

HEDRA

Pilot

Written by

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&

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EXT. NAVAL AIR BASE SOUTHAMPTON, ENGLAND 1944 - DAY

The camera cranes over the busy naval airbase during WWII.

Military aircraft take off and land, while sailors are busy servicing warships.

The camera settles on the second floor window of a barrack.

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

We are in a private officer's bedroom, on the second floor of the barracks. The room has a window view of the airfield.

HEDRA STRUTHERS is a tall, pretty, lean woman (20), a soldier in the Wrens, the United Kingdom Women's Royal Naval Service.

Hedra cuddles in bed with her handsome boyfriend TREVOR (28), a pilot in the RAF, the Royal Air Force.

HEDRA

Oh, Trevor, you have no idea what you do to me.

TREVOR

What do you mean, Hedra?

HEDRA

You know what I mean.

TREVOR

Do you only love me for my body?  
For when I service your womanly  
needs?

HEDRA

(giggling)

I love every inch of you darling...  
have you talked to your wife?

TREVOR

How's your fiancée? What's his  
name, Dumbo?

HEDRA

You silly bugger. It's Duncan. He  
has no idea about us.

TREVOR

Do you love me?

HEDRA

Of course I love you. Can't you  
feel my body needing you, feeling  
you, desperately wanting you?

Trevor kisses Hedra.

TREVOR

Oh, God, I wish that I had met you  
first.

HEDRA

You know that I've always been  
attracted to married men.

TREVOR

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's  
husband. Aren't you Episcopalian?

HEDRA

I would happily go to Hell for a  
married man, especially if he  
kisses like you.

Trevor kisses Hedra.

INT. CAVENDISH HOTEL ROOM - LONDON - DAY

In the Victorian style hotel bedroom, Lieutenant Commander HUGH DOHENY (31) is seated on a sofa, kissing a very gay male prostitute named BRUCE (22).

They are startled by the sound of an explosion.

Hugh rises on his crutches. He is wearing a plaster cast on his right leg.

Bruce opens the drapes and the two men see the busy 1944 WWII London street, with the smoke plume from the Nazi rocket in the distance.

HUGH

A V1. God help us.

BRUCE

Damn those bloody Nazis.

BRUCE (CONT'D)

(pointing to Hugh's cast)

So how's your "war wound"?

HUGH

Another couple of months.

Bruce plays with Hugh's tie.

BRUCE

Were you thinking of me when you fell? Or was it just the martini?

HUGH

I'm always thinking of you, Bruce. Singing, dancing, but most of all, shagging. You bring out the best in me.

BRUCE

You mean the beast in you.

They both laugh at the humor.

Hugh kisses Bruce passionately, one more time.

EXT. CAVENDISH HOTEL ROOM - LONDON - DAY

In uniform, cast and crutches, Hugh hobbles out of the Cavendish Hotel front door, to his waiting black Rover sedan, on the busy London street.

Bruce follows behind, smoking a cigarette, wearing a monogrammed bathrobe.

The madam, ROSA LEWIS (77), joins them. She is wearing an elaborate dressing gown, her hair in a bun.

ROSA

You behave yourself, young "Dohēny".

Rosa mispronounces "Doheny", using the American pronunciation.

Hugh walks over to Rosa and kisses her on the cheek.

HUGH

(sweetly)

It's "Dohany", Rosa. We're not in California, it's just my cousin that pronounces it that way.

ROSA

The famous Beverly Hills oilman?

HUGH

Yes. Mr. Tea Pot Dome.

ROSA

Your father built all the railroads  
in Canada.

HUGH

(laughing)

No, darling, just the ones in  
Quebec.

Bruce holds Rosa's arm and leans over to kiss Hugh.

BRUCE

See you next time, sailor.

HUGH

You are one cheeky bugger.

ROSA

Bruce is already booked for next  
time, young "Dohény".

Hugh's driver HIGGINS opens the door of the car for him, as Hugh hobbles on his crutches into the backseat.

EXT. AERIAL GERMAN WARPLANES FLYING - DAY

German Messerschmitt warplanes are flying to the naval airbase.

EXT. BARRACKS - DAY

Hedra and Trevor are kissing, standing in front of the barracks.

They see the German warplanes flying overhead.

Hedra and Trevor rush to her Jeep and she drives him to his nearby Spitfire aircraft.

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

Trevor leaps out of Hedra's jeep and races to his aircraft, which has Hedra's name prominently painted in pink on the nose.

As the Nazi warplanes fly above, Trevor climbs into the pilot seat and takes off.

HEDRA

I love you, Trev...

