysis.

113. INT. TACTS RANGE TRAILER. DAY.

The double viewing screens are five feet high; high technology, state of the art. On the screens are computer animated figures showing jets from various angles. Flight data is displayed. The operators punch buttons to show various points-of-view of the battle: a pilot's POV; God's POV from overhead, a long range POV, showing topography of the landscape and height of the mountains.

Students and instructors sit on chairs in the peanut gallery, facing Viper at the front of the room.

VIPER

The bandit has good position right here. All right, freeze here. The moment of choice-- the F-14 is defensive. He has a chance to bug out right here... Better to retire and save your plane than force a bad position.

Charlie ENTERS.

VIPER

Jump in here anytime Charlie.

She studies the screen. She doesn't know who they're evaluating.

VIPER

Stay in the diamond another three seconds, the bandit will blow you out of the sky... make a hard right, select zone 5...you can extend and escape. You make a bad choice. Roll forward.

The computerized rendering resumes on the screen. WE SEE THE "S" CURVE OF THE MANEUVER. Viper motions for Charlie to continue.

CHARLIE

The F-14 performs a split S? That's the last thing you should do. The MiG is right on your tail-- freeze there... the MiG has you in his gunsight. What were you thinking here?

Looking around the room for the pilot.

MAVERICK

(long pause)

I wasn't thinking. You think and you're
dead. *

CHARLIE

(chagrined, off-guard,
but full speed ahead) *

Big gamble with a thirty million
dollar plane Lieutenant.

MAVERICK

(fatigued with it, ironic)

No guts, no glory.

Some of the students LAUGH and mockingly whistle at the
cockiness of it. They give Maverick the high sign. Charlie
notes his sarcasm.

CHARLIE

Your guts. His glory.

Maverick slumps down in his chair. The computer rendering
rolls forward again. He glances at Charlie. She shoots him
a micro-glance- like "I told you it was going to be
complicated!"

VIPER

Unfortunately, the gamble worked,
or you might have learned something.
The MiG never gets a clean shot...
Maverick makes an aggressive vertical
move here, comes over the top and
defeats the bandit with a missile shot.
The encounter was a victory, but we've
shown it as an example of what not
to do. Ice is next.

Another computerized rendering comes up on the screen.
Hollywood leans close to Maverick and speaks quietly.

HOLLYWOOD

Gutsiest move I ever saw.

Maverick gives him a small nod of appreciation.

ON CHARLIE-uncomfortable with their interaction, she pointedly avoids looking at Maverick.

ON MAVERICK- he chews thoughtfully on a pencil.

114. EXT. MIRAMAR RUNWAY. DAY.

In full flight gear, carrying their helmets and trying to stuff food down their gullets, the students stand near a lunch wagon. By teams they are hustled off in the b.g. No rest, even for lunch.

GOOSE

Can you believe that split tail
Charlie telling us how to fly?

Looks for reaction. Maverick gets his hot dog. Stony.

MAVERICK

We got to get it. Top Gun.
I want it like air.

GOOSE

(excited)

Me too. Listen Mav. I checked this out. You win that plaque and they give you the BIG option. They say: "OK GOOSE you're best, now here are your options. Duty pretty nearly anywhere you want to go. Or stay on here as an instructor!" If we were instructors. Carole and Brad could get a house and I could see him fall outa trees and be Spiderman and all that stuff.

MAVERICK

(thinks-smiles at him)

We'll get it.

Jester yells from the distance.

JESTER

On the run. Let's go. Move it!

They scurry ahead, overtaking Hollywood and Wolfman. *

WOLFMAN

What's the matter with you now?

HOLLYWOOD

She was kinky for flight suits--
said that she'd never seen
so many zippers-- played with *
them all night.

WOLFMAN *

What'd you do?

HOLLYWOOD

Shoot, I was so tired when I met her,
I just went to sleep 'til she found the
right zipper.

LAUGHTER.

WOLFMAN

May you get fungo and it drops off in the
dirt.

Hollywood walks along with a preoccupied Maverick.

HOLLYWOOD

Hear about Ice?

Maverick shakes his head.

HOLLYWOOD

He won another one.

Maverick nods. They arrive at their planes and scramble in.

MAVERICK

I feel the need for speed.

114a. EXT. PARKING LOT-MIRAMAR-TWILIGHT

*Whole new scene **

Maverick finishes wiping down his bike with a chamois cloth. He gets on it, fires it up. GUNS IT. Adjusts the choke. GUNS IT.

MEDIUM CLOSE UP-PROFILE-Maverick astride bike. He has seen something out of the corner of his eye, but looks straight ahead. CHARLIE WALKS INTO THE FRAME.

CHARLIE
Lieutenant...I...

Maverick GUNS THE ENGINE.

CHARLIE
(patiently)
Maverick...

He GUNS THE ENGINE.

CHARLIE
Pete. I hit you a little too hard
in the TACTS review. I..:

MAVERICK
I can't hear you.

He GUNS AND SPEEDS away on the bike.

114.b EXT. MAVERICK ON BIKE-IN TRAFFIC-TWILIGHT
114 c. EXT. CHARLIE'S CAR- IN TRAFFIC-TWILIGHT

He zooms down the block in front of Miramar Gate. He looks in rearview mirror.

HIS POV-Charlie's Rabbit rushes around corner after him.

ON CHARLIE-hair streaming in the wind. She looks determined.

ON MAVERICK-he speeds up and weaves past a car. Turns right. Looks in mirror.

ON CHARLIE-she is right behind him.

WIDER-ON MAVERICK-he approaches a light. It turns yellow. He wheels his way through.

ON MAVERICK-TIGHTER-he watches the mirror.

ON CHARLIE-she ZOOMS through the red light and narrowly misses getting hit by two cars crossing from opposite directions.

Maverick shakes his head and pulls over as she skids up behind him.

where page.

114 d. ON MAVERICK- he swings off the bike.

Charlie marches up. (Cars drive by throughout.)

MAVERICK

What the hell are you doing?

CHARLIE

(discovery)

You're more afraid of this than I am. I...

Maverick is off center.

MAVERICK

What are you talking about?

CHARLIE

I'm going to finish my sentence Lieutenant. I got scared. I thought...everyone in the TACTS trailer would see right through me. I... just didn't want anyone...to know... I had fallen for you.

ON MAVERICK-he looks at her shocked.

CHARLIE

Now I see you've got the same problem.

A beat. Another. The electricity crackles. She puts her arms around his neck and kisses him forever. A long, deep prelude. He moves into it too. MUSIC UP.

CAMERA MOVES AROUND THEM-the lights of the passing traffic flare in white and red.

DISSOLVE TO:

114 e. INT. CHARLIE'S HOUSE-NIGHT

TIGHT -Charlie is lighting white candles on her dresser. She lights the last one with a red candle. She drips the wax on her finger and she thinks. She is full, she reaches for a blouse button and stops, closes her eyes. Leans back, CAMERA EASES BACK...

...into Maverick's arms. He is dripping wet from a shower. He encircles her and kisses her shoulder. Her blouse gets wet from his hair. She rolls the candle in her hand for an instant and then drops it and turns to be engulfed by him.

*
Whole
page.

- 115 EXT-SKY ANGLES ON PLANES
- 116 INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.
- 117 INT. HOLLYWOOD'S COCKPIT. DAY.
- 118 INT. JESTER'S COCKPIT. DAY.
- 119 INT. VIPER'S COCKPIT. DAY.

Hollywood leads, Maverick follows. They point their noses down and dive. Two bogies fly side by side at five thousand, outlined against the blue Pacific. Smaller, slower, they seem helpless for a moment. We hear the instructors in the F-5's.

VIPER
(V.O. filtered)
TWO AT SEVEN O'CLOCK, JESTER.
SCRAMBLE.

JESTER
ROGER, COMING LEFT.

GOOSE

Holy shit, that's Viper.
Viper's up here.

MAVERICK

Great! He's probably saying
"Holy shit it's Maverick and Goose!"

GOOSE

Sure.

The bogeys split. Bogey One hard left. Bogey Two hard right. Hollywood sweeps left, pursuing Bogey One. Maverick hangs back to cover him.

Bogey One makes a strong vertical move. Hollywood stays on him.

MAVERICK

STAY WITH HIM, WOOD... YOUR SIX IS
CLEAR!

