

Screenplay Here in my Gethsemane

by

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CRASH

EXT BIPLANE ABOVE FIELD DAY

roll credits

V.O. MELODY GABRIELLE 19 singing *The Lord's Prayer*
accompanied by a honky tonk PIANO.

We hear the FAILING MOTOR GROW STEADILY LOUDER as the song progresses. Pilot KIFFIN YATES 26 desperately tries to control his PLANE which seems to be possessed. He looks for landing strip. The plane is gradually approaching a Chapel. We see the cross on the roof grow larger in the windscreen. It is clear it is about to collide with the Chapel. As hymn ends the sound of the motor fills the Chapel.

INT CHAPEL DAY

A simple room. BOONE MATTHEWS 9 is playing the piano. Simple wooden chairs are used as pews. A rough cross is fixed to the wall. On another wall is a notice for the Village Fair. There are two small windows in the side walls. The congregation is nearly overcome by the singing of soloist MELODY GABRIELLE who looks heavenward as her last NOTE LINGERS. In the back of the chapel we see EBB 20, a soldier in uniform with an eye-patch leaning against the doors. He is looking sadly at Melody. We hear the PLANE which is very close. People are praying wide-eyed. PARSON JEREMIAH NICKSON 40 stands beside a simple stool, and near it on the floor is his big black hat. LILY, the parson's wife, 34, from her wheelchair, looks toward heaven.

JEREMIAH

Let there be Light!

As he speaks we hear a CRASH. Dust and splinters fall upon JEREMIAH, then he is bathed in sunlight. A page flutters from his well-worn Bible. The CONGREGATION GASPS. Boone looks on in wonder at Jeremiah. Then he notices the plane through a window.

BOONE

(pointing to the window)

Uncle!

EXT LAKESIDE DAY

The PLANE has crashed into the lake and is sinking. KIFFEN is fumbling with his harness as the water rises.

JEREMIAH (OFF SCREEN)

Finn get the bell rope. Lily,
first aid. Ladies, blankets. Men
follow me!

(CONTINUED)

The pilot has a pocket knife but can't open it. He becomes frantic then the knife slips from his hand and drifts to the floor of the plane. We see his hand go limp.

INT CHAPEL DAY

Doors burst open and the congregation rushes by EBB and follows JEREMIAH. In the distance, the tail of the plane rises from the lake. The boys have outrun everyone. Jeremiah strips his coat off as he runs. He rushes into the water.

EXT LAKESIDE DAY

Men and boys are in the lake but it is chaos.

JEREMIAH

Get back!

JEREMIAH takes a deep breath and ducks below the tail of the plane. After a seemingly long time the tail section starts to rise from the lake. Then Jeremiah appears and he begins to pull the plane onto the beach. The men and boys are stunned by this feat of strength and simply cheer him on as if it were a contest. BOONE, too, looks on but sees the KIFFEN's limp head and rushes up to the cockpit and pounds the pilot in the back. The pilot coughs.

BOONE

He's alive, Uncle.

The plane is now out of the lake, draining water. FINN is running up with a thick rope.

JEREMIAH

Too late, Finn.

FINN

Perhaps on purpose, Jeremiah.

BOONE

Uncle, he needs help.

JEREMIAH

Finn can handle that!

There's a little smirk of laughter at Finn's expense as Jeremiah is surrounded by the crowd which now includes women. The crowd is full of thanks and prayers.

JEREMIAH (CONT)

The lad needs our help. Bring him up to the house. Hurry.

HELENA COATSWORTH a stunning woman about 25, with a great pile of auburn hair under her hat and a long red scarf loosely about her neck. She carries Jeremiah's hat and coat.

(CONTINUED)

HELENA
Stay warm, Jeremiah.

She offers his hat and coat.

HELENA CON'T
I'm leaving soon, Jeremiah

Helena turns away without another word and disappears into the crowd. Jeremiah's gaze follows her.

The pilot is free of the cockpit and has been laid on the beach and is COUGHING VIOLENTLY. Some women gather round and start wrapping him in blankets. Finn then hoists him over his shoulder and jogs to the Parsonage over the PROTESTS OF THE WOMEN who follow as quickly as they can. Boone and the crowd follow Finn.

DOCTOR

INT BEDROOM A LITTLE LATER THAT DAY

The room like the Chapel is simple and nearly bare except for mirrors hung low on every wall. A full length mirror stands in the corner reflecting the parlour door. There are sewing notions about and a quilting frame against a wall. This is the room Lily uses for quilting.

The DOCTOR is examining KIFFEN. BOONE is at foot of the bed with MELODY. LILY in her wheel chair, smooths the blankets around Kiffen.

JEREMIAH enters and puts his Bible on the nightstand. The Bible is well worn and looks like a collection of loose pages. Jeremiah prays quietly behind Lily. Boone opens his own Bible and takes a loose page --the page that fluttered down during the crash-- and places in Jeremiah's Bible. We can see a little fleck of plaster on the page.

Off screen we hear, indistinctly, the drone of Jeremiah's prayer.

DOCTOR
(whispering)
Let him sleep. He should be fine.
Odd that he suffered no injury.

INTRODUCTIONS

INT PARSONAGE KITCHEN DAY

The kitchen is simple, efficient, with space for LILY to move about in her wheel chair. Mirrors hang low on the walls. MEN'S VOICES AND HAMMERING drift in from outside. KIFF, a little reeky on his feet, enters the kitchen surprising Lily who slumps heavily into her wheelchair.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Sorry.

Lily nods. She is uncomposed.

KIFF CON'T

Trying your strength?

LILY

Pardon?

KIFF

Exercising? Rehabilitation the nurses call it now.

LILY

No, this is... (she motions hopelessness with her hands)

KIFF

Sorry. (beat) I'm Kiffen Yates.

LILY

Lily, the Parson's...wife.

KIFF

Saved by God's man.

LILY

Yes. (beat) Doc said to feed you oat porridge, Mr Yates.

KIFF

Kiff, please.

LILY

Kiff, sit down. It's ready. Would you like a drink? Water? Milk?

KIFF

I've had enough water for a while.

Lily laughs.

KIFF CON'T

How long have I been here?

Lily brings Kiff's breakfast on a tray across her lap.

LILY

A day. Longer than that. It's nearly two o'clock Monday.

Kiff nods and eats hungrily. He notices the HAMMERING.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

What's going on?

LILY

The men are fixing the Chapel roof. Your entrance was electrifying.

KIFF

Yes, it was exciting.

LILY

Why are you here? In Gethsamane.

KIFF

I was aiming for Amherstburg but I developed a little engine problem. Not sure why I chose the chapel to crash into.

LILY

Perhaps God chose it for you.

KIFF

Maybe a devil in the electric's chose it.

LILY

Satan can pretend to be God.

Lily returns to her cooking.

KIFF

Did I cause much damage?

LILY

A hole in the roof which will be good for business.

KIFF

For the roofers?

LILY

For the Parson. Your aeroplane is...readily fixable...according to the men. More porridge?

KIFF

Bacon and eggs if you have them.

LILY

Doc said porridge. But you've had that, so I suppose bacon and eggs are...

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

It's not too much...trouble for you, is it?

Lily begins to prepare bacon and eggs. Her face is reflected in the mirror near the stove. Lily keeps busy while she talks.

LILY

It's very gallante of you to ask. That's a rare trait among men. Don't you think, Kiff?

KIFF

I haven't seen much of it. But then, I've been trying to stay alive despite the prayers of a lot of Bosch pilots.

LILY

It's over now, Kiff. You won't dodge bullets any more.

KIFF

God willing. Any coffee?

LILY

Forbidden! Verboten!

KIFF

A religious thing?

LILY

A Parson Jeremiah thing. No coffee...until after supper.

KIFF

Why?

LILY

I knew the reason once but now I just remember that it is verboten.

KIFF

Is the Parson around?

LILY

He's always around.

KIFF

Omnipresent. Omniscient?

LILY

Almost.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

And omnipotent?

LILY

I don't know, anymore. Really, he is a very great presence. He is loved by everyone. Almost everyone. A saint, really.

KIFF

I think I remember being carried. Was that him?

LILY

No. That was Finn. The other strong man. But Jeremiah has God on his side. They say he carried that aeroplane of yours out of the lake on his back.

KIFF

Good God. She weighs 1500 pounds!

LILY

Oh yes and full of water. I don't doubt Jeremiah could do it. I know his strength. Yes, I know about that. Men, women, and children have told me the story.

KIFF

You didn't see it?

LILY

No. I was preparing the room for you. Arranging a few things and putting on fresh sheets.

KIFF

Thank you for your thoughtfulness, Lily.

Kiff is suddenly aware of the smell of coffee.

KIFF CON'T

Is that...

LILY

...hush. It's verboten.

She serves the bacon and eggs. Kiff digs in immediately.

LILY (CON'T)

(whispering)

Coffee will be served early today.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE enters, arms held like wings, making a roaring sound. He sees Kiff and stops abruptly. He is wearing Kiff's helmet and goggles.

KIFF
I think I remember you pounding
my back.

BOONE
Sorry, sir. (He drops his wings.)

KIFF
Sorry? You saved my life.

Kiff offers his hand. Boone accepts maturely.

KIFF CON'T
Flight Lieutenant Kiffen Yates,
late of the Lafayette Escadrille.

BOONE
A fighter pilot! (Flips up
goggles.)

KIFF
(nods)
And who are you?

BOONE
Oh! Boone, Boone Matthews. The
parson is my uncle. He saved you.

LILY
With God's help, Boone.

BOONE
Yes, of course. God helps us do
everything. Except bad stuff.

KIFF
I seem to remember a lot of
voices helping me. I thought they
might be angels.

BOONE
That would be Miss Melody.

Boone timidly offers the helmet to Kiff but he waves his hands to indicate Boone may hang onto it. Boone smiles.

LILY
Boone, go fetch Doc. He's at
Elspeth's treating her leg. Tell
him our guest is well enough to
eat.

Boone leaves dutifully but keeps his eyes on Kiff until the last moment.

(CONTINUED)

LILY (CON'T)
Jeremiah won't have a telephone.
New fangled. (Laughs) But he has
an automobile.

Lily turns her chair back to the stove. Kiff sees Lily
struggling to adjust the mirror near the stove.

KIFF
May I help?

LILY
(over her shoulder)
I've had four years to get used
to this.

We hear a door open and heavy footsteps. JEREMIAH enters
the kitchen, wrinkling his nose at the fragrance of the
coffee.

JEREMIAH
God has answered my prayer.

Kiff starts to stand.

JEREMIAH (CONT)
No, please, rest. I'm Jeremiah
Nickson, Parson of the Good
Shepherd's Chapel at Gethsemane.

LILY
This is Kiff, Parson.

She turns her chair away from Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH
Kiff? (Jeremiah extends his hand)
Just Kiff?

KIFF
Kiff to my friends. Formally,
Flight Lieutenant Kiffen Yates.

JEREMIAH
Mercifully the war is over, Mr
Yates. No need for rank now.

KIFF
(beat) Thank you for saving my
life, Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH
God saved your life, Mr Yates.
We are just servants. Finish
eating and then we'll look at
your machine.

(CONTINUED)

Over Lily's shoulder and looking into the mirror, we see Jeremiah leave.

KIFF

What did you mean, "The hole would be good for business?"

LILY

Oh, the light that shone through was proof of Jeremiah's sainthood.

THE PLANE

EXT YARD DAY

KIFF closely inspects the damage to his plane. He moves stiffly. A wheel strut is bent. The wings are torn. He opens a hatch and water gushes out. He shakes his head sadly. In the background, his clothes and other gear spread out in the sunshine. BOONE, still wearing the helmet, and JEREMIAH are approaching.

KIFF

Parson, I hope we didn't get off on the wrong foot.

JEREMIAH

Not at all, Mr Yates.

KIFF

Kiff, please.

JEREMIAH

Kiff. (Beat) Much damage?

KIFF

Water in the engine mostly. Fabric tears. Those aren't too bad. Prop looks fine. Some kind of miracle. Must have rolled into the lake. (points to strut) But that's got too much bend in it.

BOONE

Uncle can straighten that, Kiff. Can't you Uncle?

JEREMIAH

Most likely.

KIFF

Straighten it?

Jeremiah takes the strut, braces one hand against it and pulls back with his other hand. The strut slowly straightens. Parson stands back to admire his work.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

Not perfect. Will it work?

KIFF

It should. It wasn't that straight before it hit your roof. You have the strength of Samson!

JEREMIAH

No, Kiff, I have the strength of God.

BOONE

Uncle can straighten, lift, or break anything, Kiff. He's the strongest man in three counties.

KIFF

At least. Is the roof badly damaged?