Out of nowhere, a Messerschmitt makes a dive, guns blasting.

Trevor's Spitfire is hit!

Hedra watches in horror, as Trevor's plane crashes to the ground in front of her.

Hedra runs towards Trevor, as he pushes his way out of the cockpit and stumbles towards her.

Hedra makes eye contact with Trevor.

Hedra's name is visible on the burning aircraft.

The plane explodes, killing Trevor instantly.

Hedra is devastated.

She staggers back to her jeep and drives off.

EXT. MOTORWAY - DAY

Higgins is driving Hugh from London, towards the Southampton base.

British and Nazi aircraft dogfight above them.

There is an explosion just in front of Hugh's car, the shrapnel shredding out the front tires.

A heart broken and crying Hedra speeds by in her jeep.

Hugh and Higgins are shocked that Hedra doesn't stop her vehicle.

Higgins blasts his horn.

Hedra backs up her Jeep and turns to look at Hugh, who has pushed his way out of the vehicle, on his crutches.

She is still devastated by Trevor's death moments ago, but she has to behave in front of an officer.

Hedra salutes him.

HEDRA

Can I help you, Sir?

Hugh notices "Struthers" on her name tag.

HUGH

Struthers, I need you to drive me to Squid.

With Hedra holding back tears, Hugh hobbles into the jeep on his crutches.

EXT. HANGAR - DAY

Hedra drives Hugh past the burning wreckage of Trevor's aircraft, which is being hosed down by the ground crew.

Looking at the flames of Trevor's aircraft, Hugh makes eye contact with the tearful Hedra through the rear view mirror, acknowledging that she knew the pilot.

Hugh is speechless...

HEDRA

Where can I drop you off, Sir?

HUGH

Could you drive me to the landing craft mooring?

They drive off in silence...

EXT. LANDING CRAFT MOORING - DAY

Hedra stops her jeep in front of the landing craft.

Hedra hands Hugh his crutches and helps him out of the back seat.

Hedra salutes Hugh.

HUGH

I would be very pleased if you would accompany me to dinner tomorrow night.

HEDRA

I would enjoy that, Sir.

Hedra kisses Hugh on the cheek.

Hugh freezes.

Hedra pulls back, somewhat humiliated.

HEDRA (CONT'D)

Don't you find me attractive?

HUGH

You're crossing a line, Struthers.

HEDRA

No one has ever said that to me  
before.

HUGH

(gently)

You never met me before.

Hedra smiles, walking backwards to keep her gaze on Hugh. She giggles and runs off.

INT. SHIP GALLEY - NIGHT

A lively party rages, with sailors and enlisted women in attendance.

Hedra enters with another service woman, a pretty young girl named MAGGIE.

MAGGIE

Ohhh, lots of good looking sailors  
here tonight, eh, Lassie?

HEDRA

Yes, but I have my mind on that  
certain officer that I drove  
yesterday.

MAGGIE

You're man crazy, Hedra. Trevor's  
body is still warm. And you're  
engaged to Duncan. But you're all  
moon-eyed about that officer.

HEDRA

Can't help it, Maggie. Life is  
short. And he's so good looking.

Hedra beelines to the upright piano and sits.

Maggie joins Hedra on the bench.

MAGGIE

What are you going to play?

HEDRA

As if you need to ask.

Hedra plays the piano and sings.

HEDRA (CONT'D)

*The bride was in the parlor,  
explaining to the groom, the  
vagina, not the rectum, is the  
entrance to the womb.*

*Singing balls to you this time,  
balls to you now, the bugger that  
did it last time can't do it now.*

*There was fucking in the hallways  
and fucking on the stairs. You  
couldn't see the carpet, for the  
cunts with curly hairs.*

Hugh quietly enters the room and stands at the door.

MAGGIE

(whispering)

Keep playing, you know who is here!

Hedra continues playing, as she looks up at Hugh.

Their eyes lock in surprise.

A sailor named JAMES notices that Hugh, an officer, is in the doorway.

He yells to the sailors:

JAMES

Attention!

Maggie and all of the sailors rise, stand at attention and salute Hugh.

All except for Hedra, who keeps playing the piano.

HUGH

At ease.

Hedra continues to play, as she and Hugh smirk at one another.

Hugh hobbles to the piano.

HUGH (CONT'D)

I can sing that in Latin.

HEDRA

So can I.

Hugh playfully sings the verse in Latin, moving rhythmically, even on his crutches.

HUGH

*Sponsa in triclinio erat, sponso  
explicans vaginam, non rectum, esse  
aditum in uterum.*

Hedra joins in, singing the chorus in Latin.