Bogey One loops and comes down, and Hollywood almost loses him for a moment before regaining the angle.

MAVERICK

STAY WITH HIM! TIGHTEN YOUR TURNS!

GOOSE

Bogey at three o'clock high! Nose on!

Maverick looks quickly at three o'clock high and see Bogey Two returning to the fight. He jerks the stick right, and the two planes make a quick pass.

VIPER

SNAPSHOT...missed him!..

MAVERICK

ENGAGING THE OTHER GUY. WOOD,
YOU'RE ON YOUR OWN.

GOOSE

Just cover Wood, Maverick.
Mutual support, man!

MAVERICK

I'm gonna take him, Goose.

GOOSE

Don't be greedy. Stay with Wood.

MAVERICK

I want Viper!

Maverick goes suddenly vertical, taking the plane straight up.

GOOSE

Hey, come on-- hey!

Maverick loops the F-14 down to get the quick angle on Viper in Bogey Two. Viper takes off, running from the fight again. Maverick looks over his shoulder and sees that Hollywood still has a good position on Bogey One. He takes a hard right and streaks off after Viper.

GOOSE

What are you doing? We're cover!

MAVERICK

Wood's okay. I want HIM.

Goose looks back at Hollywood and Bogey One.

GOOSE

But we're cover!

Viper streaks across the sky with Maverick close behind. He pushes the throttle forward to ZONE-5 - full afterburner. Viper shows all his tricks... hard left, hard right, rolling into vertical, flipping into a dive. Maverick stays with him.

VIPER

(to himself)

Goddamn, rookie, you're all right!

Maverick turns to get Viper in the diamond. He hears a SIDEWINDER GROWL in his headset.

MAVERICK

What's the range, Goose? I've got a good tone.

Viper jinks but Maverick stays with him. Viper is in the diamond, and the TONE GOES CRAZY. But suddenly...

GOOSE

Two bogies! Three o'clock high, nine o'clock high! Break!

They come out of nowhere, flashing down toward Maverick-- a crossfire ambush. Maverick's eyes are startled.

JESTER

ATOLL ON THE NORTHERN F-14.

HE'S OUT OF THE FIGHT...

Maverick is stunned. He had been tricked, humiliated. There's a little salt for the wound as Viper and Jester celebrate.

JESTER
WALKED RIGHT INTO IT.
NOT ONLY THAT, BUT ZORRO GOT
YOUR WINGMAN. NICE GOING. WILD PONY

GOOSE
THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT REGRETS TO
INFORM YOU THAT YOUR SONS ARE DEAD
BECAUSE THEY WERE STUPID!
Great BALLS of fire!

Slaps his helmet like a dolt...

VIPER
KNOCK OFF THE CHATTER, TOP GUNS.
LET'S RTB. VIPER HAS THE LEAD.

120 INT. LOCKER ROOM. DAY.

Silence. Several pilots in various forms of undress.
Maverick dresses. Goose sits with a hangdog expression on
his face. Jester and Viper walk past them.

JESTER
Ya know, that was the best flying
I've seen...(He grins)
... Right up to the part where
they got killed.

Viper smiles lightly and walks away. Jester stops.

JESTER
Mitchell-its all in the way you see the
game up there. You see yourself flying
against the enemy. One on one. We've all
been there.
You got to change your attitude. See the
people around you. You may not like all the
guys flying with you. They may not like
you. But they wear the same hats. So get
with it.

Jester walks away. Goose is conflicted. He knows Jester may
have a point. But he is loyal to Maverick.

GOOSE
Hey- Good news is Viper got Iceman after
he got us. We're still in the game man!

Maverick walks off the other way. Goose watches him.

121 omitted

122 INT. SAN DIEGO AIRPORT. NIGHT

Maverick and Goose move through the terminal, Goose is excited.

GOOSE

(fishing, watching for reaction)
I told her how tough it is here.
My Ass draggin' like an old tired dog.
Studyin' at night. Told her YOU didn't even
have a woman here.

Maverick smiles.

GOOSE

She said "Yeah he's probably not got one,
he's got eight!"

Maverick smiles.

MAVERICK

Who's got time?

They rush on.

CAROLE (OS)

NICK!

ON CAROLE AND BRADLEY-she runs towards Goose. He grabs her and spins her around. Bradley is sleeping on her shoulder. He wakes up and stares dizzily at Maverick. He grins. Maverick winks at him as Goose takes Brad up on his shoulders. Carole is a pretty country woman. Direct and earthy. She hugs Maverick and they all walk along aways.

CAROLE

Maverick! Goose told me on the
phone he thought you were in love
with one of your instructors!

Maverick stares at Goose-who breaks into a run WHOOPING.
Maverick LAUGHS.

11223 INT-BEACH BAR-NIGHT

~~SOUND~~ MUSIC ROLLING- In civilian clothes. Goose is behind the counter serving beers and enchanting the fat lady bartender. Maverick and Goose ARE NOT DRUNK. Goose is just being Goose. Charlie and Maverick dance close. At a table, Carole stares at Goose for a beat-lost in love/thought. Charlie and Maverick sit down with her.

CAROLE

(happy, very slightly drunk)
Would you go fetch him? God Maverick doesn't he ever embarrass you?

MAVERICK

(ironically)
Goose? Heccck no! Well,...there were the...

CAROLE

(says it with him)
fabulous Bisquayne sisters.

MAVERICK

He TOLD you about them.

CAROLE

Oh yes, the lingerie saleswomen?
He tells me about ALL of them.
How my little angel Goose, goes home early for church. But YOU always go home with the hot women.

Maverick grimaces and leaves. Charlie LAUGHS.

CAROLE

(girl talk to Charlie)
I'd like to be able to warn you off about Maverick. But I love him to death. He is decent, and kind...If he wasn't a pilot I'd run away with him in a minute. But I cannot ABIDE pilots.

Charlie LAUGHS. Maverick and Goose head this way.

CAROLE

I've known Pete for a lot of years now.
and I'll tell you one thing for sure.
There are hearts breakin' wide open
all over the world tonight.

CHARLIE

(intrigued, LAUGHING)
Why?

CAROLE

Because unless you're a fool- and you don't dress like one- that boy is OFF the market.

ON MAVERICK-clowning with Goose. A very happy guy.

CAROLE

(voice over)

He is totally, 100%, prime-time in love with you.

ON CHARLIE-she likes that. Guys arrive.

CAROLE

Goose you big stud, take me to bed or lose me forever!

(to Charlie)

He likes me to give him confidence like that! God knows they need it, built funny like they are!

Charlie LAUGHS hard. Carole hugs her.

CHARLIE

(looking her square in the eye)

I like you lady. This is gonna' be fun.

Goose pulls Carole up. She hugs Maverick and SMACKS him a kiss on the mouth.

CAROLE

Oh boy, feel the heat.

Carole pulls Goose out the door by the belt. The fat lady waves. Maverick leans back and smiles. He closes his eyes. Charlie starts to LAUGH. He looks at her.

CHARLIE

(LAUGHING so hard she can hardly get the words out one at a time.)

Maverick you big stud, take me to bed or lose me forever!

*

123a. SMASH CUT: MONTAGE-MUSIC ROLLING

The two of them on his bike. The coast highway. Bright lights and arms tightly wrapped around his waist. A scarf is torn away. Her hair flying in the wind. Her heart open.

123b. ON HER DECK-ABOVE THE BEACH-They are embracing lovers under the moon.

124. MONTAGE. PREFLIGHT ACTIVITY. DAY.

VIPER

(V.O.)

...MiG sweep over the water. You will proceed down the one-seven-zero degree radial looking for MiGs. You will engage all that you find, destroy them, and return to base. Maverick, has the lead. Any questions? All right, let's go. Move like you've got a purpose.

INTERCUT:

125. EXT. CLOUD COVER. 20,000 FT. DAY.

126. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

127. INT. ICE'S COCKPIT. DAY.

Four F-14's fly in formation over the Pacific, searching for MiGs. They spot them, engage. The combatants fly scissor patterns, slashing past each other, angling for position.

We hear a BARRAGE of information exchanges between pilots and RIO'S. Maverick and Ice swoop close together on each other's wing-- moving on each other, testing, they glance at each other and nod. The Challenge... the fight is on. Suddenly an F-5 rises up out of the clouds in from of them-- Ice has the advantage and rolls in on him.