JEREMIAH

It's all fixed. Nothing that God fearing men couldn't put right.

KIFF

I'll work off the debt, Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH

Consider it our gift.

KIFF

Very neighbourly.

JEREMIAH

Will you be staying in Gethsemane a while?

KIFF

Could be a week or two. May I bunk out here under the wing?

JEREMIAH

Certainly not.

Kiff and Boone are taken by surprise.

JEREMIAH (CONT)

Not when a bed is available in the house.

KIFF

I guess we'll be close neighbours.

Jeremiah pulls a knife from his pocket. It has the Indian Chief in war bonnet insignia of the Escadrille Lafayette and the initials K.R.Y.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

This is yours, I trust. Handy little knife.

KIFF

Didn't do much to get me out of the trouble I was in. But it has sentimental value, thanks.

BOONE

Can I help fix the plane, Kiff?

KIFF

In exchange for a ride? Sure.

BOONE

Honest Injun?

Kiff fishes a very dry looking cigarette wrapped in cellophane from his pocket.

KIFF

A totem for a flight. Don't smoke it.

BOONE

(laughs at the suggestion)
A token?

KIFF

No. A token is just something to exchange for something else. A totem is symbolic. The smoke is like clouds. Smoke flies!

BOONE

Did you use smokes as totems in the war?

KIFF

No, there's nothing symbolic in war. Stuff is what it is. Except lies. No, in the squadron we used smokes as tokens. Just tokens.

BOONE

For flights?

KIFF

No, usually to exchange for more smokes.

BOONE

You're kidding me again.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Yep. (to Jeremiah) Fine young man you have here.

JEREMIAH

Yes. Just don't turn his head. Come on, Boone. We have lambs to visit. And don't let your Aunt see that cigarette.

Jeremiah walks a few paces.

JEREMIAH (CONT)

Supper is at half-past five, Kiff. Lily likes us on time and washed clean.

Jeremiah rubs his chin indicating Kiff needs to shave.

KIFF

I'll be there. In parade order, Parson.

Jeremiah's car leaves. Boone, wearing helmet and goggles, leans out the window from the waist, his arms like wings.

SINGING PRACTICE

INT PARLOR OF PARSONAGE NIGHT

BOONE displays his virtuosity at the piano. JEREMIAH is sitting in an easy chair reading his Bible. KIFF is studying an aircraft mechanic's manual. Boone jumps up as he hears a CAR PULL INTO THE DRIVE.

BOONE

Melody's here!

Boone rushes to the front door to welcome her and then MELODY GABRIELLE appears. Both Kiff and Jeremiah immediately put down their reading.

JEREMIAH

What a delight, Miss Melody.

Melody attempts to give her music to Boone, but Jeremiah intercepts just as Boone receives it. Jeremiah then hands it off blindly to Boone. Kiff hovers trying to catch her eye.

JEREMIAH (CONT)

Melody, this is Kiffen Yates.

MELODY

The talk of the town.

Kiff takes her hand though she gently resists.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF
(in French)
The voice of an angel.

He lifts her hand to his lips but her glare freezes him.

KIFF CON'T
Friends call me Kiff, Miss
Gabrielle.

Kiff pats her hand. He is a bit frustrated.

MELODY
(in French)
Do they?

She takes her hand back.

BOONE
Kiff's a fighter pilot.

MELODY
That's over with now, Boone.

JEREMIAH
Let's begin. You may leave Kiff,
if you have other things to do.

KIFF
I'll stay.

Kiff takes a seat very close to where Melody stands and
sings her warm up exercises. She is nervous under his
gaze. She trills a few notes.

That was a skooch sharp. Wouldn't
you say, Boone? Just a skooch.

BOONE
Yes. Miss Melody, it was a bit
tentative.

MELODY
Tentative? (she has a "do you
even know what the word means"
look)

BOONE
(before she can continue)
You are not attacking the note.

KIFF
You're sliding into it.

MELODY
Like your aeroplane slid into the
lake?

KIFF

Perhaps I could show you?

MELODY

What? How to crash an aeroplane?
I'm sure that's not too very
difficult, Mr Yates.

KIFF

Crashing is as easy as singing
sharp. No, I can show you how to
sing that scale.

MELODY

Really.

KIFF

Boone, from the top.

Kiff SINGS THE SCALE flawlessly.

KIFF CON'T

It is more from the diaphragm,
Miss Gabrielle.

Melody holds her stomach protectively.

Jeremiah steps between them and places music before Boone.

JEREMIAH

I chose these selections for
Sunday. My sermon is about love.

KIFF

A favourite subject...

MELODY

Of yours? I couldn't have guessed
that.

KIFF

..of the apostle Paul.

MELODY

Who said?

KIFF

Well, he wrote a lot...

MELODY

Maybe you could favour us with a
skooch of what the Apostle Paul
wrote.

KIFF

Love suffers long and is kind;
love does not envy; love does not

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KIFF (cont'd)
parade itself, is not puffed up;
does not behave rudely, does not
seek its own, is not provoked,
thinks no evil; does not rejoice
in iniquity, but rejoices in the
truth; bears all things, believes
all things, hopes all things,
endures all things. Love never
fails. But whether there are
prophecies, they will fail;
whether there are tongues, they
will cease; whether there is
knowledge, it will vanish away.

BOONE
First Corinthians chapter 13
verses four to eight.

Melody is stunned. Jeremiah smiles.

JEREMIAH
So many of the boys returned
without their Lord.

KIFF
It's all here. (He taps his
heart.)

BOONE
Melody needs to practise.

MELODY
Yes. Yes, I do. Now sit down
and... listen or something.

KIFF retakes the place near MELODY who moves to the other side of the piano. BOONE plays through the selections finally coming to "When Peace Like a River" which Melody sings wonderfully.

KIFF
Perhaps we could sing a duet of
that last one.

KIFF leafs through BOONE's music.

MELODY
In Chapel?

KIFF
A duet is just a small choir.

Melody has a 'this man has an answer for everything' look.

BOONE

If it's acceptable to you, Uncle.

JEREMIAH

God's music, yes. Well, Mr Yates can sing.

MELODY

...better than he lands aeroplanes.

KIFF

A crow sings better than my last landing, Miss Gabrielle.

Melody laughs despite herself. We hear Boone play an introduction. Kiff and Melody are looking at each other rather than their music and both miss their entry.

BOONE

(mature but impatient)

Come in when I nod.

Boone replays the introduction, nods, and both Kiff and Melody begin to sing. Jeremiah takes his chair and looks content. He has closed his Bible but a few pages have slipped to the floor near his feet. LILY wheels in at the second verse. Kiff and Melody sing well together. They finish to the applause of Jeremiah and Lily. Lily stops applauding once she notices Jeremiah clapping. Melody smiles thinly. Lily wheels out of the room.

MELODY

I think...

BOONE

That was wonderful.

MELODY

No, I don't...

JEREMIAH

But it was wonderful. Wasn't it Lily?

KIFF

You missed nary a note.

MELODY

(mockingly)Nary a note.

KIFF

Nary a note.

BOONE

Then we will sing it this Sunday.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

No. No, we (with great emphasis)
won't. I don't think a duet is
right.

JEREMIAH

But Melody it was perfect.

KIFF

Nary a note was wrong.

JEREMIAH

It's all for God's pleasure, not
ours. Not for us mortals.

MELODY

That sums it up for me, Parson.

JEREMIAH

Then you will sing!

MELODY

(frustrated)
I will sing.

BOONE

With Kiff?

MELODY

With Mr Yates. I still say a duet
is more for the beer hall than
the church hall.

KIFF

The Parson and I and certainly
young Boone,...

JEREMIAH

(interrupting)
Where's Lily?

Jeremiah hurries away with obvious concern in his face and
manner.

KIFF

... will have to take your word
on that, Miss Gabrielle.

BOONE

Everything's fine, then.

Kiff takes Melody's hand.

KIFF

It's a deal.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY
(whispers)
If you try to kiss my hand again,
I'll scream.

KIFF
(whispering)
Just keep it in key.

MELODY
Aaahhhrrrggg

Melody packs up her music and leaves. Kiff, his head cocked, listens closely. He enjoys the scene happening off-screen.

MELODY (OFF SCREEN)
Boone, get my coat, please.

The DOOR OPENS.

MELODY (OFF SCREEN)
Good night, Boone. Say good night
to the Parson for me, please, and
Lily.

BOONE (OFF SCREEN)
Yes, Miss Melody and I'll say
good night to Kiff, for you, too.

MELODY (OFF SCREEN)
Ahhrrrg

Her CAR STARTS and LEAVES IN A GREAT HURRY. Kiff bursts into a large smile.

BEDROOM

INT BEDROOM NIGHT

Another simple room with mirrors. LILY is seated sideways before a large mirror in her night clothes. They are more protective than alluring but we see her legs from just above the knee. She brushes her long hair and looks critically at her face in the mirror and smiles faintly. Through the mirror we see JEREMIAH enter the room.

JEREMIAH
Why did you leave? We had guests.

LILY

Lily keeps watching the mirror while continuing to brush her hair throughout the entire scene.
Your guests, Jeremiah.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

Our guests.

LILY

Am I still beautiful? Except for these, of course.

She points to her legs which are beautiful.

JEREMIAH

You are beautiful, Lily. Even your legs.

LILY

But somehow useless.
(quickly covering them)
Crippled and barren, do you thank your God for that?

JEREMIAH

Lily!

LILY

Helena Coatsworth is not barren, one would think.

JEREMIAH

Lily stop this. This is blasphemy.

LILY

Or Melody.

JEREMIAH

Melody what?

LILY

Barren. Or rather, not barren. You would think. I would think I was not barren but... (She starts to weep.)

Jeremiah tries to caress her hair but she stiffens.

LILY (CON'T)

I need to be alone.

JEREMIAH

Again? Lily we haven't been together for...

LILY

A lifetime, Jeremiah. That's what it seems like to me. A lifetime.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

Doc says you should let him
examine you. You've never let
anyone who knows about these...

LILY

Can a country doctor do what God
cannot?

JEREMIAH

I overcame...

LILY

Or undo what... You do pray for
me, Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH

Of course I do. I overcame...

LILY

...and Boone?

JEREMIAH

Yes...

LILY

...and the butcher, the baker,
and the candle stick maker...

JEREMIAH

Please stop.

LILY

...the blind, the deaf, and
Helena, lovely Helena. And me?

JEREMIAH

Lily, I...

LILY

My hair is as lovely as hers?

JEREMIAH

Yes.

LILY

Whose? Whose hair is mine as
lovely as?

JEREMIAH

Miss Coatsworth.

LILY

Why did she come to mind,
Jeremiah?

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

Lily stop this. There is no sense...

LILY

Why Helena? Why not Melody? She is beautiful, too. Hair, legs and hips. A lovely girl and the voice of an angel. You've noticed her. As a man.

JEREMIAH

Stop! This only makes you worse.

LILY

You live to tend...

JEREMIAH

Please don't...

LILY

...these lovely young lambs.

JEREMIAH

(almost praying)

Dear God, please...

LILY

Your God and your strength. No match for Lily the beautiful useless little barren lame girl.

JEREMIAH

Please don't do this, again.

LILY

Again? Jeremiah you mean "still".

JEREMIAH

You are making yourself ill, Lily.

LILY

Do you remember when I could walk? Walk! I could outrun most of the boys. You don't remember that. But you remember when I could walk.

JEREMIAH

Rest. Sleep. Stop this...

LILY

Do you remember, oh of course you do, when I stopped walking?

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH makes a such tight fist, his left palm bleeds. His Bible seems to cough out a page which slips unnoticed to the floor. Lily turns from the mirror and looks down the hall. In the mirror we see Jeremiah retreating.

Of course you do.

(calling)

Jeremiah! Please come back.

(hushed)

How am I to get into bed?

Lily is weeping. She spies the page and retrieves it. We see it is Psalm 109. Her eyes fall to the seventh verse.

When he shall be judged, let him
be condemned: and let his prayer
become sin.

Her weeping increases and becomes audible crying. Jeremiah is suddenly beside her. He lifts her into bed and tends to her almost as a mother tends a child. He caresses her head and takes the page from her hand. He kisses her forehead and Lily falls asleep. He places her chair beside the bed and arranges the items on her vanity. He does this mechanically, since he is well practised in this ritual.

GENERAL STORE

EXT PORCH CARTWRIGHT'S STORE DAY

FINN and some MEN are chatting.

HELENA exits the store. Her hair is piled on her head but still hangs well below her shoulders. She walks with a pronounced swing. She wears a long red scarf.

FINN

(Doffs his hat) Miss Helena.

HELENA

Good morning, Finn. Gentlemen.

They watch as she walks to her car.