HEDRA

*Hoc tempore tibi testas canens,  
nunc tibi testas; sceleratus qui id  
tempore proximo fecit, nunc facere  
non potest.*

At the end of the song, the sailors applaud!

Hedra applauds Hugh.

She stands up and walks to him.

HUGH

(winking)

See you tomorrow, Miss Struthers.

Hedra embraces Hugh.

But he doesn't respond.

Hedra has a look of disappointment in her eyes.

Hugh hobbles off on his crutches.

Maggie walks up.

MAGGIE

You speak Latin?

HEDRA

My talents are limitless.

MAGGIE

He's a faggot, you know.

HEDRA

Then why did he ask me out?

MAGGIE

You know how polite those Canadians  
are.

HEDRA

To hell with him.

INT. SHIP GALLEY - NIGHT - LATER

Hedra is at the piano, playing Glenn Miller's In The Mood.

She is now fairly drunk.

Maggie looks at Hedra with concern, since Hedra is flirting with the now drunk sailor James, seated on the piano bench beside her.

MAGGIE

Time to leave, Hedra.

Hedra smiles at the sailor.

HEDRA

Nah, not yet.

MAGGIE

Hedra, we're going to miss the last landing craft.

HEDRA

I don't care, I'm not ready.

Hedra wraps her arms around the sailor.

HEDRA (CONT'D)

Trevor doesn't want me to go, do you.

JAMES

The name's Jimmy, darlin'.

HEDRA

Ah, Jimmy, Trevor, Tom, Dick, Harry, I don't care anymore.

In disgust, Maggie leaves.

EXT. SHIP GALLEY - NIGHT

Maggie and several other enlisted women board the landing ship that brings them back to shore.

INT. SHIP GALLEY - NIGHT

James and Hedra are still on the piano bench, intensely making out.

HEDRA

This piano seat is getting hard.  
Like you, sailor.

JAMES

I'm ready for action, darlin'. Are  
you?

Hedra giggles.

James moves in for a kiss.

But Hedra passes out on his shoulder.

A sailor named ROBERT sees Hedra out cold.

ROBERT

The last landing craft has already  
left. She'll miss curfew.

JAMES

Oh, God. What are we going to do?

ROBERT

We'll have to *move the ship*.

JAMES

What did you say?

ROBERT

We've got to move the ship.

James looks at the unconscious Hedra.

JAMES

You are one little trouble maker.

ROBERT

Men, *to your stations*.

The sailors hesitate, then rally to get Hedra to shore.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

Twenty sailors run across the ship deck, manning their stations.

INT. SHIP BRIDGE - NIGHT

James enters the bridge and communicates with the engine room on the sound powered telephone.

JAMES  
Mitchem, half astern.

James moves the Engine Order Telegraph dial to Slow Astern.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

The ship inches backwards.

INT. SHIP ENGINE ROOM - NIGHT

The sailors manning the engines cheer, celebrating their mischief.

INT. SHIP GALLEY - NIGHT

Robert is standing guard over Hedra, passed out on the ground.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

The ship reaches the shore.

INT. SHIP BRIDGE - NIGHT

James pushes the Engine Order Telegraph to Stop.

INT. SHIP GALLEY - NIGHT

James joins the others in the galley and they carry Hedra off the ship.

EXT. SHIP DECK - NIGHT

James has thrown Hedra over his shoulder and carries her down the gangway.

Hedra's butt is in his face, which he thinks is funny.

JAMES  
You've got a nice caboose there,  
lassie.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Hugh and a visibly hungover Hedra are having dinner at a fancy restaurant near the base.

HUGH  
Struthers. What would you like to drink? I'm having a scotch.

HEDRA  
A martini. Very dry. Sir. I'm feeling a bit peely-wolly from last night. It must have been the Latin.

HUGH  
Good thing that there wasn't any Greek...by the way, you can call me Hugh. Can I call you Hedra?

HEDRA  
Of course, Sir...I mean Hugh. How was your day?

HUGH  
Last night was a disaster. My sailors moved the ship without authorization. There was this dreadful WREN who passed out and was going to miss curfew. So the men took it upon themselves to move my ship.

HEDRA  
Do you know which WREN it was?

HUGH  
It doesn't matter who. The fact of the matter is that one of my ships was moved without my orders.

HEDRA  
Some women these days...

There is an uncomfortable silence between them.

HUGH  
Did you love him? That pilot who crashed yesterday?

HEDRA  
Desperately.

HUGH  
What was his name?

HEDRA  
Trevor.

HUGH  
I'm so sorry for your loss. At  
Normandy, I had to shoot two of my  
men.