ICE

ON BOGEY. I CAN GET HIM
IN 30 DEGREES MORE.

MAVERICK

Shit! I'M IN A GOOD POSITION TO
COME IN RIGHT NOW. (to Goose)
Goddamn! If that jerk would
get out of there, I could get in.

The F-5 sees his pursuers. Goes into a hard left.

MAVERICK

He still hasn't got him.

Ice struggles against the G's to bring his nose to bear. They go around into a Lufbery-- a tight circle, Ice has the advantage. He is closer to the F-5's tail than the F-5 is to his. But he can't close, can't line up the shot. He grunts and strains as the G force pushes him down.


MAVERICK

I CAN COME IN RIGHT HERE.

ICE

Stay where you are! I NEED ANOTHER 20 DEGREES--THEN I'VE GOT HIM.

GOOSE

Shit! We're in a great position to go in right now. He is edging us out Mav! 

ICE

JUST 5 SECONDS.

Ice still isn't in a good position on the F-5.

MAVERICK

Fire or clear out!

That's enough of this bullshit.

OK ICE I CAN GET HIM- I'M IN RIGHT NOW COME OFF HIGH RIGHT.

Maverick is pulling a lot of G's, but can't target his weapons, he continues to turn in a hard circle, going round and round without gaining. He can't bring his nose to bear.

ICE

NO, JUST FIVE SECONDS.

Ice stays.

MAVERICK

OK ICE I'M IN--COME OFF HIGH RIGHT.

Maverick dives down between the two planes pulling 6.5 G's, exposing his underside to Ice. All Ice sees is belly. Obviously, in this attitude Maverick can't see him.

ICE

(under breath)

ROGER I'M OUT. Shit!

127a. INT. MAVERICK'S PLANE

GOOSE

All right! Go for it!

Another plane ZOOMS through Maverick's path.

ICE

LOOK OUT!

Maverick sees him flash into his view. He has to slam the stick forward to avoid collision. He swings by real close. Too close.

GOOSE

Oh, no!

They pass through Ice's turbulence. The blast distorts the airflow to Maverick's left engine. BOOMBOOMBOOM. The engine flames out. Full thrust on the right, engine swings the tail around in a yaw. Maverick slams the stick right to correct but too late.

GOOSE

Plane's coupling up! Plane's coupling up!

The plane couples one yaw to the next-- the tail swings around-- which becomes an ever increasing flat spin, like an out-of-control frisbee.

GOOSE

This is NOT good!...(rising panic)
We're low!

Maverick is pinned to the instrument panel by centrifugal force, desperately tries to reach back for the ejection lever-- but is falling short by about a foot.

MAVERICK

I'm pinned to the panel.

GOOSE

Time to go.

MAVERICK

I can't eject.

The plane is spinning ever faster, out of control. He drops the gear. Still spins. Goose is closer to center of spin-- G forces are less. He reaches behind him for the eject handle, starts the eject sequence.

GOOSE

3000 feet. I'll do it for you.

MAVERICK

Go ahead. I can't reach. 2000 feet!

INTERCUT:

128. EXT. SKY. ON MAVERICK'S PLANE. DAY.

129. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

BOOM-- A hurricane of wind and noise.

The canopy BLASTS away-- but is held spinning above the cockpit by the vortex of the sinking jet. Goose glances up at it.

GOOSE

1000. Watch that CANOPY!

MAVERICK

Let's go. Eject.

Goose yanks the ejection handle. Things happen in a split second. Goose is fired up and out by the rocket under his seat. Almost instantly he impacts the spinning canopy. A sickening CRUNCH. The canopy is knocked away. Maverick is slammed back in his seat as the ejection seat straps wind up. He is BLASTED out of the plane just before it spins in.

130. EXT. SKY. TIGHT ON MAVERICK AS HE TUMBLES IN SLOW MOTION. DAY.

He's in shock...the loud THUMPING of his heart, labored breathing, a SCREAM that stays in his mind.

All instinct-he gropes for straps. He releases the pilot seat, it tumbles away. His chute streams, balloons open, snapping his body like a bullwhip. He drifts momentarily, then plunges into the sea.

131. EXT. UNDERWATER. DAY.

His face, distorted in the water; wild eyes, disoriented, choking for air. He reaches out, finds nothing to grab. Suddenly, he is yanked hard to the side.

132. EXT. OCEAN SURFACE. TWILIGHT.

The parachute is caught by the wind, and dragged, pulling Maverick along beneath the surface. He is twisting in the water, turning over and over, trying desperately to slip out of the tangled straps. He finally hits the surface of the water and sucks air into his lungs. With the end of his strength, he hits the release snaps and breaks free from the parachute. It whips away like a kite in a typhoon.

The sea is choppy and rough. He struggles as his equipment drags him under. He twists, finds the inflatable raft attached to his harness. Maverick pulls the cord, and the raft hisses open. He pulls his body into the six-by-two foot raft and collapses, completely exhausted. The survival has been almost without thinking: an instinctual physical struggle.

133. EXT. OCEAN SURFACE. TWILIGHT.

Maverick begins to focus on the situation. He stains the water with dye, then sees another parachute floating nearby. Paddling to the parachute, he reaches over the side and begins to pull FRANTICALLY on the heavy cords that are submerged in the water.

A great struggle. The weight is extremely heavy. Finally, he pulls something to the surface. Goose's body. Maverick releases the parachute and pulls Goose into the raft on top of him. He holds Goose in his arms. Goose's face. Goose is dead. Maverick's mind shuts down.

From high above the ocean, we see the debris on the water. An oil slick, pieces of honeycomb titanium, and the small, helpless figures in the raft.

DISSOLVE TO:

134. EXT. OCEAN. NIGHT.

Searchlights skim over the black ocean.

A brilliant light flashes as Maverick POPS A PENCIL FLARE. Helicopter blades flick powerfully. The lights of the choppers descend toward the wreckage area, scanning the debris, searching for life. The spotlights find Maverick and Goose in the raft.

The draft from the chopper churns the water. A FROGMAN drops from the chopper and hits with a heavy splash. He surfaces and swims to the raft as a rescue harness is lowered.

Maverick watches curiously as he starts to examine Goose. He hugs Goose closer and looks threatened.

FROGMAN

Let him go, sir. Take it easy.

He tries to pry Goose free, but Maverick has a death grip on the body.

FROGMAN

Sir! Let him go. It's all right.
Let him go.

Maverick glares at the man as he bobs in the water.

Another long moment, then Maverick releases Goose. The frogman quickly straps Maverick into the harness.

HIS POV.-- He watches the lifeless body in the water as he is pulled up and away. He shivers from the cold.

135. INT. HOSPITAL ROOM. NIGHT.

Extreme CLOSE on Maverick's face. He is emotionless. His eyes are flat and absolutely without expression.

OUTSIDE THE OPEN DOOR- Jester speaks quietly to Viper.

JESTER

The Board of Inquiry people are already on top of it. We asked them to expedite this one because of graduation.

SOUND OF JESTER WALKING AWAY.

There is complete silence in the room. Then we hear the quiet, calm, probing voice of Viper.

VIPER

How do you feel?

MAVERICK

All right.

VIPER

Goose is dead.

MAVERICK

I know.

Not one sign of emotion from Maverick. Not one tone of expression. We see Viper now, and his face is strained from a very long day.

VIPER

If you fly jets long enough, something like this happens. No one escapes it.

Maverick looks at Viper, and his eyes are very disturbed.

MAVERICK

He was...my responsibility--my RIO.

VIPER

My first squadron in Vietnam, we lost eight out of eighteen planes. Ten guys. The first one- you die too-but there'll be others-- you can count on it.

No reaction from Maverick. He can't quite face up to that reality right now.

VIPER

You've got to put him in the box son.

Maverick is watching Viper, but he doesn't have anything to say.

136. EXT. CHARLIE'S SPORTSCAR. NIGHT.

Charlie is bringing him back to the barracks. She stops in the parking lot. Turns off ignition.

136a. INT. SPORTSCAR-NIGHT

The RADIO plays John Lennon; "Stand By Me". They sit for a long moment. Maverick's eyes closed.

CHARLIE

...they say you're alright.

