

# Story Outline

## Top Gun by Jim Cash

### Act I

Opening titles over scenes of aircraft carrier flight operations.

Below deck, controllers notify a flight of U.S. aircraft that they are about to make contact with a bogey. The commander is less than pleased when he learns that MAVERICK and GOOSE are flying one of the intercept planes.

In the skies over the Indian Ocean, Maverick leads his wing, flown by COUGAR and MERLIN, into action.

The American fliers spot what they believe to be a lone bogey, but it turns out to be a pair of ultra-modern MIG 28's. Maverick and Cougar split up to play cat and mouse with the hostile jets. Maverick immediately gets a missile lock on his opponent, who hastily flies away.

The other MIG, however, gets a missile lock on Cougar. But Maverick blasts in and chases off the enemy plane with some hotshot, unorthodox maneuvering.

Maverick and his wing are both low on fuel and need to return to the ship, but Cougar has been badly shaken by the encounter and flies off in no particular direction.

Against orders and common sense. Maverick chooses not to land, but circles around and guides Cougar back to the ship.

In the commander's office. Cougar turns in his wings. He's lost the edge.

Maverick and Goose see the commander next, and they—especially Maverick—get their asses chewed. But the commander reluctantly announces that since Cougar quit flying, they are next in line to go to the Navy Fighter Weapons School—Top Gun.

Miramar Naval Air Station, Fightertown USA: Maverick satisfies his need for speed on his motorcycle.

At the initial Top Gun briefing, a Navy officer briefs the pilots on the history and successes of the Top Gun program, then introduces the school's commander. Viper, who gives a pep talk and explains the schedule for the upcoming weeks. And Maverick has a chilly introduction to one of the other top pilots, ICEMAN.

At a bar that night. Maverick and Goose butt heads with Iceman and his co-pilot, SLIDER.

Then Maverick spots a pretty blonde, and along with Goose and a couple dozen other pilots, he serenades her. The stunt gets him an introduction, but as Maverick's ego shines through, the woman leaves to sit at a table with an older man.

Later, Maverick follows her into the ladies' room and hits on her with all the subtlety of a battleship in a bathtub. To say the least, she's not at all charmed.

In class the next day. Maverick and Goose discover that the woman, CHARLIE, has a Ph.D. in astrophysics and is one of their Top Gun instructors. And she knows her stuff. She locks horns with Maverick over the enemy plane that he (and Goose) had intercepted earlier.

After class she corners Maverick in a hallway. He thinks she's warming up to him, but she only wants to know more about the MIG. So he leaves her hanging.

Then he runs into Iceman, who accuses Maverick of lying, having an obnoxious attitude, and just generally being full of crap.

During the first aerial maneuvers. Maverick manages to shake JESTER, an experienced instructor pilot, and get on his tail. But Jester flies down low—out of bounds—so Maverick breaks the rules and follows him down for "the kill" Maverick is feeling cocky, and to prove it he disobeys orders and buzzes the air traffic control tower with his jet.

In the locker room. Maverick and Iceman go nose to nose. They do not like each other.

In VIPER's office. Maverick and Goose get another severe ass-chewing. If they disobey the rules one more time, they're history.

## Act II

Jester and Viper don't know quite what to make of the young hotshot.

Goose has a heart-to-heart with Maverick, asks him to think of his partner for a change and take it easy. Maverick promises not to let his co-pilot down.

In class the next day, Charlie and Maverick talk about flying and Maverick's embarrassing show in the bar. By the time the conversation's over, he has her address and a dinner invitation.

The pilots gather outside for an intense volleyball game. They compete fiercely, even when they're supposed to be relaxing.

After the game, Maverick is running late for his date with Charlie. She's afraid he might not show, but when he finally does arrive she plays it cool.

Over dinner, she says the real reason she invited him over was to learn more about that MIG he intercepted.

After their meal they lounge around and listen to Otis Redding, and Maverick talks about his past. His father was in the Navy, and still has a bad reputation, even though he's been dead nearly twenty years. When Charlie makes a slight overture to Maverick, he brushes her off with a grin. Now it's his turn to play hard to get.

In an elevator on the base the next day, she admits that she likes him a little more than she's letting on. Again he grins, and stops just short of kissing her.

Goose's wife CAROL and their daughter arrive in California to be with their man.