HEDRA  
Oh, how absolutely dreadful. What  
happened?

HUGH  
They were...impaled. And in agony.

HEDRA  
Did you do the right thing?

HUGH  
Only God knows.

A tear appears in Hugh's eye.

Hedra reaches her hand across the table.

And looks up at him.

And Hugh looks at her.

She gives him a sad smile.

HEDRA  
You know, I can make you feel  
better.

HUGH  
How?

HEDRA  
(smiling)  
You'll see.

EXT. BARRACKS - NIGHT

Hugh's driver Higgins delivers Hugh and Hedra to her  
barracks.

HUGH  
Thank you for a lovely evening.

Hedra leans in to give Hugh a kiss on the cheek.

They embrace.

HEDRA  
I can hear your heart beat.

She looks for a reaction.

Hedra gazes into his eyes.

Hugh turns his head away from her, rejecting her advance.

Hugh turns back to look at Hedra.

She gently brushes his lips with hers, waiting for his reaction.

But his expression cannot be read.

So she tries to kiss him on the lips.

But Hugh pushes her away.

HUGH  
Hedra...

HEDRA  
Hugh...don't you find me attractive?

HUGH  
I can't do this. I hope that you understand.

HEDRA  
Are you married? Have a girlfriend?

HUGH  
No...

HEDRA  
So what is it?

HUGH  
I can't give you what you want. Not in that way.

HEDRA  
Maybe I need affection too much.

HUGH  
There is no such thing as too much love. With the right person, that is.

HEDRA  
Who is the right person?

HUGH  
Wasn't Trevor?

HEDRA  
That was then, this is now.

HUGH  
That seems cold.

HEDRA  
I need to be true to myself. And I  
feel great connection with you.

HUGH  
For some reason...I can't explain,  
I need to comfort you.

Hedra smiles hopefully.

HUGH (CONT'D)  
But not in that way.

HEDRA  
Is there more than one kind of  
love?

HUGH  
There always is.

HEDRA  
Hearts are broken when the  
different kinds of love are in  
play.

HUGH  
That's been my life.

HEDRA  
Mine too.

She tries to kiss him again.

Once again, he doesn't respond.

HUGH  
Would you be free for tea tomorrow?

HEDRA  
I'm going to London to pick up a  
puppy for my mother. Then I'm  
taking the train to Scotland.

HUGH  
Oh, you come from Scotland? Where?

HEDRA

Cambo. It's seven miles from St. Andrews.

HUGH

Oh, the Old and Ancient golf course.

HEDRA

Oh, I guess that we'll say goodnight. I'll see you in my dreams...

Hedra salutes Hugh.

He salutes back. But he doesn't make any affectionate moves.

Disappointed and humiliated, Hedra enters the barracks.

Hugh watches her leave, wishing that he cared in that way.

EXT. DOG BREEDER'S HOUSE LONDON - DAY

Hedra takes a taxi through busy London, to the dog breeder's house.

She rings the door bell and the breeder HELEN brings the Cocker Spaniel puppy to Hedra.

HEDRA

What a ducky wee puppy!

Helen smiles.

HELEN

He's the pick of the litter.

HEDRA

Mummy will be so pleased.

HELEN

She'll love this puppy almost as much as she loves you.

HEDRA

More!

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Hedra carries the puppy in a carrier.

She sticks her hand in the wicker cage to play with the adorable dog.

EXT. CAMBO ESTATE - DAY

Hedra and the puppy arrive in a taxi, at the huge Cambo Estate in Scotland.

Hedra's mother LADY STRUTHERS greets Hedra and the puppy in front of the manor.

Hedra lets the puppy out of the carrier.

Lady Struthers happily picks up the puppy, which licks her on her face.

LADY STRUTHERS  
We'll have to give this puppy a  
name.

Hedra's fiancée DUNCAN comes out the front door.

Hedra makes eye contact with Duncan. But she does not approach him.

Duncan walks up to Hedra and embraces her.

Hugh and Higgins drive up in the Rover automobile.

Hugh exits the vehicle, still on his crutches.

Duncan's back is to Hugh, so only Hedra and Lady Struthers see him approach.

Hedra looks happily at Hugh, while she embraces Duncan.

Duncan turns around and is shocked to see Hugh.

HUGH  
How's the puppy?

HEDRA  
Adorable.

HEDRA (CONT'D)  
Hugh, how lovely to see you. What a surprise.

HUGH  
Can I hold the puppy? I miss my beagle Sam in Montreal.

HEDRA

Mummy, Duncan, this is Lt.  
Commander Hugh Doheny.

DUNCAN

What happened to your leg? That's  
some war wound.