Maverick opens his eyes.

MAVERICK

Good.

CHARLIE

Its gonna' take time.

Maverick is silent.

CHARLIE

You need to put as much life as you can between it and you.

MAVERICK

I want it back.

CHARLIE

What?

MAVERICK

Yesterday. I want him in there. Here.

CHARLIE

Look-what you do is really dangerous. It could have been you.

MAVERICK

But it wasn't me. It was my hand, my brain. My fault.

CHARLIE

You believe that?

MAVERICK

(pause-deep breath)

When I breathe in- it was my fault.
When I breathe out-I don't know.

She holds his hand lightly.

CHARLIE

Look, I... think I could help with
this...I...

MAVERICK

I've got to spend some time alone-
think this out. OK?

She nods.

CHARLIE

(putting her hand on his arm)
Maybe... when you can stop thinking.

MAVERICK

(getting out)
Not quite yet.

137. INT. GOOSE'S ROOM. NIGHT.

The door opens, and Maverick enters the dim room. He sets a cardboard box on the bed. It is very quiet.

Maverick gathers together Goose's few personal possessions. He fills the box with clothes, books, a clock, a radio, a walkman, and articles from the bathroom. He examines each closely, like an artifact.. as if he might find some message or meaning in them. He fumbles them into the box. He has the thousand-yard-stare in his eyes.

Maverick closes the box and carries it to the door. He takes one last glance around.

138. INT. BOQ ENTRANCE/RECEPTION AREA. NIGHT.

Carole stares at a silent TV. Looks lost. Maverick WALKS IN, finds her. An awkward silence while they both try to think of something to say. Maverick hands the box to Carol.

CAROLE

God he loved flying with you, Maverick.

Maverick hugs her. She pulls back and eyes him directly.

CAROLE

But he'd 'a flown anyway. Without you.
He'd hate it. But he'd do it.

Maverick walks away.

ON BABY BOY BRAD- alone at the end of the room. His tiny arms out like wings- he plays silently- swooping, flying high above it all.

139. INT. EXTREME CLOSE UP. MAVERICK. DAY.

He sits staring right through us...the thousand yard stare. A strange white unreal light washes over him. The only color, the Navy and gold of the stripes on his shoulderboards. A low rumbling mumbling filters through the HISS fans. Snatches of whispered conversation..."disregard of...basic air-safety principles- too aggressive- incident- 29 July -within performance parameters -disciplinary action -tactical doctrine -even reckless at times -only conjecture -unsupported -benefit of the doubt"...

VOICE (OS)

Lt. Mitchell!

Maverick's eyes slowly focus. The light attenuates. The surrounding image becomes denser. Things become real.

140. INT. CONFERENCE ROOM. MAVERICK'S POV. DAY.

A BOARD OF INQUIRY, a COMMANDER and other NAVY OFFICERS seated behind tables at the front of the room. Maverick faces them, wearing dress whites. Viper is also present. The Commander looks at each of the Officers. They each nod, in turn, indicating readiness. The Commander turns to Maverick, and states for the record.

CDR

The Board of Inquiry finds that
Lt. Pete Mitchell was not at fault
in the accident of twenty-nine July. *

No response from Maverick. Viper studies his face.

CDR

Lt. Mitchell's record will be
cleared of this incident.

Still no response from Maverick.

CDR

Lt. Mitchell is restored to flight
status without further delay. These
proceedings are closed.

Maverick doesn't respond.

ON VIPER-tight.

VIPER
 (quietly, to someone OS)
 Get him up flying ...soon.

Jester leans into frame.

JESTER
 Yes Sir.

SOUNDS OF VAGUE RADIO BABBLE OVER.

141. INT. CLASSROOM-DAY

MOS Charlie is working alone. Perry Siebenthal comes in. Hands her a piece of paper. He shakes her hand. She smiles and hugs him. Perry leaves. She looks down at the paper, her smile softening into thoughtfulness.

141a. INT. COCKPIT. F-14 ON FLIGHT LINE. DAY.

Maverick sits in the cockpit staring at the controls while the ground crew preps the aircraft for flight. Ground crewman helps him strap in.

Maverick looks at the cockpit as if it's strange territory, suddenly foreign to him. He grabs the stick like it's some peculiar talisman. He turns and looks aft. He seems surprised that it moves the control surfaces in the tails.

142. INT. MAVERICK'S F-14. DAY.

143. EXT. SKY. MAVERICK AND BOGEY. DAY.

SUNDOWN
 BOGEY AT TEN O'CLOCK LOW. YOU'VE
 GOT THE ANGLE--PIECE OF CAKE.

Maverick checks ten o'clock low. He is disturbed. He tries to make the move, but he is a man with no secret: he is afraid.

SUNDOWN
 ENGAGE, MAVERICK - ANYTIME.

The bogey abruptly turns into him. Maverick hesitates. Then suddenly, he jerks the stick hard right and takes the F-14 away from the bogey at great speed. Sundown is startled.

SUNDOWN
 WHAT? WHERE'RE YOU--HEY, WHERE
 IN THE HELL ARE YOU GOING?

MAVERICK
 DIDN'T ... AH...LOOK GOOD.

SUNDOWN
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? IT DOESN'T
GET TO LOOK MUCH BETTER THAN THAT!

MAVERICK
NO. NO GOOD.

143a. EXT. FLIGHT LINE. DAY.

Maverick walks away from plane. Sundown looks at him.

SUNDOWN
We had a good shot Maverick.

ON MAVERICK- he walks back.

MAVERICK
(frustrated, angry)
You call 'em from the backseat.
I shoot 'em from the front, WHEN I'M READY!

He walks away.

ACROSS THE FLIGHT LINE

Jester turns to Viper, who waits near an F-5. Watches
Maverick walking away from his plane.

JESTER
He can't get back on the horse,
Skipper. He just won't engage.

VIPER
It's only been a few days.

JESTER
I've seen this before.

VIPER
So have I.

JESTER
Some guys never get it back.

VIPER
Keep sending him up.

He walks off.

144. INT. LOCKER ROOM. IMMEDIATELY AFTER. DAY.

Maverick grabs his stuff out of the locker, throws them in a
duffel bag. Iceman is fixing his immaculate hair. He stares
at Maverick. A can of shoe polish drops out of Maverick's
duffel and rolls a couple of feet. Ice steps over to get it.
He holds it in his hand and puts it carefully in Maverick's
duffel. *

ICE
Everybody liked Goose. I...I'm sorry. *

Maverick grabs the duffel, brushes past Jester and Wolfman and walks up the corridor. Jester and Wolfman watch him go. Wolfman goes to the phone.

145. INT. SAN DIEGO AIRPORT TERMINAL. DAY.

whole scene.

A

Charlie hurries through the crowd, bumping past people, searching for Maverick in the huge terminal. She moves past bench after bench, and her eyes flick in all directions. A quick glance at the souvenir shop, the coffee shop, then she heads for the bar.

Maverick is there, sitting alone in a booth with his duffel beside him, staring into a drink.

Charlie stops, breathes deeply, composes herself, then breezes over to the booth and sits across the table from him.

CHARLIE

Is this the elephant's graveyard?

He looks uncomfortable. The waitress comes up.

CHARLIE

I'll have what he's having. Hemlock, is it?

The waitress departs. Long pause.

CHARLIE

You weren't gonna say goodbye?

MAVERICK

(long pause)

Weren't you gonna' tell me about your new job in Washington?



CHARLIE

(sighs)

Yes I was. And I sure wasn't gonna LEAVE
without seeing you.

MAVERICK

I didn't want to see you.

CHARLIE

(stinging a little)

Well thank you. Who the hell is in CHARGE
inside there?

MAVERICK

(trying to get in charge)

Don't worry about it. I'm in charge.

She looks sceptical. A beat.

CHARLIE

(sarcastic)

Where are you going? Maybe I could go too?

MAVERICK

What are you doing here?

CHARLIE

Same thing you are. Making a big mistake.
Look Maverick, I remember you a couple
of weeks ago. Somebody with fire in him.
Bigger than life. And now here you are
twisting straws in an airport lounge.
You don't even have a ticket do you?

MAVERICK

(muting anger)

Look, you're a good lady Charlie
but you just don't understand.

CHARLIE

Bullshit. What I understand about
you could fill this airport, the question
is...Do YOU understand?