FINN (OFF SCREEN)

By God, you could see that
woman's hair and her sashay from
a mile off. She hardly needs that
scarf.

We hear the men agree. We see a man, TOBY, with two hound dogs walk past her car. He lifts his hat. He carries a rifle over his arm.

TOBY

Ain't you boys marrit?

(CONTINUED)

FINN

Aye, married, Toby, not dead!

TOBY

Or blind!

FINN

(Eyeing the rifle)

Doing a little practise for the Fair?

TOBY

No. I bin workin' the dogs. They like ta hear a shot or two.

FINN

Hunting's not training, you old reprobate.

We see Ebb in the background.

FINN (CON'T)

You better practise. Ebb's home this year and he still has his shooting eye. Right Ebb?

Ebb nods. He has a vacant look.

TOBY

Ebb, the trophy's yours. I was jess akeepin' it polished for when ya got back.

Ebb doesn't react. He's watching something in the distance.

FINN

Now, you've taken all the fun outta winning for Ebb. (Finn brightens) You're the only real competition he has 'round here.

TOBY

I'm savin' my lead for deer. In season, of course. Besides I'm fishin' the marsh for bass now. No time for deer.

Everyone laughs.

FINN

Any news up your way?

TOBY

All the news is happenin' down this way.

(CONTINUED)

FINN

Yeah, a Yankee bird tried to land
on the Chapel roof.

Toby nods his head to indicate he knows the story.

TOBY

I heard our Lady Helena is
selling the place.

FINN

She's threatened that since the
Old Man died.

TOBY

Yeah, well, rumours be all the
news I have today.

FINN

I'd miss the sight of our Lady,
for sure. Gonna tell us where the
deer are?

TOBY

Yep.

Toby opens the store door.

When my dogs find one, I'll let
ya know, Finn.

The men laugh again.

FINN

You know where to find deer
better than these hounds!

MEN

Hanging in his cellar, most
likely.

The men laugh again. We see that Ebb is quietly watching
MELODY as she passes in her automobile. He has a tear in
one eye. We HEAR the door close behind Toby.

FINN

That Toby's a hound dog of a man.
Ain't no deer he can't find.
Ain't nothing in the woods he
can't find. He's a hound dog of a
man.

Finn rears back and howls like dog.

We hear a CAR pull up. We see JEREMIAH and BOONE.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

Finn, that sounds like a howl of defeat. Getting ready for Saturday?

FINN

I'm thinking of skipping the contest.

He pats Boone on the head.

JEREMIAH

Boone, get what we need.
(hands a list to Boone)
You can't...

FINN

I can do anything...

MEN

..his wife let's him do!

FINN

No sense in getting tuckered only to lose.

JEREMIAH

but...you've got a real chance, Finn.

FINN

Mmmm, I figgered I might until you dragged that aero-machine outta the lake. That took horsepower. Divine horsepower. I can't win against you and God! Sorry, Parson. And I'm not shooting against Ebb, or baking pies against my wife!

JEREMIAH

You're a disappointment, Finn.

FINN

Maybe that cop from Detroit will show up. Part moose and part Irish!

JEREMIAH

The moose part might be a challenge.

FINN

That's the spirit, Parson. So I can put my money on you?

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH
(seriously)
Finn, you know gambling is not
scriptural.

FINN
(humbled)
Sorry, Parson. Just joshing.
Sorry.

Boone pushes out the door with a box of groceries.

BOONE
Toby offers his respects, Uncle.

JEREMIAH
Toby is respectful of God.

Jeremiah ushers Boone to the car. Then turns to Finn.

JEREMIAH (CONT)
Elspeth needs help. You men
organize a way to get her
livestock tended.

FINN
Yes, Parson.

We hear the CAR pull away.

MEN
Toby respects God but not always
the game laws.

The men laugh.

FINN
A man does what he must to
survive. Toby ain't got a grave's
worth of farming land at his
place.

TENDING THE LAMBS

EXT PARSONAGE DAY

JEREMIAH and BOONE are loading up the car with boxes of
food and books. LILY wheels out.

Lily hands Boone a rolled up quilt.

LILY
This is for Elspeth.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

Lily, you must be careful coming down those stairs. Boone, help your aunt back into the house.

LILY

I have laundry to hang. I'll ask Kiff to help me when I'm done.

Boone hugs his aunt and Jeremiah bends to kiss the top of her head. We HEAR the car drive off.

MONTAGE

JEREMIAH and BOONE visit farms around Gethsemane.

Car travelling the road.

Boone, in the helmet, studies the Bible as they drive.

In homes: giving and receiving. Things given are handed to others at the next place.

People rush out to meet Jeremiah. He prays with them first then hands out the goodies like Santa Claus.

Boone and the kids play war, pretending to be planes and chasing each other.

Boone retrieves Bible pages at nearly every stop.

PICNIC

EXT FIELD BEHIND THE PARSONAGE DAY

We see KIFF at work on the plane. In the background we see MELODY approaching with a large picnic basket.

MELODY

Boone, I've bought you...
(noticing Kiff) oh...

KIFF

Good day, Miss Gabrielle. What an angelic surprise.

MELODY

(beat) I brought a picnic...

KIFF

What a wonderful idea...

MELODY

...for Boone, because

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

...of Jeremiah's burnt offerings?
I've suffered, too.

MELODY

Poor boy. Overdone? A skooch?

KIFF

Much more than a skooch, A skooch
is almost nothing. What's wrong
with Lily?

MELODY

No one knows. She won't see the
Doc. Any doctor. Where is Boone?
I thought he was helping you.

KIFF

He went to the store for a
leather needle.

MELODY

You could have asked me.

KIFF

Boone suggested that. But...

MELODY

But?

KIFF

After the way you left choir
practice, I thought you might
have stuck it into me.

MELODY

Hmmm... Still you shouldn't be
wasting money on things which
could be borrowed. Especially
since you don't seem to have any
money.

KIFF

That's why I'm working on this. A
good day at the fair and I'll...

MELODY

Be rich?

KIFF

I'll have enough money to get to
a big fair in Cincinnati

Melody begins unpacking the lunch and it is clear she
brought enough food for three people.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

Gethsemane is a nice enough place.

KIFF

More than nice enough.

MELODY

I hope you like chicken salad. You don't just eat caviar and quail eggs, do you?

KIFF

Squadron food, even in France, is not as fancy as you might think. Chicken salad is my favourite.

MELODY

(beat)

Tell me about the war.

KIFF

Some men died. Some men didn't. Some men wished they did.

MELODY

You're so...light-hearted. I thought you might talk about it. Poor Eberley...

KIFF

Eberley?

MELODY

The lad with the eye-patch.

KIFF

Oh.

MELODY

He was light-hearted...now he just stares, as if he is lost and he's looking for something he recognizes.

KIFF

Or someone to recognize him.

MELODY

You are a deep one, aren't you?

KIFF

I prefer light-hearted.

MELODY

(several beats)

I don't even know if Ebb can still talk. He's half-blind and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MELODY (cont'd)

most likely crazed and perhaps
struck dumb.

KIFF

Good.

MELODY

What?

KIFF

This sandwich. Did you bring me a
beer?

MELODY

At the Parson's place? You'll get
lemonade, and not too sweet,
either.

KIFF

There's a lot back in Europe.

MELODY

Lemonade?

KIFF

Men like Eberley. Hospitals
jammed to the rafters with
half-men, silent as death or
screaming like banshees. Let's
talk about something else.

MELODY

Sorry. (beat) What's it like to
fly?

KIFF

When no one is shooting at you,
it's exhilarating. When they are
shooting at you it's very
exhilarating.

MELODY

(lost in her own world)
Free as a bird! Very romantic.

KIFF

No, there's always too much to
do. Navigating and keeping an eye
on engine gauges and another eye
for landing places in case the
engine goes bad. And then there's
the weather.

MELODY

But it looks like so much fun.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

It's a hundred percent fun. It's just busy fun. I'll take you for a flight, if you like.

MELODY

Please, yes. I baked cookies.

KIFF

Do you know about Jeremiah and Lily?

MELODY

Of course. Oh, you mean discord...Lily is... childless. That grieves both of them. She's better since Boone's been with them.

KIFF

I think she blames him for being crippled. Did he... He's so strong.

MELODY

Hurt her? The Parson! If the Parson is a rough man, I haven't seen it. He cries nearly every time I sing.

(off his look)

And no jokes, Mr Yates!

KIFF

You have the voice of an angel.

MELODY

So you've said already.

KIFF

And the face of one.

Melody is non-plussed. She pushes another sandwich at him which he takes and bites into it, never taking his eyes from her. She looks into the basket and pretends to be absorbed.

We see BOONE approaching at a run.

BOONE

I got it, Kiff. I got the needle.

BOONE rounds the tail section and sees Melody.

BOONE CON'T

Oh hi Miss Melody!

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Miss Gabrielle brought us a picnic. And you are already a sandwich behind.

BOONE

Did you give thanks?

Kiff looks at Melody.

KIFF

In my heart, yes I did.

Melody suppresses a smile and serves BOONE sandwiches and lemonade. Boone gives silent thanks.

BOONE

We almost have the aeroplane fixed, Miss Melody. Kiff's taking me for a flight!

KIFF

To God's country.

MELODY

Where's that?

KIFF

Any place there are angels!

Melody blushes again.

BOONE

Tell me about being a fighter pilot, Kiff.

MELODY

Kiff doesn't want to talk about it, Boone. Maybe later.

KIFF

I'll tell you tonight after dinner.

BOONE

Honest Injun?

KIFF

Honest Injun! Let's see that needle.

Boone hands over a large curved needle.

MELODY

Why do you need that?

KIFF

To sew the silk, Miss Melody. The curved needle helps keep the stitches even.

BOONE

I thought we were using glue?

KIFF

For the fuselage hole. But for tears, we sew. There's a tool for every job. A man gets in trouble when he uses the wrong tool. Now where's those cookies.

KIFF rummages in the basket. He and MELODY grab the plate at the same time and they struggle playfully.

MELODY

I warn you, sir, I have a good grip. My dad calls me 'bulldog'.

KIFF

Because of your overbite?

She relaxes her grip and Kiff takes the plate.

MELODY

I don't have an overbite!

KIFF

You don't have the cookies, either.

KIFF holds the plate as if serving her.

KIFF CON'T

Care for a cookie, Miss Gabrielle?

MELODY

Dad called me that because I am tenacious and I have a good grip.

KIFF

You do, Miss Gabrielle. You really do. A death grip, Miss Gabrielle.

MELODY

Call me Melody...Miss Melody.

KIFF

Miss Melody. Miss Melody could I have another cookie, Miss Melody.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

Boone, when you become a man,
remember to grow up first.

BOONE

No one can become a man without
growing up.

MELODY

You might think that.

BOONE looks to KIFF for some adult male wisdom. Kiff
shrugs.

KIFF

(sincerely)

Miss Melody, thanks for lunch.
I'm sorry for being...

MELODY

Light-hearted? Don't be sorry for
that, Kiff.

BEDTIME STORY

INT BOONE'S BEDROOM DAY

On a table sits a homemade paper model of a fighter plane,
next to his Bible. Above is a shelf displaying stones,
drift wood, tiny skeletons and other odd treasures.

We see KIFF sitting on the bed with BOONE who is wearing a
tuque.

KIFF

What's this? (removing the tuque)

BOONE

My flying helmet!

Kiff sees the Biplane model.

KIFF

Did you make this?

BOONE

Out of Baptist Monthly magazine
covers. I'm going to be a pilot.

KIFF

I thought you were going to be a
parson.

BOONE

Well, a flying parson, then.

Kiff laughs then falls silent for a few beats.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

I don't know how they do it.

BOONE

Who? Flying Parsons?

KIFF

Women.

BOONE

Women do what?

KIFF

You know, cook dinner and then clean up. (beat) It's almost bedtime.

BOONE

You promised!

KIFF

I'm starting the story right now.

BOONE

Ok. How did you learn to fly?

KIFF

My Uncle Rockwell was a gadabout who learned to fly with Louis Bleriot. Uncle Rock taught me.

I left school when I was 15. Don't you do that, Boone. Anyway my mom sent me to Uncle Rock who lived in France. I got there June 9th 1913. A lifetime ago, Boone.

BOONE

I was just three then. That is a long time ago.

KIFF

Uncle Rock started teaching me to fly his aeroplane the next day.

BOONE

Will you teach me, Kiff?

KIFF

I will teach you. You'll be flying the first time up.

BOONE

When? When?

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Well, we have some more repairs,
but soon. Soon.

BOONE

You learnt to fly and then the
war started, right?

KIFF

Not quite. I soloed in June 1913.
First day of summer. I flew until
the Fourth of July, 1914 and then
my uncle's plane was taken to
train pilots. Some folks knew
there was a war coming.

