

HUNTERS IN THE SKY

Program 13: "Reflections On War"

FINAL SCRIPT

TEASE:	
A. NARRATOR: They were young. They were scared. They were brave. They had a job to do. It was a time for eagles.	
B. FOSS: (V/O) "They believed in their country, they believed in what they were doing, and (O/C) and were off and ready to go, and you could take 'em anyplace under the sun and they'd follow you."	
C. TANAKA: (V/O) "I fought to protect my country. (O/C) I didn't think about the possibility of dying."	195J-7: (00:51:33) ["In the war in which countries fought against each other,] () I fought to protect my country, () [but] () I didn't think about the possibility of dying." (00:51:53)

<u>SERIES TITLE:</u> <u>HUNTERS IN THE</u> <u>SKY</u> (:15)	
<u>EPISODE TITLE:</u> "Reflections on War"	

ACT I:	
<p>1. NEWSREEL NARRATOR: "The Mustangs dropped their wing tanks and plunged into the fight. Leading was an Ohio boy Captain Don Gentile. Another hotrod, Colonel Francis Gabreski from Pennsylvania joined the fight. In the same outfit was Indiana's Major Walker Mahurin...."</p>	
<p>2. NARRATOR: In World War II, the hunters, the fighter pilots, were fiercely proud of their squadrons, their leaders, and their skills.</p>	
<p>3. NEWSREEL NARRATOR: "Then came a fresh formation of Mustangs, some of Colonel Blakeslee's "Bachelors." They came down from almost invisible heights to engage the enemy."</p>	

4. NARRATOR: They tested themselves against the enemy, and against each other in what they called "friendly rivalries."	
Walker "Bud" Mahurin is a top ace with the 56th Fighter Group.	
5. MAHURIN: (O/C) "We were one of three fighter groups that got the P-47's and of course you like to look at scoring on the scoreboard like we do today in all our games. And of course, the first time you got a victory that added prestige to your group and prestige to your squadron."	
6. NARRATOR: Walter Beckham, 353rd Fighter Group, USAAF.	

<p>7. BECKHAM: (O/C) "Bud Mahurin was credited with fifteen airplanes and I was fourteen, so, that's...and he and I were good friends. (V/O) So I flew a mission one day and I came back with 2 airplanes destroyed, and some good film. (O/C) Public Relations officers, oh they were great. "We the 353 Group now have the highest score; and the 56th Group with Bud Mahurin is now behind." I have 16, he has 15. So the Deputy Group Commander and I shook hands, and they took pictures, and big, big deal...."</p>	
<p>8. MAHURIN: (V/O) "As time went by the more you got, (O/C) the more prestige and the more envy other fighter groups would have of your organization. So it became a competitive thing."</p>	

<p>9. BECKHAM: (O/C) "And then, alas! Bud Mahurin came back and he had shot down one airplane. So, that was terrible! So now it's sixteen-sixteen, of course."</p>	
<p>10. NEWSREEL SOT - USAAF COMMANDER: "The 56th will lead the show in. We escort the lead box of bombers. We've got to give them head gun cover. Nothing must break through. The 4th Fighter Group covers the tail of our task force. And there should be over 100 of us."</p>	
<p>11. NARRATOR: A legendary rivalry pits Hub Zemke's 56th Fighter Group, known as "The Wolfpack", against Don Blakeslee's 4th Fighter Group. The Germans call them "The Debden Gangsters."</p>	

Don Gentile and his wingman, Johnny Godfrey are top guns of the 4th. Between them they score 36 combat kills, six over Berlin in one 20-minute dogfight.	
Their rivals from the 56th are Bob Johnson and Francis Gabreski who themselves are in a nip and tuck competition for the title of "America's Number One Ace Over Europe." Gabreski will score 28 kills, and gets the title. Later, a disputed kill is awarded to Johnson for a tie.	
In the final tally the 56th destroys 1006 Luftwaffe planes. The 4th gets 1006 and <u>1/2</u> kills.	
12. NEWSREEL NARRATOR: "We salute the sky masters engaged in the greatest air battles the world has ever known!"	

<p>13. NARRATOR: Rivalries for the title of top gun helped the aces forget, if only for a moment, that the threat of death was constant.</p>	
<p>Mackie Steinhoff, Luftwaffe.</p>	
<p>14. STEINHOFF: (O/C) "And you go to bed at night with the thought: Will you be alive the next morning? Well, if the weather was good then you knew that the bombers would come. (V/O) That you would have to start the plane. That you would have an air battle. And then you wouldn't know whether you would be alive or not. How we coped with this, I couldn't tell you today."</p>	<p>240G-2: (approx. 4:03:30) "You go to bed at night with the thought, will you be alive the next morning? Well, if the weather was good, then you knew that the bombers would come, that you would have an air battle, that you would have to start the plane. And then you wouldn't know that you would be alive or not. How we coped with this, I couldn't tell you today." (4:04:11)</p>
<p>END ACT ONE-----</p>	

ACT II:	
1. NARRATOR: In the battle for the skies, discipline is tight, tough and crucial. Trust and teamwork are essential to survival.	
But there is no taming some of the hunters. They are the mavericks, the loners. A few gain blazing fame and the admiration of their fellows. Too often, the price for breaking the rules is death.	
Hauptman Hans Joachim Marseille, Luftwaffe. He wears his hair long, he likes jazz music, and he loves the ladies.	