Long pause.

MAVERICK

Yeah. I can't move...I'm empty.

Charlie waits.

CHARLIE

(nodding, understanding)

I understand that too. Like the last few
days, I've been empty. Its OK to be empty.
Its what's OK NEXT that worries me. OK to
crawl somewhere. OK to throw away your
friends?

OK to be a mediocre pilot?

MAVERICK

(angry)
HOLD ON!

CHARLIE

To be the Best of the Best means you got to make mistakes and start over again. Just like the rest of us.

Maverick is levelled.

CHARLIE

I came here because I wanted to help you. But now that I look in your eyes. I'm too late. You're already gone. And you didn't learn a damn thing. Except how to quit. You've got that maneuver down real good.

She tosses a handfull of one dollar bills on the table.

CHARLIE

So long sailor, see you on the beach sometime.

She swings away. Her wake sucks in the stares of every man in the place. Then they look over to Maverick, quick flicks of envy in their eyes. He stares them back and can't quite meet their eyes.

146 EXT. VIPER'S HOUSE. LATER. ** Wife scene.*

A nice suburban home. A weathervane creaks in the breeze. Maverick walks up to the door. KNOCKS.

146a INT. VIPER'S HOUSE. NIGHT

MRS. METCALF opens the door. Maverick nods and ENTERS. TIM, his ten year old son watches warily as Maverick awkwardly follows Mrs. Metcalf down the hall and opens a study door.

146b INT. VIPER'S STUDY-NIGHT

Viper is wearing a Walkman headset and working on his income tax. He looks up and motions Maverick to come in. Takes off headset. He is dressed in jeans and a cowboy shirt.

MRS. METCALF

Can I get you anything to drink?

Maverick shakes his head. She leaves.

✱

MAVERICK

Skipper, sorry to bother you.

VIPER

No bother. Just one minute.
I think I've figured these taxes
so that I pay the Government just a little
more than they pay me every year.

Maverick smiles. He walks around the room and looks at the photographs of airplanes and memorabilia. He stops at one picture.

ON PICTURE-TIGHT Viper and other men. One of whom is Maverick's father.

VIPER

I served with your old man.

MAVERICK

(Surprised)

Where?

VIPER

VF 51, the Oriskany. You're just like he was, only better... and worse.

MAVERICK

I don't feel anything like him.

VIPER

(chuckling)

That's the contrary sort of thing he'd say. You ARE like him. He was a natural heroic sonofabitch.

MAVERICK

So he did it right?

VIPER

Is that why you fly like you do?
You think you got to prove something?

(thinking)

Your old man did it very right,
We were in the worst fire fight I ever dreamed of. Bogeys like fireflies all over the goddamned place. His F-4 was hit, he was wounded, but he could have made it back, but he stayed in it. Saved three planes that I saw. Before he bought it.

MAVERICK

I never heard that.

VIPER

Not something the State Department tells dependents when the battle occurs in over the wrong lines on some map.

MAVERICK

And you were there?

VIPER

(looking at him eye-to-eye)
I was there.

VIPER

What's on your mind?

MAVERICK

My options.

VIPER

Simple. We can send you back to your squadron with nothing noted on your record no explanation required. Doesn't hurt your career, but people always wonder about things like that.

Or...You can quit. It's no disgrace, Lieutenant. That spin was hell. It would shake me up.

MAVERICK

(starts to get his back up)
You think I should quit?!

VIPER

I didn't say that. But I have a responsibility to the other guys up there, not just you. They need to know you're all right... that they can depend on you.

Maverick reaches into his pocket, comes out with the Navy Cross. He looks at it.

VIPER

Kid, the plain fact is...you feel responsible for Goose. And you've lost your confidence.

Technically, the board of inquiry absolved you. I'm not gonna stand here and blow sunshine up your ass. You and I know what really happened. You pushed it- but you've got to push it.

Now the question is, is there is some value in it. Start with what you know. It is the FIRST THING I've ever seen that's really made you stop and question yourself.



VIPER

A good pilot ALWAYS questions himself.
Stays alert to drifting. Makes little
corrections. That saves his life.

MAVERICK

(long pause)

Would you take me back? Would they?

VIPER

I start with what I know. You were gone.
Now you're back. The Navy's got a
lot invested in you. They'd hate to lose it.
The Navy needs a very few, very very good
men.

147,148,149 omitted
150. INT. TOP GUN OFFICE. DAY.

LOUD ROCK AND ROLL. The post-graduation ceremonies are in full swing... they consist of informal ribbing, laughing, and a lot of talking with the hands. Every now and then, the name Goose comes up and a shadow passes across a face. For the most part, they press on, having a good time. Sundown shrugs at someone's question and looks around.

SUNDOWN

Don't know where he is...

FLEX

What are his plans?

SUNDOWN

(shrugging)

It's got to be hard on the guy.

Ice stands proudly holding the Top Gun plaque, PHOTO FLASH. Guys congratulate him... Hollywood looks up as the door opens, Maverick is there. He looks uncomfortable, unsure. He sees Ice with the plaque. Sundown moves over to him, brings him in. One by one, several guys come over, shake his hand. Viper watches.

Maverick steps away from crowd, looks around for Charlie. He thinks he sees her, but its not her.

ON PERRY SEIBENTHAL- He is standing alone. Maverick walks over to him. Shakes his hand. MOS they chat.

TIGHT ON MAVERICK- MOS Maverick asks about Charlie. Perry shakes his head. Maverick nods.

The guys notice. The group's attention gradually swings onto them. They quiet down instinctively. Maverick stands alone.

Viper finally turns to them.

VIPER

Gentlemen, you know how I hate to break up this party before it has a chance to get really out of hand...

(more serious)

...but there's work to do.

JESTER

Who is here? Hollywood and Wolfman?

GUYS

Yo!

Jester quickly goes down the list of the teams, in pairs. Until Maverick who is clearly without a RIO.

JESTER

Maverick?

MAVERICK

Yo!

JESTER

All here Skipper.

Jester begins handing out orders.

VIPER

We've got a couple of little hot spots out there right now. Good luck. I'm proud of you.

Viper sees Maverick standing alone.

VIPER

(loudly)
Maverick.

MAVERICK

Yes sir.

Everyone in room stops to listen.

VIPER

You'll get a RIO from the Kitty Hawk.
And if you don't. (pause)

ON MAVERICK-

VIPER

(light smile)
Give me shout. I'll fly with you.

ON MAVERICK-he smiles gratefully.

ON ICEMAN-he's not impressed.

ICEMAN

(to himself)
Well I won't.

157 INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. TIGHT ON MAVERICK'S EYES. DAY

WIDEN OUT. To include his helmet. He sits in his Tomcat on Ready 5 Alert. In the backseat, Merlin plays a computer game. Jet attack.

WIDE SHOT-KITTY HAWK-DAY

SUPER: KITTY HAWK OCT 16, 1985

(NOTE: RADIO BABBLE of real time UHF, should be played like music. There is a battle above this ship. We should hear it through his headset, It increases in intensity throughout until his take off.)

ON MAVERICK- his mind goes back to the briefing room.

STINGER (V.O.)

...Navy oceanographic ship...
international waters... fired
upon... unknown forces...

152,153 omitted

154. INT. READY ROOM. USS KITTY HAWK. FLASHBACK--MOMENTS BEFORE. DAY.

In full flight gear, sixteen teams of fighter pilots and RIO's pay close attention to the Squadron CO, Stinger.

STINGER

...by unknown forces... by MiGs.
It's our ship, and our orders are to escort it out of the area.

Stinger circles an area on the map.

155. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. TOMCAT ON THE DECK. MAVERICK. DAY.

He studies his copy of the same map, headings and vectors pencilled in.

STINGER (V.O.)

This is "Bullseye". A rescue operation is to begin within the hour. Your mission is to give air support to that rescue. There are MiGs in the area, and tensions are high. If you witness a hostile act you will return fire. We will be covering 360 degrees of the compass by section. Get ready for anything.

156. INT. READY ROOM. FLASHBACK. DAY.

Stinger is speaking to individual pilots.

SLIDER

Ice and Hollywood, sector two.

He turns to Maverick who stands nearby.

SLIDER

And Maverick. You'll back them up, with Merlin, on Ready Five.

