

LAVENDER

Pilot

Written by

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EXT. NAVAL AIR BASE SOUTHAMPTON, ENGLAND 1944 - DAY

The camera cranes over the busy naval airbase during WWII.

SUPER: Southampton, England 1944

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 ERSKINE is tall, pretty and lean (20), a service woman in the W.R.N.S., Great Britain's Women's Royal Naval Service.

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

A smiling Hedra has *her arms tied* to the bed's metal headboard.

Trevor *unties* Hedra's arms and gives her a kiss.

They cuddle.

HEDRA

It's your turn. Ready for an encore?

TREVOR

I might need to refuel.

HEDRA

You pilots.

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.

Trevor grabs Hedra's breasts.

TREVOR

I love every *inch* of you too, Miss Erskine.

HEDRA

Do you love your wife as much as you love me?

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 enough to kiss Duncan goodbye?

HEDRA

(joking)

I haven't even kissed him hello.

TREVOR

It sounds like a relationship made in heaven.

HEDRA

(laughing)

Or hell.

Trevor kisses Hedra.

TREVOR

Oh, God, I wish that I'd met you before Lorna.

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.

They kiss.

TREVOR

If I weren't married, would you marry *me*?

HEDRA

(teasing)

What's the fun in that? I'm a much better mistress than wife. And by the way, what's your title, you commoner?

TREVOR

You cheeky thing. I'm a Wing Commander.

HEDRA

Silly, that's a rank, not a title.

TREVOR

Bloody nobility. Why can't the royals just marry whom they love?

HEDRA

Unfortunately, darling, you're not *Sir* Trevor. And you know that mummy and daddy are making me marry Duncan because he's titled.

TREVOR

You mean *Sir Dumbo*?

They both laugh.

HEDRA

And I don't want to marry anyone anyway. I just want to have fun.

TREVOR

I don't want you to have fun without me. Besides, I know that I've spoiled you for anyone else.

HEDRA

I don't want to be tied down in *that* way.

TREVOR

Do you think that marriage is a prison?

HEDRA

Marriage would be a prison to me.

TREVOR

You will never be happy. You'll be alone.

HEDRA
I'll always have you...

TREVOR
Are you sure about that?

They cuddle again. But both look sad.

INT. CAVENDISH HOTEL ROOM - LONDON - DAY

In the Victorian style hotel bedroom, Lieutenant Commander HUGH DOHENY (31) is seated in his naval uniform, 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
Another V1. God help us.

BRUCE
Damn those bloody Nazis.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
(pointing to Hugh's cast)
So how's your "war wound",
commander?

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

Hugh hobbles on crutches 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 "Dohēny".

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

Trev, why can't I tell you how much I love you?

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.

The name *Hedra* is visible on the burning aircraft.

The plane explodes, killing Trevor instantly.

Hedra looks devastated.

She staggers back to her jeep and drives off.

EXT. MOTORWAY - DAY

Higgins drives 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 "Erskine" on her name tag.

HUGH
Erskine, 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
Would 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, Erskine.

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 girl named MAGGIE (20).

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
 Cantus globulos ad tu hoc tempus,
 globulos ad tu hoc nunc, de asinus
 illud fecit id postrumes tempus non
 potest fac id nunc.

At the end of the song, the sailors applaud!

Hedra applauds Hugh.

She stands up and walks to him.

Hedra embraces Hugh.

But he doesn't respond.

Hedra has a look of disappointment in her eyes.

HUGH
(winking)
See you tomorrow, Miss Erskine.

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 - NIGHT

Maggie and several other enlisted women board the landing
craft 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 gettin' there, darlin'. Are
you?

Hedra giggles.

James moves in for a kiss.

But Hedra passes out on his shoulder.

A sailor named ROBERT sees Hedra collapsed.

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

Erskine. 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 and gives Hugh a kiss on the cheek.

She embraces him.

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 her lips with his, waiting for his reaction.

But his expression cannot be read.

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 ERSKINE greets Hedra and the puppy in front of the manor.

Hedra lets the puppy out of the carrier.

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

LADY ERSKINE

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 Erskine 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 ERSKINE
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 Erskine, 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 ERSKINE

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 Erskine.

LADY ERSKINE

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

The servants serve flambé.

Hugh smiles at the incongruity of the fancy flaming dessert being served during wartime rationing.

LADY ERSKINE (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 ERSKINE
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,
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;*

(MORE)

HUGH (CONT'D)
*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