BOONE

So they trained you to be a
fighter pilot?

KIFF

No. No one thought of planes as a
weapon just as an observation
platform.

BOONE

What changed?

KIFF

Nothing. Pilots carried pistols
and..

BOONE

Used them?

KIFF

Yes. Bang, bang and suddenly the
sky was full of lead.

BOONE

They should have taken Bibles.

KIFF

A sky full of Bibles! Actually,
the sky was full of prayers.

BOONE

So how'd you become a fighter
pilot?

KIFF

I met Raoul Lufbery and when he
found out I was an American and
could fly, he said let's start a
squadron.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE
Just like that?

KIFF
He said it like *Zo we make zee escadrille!* He was a Yank but had lived in France since he was about your age. He foresaw aeroplanes with machine guns. Bombs.

BOONE
So you started the Lafayette Escadrille with Mr Lufbery?

KIFF
First it was the Escadrille Americaine. Then the Bosch complained about us Yanks shooting them down! They wanted us to stop. Just quit. We were supposed to be neutral.

BOONE
Don't you have to be for good or evil?

KIFF
That's exactly what we said to the Bosch.

BOONE
So you didn't quit?

KIFF
No one quits war, Boone. Not really. You die or the war stops. For a while.

BOONE
But what happened to the American...

KIFF
Americaine! Escadrille Americaine. Squadron 124. After the Bosch complained the French changed the name to...

BOONE
...Lafayette Escadrille.

KIFF
Escadrille Lafayette... in honour of Marie-Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, the Marquis de Lafayette.

BOONE

The squadron was just you and Mr Lufbery?

KIFF

No. Luf got assigned to another squad at first. So it was me, Prince, Chappy, Bertie, Jimmy, Will, and Elliot.

BOONE

Seven pilots? That's all?

KIFF

Seven to start. The squad grew to 38 by the end. We had to give the Bosch a chance!

BOONE

Did you shoot down Bosch aeroplanes, Kiff?

KIFF

I made the first tally. A few days later Chappy got a tally. Then Prince tallied but crashed at the aerodrome trying to land.

BOONE

Was he hurt?

KIFF

Dead. Time for bed, Master Boone. I, er, we promised the Parson.

BOONE

He won't be back for another hour.

KIFF

Where did he go?

BOONE

Probably to Miss Elspeth's. She's got a bad leg and her husband was drowned on the lake last October. They never found him.

KIFF

Lots of happy bedtime news. Time for bed.

BOONE

One more question?

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Okay.

BOONE

Were you ever shot down?

KIFF

Yep. Killed on the 18th of September 1916 by a rear gunner. Chopped my Nieuport 11 up into kindling.

BOONE

What do you mean, killed?

KIFF

I read my own obituary a few days later, on my 24th birthday. Spooky feeling, that.

BOONE

What happened?

KIFF

I was diving on an observation plane and the rear gunner got a clean shot. My plane sort of came apart and I sort of floated down. Or maybe I dreamt it.

BOONE

Is this a story?

KIFF

I woke up a day later. Chappy and Bertie were there with the newspaper. Flight Lieutenant Kiffen Yates, K.I.A.

BOONE

K.I.A?

KIFF

Killed in action. But I didn't have a mark on me. Or maybe I dreamed that, too. I just slept for 24 hours. Doctor's couldn't explain it. Neither could Coulter, my mechanic. No one could.

BOONE

God could! God saved you. God's saved you twice.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF
Yeah. He was mad though.

BOONE
God?

KIFF
No, Coulter, my mechanic. He
loved that plane.

BOONE
Kiff?

KIFF
No more questions. Time for bed.

BOONE
You believe in God?

KIFF
Yeah, but better than that, God
believes in me. Good night.

BOONE
Good night, Kiff.

Kiff closes the door and after moment reopens it.

KIFF
Boone, you didn't say your
prayers.

BOONE
Oh!

Boone jumps out of bed and starts praying fervently.
Dear God, I am sorry that I
forgot...

Kiff closes the door.

DEVIL'S BLINDERS

EXT PLANE DAY

KIFF and BOONE are working on the plane. Boone is in the pilot's seat wearing Kiff's helmet and goggles. Kiff walks slowly around the plane as he inspects all the controls and linkages.

KIFF
Flight Cadet Matthews!

BOONE
Yes, sir!

(CONTINUED)

KIFF
Push the joystick slowly forward.

BOONE
Yes, sir.

KIFF
OK. Pull it back.

BOONE
That makes the plane zoom.

KIFF
No. Pushing the throttle forward makes the plane climb.

BOONE
What does the joystick do?

KIFF
The same thing a hickory stick does.

BOONE
Swats your bottom? Kiff!

KIFF
Adjusts your attitude. Pull back (he tips his hand up) nose up.

BOONE
Push forward, nose down?

KIFF
Yes. Throttle controls altitude. Stick controls attitude and bank. And speed.

BOONE
Speed?

KIFF
Forward to speed up, back to slow down.

BOONE
I thought the joystick controlled the ailerons.

KIFF
Right.

BOONE
Which turn the plane!

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

No. Ailerons control bank.
(holds his arms like wings
and tips side to side)
The lift of the wing turns the
plane.

BOONE

What does the rudder do?

KIFF

On the ground, it turns the
plane. In the air it keeps forces
co-ordinated. Or unco-ordinated
if you want.

BOONE

It's not good to be
unco-ordinated is it?

KIFF

No, it's very good if an enemy is
shooting at you.

BOONE

I'm never going to learn how to
fly.

KIFF

It just takes practise. Like
playing the piano. (beat) Who
taught you to play piano?

BOONE

Mom.

KIFF

Oh. I'm sorry.

BOONE

She got sick last year and so did
my real aunt and uncle.

KIFF

What about your father?

BOONE

He drowned three years ago. He
was out fishing with Uncle.

KIFF

Sorry, Boone.

BOONE

Dad just got a job in Chatham at
the automobile factory. We were
gonna move in a few days but he
drowned.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

We would never have met.

BOONE

I like it here with Uncle Jeremiah and Aunt Lily.

KIFF

They're not your real folks, though. Family, I mean.

BOONE

No. But Uncle helped my mom and dad a lot right from the day he got here. He looked after me.

KIFF

The Parson was tending his lambs, I guess.

BOONE

Yes. That's the most important thing for Uncle. After dad... he always brought food and he helped cut wood. Uncle got mom hired at the school.

KIFF

Your dad was a fisherman?

BOONE

He quit that. His brothers and father were drowned in 1904. Dad swam ashore. He never went back out on the lake.

KIFF

Until he went with the Parson.

BOONE

Uncle said he had conquered his fear. But the lake blew up and dad lost his trust. Uncle nearly drowned, too.

KIFF

That's enough, Boone.

BOONE

I'm okay. (beat) He repaired things. All those tools in Uncle's shed are my dad's.

KIFF

Thank him in your prayers for me.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE

I think of Uncle as my dad now. Uncle and Aunt Lily are my real family now.

KIFF

Sure. My squad buddies were my real family. The people you trust.

BOONE

That's it. The people you trust. (long pause) Are you going to have a family, Kiff?

KIFF

One day. When I find the right woman. Sure.

BOONE

Miss Melody is nice.

KIFF

Yes. Well, sure maybe. But remember loose lips sink ships, Boone.

BOONE

My lips are sealed. She's going to be a teacher at the school.

KIFF

Miss Melody?

BOONE

Uncle got the men to agree. I overheard them. I don't think Miss Melody knows yet.

KIFF

I suppose she'll want to stay here.

BOONE

You could stay, too. Teach people to fly.

KIFF

That's a hobby, Boone, not a job. Not around here, anyway.

BOONE

Mr Cartwright said the Royal Mail is going to fly out to the island every day soon. Perhaps...

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Perhaps....yes... I'll stop by
next time I'm in town.

BOONE

Then we could fly everyday
together. Just like in France.

KIFF

Loose lips and all that. This is
our secret for now.

BOONEI

Promise.

KIFF

Back to work, Flight Cadet. Push
left rudder. (observes) Right
rudder. Got to get the old girl
ready.

BOONE

How did you feel shooting down
Bosch pilots?

KIFF

You try not to think of it. You
sort of put on blinkers like they
put on horses.

BOONE

So they don't shy from things.

KIFF

Exactly, so they don't shy from
things. You put on these blinkers
in your mind, these devil
blinkers which keep you from
seeing the world as it is.

BOONE

Mom told me not to be fooled by
appearances.

KIFF

Why'd she say that?

BOONE

She was delirious, so Doc said.

KIFF

Chappy got burned by a tracer
shell and the wound went septic.
He kept seeing the devil
everywhere he looked.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE

He was delirious like my mom.

KIFF

I thought so at the time.

BOONE

But?

KIFF

Now, I think the rest of us were delirious. The devil was everywhere.

BOONE

He's not here. Not here in Gethsemane. Not as long as we follow Jesus.

KIFF

Jesus is a tough act to follow, Boone. (beat) Back to the job.

BOONE

Are we ready to fly?

KIFF

We won't be flying today, but soon. Now one more time through the controls, Flight Cadet. Stick forward... back... stick left...

RUN UP

EXT JEREMIAH'S HOUSE DAY

BOONE runs from the house. He is wearing KIFF's helmet. We follow him to the plane which now looks fully repaired. KIFF is clearing up a few tools.

BOONE

Kiff, is today the day?

KIFF

What day?

BOONE

You know.

KIFF

Check out flight day?

BOONE

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Yes.

BOONE jumps up into the cockpit.

Ten hut! You aren't going on the
check out flight, Flight Cadet
Boone.

BOONE

But...

KIFF

But nothing. Last time she was in
the air she didn't want to stay
there.

BOONE

But...

KIFF

First, most landing problems are
pilot error.

BOONE

But the motor wasn't working
right. We could hear it.

KIFF

I've landed before without power.

BOONE

I trust you, Kiff.

KIFF

I've got to trust myself, too. I
can't put you in jeopardy. Not a
member of my squad.

Boone sees the wisdom of this and slowly gets out. We see
Jeremiah striding to the plane.

JEREMIAH

Look's good.

KIFF

Yeah, now if we fly as good as
she looks... (he caresses the
plane)

JEREMIAH

Boone, I'm going to do a few
errands...

BOONE

...Kiff promised...

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH
...and I wondered if you would
stay here. Just for today.

BOONE
Thanks, Uncle!

JEREMIAH
This thing is safe, right?

KIFF
Boone's not flying until I check
everything out. Plane and pilot.

JEREMIAH
Praise the Lord.

KIFF
Parson?

JEREMIAH
Yes.

KIFF
Say a little prayer for...a safe
flight?

JEREMIAH
I have already, Kiff.

We watch Jeremiah leave and hear his CAR as it travels
into the distance.

BOONE
Why do you call the plane 'she'?

KIFF
Tradition. Boats are 'she', too,
right?

BOONE
Yep. Why?

KIFF
More tradition. But I suppose
it's because you can't muscle a
plane around. Gentle touch.
Pressure on the fingertips.
Listening to the thrumming of the
wind in the strut wires.

BOONE
Like playing the piano.

KIFF
I don't think pianos fly all that
well.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE

I mean women are like pianos.

KIFF

Really? I thought organs were more like pianos.

BOONE

Kiff!

KIFF

No more philosophy. We need to get this lovely lass out into the field.

BOONE

Wouldn't it be easier to taxi it?

KIFF

With the throttle firewalled, she'd blow Aunt Lily's washing clear to Cleveland. I'm going to need my goggles.

BOONE

They're on my shelf.

KIFF

Get them later. Unchock the wheels, Flight Cadet!

BOONE

Yes, Flight Lieutenant!

KIFF

We really should have asked Jeremiah to help us. Did he seem in a hurry?

BOONE

God's work is always urgent. That's what Uncle says.

Boone removes the firewood wheel chocks and stows them in the front seat of the plane. Kiff shows him where to push on the plane and slowly they muscle the plane into the field.

Kiff does his walk around showing Boone all the things to inspect. Boone retrieves the chocks and re-blocks the wheels. Kiff pulls the prop through and swings it hard and after three tries the engine comes to life.

Kiff jumps into the cockpit and checks all the controls and runs up the engine. He motions for Boone to remove the chocks again. Kiff taxis the plane down the field and back.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF
(shouting)
Get the goggles! She needs a few
minutes to warm up! Get the
goggles!

KIFF makes circles of his fingers and holds them to his eyes. Boone nods and runs off.

APPARITION 1

EXT Parsonage DAY

As BOONE approaches the house, he sees LILY walking by the window. He falls to his knees and rubs his eyes. She is gone. Boone approaches the door timidly. The plane ROARS in the background.