157. INT. CLOSE ON HIS FACE. DAY.

A fleeting moment's disappointment. ✖

MAVERICK

Yessir.

ON ICEMAN- he's not pleased.

ICE

Nothing personal Sir, but is that the best backup you've got? ✖

Maverick hears it. Stinger waves Ice out firmly. ✖

INTERCUT:

158. EXT. SKY OVER OCEAN. DAY.

159. INT. ICEMAN'S COCKPIT. DAY.

160. INT. HOLLYWOOD'S COCKPIT. DAY.

Ice and Hollywood fly together at ten thousand feet.

Their eyes search the horizon, while Slider and Wolfman watch their instruments.

ICE
MUSTANG, THIS IS VOODOO ONE,
WE ARE ON STATION.

The two jets streak across the sky.

INT. COCKPIT.

Suddenly, there are BLIPS on the radar scope.

HOLLYWOOD
CONTACT. TWO BOGEYS 20 RIGHT. AT
12 MILES, CLOSING.

INT. COCKPIT. THEIR POV.

Two MiGs flying low to the deck.

HOLLYWOOD
TALLY HO. TWO MIGS AT TWO O'CLOCK LOW.
THE MIGS SUDDENLY PULL VERTICAL AND STREAK STRAIGHT UP.
ICE AND HOLLYWOOD WATCH CAREFULLY.

HOLLYWOOD
WHAT ARE YOUR INTENTIONS, BOYS?

ICE
THEY'RE JUST HASSLING. LET'S
WORK THEM OUT OF THE AREA.

WOLFMAN
I'VE GOT TWO MORE BOGEYS COMING
IN ATR FOUR O'CLOCK HIGH.

HOLLYWOOD
GOT 'EM.

THE FOUR MIGS

Join together in a box formation and begin to circle the area.

HOLLYWOOD
TWO MORE-- TWO MORE CONTACTS.
2-7-0 AT TEN MILES. WE NEED
SOME HELP HERE, MUSTANG.

ICE
MUSTANG, WE HAVE FOUR MIGS IN
THE AREA OF BULLSEYE. REQUEST
YOU LAUNCH THE ALERT 5 FOR SUPPORT.

161. EXT. FLIGHT DECK, KITTY HAWK. DAY.

Maverick on the Catapult on ready alert, listening to the HOTTER MESSAGE TRAFFIC. He gets a LAUNCH ORDER, turns to the CATAPULT OFFICER. The CATAPULT OFFICER salutes, Maverick salutes. The CATAPULT OFFICER drops to the deck. Maverick is slammed back as the F-14 is fired off the deck and rockets into the sky.

CCA
(V.O. filtered)
ROGER, VOODOO.

INTERCUT:

162. EXT. SKY OVER OCEAN. DAY.

163. INT. HOLLYWOOD'S COCKPIT. DAY.

164. INT. ICE'S COCKPIT. DAY.

The two MiGs cross in a scissor pattern in their path... a provocation... they join together again and fly level at ten thousand feet. One of the MiGs does a sudden canopy roll.

HOLLYWOOD
VERY FANCY!

BOOM! A FLASH! Suddenly, out of nowhere, Hollywood's hit. WHAM! Just that fast, he's hit and goes down. His F-14 disappears into the clouds.

ICE
WOOD! WOOD, ACKNOWLEDGE!

Ice puts his nose down and follows him.

ICE
VOODOO ONE, MUSTANG. VOODOO.
THREE IS HIT. GOING DOWN.
WILL ATTEMPT SAR.

He comes out of the clouds at 15001, nothing but empty water below.

ICE
Do you have them? Did they
get out or not?

SLIDER
(confusion)
No contact. I don't know.

ICE
God dammit!

INTERCUT:

165. EXT. SKY. DAY.

166. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

167. INT. ICE'S COCKPIT. DAY.

EXT. MAVERICK'S F-14.

MAVERICK
VOODOO, GHOST RIDER ONE. I'M
ON THE WAY. WAIT FOR ME.

THE SKY -- MIGS AND TOMCATS CIRCLE.

ICEMAN
(to Slider-sarcastically)
Right! Watch him close Slider.

SLIDER
Roger.

ICE
GHOST RIDER. VODOO THREE IS GONE.

MAVERICK
COPY VODOO ONE.

ICE
MUSTANG. GHOST RIDER. REQUEST
PERMISSION TO FIRE.

STRIKE
(V.O.)
VOODOO, GHOST RIDER, THIS IS MUSTANG.
CLEARED TO FIRE. CLEARED TO FIRE.

ICE
ROGER. ENGAGING. I HAVE THE LEAD.

INT. MAVERICK'S F-14.

MERLIN
Let's go! Cream those bastards!

Maverick hesitates.

MERLIN

Come on, man, engage. Get your nose in there.

Maverick hesitates again. He sees the hornet's nest below: planes all over the sky.

MERLIN

Bandit at seven o'clock low--solo. Take him. Pull on the goddamn stick, man!

Maverick draws a breath, then forces himself to pull the stick over. The F-14 rolls in hard toward the battle. Suddenly, the cluster breaks apart. The MiGs break in every direction as Maverick BLASTS through their formation. Something comes up through the clouds. A MiG BLASTS by. Another rolls in and locks onto them.

The MiGs swarm toward the TOMCATS, coming from every direction. CANNON FIRE erupts from one of the MiGs.

MAVERICK

MAVERICK'S ENGAGED. HARD LEFT, ICE, PADLOCK THE EASTERN SECTION.

The F-14's execute a left oblique turn in unison. They come down in a section attack with their cannons blazing. From Maverick's cockpit, everything looks choppy: MiGs slide past at incredible speed. Cannons BLAST, as the planes scramble for position.

Out-numbered four to two, Maverick and Ice fight defensively. Maverick has the angle on a MiG, when Fungus spots a missile launch.

MERLIN

BREAK LEFT! BREAK LEFT! CHAFF! FLARES!

MAVERICK

BREAKING LEFT!

Maverick releases a flare as he takes the F-14 into a hard left. The missile tracks the heat of the flare and sails out of the area, missing the Tomcat and falling toward the sea.

ICE

TWO MIGS ON MY TAIL, MAVERICK. I'M DEFENSIVE.

Maverick jerks his stick right and streaks toward Ice. He cuts off one of the MiGs with CANNON FIRE, driving it down toward the deck. Ice goes into vertical and comes around to gain an angle on the other MiG. His RIO is in position to check Mav's rear.

SLIDER
MAVERICK! SIX O'CLOCK!

Maverick turns to look and jerks a hard left. The MiG is on him, CANNON BLAZING. Ice Yo Yos inside and cuts the MiG off.

ICE
FOX TWO.

He fires a sidewinder. The MiG turns hard, the missile sails away.

SLIDER
BANDIT, THREE O'CLOCK HIGH!

Ice's F-14 is suddenly caught in a HAIL OF CANNON FIRE as a MiG sweeps down from three o'clock. He breaks, dives. The jets streak across the sky, low to the deck, skimming the surface.

MERLIN
Ice's defensive, help him out.

Maverick's F-14 Rollaways in and intercepts the bogey on Ice's tail.

MAVERICK
Reverse right.

Ice turns right, the MiG bugs and jerks into vertical. Maverick swoops after him.

MERLIN
Stay with him. Your six is clear.

Maverick closes, jerking left, right, twisting and turning, staying on his tail.

MERLIN
One on our six! Bug out! Bug out!

BULLETS fly by Maverick's F-14 from the MiG on his six. He pulls a hard left, then takes the plane straight up. We hear instructions shouted by Fungus, but it is all obscured in the SOUNDS AND FURY OF THE BATTLE. Maverick peels over the top and comes down like a comet. A series of passes at the MiGs. As they come by, one of the MiGs pulls up.

MAVERICK
OKAY, GOING UP. ICE, GO HIGH.

ICE
LOOK OUT!

They look up. A MiG 21 is coming down, belly to them, close to a mid-air collision.

MAVERICK

Jesus!

He pushes down. The MiG ROARS BY. The whole airplane goes "BOOOOMMM" it's that close.

MERLIN

Ohhhhh shit!

The shock, the air pressure SLAMS them as it goes by, missing by 4-5 feet. Maverick pulls back in, sees a MiG 21 below. It takes off, bugging out. Ice goes after him. The MiG maneuvers, jerking hard left, hard right, twisting up, down.