During a debriefing for a previous mission, Charlie and Viper take turns bashing Maverick's outrageous flying. Iceman gets a kick out of the browbeating, but his co-pilot. Slider, compliments Maverick.

After class Maverick blows Charlie off completely and races through town, with her in hot pursuit. They argue in the street, and she admits that she's fallen for him. Then they retire to a bedroom for the evening.

During flight maneuvers. Iceman and Maverick take to the air. Halfway through training, the rivals are running neck and neck for the Top Gun trophy.

In the thick of a mock dogfight. Maverick breaks the rules again and leaves his wing man hanging to go after Viper.

As they thunder through the desert canyons in pursuit of Viper, Maverick and Goose are ambushed and "killed" by Jester.

On the ground Jester, then Iceman, tear into Maverick for his reckless attitude. Maverick admits to Goose that what he did was stupid, and promises it won't happen again. Goose doesn't seem convinced.

That night, alone in his room. Maverick wonders about what really happened to his dad.

Maverick and Goose yuk it up in a burger joint; Charlie hears that Maverick is head over heels in love with her.

Later that night, Charlie and Maverick race about town on his motorcycle, stopping occasionally to test fly each other's lips.

With only two weeks left until graduation, the Top Gun trophy is still up for grabs. During an intense, frenzied mock battle over the desert. Maverick and Iceman go for each other's throats as they maneuver their jets for a kill on a single adversary.

Maverick flies in too close to Iceman and his jet wash, and loses both engines to a flameout. Maverick and Goose fall into an extremely dangerous flat spin, losing altitude rapidly as they head out over the ocean. In a frantic ejection. Goose slams into the jettisoned canopy and is killed. Maverick survives the ejection unharmed.

On the ground. Viper tries to console Maverick. It doesn't work—the subdued hotshot blames himself for the death of his co-pilot and best friend.

Maverick gathers Goose's personal effects and brings them to his widow

A panel of inquiry clears Maverick of any blame in Goose's death, and restores him to flying status. Maverick goes up in a jet for the first time since the accident, but passes up a perfect shot and breaks away. He's lost the edge.

When Maverick blows up at his new wing man. Viper and Jester decide that the best therapy is to keep sending him up.

Iceman does his best to offer condolences, but it doesn't help.

After Charlie learns that Maverick has quit flying, she finds him in an airport lounge, and tells him that she has a lucrative job offer in Washington, D.C. She also tries to convince him that he can't blame himself for Goose's death. But Maverick has gone off the deep end, and without a sound he lets her walk away.

### Act III

Maverick visits Viper's house, and demands to know the true story of what happened to his father. They then discuss Maverick's options for the future.

Maverick rides over to Charlie's. Her house is for rent and she's already gone. He spends a lonely evening watching the jets come and go at the base.

At the Fighter Weapons School graduation, Maverick shows up just in time to congratulate Iceman and Slider for winning the Top Gun trophy. Viper breaks up the party by handing several pilots emergency orders. Two of those pilots are Maverick and Iceman.

Out at sea, it's a real-world situation. The stakes are high. So is the tension. Maverick is assigned to stand by on alert, ready to cover Iceman as he intercepts enemy aircraft approaching the fleet. Iceman doesn't trust Maverick.

On patrol, the bogeys are sighted and the intercept is on. Five MIG 28's swarm the American jets, and immediately shoot down Iceman's wing man. Maverick takes off with orders to assist his old rival.

In the middle of a harrowing dogfight, with Iceman outnumbered 5 to 1 and all alone. Maverick loses his cool and breaks away.

But he finds strength in the memory of Goose, and returns to engage the enemy. One MIG goes down straight away. Ice and Maverick work together now...Iceman gets a kill...but he's hit...and hit again...teamwork...another jet down... Maverick lures in the fourth MIG then destroys him; the last enemy pilot heads home with his tail between his afterburners.

Maverick, back to his old self, buzzes the tower on the aircraft carrier. But you can bet he gets away with it this time.

A hero's welcome for Maverick on the flight deck, and a big hug from Iceman.

Maverick tosses Goose's dog tags out to sea, sending with them the guilt he's carried since the accident.

Maverick is offered his pick of assignments to anywhere in the world—he chooses Miramar Naval Air Station, and a job as Top Gun instructor.

Back in Fightertown USA, Maverick discovers that Charlie left her job in Washington to come back and be with him. If this assignment wasn't a sweet deal before, it is now.