HUGH

You have no idea how dangerous  
London hotels can be.

LADY STRUTHERS

I do hope that you're staying for  
the night, Sir.

Duncan looks disappointed that Hugh might be staying  
overnight.

Hedra smiles.

Hugh waves Higgins to join them.

Hedra, Hugh, Lady Struthers, Duncan and Higgins walk to the  
house.

Duncan defiantly pinches Hedra's butt, to upset Hugh.

INT. CAMBO BREAKFAST ROOM - NIGHT

Lady Erskine, Hedra, Duncan and Hugh are having dinner in the  
opulent, candlelit breakfast room.

LADY STRUTHERS

My apologies that we're dining in  
the breakfast room. Much of our  
staff is at war.

HEDRA

Yes, as Mummy says, we're down to  
thirteen staff members now.

DUNCAN

Damn inconvenient, this war.

Hedra looks at Duncan with distain.

HUGH

Bloody inconvenient for all those  
men who lost their lives at  
Normandy...absolutely delicious  
meal, Lady Struthers.

LADY STRUTHERS

Yes, the cook has had quite a time  
with the rationing, to prepare  
anything half decent to eat.

The servants serve flambé.

LADY STRUTHERS (CONT'D)

Hugh, you were at D-Day? There were  
hardly any boats left in the harbor  
at St. Andrews when the call went  
out.

DUNCAN

I was playing golf on the Old and  
Ancient, watching the boats sail  
away.

HUGH

I take it that you're not serving?

DUNCAN

Damn these flat feet...Hugh, how  
about a quick game of billiards  
before bedtime?

HUGH

Thanks for the offer, Duncan. But  
I'm tired from my journey.

LADY STRUTHERS

Okay, time to retire. Thank you all  
for a wonderful evening.

All four people stand up.

Duncan tries to kiss Hedra, but she turns her cheek, glancing  
at Hugh.

Hugh winks at Hedra.

Duncan notices...

INT. CAMBO BEDROOM HUGH - NIGHT

Hugh is in the bedroom praying, kneeling on the floor.

HUGH

Pater noster, qui es in caelis,  
sanctificetur nomen tuum, adveniat  
regnum tuum, fiat voluntas tua,  
sicut in caelo et in terra.

INT. CAMBO HALLWAY - NIGHT

Hedra walks up to Hugh's bedroom and adjusts her dressing gown to show more cleavage.

INT. CAMBO BEDROOM HUGH - NIGHT

Without knocking, Hedra enters the room.

Hedra is quite surprised to see Hugh praying and covers up her cleavage.

HEDRA

Sorry to disturb you. I just wanted  
to see if there was anything that  
you needed.

She looks down at her bosom, hoping that that is what Hugh needs.

Hugh's stony look disappoints Hedra and so she closes her dressing gown, to show even less cleavage.

She notices a book on Hugh's bed.

HEDRA (CONT'D)  
What book are you reading?

HUGH

It's Robert Service. The Spell of  
the Yukon.

HEDRA

He's my favorite poet.

HUGH

Would you like me to read to you?

Hedra excitedly jumps on the bed, like a little child.

HUGH (CONT'D)  
*There's gold, and it's haunting and  
haunting;  
It's luring me on as of old;  
Yet it isn't the gold that I'm  
wanting  
So much as just finding the gold.  
It's the great, big, broad land  
'way up yonder,  
It's the forests where silence has  
lease;  
It's the beauty that thrills me  
with wonder,*  
(MORE)

HUGH (CONT'D)  
*It's the stillness that fills me  
 with peace.*

HEDRA  
 That stanza has always been magic  
 to me. I've always wanted to visit  
 the Yukon. Have you ever been?

HUGH  
 I've visited all over Canada.  
 Including the Yukon.

HEDRA  
 Is it as wonderful as his poetry?

HUGH  
*I'll fight--and you bet it's no sham-  
 fight;  
 It's hell!--but I've been there  
 before;  
 And it's better than this by a  
 damsite--  
 So me for the Yukon once more.*

Hedra cuddles up to Hugh.

Close on his face.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. CAVENDISH HOTEL ROOM - LONDON - DAY

Hugh flashes back to making out with Bruce.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. CAMBO BEDROOM HUGH - NIGHT

Back on Hugh's face.

Close on Hedra's face:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. BARRACKS - DAY

Hedra flashes back to being in bed with Trevor.

END FLASHBACK:

INT. CAMBO BEDROOM HUGH - NIGHT

Hedra starts to gently cry.

Hugh looks at her compassionately, kisses her on the forehead, takes her into his arms and turns out the light.

THE END