Ice is right in his shadow. They come in hard and low over the sea. He has the MiG in the diamond.

ICE

GOOD TONE, FOX TWO.

The MiG starts turning.

ICE

Get back in there!

The missile goes by the tail.

ICE

Son of a bitch!

Then his tail comes off, the airplane goes over, a chute comes out. The MiG EXPLODES into a thousand small pieces. They roar by the MiG pilot hanging in his straps.

SLIDER

JESUS! HEY SPLASH ONE, SPLASH
ONE BANDIT! SPLASH THAT SUCKER!

MAVERICK

I GOT ONE HERE. ON THE NOSE.
COMING DOWN.

Rolling down on him, good SIDEWINDER TONE. The MiGs sense him, they break, one guy down low.

ICE

ON THE NOSE?

MAVERICK

GOT 'EM. GOT GOOD TONE.

He squeezes the trigger.

INTERCUT:

168. EXT. SKY OVER OCEAN. DAY.

169. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

The missile starts to go. The vapor trail comes off, the MiG 21 turns like he's been bounced off a rubber wall, comes around on the missile, beats it. The missile flies by him.

MAVERICK

Ah, shit! Goddamn it!

MiG comes back turning into him.

MERLIN

There's another one up there!

MAVERICK

I GOT ONE COMING UP.

MERLIN

and he's gunning.

He looks back. 30 millimeter tracers go by; they just kind of float. He breaks, hits airbrakes, the trailing MiG dives through.

Suddenly another MiG appears, rocketing straight for him. They close at 900 knots--VABOOOM!--They pass nose to nose, canopy to canopy. Both planes pitch straight up, trying for the altitude advantage.

MAVERICK

Zone 5 burners.

The F-14 outclimbs the MiG sitting on its tail, full thruster, it rockets straight up, away from the planet. Maverick has the advantage. Suddenly, his F-14 runs out of energy. Merlin is the first to call it.

MERLIN

We're ballistic! Ohhhhhh Shit!

The plane backs down on itself, backs into its own smoke as it flips over, falls away...He catches it, just regains control, when ... A ROAR. He looks up.

SECOND MIG coming down. Right on him. It fills the canopy! Instinctive-- A push to miss him, Maverick breaks fast down into him, a 1st ditch maneuver, and the airplane DEPARTS... the roll rates and the pitch rates combine and it tumbles over the top; the airplane just goes end-over-end. They are being slammed and rattled all over the cockpits... bone-jarring, neck-snapping whips. SHRIEKS and SCREAMS from the airframe. Terrifyingly!

MERLIN

Ohhh Mother!

MAVERICK

(strangely calm)

Don't worry, Merlin, I've got it.

Merlin is getting his teeth rattled. He's helpless, he has no controls, there's nothing he can do but hold on.

MERLIN

Don't WORRY!!!? You've GOTit!!!?

MAVERICK

Roger, I've got it.

The plane's gyrations are rattling Merlin's helmet off the canopy.

MERLIN

(sarcastic)

Good! 'Cause for a minute there, you had me in toilet trouble.

It yaws and rolls, starts into a spin.

MERLIN

Have you still got it?

MAVERICK

Yawing right.

MERLIN

I noticed!

MAVERICK

Rudder's left, stick's forward.

MERLIN

Passing ten thousand! Passing 8, Passing 6,
Lock your harness!

MAVERICK

I've got it. Hold on!

They're in a progressive spiral, nose low. The altimeter unwinds, speed picks up. The G forces are forcing them away from the axis of spin, jamming Maverick against the instrument panel at the front of the cockpit.

MAVERICK

You with me?

Merlin, also, is jammed to his panel.

MERLIN

Right...be...hind...you.

He is closer to the center of the spin and less strongly held. But, the only thing he can reach is the yellow and black loop: the ejection handle. He reaches for it.

MERLIN

Speed's up to 150.

Merlin's eyes are wide. The earth grows larger as it rises towards them. G forces flatten them. They've long since lost the MiG. Nobody but an idiot would try to follow them in this maneuver.

MERLIN

(serious panic beginning)
5000 feet. Speed two hundred.

MAVERICK

Okay.

The earth grows larger.

MERLIN

4500. Critical point. I'm gone.

Merlin grabs the ejection handle with both hands.

MAVERICK

No! Not again!

MERLIN

What are you doing? We gotta go!

MAVERICK

(to himself)
I'm not losing this one!

The jet is standing on its nose, gaining speed, plunging towards the ocean.

MERLIN

Gotta go, man.

MAVERICK
280, 290, 300 knots.

MERLIN
3,000 feet. We gotta go, man.
3,000 feet, we gotta go!

MAVERICK
No. I'm staying with it.

MERLIN
I'm gonna go! THREE...TWO...ONE...

Then, just as suddenly, as he's about to pull...Maverick catches it. The plane responds. They're out of the spin. He gets control. Merlin sits there dumbly, hands on handle. Still not believing...

MERLIN
ONE...ONE...ONE...

INTERCUT:

170. EXT. SKY. DAY.

171. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

172. INT. ICE'S COCKPIT. DAY.

Maverick stops the tumble, pulls the nose up quickly and the F-14 sweeps into level flight no more than a hundred feet above the deck. He comes up and looks right at Ice. Ice is down low. He comes around, a MiG-21 all over him like a cheap suit. A flick, a whip, and Maverick in perfect position, rolls right in on the MiG. Merlin looks like he just saw Jesus.

MERLIN
What the shit do you
call THAT maneuver?

He looks at the MiG target set-up in front of him in awe.

MERLIN
Fetch me the bible boys I think I believe
in God! Was that a planned maneuver?

Maverick's acquired the target and is all business.

MAVERICK
ALL RIGHT, ICE. COME HARD STARBOARD,
THEN EXTEND TO THE RIGHT.

Merlin is still frazzled.

MERLIN

Because...if that was...Next time
you tell me first.

ICE

ROGER.

Maverick breaks down, Ice zooms up, breaks in and takes the
MiG the other way. Maverick Yo Yos in, comes right up
behind the MiG, as the MiG starts acceleration.

Maverick rolls in on Ice and the MiG.

MAVERICK

I GOT A WINDER LEFT, BUT NO GOOD
TONE ON IT.

ICE

I CAN'T LOSE HIM, CAN YOU GET
OFF A SHOT?

MAVERICK

I GOT NO TONE. IT MIGHT GET YOU.

ICE

GO FOR IT. SHOOT IT!

MAVERICK

WHEN I SHOOT, YOU BREAK LEFT..3..2..

The MiG fires.

MAVERICK

HE FIRED, BREAK NOW!

Ice breaks left, drops flares. The MiG's missile follows
the flares. Maverick FIRES. Maverick's missile flies right
up the tail pipe of the MiG, the canopy flies off, the pilot
comes out of it, and then the MiG blows up, WE FLY right
through the fireball. VVVARRRUOOMMM!

MAVERICK

He's out! We got him!

The MiG rolls into the ground...KABOOM! They swoop by the
pilot, hanging in his straps... He watches them, dumbly.
Merlin waves.

MERLIN

Happy landing! Get another plane,
we'll be HAPPY to shoot you down again.
That's what we're here for!

Maverick and Ice join up, light it, stand on their burners and blast straight for the sun.

MAVERICK'S F-14

Without warning, a triple roll, as the elation hits him.

173. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

MERLIN

What is it? What's wrong?

Merlin nervously looks around at his circuit breakers.

MERLIN

Is there something I should know?

MAVERICK

Just relax.

MERLIN

Is it the plane?

MAVERICK

No. I want you to do me a little favor Merlin.

MERLIN

...sure.

MAVERICK

HELLO MUSTANG, THIS IS MAVERICK.
I'VE GOT A MESSAGE FOR STINGER.

STRIKE

(V.O.)

ROGER, MAVERICK. GO AHEAD.

MAVERICK

TELL STINGER MAVERICK HAS GOOD NEWS
AND BAD NEWS. THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT
ICE GOT A MIG. THE BAD NEWS IS THAT
MAVERICK GOT TWO!

He looks over at Ice.

ICE

'COULD BE WORSE.

MAVERICK
WE GOTTA HAVE ONE.