APPARITION 2

INT Parsonage PARLOUR DAY MOMENTS LATER

LILY is sprawled on the floor. BOONE rushes in, past her wheel chair.

BOONE
Aunt Lily. Aunt Lily!

LILY
I'm fine, Boone.

BOONE
I saw you walking.

LILY
How did you see that?

BOONE
Through the window!

LILY
I was just rehabilitating.

BOONE

BOONE looks for the chair.
How did the chair get over there?

LILY
It shot back when I pulled myself
up, I guess. I should have put on
the brake.

BOONE goes to the chair attempts to push it, but the brake is on.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE
The brake is on.

LILY
Must have hit the table leg. Just
bring it here and help me into
it, Boone.

BOONE lifts her into the chair.
Good boy. Run along. I'm fine. No
need to tell your uncle. He'd
only worry.

BOONE
Yes, Aunt Lily.

LILY
Why'd you come back? I thought
you were flying today.

BOONE
Oh! I came to get Kiff's goggles!

LILY
Take care, Boone. Be sure to give
Kiff that cigarette.

BOONE
(very surprised)
Yes ma'm.

TEST FLIGHT

EXT FIELD DAY

KIFF is suited up and strapped in. BOONE is wearing a
tuque. Kiff and Boone salute each other and Kiff takes off
and climbs into the sky.

Boone races after the plane, wheeling as the plane banks,
spinning, his arms held as wings, beaming, following the
flight wide-eyed, till the plane touches the field, and
rushing, giddy with laughter, to meet Kiff as the plane
rolls cloer.

Kiff gives Boone a thumbs up as the plane rolls by and
then spins the plane down wind before stopping. Boone
hands the cigarette to Kiff and climbs into the plane and
straps in. They taxi to the end of the field, turn into
the wind and gather speed as the engine roars. The tail
comes up and then the plane dances into the sky.

EXT COCKPIT DAY

(CONTINUED)

BOONE is completely absorbed as KIFF takes him over the fields and lake. Boone strains to see everything. They pass about a mile from the railroad station. From the shadows steps a large man with a big brimmed hat. Boone smiles as he recognizes his uncle.

BOONE

(shouting) Hey Uncle! Hey!

The man steps back into the shadow of the station. A woman with long flowing hair gets out of a car and walks to the station, long red scarf fluttering.

Boone turns his head toward Kiff.

(still shouting) That's Miss
Coatsworth.

Kiff motions that he can't hear. Boone shrugs and smiles. The plane banks and heads back to the lake. We see Toby fishing in the marsh. The dogs look up at the plane. Boone is very excited.

Kiff motions for Boone to take the stick and Boone flies.

FLIGHT DEBRIEFING

EXT PORCH OF PARSONAGE DAY

BOONE

I flew. I flew the aeroplane,
Uncle.

JEREMIAH

And made a fine landing.

BOONE

You saw? Kiff mostly did that.
But I followed what Kiff did on
my own stick.

KIFF

He's a natural pilot. Some folk
get up in the wild blue and can't
even look out of the plane. Not
Flight Cadet Boone!

BOONE

(noticing Jeremiah's hands)
Did you pick berries for dessert,
Uncle?

JEREMIAH

(following Boone's gaze)
Just... tied up a few raspberry
canes.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE
(moving on)
We saw Toby in the Hillman Marsh.
Peter and Paul looked up at us!

JEREMIAH
He shouldn't be there hunting.

BOONE
He was fishing.

JEREMIAH
Fishing? Where? Not at our
favourite hole?

BOONE
No. But he knows about that.
Toby's the one who told me about
it.

KIFF
Who are Peter and Paul?

BOONE
Toby's dogs. They looked annoyed
at us. I flew! Is Aunt Lily well
now?

JEREMIAH
She's fixing dinner.

BOONE
Hooray! (sheepishly) Sorry,
Uncle.

KIFF
Hooray! (pretending to be
ashamed) Sorry.

JEREMIAH
Better a crust where love is...

KIFF
But best is a meal where a good
cook is!

JEREMIAH
I admit I know nothing about
women's work.

BOONE
Uncle, it was wonderful. I want
to be a fighter pilot, too.

KIFF
Don't wish for that, Boone. Just
wish to be a pilot. Just a pilot.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH
Go wash up, Boone.

BOONE
Yes, Uncle. I was flying!

Boone runs out to the pump. The door SLAMS behind him.

JEREMIAH
Can you observe much on the
ground from up there?

KIFF
Yeah, but I still have the habit
of watching the sky. And checking
the ground for likely landing
spots.

JEREMIAH
The Chapel roof?

KIFF
Well, technically that was
crashing spot.
(Jeremiah's look sobers
Kiff)

KIFF CON'T
Maybe a bit more concentration to
the ground would help.

Jeremiah rubs his hands.

KIFF CON'T
I have some salve in the plane.

JEREMIAH
No need, God will heal them.

KIFF
You got a nick on your face, too,
Parson.

JEREMIAH
He heals razor cuts, too.

HISTORY

EXT PLANE DAY

KIFF runs his hands over his plane as though it were a
lover's body. His reverie is interrupted by the arrival of
TOBY and his dogs. Toby is toting a leaky bucket.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
Hey, Captain.

KIFF
Flight Lieutenant...call me Kiff.

TOBY
Toby.

KIFF
Yeah, Boone talks about you
nearly as much as praises his
Uncle Jeremiah.

Toby puts the bucket down and they shake hands.

TOBY
I fetched some minnies for me and
Scout ta go fishin'.

KIFF
He left with his uncle. Tending
the sheep.

TOBY
Lambs. Lambs! Sheeps too
indy-pendent, accordin' to the
Parson!
(beat)
He's a fine boy, young Scout.

KIFF
Yes, he is. Did you know his
folks?

TOBY
Yep, buried Esther, his maw.
Pretty little creature. Big doe
eyes. Finn and me do all the last
spade work for folks round here.

KIFF
Boone's dad drowned.

TOBY
Yep, only found a button off his
coat.

KIFF
A button?

TOBY
Yep, washed up the next day.
Plumb miracle the Parson found
it. He was jess new here, maybe a
week, and he has his first
burial. He nearly had to do his
own burial!

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Boone said they were fishing.

TOBY

Lake blew up. Course they shoulda seen that in time. The Parson swum ashore. Oscar never showed up.

KIFF

Then Boone's mom dies...

TOBY

Two years later. Esther dies and her sister Louella and her man Liam. And Finn's older brother. His sisters. Then Finn's old man and then his maw. The influenzy. Killed 'em all.

KIFF

You dug all those graves?

TOBY

And more. Me and Finn, yeah. Nice straight ones. Six feet deep. No scant measures, either.

KIFF

Finn dug graves for his folks?

TOBY

Finn is as strong and tough as God made men. Yeah, Finn dug. But every spadeful must have pained him like a knife in his guts. He's got a heart as big and as soft as Hillman Marsh.

The dogs start to lap from the bucket.

TOBY

Whoo outta them minnies, Petey. Outta there, Paul.

KIFF

I'll tell Boone you dropped by.

TOBY

Thanks, Captain Kiff. (beat) That airy-o-plane is as pretty as a woman.

KIFF

Yes she is and she has a devil in her, too.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
(laughing)
Guess that's why you landed here
in Gethsemane.

KIFF
(whispering)
Crashed... not landed... crashed.

THE CHOICE

INT PARLOUR DAY

KIFF and MELODY, BOONE, and Jeremiah are gathered around the piano. Melody is wearing a driving smock and hat and goggles which hang round her neck.

JEREMIAH
But perhaps Kiff could just
borrow your automobile...

MELODY
...and pray he drives better than
he...

JEREMIAH
...or mine...

KIFF
...I need Miss Gabrielle's
advice...

JEREMIAH
...on aeroplane parts?

KIFF
Some bunting for the sign.

JEREMIAH
Red, white, blue!

LILY wheels in quietly.

LILY
It's not that simple, Jeremiah.
Satin, silk, crepe.

JEREMIAH
I would think the budget
precluded satin or silk and crepe
paper for that matter.

LILY
They're young.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH
(ignoring Lily)
And the practice. What about the
practice?

LILY
Melody has sung every hymn in our
hymnal a dozen times.

MELODY
Two dozen.

LILY
At least.

KIFF
And nary a note wrong.

JEREMIAH
But...you are choosing...

LILY
Jeremiah, they are not choosing
anything over God. Just a
practice.

JEREMIAH
We must at least have a prayer.
People can't just up and go. It's
not godly.

Boone sidles in beside the Parson.

BOONE
I could go instead of Melody.

LILY
You will be in bed before Melody
and Kiff get back. Besides, you
have practice.

BOONE
If Melody's not here...

LILY
We can't two people missing
practice. Can we Jeremiah?

JEREMIAH
God's order must be...

LILY
...flexible...

JEREMIAH
...maintained!

(CONTINUED)

LILY

Jesus healed on the Sabbath. That
broke a Levite law.

JEREMIAH

Let's pray.

Dear God, we ask that we always
maintain your Holy Ways in all we
do. Lead us from the way of the
flesh. Keep us from the road to
Perdition. Let us fear evil and
sin and let us love you. In
Christ's Holy Name. Amen.

LILY

Run along. Boone bring a bucket
of water and some maple for
baking pies.

MELODY

I'll come early Sunday, Parson.

JEREMIAH

No need, Miss Gabrielle.

LILY

Jeremiah means go ahead on your
errands, Melody. Your voice will
be angelic Sunday as always.

KIFF

Thank you for everything, Parson.

ADVANCE NEWS

EXT WOODPILE DAY

BOONE is gathering an arm load of wood. KIFF approaches
Boone from behind.

KIFF

Boone, I know you are
disappointed.

BOONE

That's ok. Aunt Lily wanted me to
stay.

KIFF

I've been thinking about the
family thing, again.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE
You love Melody.

KIFF
Yeah. Well, I think so.

BOONE
How do you find out?
(remembering suddenly)
Toby says to spend a day together
slogging through Hillman Marsh.

KIFF
Yes, I'm sure. It's just...I
don't think Miss Melody is a
marsh-slogging kind of woman.

BOONE
So you're going on a long ride
together.

KIFF
It's not as rigorous as wading in
mud up to your belly but...

BOONE
...it's a lot of fun...riding in
Miss Melody's car. If you like it
are you going to ask her to...

KIFF
..to, you mean...

BOONE
Uh uh.

KIFF
Uh uh. I have to play it by ear
and all. But yeah, uh uh.

MELODY (OFF SCREEN)
Come on, Kiff!

BOONE
Better go.

KIFF
Yeah, you, too.

BOONE
Toby says act natural...

KIFF
Good advice.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE
..but not too natural.

MELODY (OFF SCREEN)
Kiff!

KIFF
Coming!

BOONE
Remember to see Mr Cartwright.

KIFF
Right. Dismissed, Flying Cadet
Matthews.

They salute and Boone watches Kiff and Melody leave.

MELODY (OFF SCREEN)
What was keeping you?

KIFF (OFF SCREEN)
Just checking with my squad
before the mission. I need to
stop at Cartwright's if that's
convenient.

MELODY
And if is isn't?

KIFF
Stop anyway, it's life or death.

MELODY
Life or death?

KIFF
Well, life anyway.

INTParsonage PARLOR DAY

LILY is manoeuvring her wheelchair trying to slip past
JEREMIAH.

JEREMIAH
They will spend the whole day...

LILY
..canoodling?

JEREMIAH
Or worse. You helped them choose
canoodling, as you put it,
over...

(CONTINUED)

LILY

Jeremiah, you can't control the world. You try but you can't.

JEREMIAH

my...the practice. It's not godly to miss a duty. God wants...

LILY

...what you want?

JEREMIAH

I know what God wants so I want it, too. And God wants obedience.

LILY

And love? Does your God want love?

JEREMIAH

Don't say *my God*. He is God. God for everyone.

JEREMIAH searches his Bible for a quotation.

LILY

Even the Devil quotes scripture.

JEREMIAH

Because he knows it's true!

We hear BOONE dropping wood in the woodbox.

LILY

Is there a time for baking pies, mentioned in your Bible? I hope so since they are ready for baking.

JEREMIAH

You are tempting God with your ridicule, Lily.

LILY

Then I shall pray for forgiveness. I never intend to slight God.

TRIP

EXT ROAD MELODY'S AUTOMOBILE DAY

MELODY drives. She and KIFF wear helmets and goggles. The top is down and WIND noise makes it necessary to speak loudly.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

So you got your business done at
Cartwright's?

KIFF

Yep.

MELODY

Small package?

KIFF

I didn't buy anything.

MELODY

(crestfallen)

Oh.

KIFF

The Parson was disappointed you
left.

MELODY

The Parson wants everything just
so.