174. INT. ICE'S COCKPIT. DAY.

SLIDER

I don't know, Ice, We've really been
burning up the fuel.

Ice considers for a moment, then responds.

ICE

I know. I know.

175. INT. MAVERICK'S COCKPIT. DAY.

MERLIN

You're not supposed to...

MAVERICK

But I have to! I got a reputation
to uphold.

MERLIN

Well since you put it that way!

MAVERICK

MUSTANG, THIS IS MAVERICK, REQUEST
A FLYBY.

176. INT. PRI-FLY BRIDGE (PRIMARY FLIGHT CONTROL) USS KITTY
HAWK. DAY.

The REDNECK Johnson, the new Air Boss speaks to Maverick
over the UHF. The Admiral, the XO and other officers watch
and listen.

AIR BOSS

(not happy)

GHOST RIDER, THE PATTERN'S FULL.

Airboss Johnson looks at Admiral.

ICE

(V.O. filtered)

MUSTANG, THIS IS VODOO ONE.
REQUEST A FLYBY FOR TWO.

OFFICER

Who is that guy?

ADMIRAL

That's the Top Gun.

STINGER

(smiling)

BOTH of them.

177. INT. MAVERICK'S F-14. DAY.

He glances over at Ice, who gives him the thumbs up.

MAVERICK
BOSS, YOU BETTER CLEAR IT OUT,
WE'RE FIVE MINUTES OUT AND WE'RE DOING IT!

178. INT. PRI-FLY BRIDGE. DAY.

Airboss looks at Admiral. The Admiral looks out over the water and smiles.

MAVERICK
(V.O. filtered)
TEN MILES ASTERN, BOSS.

The Air Boss is livid. He clenches the mike.

AIR BOSS
MUSTANG TO GHOST RIDER!...

Just then the Admiral pipes up.

ADMIRAL
(sternly)
Johnson!

AIR BOSS
Yes, Sir, Admiral?

ADMIRAL
Give the man his flyby.

The Admiral looks at the others, tries to suppress his own grin. He slides into his (borrowed) command chair, looks into the wind. On the back of the chair, a clue; his name and rank: RADM. Buford Clancy, "BOOMER"

The Air Boss burns, but has no choice.

AIR BOSS
(really pissed off)
ROGER, GHOST RIDER, YOU'RE CLEAR.

179. EXT. KITTY HAWK. DAY.

Sailors line the deck and search the sky. They crane their necks from their battle stations, sweating into the sun, watching for the approach of F-14's. Someone sees it-- he points and SHOUTS. The F-14 appears, and every man stands and CHEERS.

180. EXT. MAVERICK'S POV-- DAY.

MERLIN

Now?

MAVERICK

NOW!

MERLIN

GREAT BALLS OF FIRE!

WE COME SCREAMING IN, 5 FEET OVER THE WATER, throwing up rooster tails behind. WE SPLIT OFF and ZOOM along each side of the carrier, at 100 feet and ROLL IT.

181. INT. PRI-FLY BRIDGE-- VVAAAAABBOOOM! DAY.

It lifts the Air Boss right off his feet. The walls warp, dust sifts from the overhead. The whole tower just goes BOOM!

AIR BOSS

Goddamn that guy!

His words are drowned out by ICEMAN taking his flyby. VVAAAAABBOOOM!

182. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. DAY.

They break at 500 knots. Ice is first down over the ramp, waved in. The F-14 comes in a little rocky. It bounces hard but grabs the wire, then jerks to a sudden halt. The sailors CHEER AND APPLAUD, throwing fists of victory into the air, straining to get a look at Ice as the crew directs his plane off to the side. Opening the canopy, Ice and Slider unstrap. Stinger and the others are there. Guys are climbing up, climbing all over the airplane. They're already painting a MiG on the side, and they're looking at Ice in awe.

183. EXT. KITTY HAWK. POV--MAVERICK--THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD--AS HE LANDS. DAY.

He catches the wire, the view slams down toward the deck as the plane arrests, then comes up... He releases the cockpit and can hear the ROAR OF THE CROWD...

184. EXT. FLIGHT DECK. DAY.

He swings the nose around past Ice's. Ice's plane is covered in colored jerseys as the ground crew pulls him out. Maverick's plane swings towards the PRI-FLY BRIDGE. Pilots in flightsuits pour from the deck hatch APPLAUDING...

He cuts his engines as the Ground Crew swarms.

As Maverick and Merlin climb down, Maverick is elated to see two familiar figures: Hollywood and Wolfman walk from their battle damaged TOMCAT on the forward elevator as it sinks out of sight below decks.

MAVERICK

What happened to you?

WOLFMAN

Nothing- Just hit a curb, parking.

MAVERICK

You are two lucky guys.

HOLLYWOOD

Not luck. Skill.

Ice is looking in Maverick's direction. His face is inscrutable. He pushes over to Maverick. They stare at each other for a moment, eye to eye even as they are buffeted by the crowd. Finally, Ice breaks...a grin.

ICE

I guess I owe you one.

MAVERICK

You don't owe me anything.

ICE

You saved our lives. You did it!

MAVERICK

We did it, we're on the same team.

They embrace.

ICEMAN

You can be my wingman anytime!

MAVERICK

(laughs)

Bullshit! You can be mine!

Now Ice LAUGHS. Nobody's ever gonna win on this one. But Ice smiles at him.... It's now a running joke between them.

ICE

Whatever you say, Commander.

He and Slider snap to and proudly salute. Maverick hesitates, then returns it. As Ice and Slider snap it off, it turns into the pilot's salute, they give them the bird. Maverick and Merlin laugh and return the compliment.

185. INT. THE READY ROOM-LATER

Maverick is alone. He is staring at a locker

TIGHT ON LOCKER- with Lt. Josh Bradshaw "GOOSE" written on tape. He reaches up and pulls it off slowly.

WIDER- Stinger comes in.

STINGER

MiG killer! You got the big duty option Son. Sky's the limit. Anything, anyplace.

MAVERICK

MiG killer. What else is there?

TIGHT-Maverick grins, turns away.

186. EXT. BOW OF THE SHIP-DAY

He looks out, at the dying sun shimmering over the sea. He takes Goose's name tape and stretches it out on the ship's railing. Then he starts out at one end and rolls it in a neat roll- throws it out to sea.

187. FADE IN -WEEKS LATER- SUNRISE

SILENCE- WE ARE FLOATING INTO AN APPROACH ABOVE MIRAMAR RUNWAY.

188. ON FLIGHTLINE-MIRAMAR

ZZZZOOOOOMM! The F-14 lands.

189. ON F-14- as it taxis into place.

ON PLANE- ENGINE WHINES DOWN. No one is around.

190. ON CANOPY- it slides back and Maverick steps out. He crawls down to ground. Takes off helmet. Plane Captain runs up.

PLANE CAPTAIN

Welcome back Sir. 'Be someone to pick you up in a minute. It's early.

MAVERICK

(nods)

There's a little vibration in the back here.

They walk around the plane and MOS inspect it.

A jeep speeds across the tarmac and pulls up on the other side of the plane. Maverick walks slowly under the wing for post flight inspection and over to jeep.

A "TOP GUN INSTRUCTOR" cap is sitting on the jeep top. He puts it on.

Bends down, looks inside to see driver. No one there.

VOICE

Taxi sailor?

He turns to see Charlie. He smiles at her. Looks at Plane Captain who comes around wing, is surprised to see Charlie.

MAVERICK

I must have landed at the wrong place.

CHARLIE

Could be. I guess we'll see.

He looks at her for an explanation.

CHARLIE

They gave me the big option. Anywhere. I checked around. Found out the best of the best were all gonna' be back here. So I took Perry's job.

Plane Captain looks at them, while trying to do his work. Maverick walks by her and throws his bag into the jeep. Charlie watches the Plane Captain.

MAVERICK

(ironically)

This could be a complicated engagement.

She turns to him.

CHARLIE

I don't know. I've only done it twice.

MAVERICK

How'd you do?

CHARLIE

Crashed on the first one. I'll tell you tomorrow. But its looking good so far.

She reaches out and kisses him hard for a very long time. Plane Captain stops and stares and scurries away.

TWO F-14s ZOOM into take off in BG.

MUSIC UP.

CREDITS UP

FADE OUT.

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