KIFF

I suppose that's why he chose you
as the soloist.

MELODY

You've changed your tune.

KIFF

Nope.

MELODY

Not even a skooch?

KIFF

Nope. You've always sounded like
an angel to me.

MELODY

I was a little nervous... with
you staring at me.

KIFF

I wasn't staring.

MELODY

You were staring.

KIFF

Nope. I was leering.

The car lurches across the road.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF CON'T
Mind on the road, Miss Melody.

They travel without speaking further. But Kiff keeps looking over at her. Melody quickly looks over but her driving becomes erratic. The car stops and she gets out and switches places with Kiff.

MELODY
Two can play this game.

KIFF
You're going to leer at me?

MELODY
I am not! Drive on, Jeeves.

KIFF
Yes, madam. The other driver not to your liking, miss?

Once underway, MELODY stares at KIFF.
It's not going to work. I've been under fire. I can stand the pressure, Miss Melody.

MELODY
Please just call me Melody.

KIFF's head snaps over toward her and the car lurches as it did before. They laugh.

KIFF
Melody. Melody. Melody!

The car lurches each time he says her name.

MELODY
Mind on the road, Mr Yates!

WATCHER

EXTParsonage NIGHT

Melody's car PURRS in the distance as curtains move in one window of the parsonage. Then the light in the window goes out.

KIFF
I could walk back.

MELODY
I've driven this road a hundred times.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF
Without lurching?

MELODY
Yes. And you would only make it worse. Good night, Kiff.

KIFF
Good night, Melody.

They kiss and as the car pulls away, he walks to the house.

KIFF takes pains to be quiet.

KIFF
(whispering)
Good night, my dear Melody.

NIGHT CAP

INT KITCHEN NIGHT MOMENTS LATER

JEREMIAH is pouring himself a glass of milk. We hear KIFF trying to be careful in the dark hallway but his foot BANGS into what sounds to be a bucket.

KIFF (OFF SCREEN)
What fool...

JEREMIAH
That would be me, Kiff.

KIFF

KIFF enters carrying a bucket.
Strange place to leave it.

JEREMIAH
I was headed out for water but Boone had already brought it.

KIFF
With his own bucket.

JEREMIAH
Yes. Do you care for a glass of milk?

KIFF
Please.

JEREMIAH
They don't drink milk in the escadrille as I have read, in the papers from Europe. Quite a wild bunch.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF
I don't know many newspapers,
personally.

JEREMIAH
(abruptly)
I meant the... your comrades.

KIFF
War is a wild business.

JEREMIAH
I know about war.

KIFF
But we did drink milk. Quite a
lot of it.

JEREMIAH
Really?

KIFF
Five, six, seven times a day.

JEREMIAH
What?

KIFF
It was liberally laced with
brandy, of course.

JEREMIAH
The devil's own water.

KIFF
We were doing the devil's own
work, Parson. And that's why you
and I now drink pure, straight
milk.

JEREMIAH
Yes. That is a very fine way to
put it. You are a poet at heart.

KIFF
I'm sure that did not impress my
victims.

JEREMIAH
Victims?

KIFF
Parson, I was a fighter pilot.

JEREMIAH
Of course. Was the trip...
fruitful?

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Yes, very. In many ways.

JEREMIAH

Just the right type of bunting?

KIFF

Ohhh, not in that way.

JEREMIAH

All that way for nothing?

KIFF

Not for nothing. But not for bunting.

JEREMIAH

Other things on your mind, then?

KIFF

Just keeping my mind on the road.

JEREMIAH

And Miss Melody.

KIFF

No, just on the road.

JEREMIAH

I meant, did Melody keep her mind on the road?

KIFF

For the most part.

JEREMIAH

Are you going to take Miss Gabrielle away?

KIFF

I haven't discussed anything with her.

JEREMIAH

But you are going to. To discuss the possibility?

KIFF

I will let you know once I talk it over with her, Parson.

JEREMIAH

(after long silence)
She's only 19, Mr Yates.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

Most of the casualties in Europe were 19. Or younger.

JEREMIAH

That's not the same thing.

KIFF

Not at all. Marriage and families are good. You'd agree, wouldn't you, Parson?

JEREMIAH

Of course, but she is needed here. You've only known each other for a few days.

KIFF

How long did you know...

JEREMIAH

...I knew Lily for years.

KIFF

...Jesus, before you knew He was your Saviour?

JEREMIAH

We're talking chalk and cheese.

KIFF

We are also getting ahead of ourselves. I haven't asked Melody anything.

JEREMIAH

So you said.

KIFF

No bunting. Do you think Lily might have some?

JEREMIAH

I wouldn't know.

KIFF

Well, thanks for the drink.

JEREMIAH

Thanks for finding my bucket.

Jeremiah stares into the dark hall after Kiff as he crushes the bucket through sheer strength. He looks down surprised to see the destruction and starts to pull the bucket back into shape.

EXPECTATIONS

EXT FAIR GROUNDS DAY

The field is taken over with wagons and tables. Union Jack flags fly everywhere. It is Dominion Day 1919. There are a few stalls with games of skills like horseshoes. Every farmer has brought his team or his tractor.

JEREMIAH is pushing LILY in her chair. BOONE hangs back a few steps with KIFF and MELODY. Boone tugs on Kiff's arm. Kiff leans down to hear Boone.

BOONE
(whispering)
Did you? You know.

KIFF
(whispering)
Not yet. Today. The other thing--
Cartwright? (Kiff gives a thumbs
up)

BOONE
(hushed)
Hooray.
(normal voice)
I told you the car ride would be
fun.

MELODY
What are you two conspiring
about?

BOONE
(pretending not to hear)
Tonight we're going to have
fireworks!

KIFF
And it's time for lesson number
two.

BOONE
Another flying lesson?

MELODY
You'll burst him with excitement,
Kiff.

BOONE
Did you hear that, Uncle? I'm
going flying again!

JEREMIAH
After I win the contest, I trust.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE

Oh yes Uncle. And when I'm flying I'll shout down to everyone. "My Uncle is as strong as Samson!"

JEREMIAH

I'll have something special for you.

BOONE

I wouldn't miss it, Uncle, not for anything.

JEREMIAH

Be there, Boone.

KIFF

We'll all be there, Parson.

LILY

Take me over to the quilting bee, Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH

Are you going there, too, Melody?

LILY

I expect she'll want to show Kiff around.

MELODY

If that's ok, Parson.

LILY

Run along. Kiff will need to start his trips to the wild blue yonder soon.

JEREMIAH

You will be there...at the contest.

KIFF

I will. I want to see the strength of Samson.

JEREMIAH

And my Delilah, you will be there, too?

LILY

Push my chair and I will come along for the ride. Melody scoot. Take Kiff to taste the cherry pies. And Boone, you can have two slices, only.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE

Yes, auntie. Can I go now?

LILY

Do you remember last fair day and your bellyache, Boone?

JEREMIAH

Moderation in all things, Boone.

BOONE

Yes, Parson.

JEREMIAH

Run along.

Boone runs away calling out to TOBY.

FAIR TOUR

EXT FAIR GROUNDS DAY

MONTAGE

BANDS march and practise God Save the Queen, O Canada, and The Maple Leaf Forever.

LILY shows the fine stitchery of her quilts to admirers.

FINN and EBB hang out at the shooting range. Ebb keeps watch over MELODY, while Finn positions the target.

JEREMIAH is greeted by everyone as he passes. Men doff their hats, women curtsy, and children wave. He kisses the little children.

BOONE and TOBY head straight for the pie booth. They go to other food booths and try everything, though we see Boone reluctantly refusing second helpings. Then they wander over to the shooting contest.

KIFF and MELODY stroll arm in arm, oblivious to things going on around them.

PRACTICE

EXT FAIR SHOOTING RANGE DAY

The range has a starting line and a target a hundred yards away. FINN, TOBY, and EBB are just puttering around.

FINN

Toby, you gonna give Ebb a little competition?

(CONTINUED)

TOBY
Very little. I told ya I ain't
shootin'. Lead ain't cheap.

FINN
Poor Ebb, he's gonna win without
hardly a shot.

TOBY
Ya know the target spike is only
that big?

TOBY indicates about a half an inch with his fingers.

FINN
The distance between a man's
eyes.

TOBY
At least Ebb's Bosch died quick.

FINN
He's better with one eye than he
was with two.

TOBY
He lives a simpler life now. No
distractions.

FINN
So focused he's done scared
everyone off.

TOBY
There's a bunch coming from
Seacliffe. They always figger
they can whup any of us here at
anythin'. Except you, Finn.

FINN
And the Parson?

TOBY
Even those rogues don't fight
parsons.

FINN
And Master Boone? Can they play
pie-anny like him?

TOBY
A'course they can't. They jess
think they can!

BOONE
Mr Ebb, are you gonna practice?
We came to see you hit the spike
in the target, not just win.

(CONTINUED)

We see Ebb with his rifle. He is looking over to where the ponies are being groomed. He smiles shyly at BOONE. He steps up to the firing line, throws the rifle to his shoulder and shoots immediately. The RING of metal echoes back.

TOBY

It's a wonder them Bosch had any soldiers left.

Ebb is staring into the distance again.

BOONE

Mr Ebb came back with his shooting eye for sure.

FINN

(to himself)

Not much else.

GREEN EYED MONSTER

EXT FAIR PONY RING DAY

KIFF and MELODY stop where GIRLS about 14 years old are preparing their ponies for the show.

GIRL ONE

Will you take us for a ride, Mr Kiff?

KIFF

I thought you rode ponies.

GIRL TWO

We want to come ride in your aeroplane with you!

KIFF

I don't think your pony would fit.

All the girls giggle.

MELODY

You and your sisters can come after the shooting is over.

KIFF

No ponies, though.

Melody tugs Kiff toward the next display.
Do you like children, Miss Melody?

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

I see you do. Pretty ones,
anyway.

Kiff spins Melody so he can look into her eyes.

KIFF

I never noticed that tinge of
green before.

MELODY

Oh. (ashamed) Yes, I like
children.

KIFF

Do you like...

MELODY

I said I like children.

KIFF

...pie?

MELODY

Yes. But I'm not hungry.

KIFF

You weren't hungry at our picnic
either. Are you well?

MELODY

Very well, thank you. I'm just
not hungry.

THE CONTEST

EXT FAIR GROUNDS DAY

A device which allows a man to lift with his back sits in a ring of spectators. It is loaded with boulders, and stacked firewood. LILY, BOONE, TOBY, FINN, KIFF and MELODY, and EBB and OTHERS make up the spectators

JEREMIAH

Finn? Feeling strong today?

FINN

Real strong.

JEREMIAH

Good.

FINN

But I'm saving my strength this
year for barn building.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

A few lifts is all it will take.
Perhaps less.

Jeremiah removes his coat and prepares to lift. But after getting himself settled. He steps back out.

FINN

Shall I lighten the load, Parson?

JEREMIAH

Lighten? It's no challenge as it sits.

Finn and others add weight.

FINN

Put your back to that, Parson.

Jeremiah gets under the load and strains but he lifts it. The crowd cheers and Boone beams.

JEREMIAH

A record, I should think.

FINN

Oh, not even the weight of my lift last year. I was pooped a might that day, if you recall, Parson.

Finn steps under the load and quickly raises the weight. The crowd cheers. Jeremiah is a little unsettled.

FINN (CON'T)

Two hundredweight light of last year, Parson.

JEREMIAH

Add four hundredweight.

Toby and others load boulders onto the device.

TOBY

That's a lot of weight. We hardly have nothing left.

JEREMIAH

This should be enough.

Jeremiah readies himself, taking longer this time. He lifts the weight. The crowd cheers and Boone is glowing with pride.

BOONE

That's my uncle!

(CONTINUED)

FINN

Let's not crown our Samson just yet.

Finn gets ready much more quickly than Jeremiah. Finn lifts the weight nearly easily. Boone is mildly disappointed. The crowd CHEERS.

BOONE

Uncle, you will win, now.

JEREMIAH

I am going to show you something now.

Jeremiah takes his position but after a long pause. Steps out and removes two pieces of wood from the load. The crowd is confused.

FINN

Are you conceding, Parson?

JEREMIAH

Boone, come here.

Jeremiah hoists Boone onto the load where he removed the two sticks of wood. Then he hands the wood for Boone to hold. He then positions himself and after a long moment lifts the load. A strain shows on Jeremiah's face. The crowd ERUPTS and Boone is cheering wildly.

FINN

Stay there Boone. I think I can give you another little ride.

Finn catches Boone's look of joy as it dimmed slightly. Finn takes his place and after a long pause, he steps out. A offers his hand to Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH

A worthy opponent.

BOONE

My uncle is still the strongest man in three counties!

TOBY

(quietly to Finn)
Ya coulda stood another lift, Finn.

FINN

But Boone couldn't.

The CHEERING goes on. Kiff and Melody slip away. Jeremiah hands his trophy ribbon to Boone.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

I told you I had a treat for you.

BOONE

This is the best win ever!

Boone pins the ribbon to his "flying tuque". Jeremiah hoists him on his shoulders and parades through the cheering crowd.

ENGAGEMENT

EXT FAR END OF FAIR GROUND DAY

As KIFF and MELODY wander from the contest to a copse at the edge of the field, Melody collects summer flowers. GUN SHOTS and CHEERING are muffled in the distance. They stop under a large tree.

KIFF

You are beautiful.

MELODY

Even with my overbite?

KIFF

You must stop running yourself down. You don't have an overbite. But even if you did, you would still be beautiful.

MELODY

Do you know other beautiful women?

KIFF

Oh, France is full of beautiful women. A franc a dozen. Maybe two dozen.

MELODY

Really? And yet you left France.

KIFF

Well, France is fine if you like beautiful women...

MELODY

...most men like beautiful women.

KIFF

...but I'm not most men...I was looking for an angel.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

You better mean this. I won't let go of you. You know what a strong grip I have.

KIFF

Oh, the bulldog death grip. Don't worry, I am loyal. I never leave a friend.

MELODY

Didn't you leave some in France?

KIFF

No, they left me.

MELODY

To go home?

KIFF

To go to Hell.

MELODY

Oh.

KIFF

I don't think many could get to Heaven.

MELODY

Believe in Jesus. That's the way.

KIFF

It's hard to believe in anything in war.

MELODY

The war's done, Kiff. All war is done. Parson said it was so horrible men wouldn't think of having another one.

KIFF

They didn't think about having this one. (Pause) Come, I know a romantic spot near here.

MELODY

How?

KIFF

Toby told Boone about it.

MELODY

Toby's idea of romantic. This should be good.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

He didn't say it was romantic. He said it looked "trouty".

MELODY

Trouty. Even better.

KIFF

And trout like little quiet pools shaded by trees.

MELODY

You're getting closer to romance.

KIFF

A lot of little trout get their start in those pools.

MELODY

You'd better have honourable intentions or the Parson will deal with you.

KIFF

What did he say?

MELODY

Nothing in particular. It's just his way in general.

KIFF

Yeah. Like a German squadron rolled into one man.

MELODY

One really strong man.

KIFF

Monstrously strong. (beat) I'm having second thoughts.

MELODY

(joking)

So your intentions were not honourable!

KIFF

Either way will upset the Parson. He told me you were needed here.

MELODY

He looks after young women.

KIFF

Helena, too?

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

Yes.

KIFF

Where did she go?

MELODY

She has enough men to worry about her.

KIFF

Just strange that she vanished.
No one seems to be worried.

MELODY

The Parson said she was in Toronto.

KIFF

Oh, I didn't know it was a fact.

MELODY

The Parson said so, so it's a fact.

KIFF

Boone said Toby was scouting the bush.

MELODY

Toby would be in the woods anyway looking for deer.

KIFF

Yeah, I guess.

MELODY

We don't need a romantic trouty pool. This place is lovely.

KIFF

I had this all worked out. But...

MELODY

Just spit it out, Kiff.

KIFF

I'm going to fly the mail to Pelee.

MELODY

Oh. I see now why you needed the romantic backdrop of a trouty pool.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

It would mean that I could afford
a wife.

MELODY

A wife?

KIFF

You, if you'll say yes.

MELODY

Yes to what?

KIFF

Melody, I love you. And I want to
marry you.

MELODY

That's not a question, Mr Yates.

KIFF

Melody, will you marry me?

MELODY

Yes.

KIFF

You will?

MELODY

Yes.

KIFF

Just like that?

MELODY

Just like that. I love you,
Kiffen Yates.

KIFF

I don't have a ring yet but I
have a totem.

He pulls the cellophane wrapped cigarette from his pocket.

MELODY

Kiff, kiss me.

They kiss modestly.

I can't carry around a cigarette
wrapped in cellophane, Kiff.

Kiff rifles through his pockets, eventually finding his
knife.

(CONTINUED)

KIFF

This?

MELODY

Until you get a ring? A totem of our love.

KIFF

A symbol.

MELODY

How is it symbolic?

KIFF

It's bright... enduring. It's enduring.

MELODY

Slip it onto my locket chain.

Melody removes her locket chain and Kiff slips on the knife and then clasps the chain round her neck. Melody clutches it like a precious thing.

KIFF

(straining to hear)

That's The Maple Leaf Forever. My flights start soon!

MELODY

Will we be in God's Country, today, Kiff?

KIFF

After Boone's lesson we'll go to God's Country. Just you and me, I promise. Let's go, we'll be late.

MELODY

You run back. I'd just slow you down. You'll need all the money you can earn.

KIFF

For a ring.

MELODY

There are more important things for a new household, Kiff. I love you.

KIFF

I love you!

They kiss again and Kiff starts down the path and returns for another kiss.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

Now go, Kiff. I'm going to be
near you forever.

Melody follows Kiff but at a very relaxed pace. She dances along the trail. After a few minutes, Melody smiles at the sound of Kiff's plane warming up. A shadow approaches her from behind. Melody notices it as it overtakes her. Startled, she quickly turns.

MELODY

Oh. Parson...

JEREMIAH

Dear Melody.

MELODY

(sensing danger)
...what are you doing here?

JEREMIAH

My question to you, Melody.

MELODY

I am going back to the fair.

JEREMIAH

Not just yet, Melody.

JEREMIAH reaches for her but she pulls back.

MELODY

Stay away or I'll scream.

JEREMIAH

And who might hear a scream over
the engine of Mr Yates'
aeroplane?

MELODY

Parson, just let me pass, please.

JEREMIAH

You can't pass, Melody. God wants
you to stay.

MELODY

I am staying. Kiff is going to
fly the mail.

JEREMIAH

(in a trance)
God doesn't want you to go. He
told me.

(CONTINUED)

MELODY

Parson, you need to sit down. You are over exerted from the contest.

JEREMIAH

It says here (opens Bible) Thou shalt not...

MELODY

...kill, Parson.

JEREMIAH

...disobey God.

MELODY

No one should disobey God. You tell us that every week, every week you tell us to love and obey, (singing nervously) trust and obey for there's no other way/to be happy in Jesus/than to trust and obey.

JEREMIAH

(snatching up her hand)

You have a very soothing voice, my angel.

MELODY

You are hurting me, Parson. Let me sing. (she sings) Blessed Redeemer, Jesus... (she is slowly choked off)

JEREMIAH

You have the voice of a siren. I can't listen anymore.

He clamps her mouth shut with his hand.

Melody, I can't lose you, too. I want you to stay.

He continues to smother her and as she struggles we see her hand crumple a page from his Bible. We see her hand in a tight fist. He snaps her neck, drops her and suddenly seems aware of what he has done and he begins to cry and pray and fidget. He sees the knife and pulls it from her neck and stabs her already dead body several times with it. The knife is bloody.

EBB'S SHOT

EXT FAIRGROUNDS DAY

Jeremiah carries dead MELODY. He is shouting but he is a long way off and his shouts are drowned by the noise of the fair. Kiff's plane DRONES about 100 yards from the shooting range on the other side of the field. A line of would-be passengers wait behind a rope ten yards from the plane. BOONE is ready to take tickets. The last few shots ring out from the shooting contest. KIFF checks his plane.

Jeremiah is approaching. He is shouting but his cries are inaudible.

JEREMIAH

Kiff killed Melody!

Boone sees the Parson and runs toward him. Kiff sees what is happening. Kiff climbs on the wing and reaches into the cockpit to shut down the engine. Now everyone hears the Parson.

Kiff killed Melody!

EBB steps from the shooting line and takes aim. As Kiff turns to jump off the wing, Ebb squeezes off a shot. Kiff slumps and slides to the ground.

Boone has reached the Parson and he takes Melody's hand which is balled into a tight fist. Boone stares at her hand and begins to cry. The crowd converges on the Parson. Melody's hand is now open and limp. The Parson places Melody on the ground and then drops Kiff's knife. Boone edges away from Melody's body. His fists are clenched and tears flow down his cheeks.

The DOCTOR approaches at a fast trot.

DOCTOR

Get the kids out of here.
Blankets! Get the Parson a cider.

After a quick check the Doctor puts his coat over Melody's face. All the FAIR SOUNDS are hushed. Only the WEEPING of the crowd can be heard.

DOCTOR

What about Kiff?

FINN

Ebb don't miss, Doc.

DOCTOR

Finn, call Officer Pitt. I'll drive the Parson and his family home. You take the bodies to the Chapel.

(CONTINUED)

FINN
What about Ebb?

TOBY
I'll fetch him.

DOCTOR
And take that rifle from him.
Officer Pitt will want to look at
it, I suppose. Oh, and take that
knife. (turning to Jeremiah)
Jeremiah, do you want something
to settle your nerves?

JEREMIAH
Just some quiet time with my Lord
should do, Doc.

DOCTOR
Lily?

LILY
I'm fine, Doctor.

DOCTOR
You've had quite a shock. Both of
you and Boone.

JEREMIAH
But it's not about me, Doc. I
have my lambs to tend.
(he turns to the crowd)
Bow your heads folks. We need to
ask the Lord for peace.

As Jeremiah prays we hear the crowd sobbing.

JEREMIAH (CONT)
Dear God, dear God...

Jeremiah is overcome and the crowd gathers round to
comfort him. TOBY pushes LILY to Jeremiah who collapses
before her, his head resting on her lap. She caresses his
head. Toby puts his arm around Boone who holds the
Parson's hat. We see his other hand is clenched into a
fist.

BOONE
I want to go with you, Toby.

FUNERAL

EXT GRAVE YARD DAY

(CONTINUED)

The grave yard is in the distance. It is quiet except for WIND. The crowd is gathered around Jeremiah, only this time, he is in control and most of the mourners are weeping. FINN and TOBY stand to one side with shovels.

JEREMIAH

Sweet...angel...

Jeremiah trails off, turns and the mourners follow him to the Chapel.

Finn and Toby watch the procession silently until the grave yard is clear.

TOBY

Her neck was snapped.

FINN

Doc tell you that?

TOBY

Yeah. He didn't have to. I could see it right smartly. That killed her.

FINN

Why did Kiff stab her then?

TOBY

Petey tore up a muskrat hat of mine once.

Finn gives Toby a quizzical look.

TOBY CON'T

Well, the hat was dead...

FINN

You'd expect that.

TOBY

... but ol' Pety couldna help hisself.

FINN

Get shoveling or I might not be able to help myself.

TOBY

Just couldna help hisself.

FINN

Like Ebb.

TOBY

He ever say anythin'?

(CONTINUED)

FINN

Officer Pitt said he just
clutched his chest and rocked
like a dumb animal in a cage.

TOBY

When he left for overseas Ebb
said, "I hope God's on our side."
That's the last thing I ever
heard him say.

FINN

I pray God's on our side.

TOBY

I can't wait to get back into the
bush. This amount of evil ain't
natural.

FINN

It's unnatural to commit
cold-blooded murder, then just
lolly-gag around.

TOBY

Murdering a woman who looks like
Miss Melody would haff ta be
hot-blooded murder, Finn.

FINN

Kiff could have flown out of
here.

TOBY

Murderers have a lot of gall.
Look at Jack the Ripper. He was
the Prince of Wales.

FINN

Toby, that was just talk and it
was the prince's son.

TOBY

Well, Billy Bishop thought your
good prince looked shifty.

FINN

Different prince, Toby. This
Melody thing doesn't make sense
to me.

TOBY

Me neither but Kiff's knife
stabbed her. And he coulda
snapped her neck. Everyone learns
that in the army. Why'd he kill
such a beautiful girl?

(CONTINUED)

FINN

Kiff had no blood on him that wasn't his own and no scratches.

TOBY

But there's still the knife.

FINN

Yeah, and there are still these shovels and a heap of dirt to get onto Miss Melody.

TOBY

Well, if there's a murderer out there, some tramp or no good around, I'll find him. I'll start checking tomorrow, first thing.

FINN

Look for Lady Helena, too.

TOBY

Parson says she's in Toronto. I ain't going there. Enough evil right here.

FINN

The three most beautiful women in Gethsemane--dead, missing, or crippled.

TOBY

Your missus is a looker, Finn.

FINN

Or nagging.

TOBY

I'll be sure to tell 'er that.

FINN

I was kidding, Toby.

TOBY

The missus told ya to say that, eh?

Finn laughs ruefully and then he and Toby shovel the grave closed.

FINN

Boone's mamma was a pretty thing, too.

Finn begins to walk away, but Toby remains at the grave. He does not look back as he speaks.

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

Finn,
(Finn turns)
Officer Pitt thinks Helena is
dead.

FINN

Did he say that? Why?

TOBY

He didn't say it but he asked me
ta scout the brambles on the
lower forty of her farm. And the
marsh near the old levy road.

FINN

Why?

TOBY

'coz I've done looked everywhere
else.

FINN

What about her friends in
Toronto?

TOBY

Her sister never heard of 'em.

FINN

That's not proof. There could be.
Friends no one heard of. Lady
Helena was always aloof, as my
missus would have it.

TOBY

Officer Pitt hired me to look. He
wouldn't spend a penny if he
believed that Toronto story. And
he knows something about
everyone. He even knew about my
Uncle Lou.

FINN

You don't have an Uncle Lou.

TOBY

Officer Pitt knew that, too!

FINN

So maybe three dead and Ebb with
his head in a noose.

TOBY

Yep. And a murdering rogue round
here. Two rogues if Kiff didn't
kill Melody.

(CONTINUED)

FINN

Or one. (beat) No blood on Kiff.
Look at the Parson. All bloody
just from carrying her.

TOBY

Melody was stabbed in the belly.
He coulda caught her from
behind.

FINN

Yeah. Neck snapped, uh?

TOBY

Yeah, but there's still the
knife. Kiff's knife. He had it
just before the murder.

FINN

How'd you know?

TOBY

Boone and me wandered over ta
Kiff's plane after the contest.
Kiff was acuttin' ribbon for the
sign. Melody was there, too.

FINN

You wanted to ride in the
aeroplane, Toby?

TOBY

Too rich for my pocket. Anyway
Kiff and Melody mooned away at
each other and wandered off. Well
sir, Boone and me went back ta
taste pies.

FINN

My good missus won that contest.

TOBY

And you could've won the lifting
contest, Finn.

FINN

Meant more to the Parson and
Boone.

(several beats)

I'll shift a big load in a few
weeks and when the word gets back
to him, he'll be nervous for darn
near a year.

TOBY

I'll sure enough relay the news
for you! Just to be neighbourly.

(CONTINUED)

They fall silent as the grave fills up. They tamp down the earth as they finish.

FINN

I'm tired of digging, Toby. I pray you don't find Helena.

TOBY

So do I. Not that she'd look twice at me. Though I'd look twice at her.

FINN

Yeah. Unnatural amount of evil has been in the world lately.

Finn turns and walks to the Chapel.

TOBY

God keep ya, Miss Melody. I'm gonna miss yer angelical voice.

Toby looks at a fresh unmarked grave outside the fence just a few yards from Melody's grave, before hustling to catch up with Finn.

TURMOIL

INT DAY CHAPEL

JEREMIAH is at his podium silently rehearsing a sermon. He gestures expansively. The chapel door is flung open and in strides OFFICER PITT.

JEREMIAH

Officer Pitt, come with a report on Ebb?

OFFICER PITT

No. Well, he's been sent to hospital in London for a rest. I don't think he's going to be charged.

JEREMIAH

He hadn't been himself since coming back.

OFFICER PITT

None of them are, Parson. You were lucky.

JEREMIAH

I had God.

(CONTINUED)

OFFICER PITT
(passing over the comment)
I've come about Helena.

JEREMIAH
I heard she was in Toronto with
friends.

OFFICER PITT
Toby found her automobile in the
Hillman Marsh.

JEREMIAH
And Helena?

OFFICER PITT
No, no one in the auto. Strange
accident. The transmission was in
neutral.

JEREMIAH
Could she...have been thrown
clear?

OFFICER PITT
Not likely. It looks like the
auto rolled or was pushed into
the marsh.

JEREMIAH
Are you saying the accident was
faked?

OFFICER PITT
Faked? Phony suicide? I hope so.
I'm trying to retrace her steps.
She bought a ticket to Chatham at
the station.

Through the window we see Boone moping his way to the
Chapel with a folder of music under his arm.

JEREMIAH
Perhaps she used it at another
station.

OFFICER PITT
When did you see her last?

BOONE opens the door as the Parson answers.

PARSON
I last saw Miss Coatsworth
passing Cartwright's Store a few
days after the Sunday of our
great excitement. Perhaps,
rather, the Sunday of our great
misfortune.

(CONTINUED)

Boone's eyes grow wide.

OFFICER PITT

Oh, hello, Master Boone. Mrs Pitt sent some sheet music for you. She thinks it will be a comfort.

BOONE

(nervously)

Thank you.

OFFICER PITT

Come with me. I'm done here. Thanks, Parson. Most helpful.

JEREMIAH

Don't be long, Boone. We must go over the hymns. Good day, Officer Pitt.

OFFICER PITT

Good day? No, Parson, I won't be having one of those. A good day is fishing with Toby.

Boone does not answer nor look back. Officer Pitt places hand on Boone's shoulder. Jeremiah moves to the window. He watches Boone accept a folder of sheet music. Officer Pitt and Boone talk for few moments. Officer Pitt hugs Boone, then drives away. Jeremiah bows his head.

CANNOT SERVE TWO MASTERS

EXT CHAPEL DAY

BOONE is sitting in the plane. He is wearing his flying tuque but the trophy ribbon has been removed. The plane has been dragged back to the spot where Kiff and Boone had repaired it. He is reading his Bible. TOBY approaches with his dogs. Boone hears the dogs, looks at Toby but says nothing.

TOBY

I brung ya sumpthin', Scout.

BOONE

What?

TOBY

TOBY opens his hand to reveal a perfect arrowhead.
Found it near the ol' levy road
at the marsh. It musta bin in
clear sight for years but no one
saw it 'til now.

(CONTINUED)

BOONE

Near Miss Helena's auto?

TOBY

Yeah.

BOONE

Is Miss Helena in the marsh? Did she drive off the road?

TOBY

Ya shouldna be worryin' 'bout Miss Helena. Let Officer Pitt do the worryin'. Nice arry-head, uh?

BOONE

Finn says you can find anything.

TOBY

I figgered ya needed some buckin' up. Finn said ya weren't yerself.

BOONE

Wish I wasn't. Toby, how do you decide things?

TOBY

Well sir, one day I was scouting Cook's Woods. Pete and Paul had lapped up nigh ten pounds of lard at Finn's place and were poorly, so it was jess me alone and I'm amoving' Injun-style when I spies two bucks the size of cattle. They's about a yard apart. They'd been fighting and were takin' a break before the next round.

BOONE

Does this have something to do with deciding things?

TOBY

Patience, patience. Well Scout, I takes a squint at one buck and then t'other. I's hopin' to take the best one, natchurally.

BOONE

Which one did you take?

TOBY

I takes neither, God willin'.

BOONE

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

TOBY

Whilst I was conflicted, they
hidy-hoed for the county yonder.

BOONE

I don't understand.

TOBY

Parson's always preaching that we
can't serve two masters. Ya gotta
look in one direction.

BOONE

Cannot serve two masters. But you
can love two...

TOBY

...or more...

BOONE

...people...

TOBY

..sure enough...but only one God,
Boone. A man can't be but lovin'
and servin' one God. Otherwise
he's conflicted.

BOONE

You could have taken both bucks.

TOBY

And scotch my story? Yer Uncle
would want ya ta serve God.

BOONE

No matter what? What if...

TOBY

No matter what. Otherwise a man
is conflicted.

THE LAST PAGE

INT BOONE'S BEDROOM DAY

A small animal skull which sits next to the arrowhead and
biplane and goggles on the shelf of treasures. BOONE lifts
the skull and takes something from under it. Then he
kneels beside his bed. It appears as if he might pray.

Boone's hand is clenched into an angry fist. His hand
slowly eases, revealing paper crumpled into a ball. He
teases open the ball. Tears well up and fall onto the page
as it becomes clear that it is from Jeremiah's Bible.

REVELATION

INT LILY'S QUILTING ROOM DAY

Through the mirror we see BOONE enter Lily's quilting room. LILY appears to have just settled in the chair.

BOONE
Aunt Lily?

LILY

Lily turns her chair from the mirror. She smooths her skirts. Her eyes are raw.

Come here, Boone, darling. You've had too much grief for a child.

Boone places his head on her lap. After a long while, Boone starts to talk.

BOONE
I know something that is very, very terrible.

LILY
It's about your Uncle.

BOONE
How did you...

LILY
You don't talk about him any more. You can't blame him for the ...

BOONE
I found a page of Uncle's Bible.

LILY
That's the terrible news? Boone, you have had a great shock. We all ...

BOONE
It was in her hand.

LILY
Whose? (Beat) Melody!

BOONE
Yes.

Lily guesses Boone's terrible knowledge.

LILY
But your uncle found her. She clutched it as Jeremiah tended to her. She clutched it...

(CONTINUED)

BOONE

Kiff said he was going to ask Miss Melody to...

LILY

..marry him...

BOONE

(several beats) Uncle lied to Officer Pitt about Miss Coatsworth.

LILY

Oh, God.

BOONE

Uncle said he hadn't seen her since the Sunday Kiff came. But I saw him at the station with Miss Coatsworth.

LILY

How?

BOONE

On my flight with Kiff. Uncle's big hat and Miss Coatsworth's hair. It was easy to see. And Miss Coatsworth had that long red scarf.

LILY

You are sure of this. Positive? You are...

BOONE

Yes. And Officer Pitt said Miss Coatsworth's automobile had been pushed into the marsh.

LILY

Only Jeremiah could do that.

BOONE

Finn could too...but...why did Uncle say he hadn't seen Miss Coatsworth if he wasn't hiding something. Maybe he forgot?

LILY

Your Uncle wouldn't forget a meeting with Helena. Men don't forget that.

BOONE

That's what Toby told me once.

(CONTINUED)

LILY
We must call Officer Pitt. You know that, Boone.

BOONE
I think so. What if I am wrong and Uncle...

LILY
We have to tell, Boone. You have to go to Cartwright's.

BOONE
But if I'm wrong? Uncle Jeremiah...

LILY
We must do this for Melody and Kiff. And Helena.

BOONE
And Ebb.

LILY
Yes, Ebb, poor Ebb. Boone, you must go to Cartwright's. Call Officer Pitt and come back with him. Only with him. Understand?

Boone's head falls to his chest. He pulls Jeremiah's blue ribbon from his pocket and crushes underfoot. He stands up nearly to attention.

BOONE
I'm going now.

Boone kisses Lily who continues to weep.

LITTER OF LEAVES

EXT ROAD BY PARSONAGE DUSK

OFFICER PITT arrives with SEVERAL OFFICERS in two cars. Officer Pitt and BOONE exit the lead car. Together they march to the front door. JEREMIAH answers the door. An officer leads Boone past Jeremiah to LILY, who embraces Boone. Jeremiah listens stoically to Officer Pitt.

An officer helps Jeremiah with his coat. Jeremiah dons his big black hat. Jeremiah is handcuffed and led to the first car by two officers.

Jeremiah looks in wonder at the red leaves on the road.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMIAH

Fallen like great splashes of
blood from my brow.

The officers exchange a puzzled look.

In the door way, Officer Pitt speaks with Boone and places
a consoling hand on his back.

THE SURE SIGN

EXT ROAD BY CHAPEL DUSK

As the police cars pull away, TOBY and his dogs emerge
from the woods. He wipes his eyes as he trudges. He flags
the cars down.

OFFICER PITT and another OFFICER get out and speak with
Toby, who motions to indicate a long distance into the
woods. Toby reverentially pulls Helena's RED SCARF from
his pocket. Toby hands the scarf with both hands to
Officer Pitt. The other officer takes a LANTERN and a
SHOVEL from the trunk of the second police car.

Toby lights the lantern. Then he and his dogs lead the
officer who carries the shovel into the woods. Toby wipes
his eyes frequently on his coat sleeve.

The cars move like a funeral procession up the road. The
lantern twinkles through the trees.

AVATAR

INT BOONE'S BEDROOM DUSK

Through his bedroom window we see BOONE crying as he
kneels in prayer. He has carefully placed the goggles, his
portfolio of music, the arrowhead, and his Bible on the
bed. We hear only a strengthening WIND.

AMBIGUOUS

INT FRONT HALL PARSONAGE DUSK

We see LILY from behind from the shoulders up. She is
weeping. We see through a mirror that her wheelchair is
empty. Through the open doorway, the tail lights of the
police cars fade up the leaf littered road.

ROAD TO PERDITION

EXT FRONT PORCH PARSONAGE DUSK

Roll end credits as the cars ghost around a bend in the road. We hear only the WIND which catches up and swirls the fallen leaves. The lantern has nearly died out as the film ends.

THE END