<p>2. STEINHOFF: (V/O)</p> <p>"Marseille was an extremely good looking young man. We're talking about people who were twenty to twenty-two years old at the time. But he lacked the discipline necessary. During his rest periods he had far too many women. (O/C) Basically, I had nothing against this, but it did have an effect on his performance, And I told him once, "Marseille, I really can't work with such undisciplined aces. (V/O) He was transferred then to North Africa. In Africa, he became the star of Africa. He was talented. And the secret of his success was the fact that there were no girls in Africa."</p>	<p>240G-5: (approx. 4:09:20)</p> <p>()</p> <p>"Marseilles was an extremely good-looking young man. We're talking about people who were 20 to 22. He was 22 at the time.</p> <p>() [He had only ... he downed only one or two planes.]</p> <p>() But he lacked the discipline necessary.</p> <p>() [Back in our days in post and in]</p> <p>()</p> <p>during his rest periods he had far too many girls. Basically I had nothing against this. But it did have an effect on his performance. And I told him once, 'Marseilles, I really can't work with such undisciplined aces.' He was transferred to North Africa. In Africa he became the 'Star of Africa.' He was talented. And the secret of this ... his success was the fact that there were no girls in Africa." (4:10:52)</p>
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<p>3. NARRATOR: Marseille scores 158 kills. Returning from a mission, the engine flames, he bails out, his chute fails to open and he is crushed against the hard desert floor. A makeshift memorial marks his grave.</p>	
<p>Greg "Pappy" Boyington leads the maverick "Black Sheep" squadron of Marine pilots in the Pacific.</p>	
<p>4. ROSSI: (O/C) "Old "Pappy" Boyington was pretty colorful on the ground because he was a rough, tough character. (V/O) When "Pappy" had quite a few drinks, he was a good man to stay away from."</p>	
<p>5. ROSEBERT: (O/C) "And I knew him very well because I was billeted with him in the last days of Rangoon. And most of the stories about him are true."</p>	

6. LAYHER: (O/C) "Like the night he shot up the town clock in Rangoon and we had to take his, we all carried a sidearm, we had to take it away from him. And, but yes, there were many colorful characters, I promise you."	
7. NARRATOR: Boyington is shot down, presumed dead, and awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor. Amazingly, he is rescued by a Japanese submarine and spends the rest of the war in a prison camp. He returns to claim the title of top Marine Ace with 28 kills.	
8. NARRATOR: While the mavericks make news, it is the team players who win most of the victories.	

<p>In the Pacific, Hiroyoshi Nishizawa is Japan's top ace. He is killed as a passenger on a transport plane evacuating pilots back to Japan.</p>	
<p>Edward "Butch" O'Hare is the first U.S. Navy Ace. In the Battle of the Coral Sea, O'Hare downs five Japanese bombers in five minutes and is awarded the Medal of Honor. O'Hare will die in a night battle, the victim of friendly fire.</p>	
<p>9. VORIS: (V/O) "And he was returning to join up on his mother torpedo plane, (O/C) and the rear gunner in that torpedo plane, thought he was an enemy airplane. And he turned his turret on him, unknowingly, and shot Butch down."</p>	

<p>10. NARRATOR: Over Russia, Alexander Pokryshkin flies American P-39 fighters and scores an official 59 kills. Because he has become a symbol of heroism to the nation, his life is too valuable to risk in combat. Grounded by the Red Air Force, he flies secretly and adds to his score. When he is airborne the Germans warn their pilots, "Achtung, der ass Pokryshkin in der luft." Attention, the ace Pokryshkin is in the sky.</p>	

In the Pacific, a rivalry for top gun matches Richard Bong against Tommy McGuire. Dick Bong is the first American ace to pass Eddie Rickenbacker's World War I record of 26 kills, on his way to a total of 40. McGuire gets 38 victories. McGuire dies in combat. Bong is awarded the Medal of Honor. Days before the war ends, while testing America's first jet fighter, Dick Bong is killed.

Douglas Bader, Royal Air Force, is a special kind of hero to the British people. Bader, wearing artificial legs, exemplifies the grit and courage that won the Battle of Britain.

11. JOHNSON: (V/O) "Once he was in the cockpit of a Spitfire, I think he was the (O/C) equal of... the fact that he was disabled, you didn't notice it."

<p>12. NARRATOR: Bader is shot down and captured by the Germans. Luftwaffe ace Adolf Galland arranges for him to get a new pair of aluminum legs to replace the ones Bader lost in the crash. Bader gets the metal legs... and tries to escape!</p>	
<p>13. JOHNSON: (O/C) "Of course, he was a great, inspiring leader. He was utterly fearless and basically taught us how to conduct ourselves as young fighter pilots. (V/O) He taught us how to lead, and what it was all about."</p>	
<p>14. NARRATOR: The wild ones, the quiet ones, the flamboyant ones, the serious ones... all of them took the hunter's challenge, and all earned immortality in the proud fraternity of eagles.</p>	

END ACT II-	
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ACT III:	
<p>1. NARRATOR: The fighter pilots who did battle in hostile skies were, for the most part, young men in their early twenties. Each flag painted on the side of a plane represented a victory for one, and death for an adversary.</p>	
<p>Matters of life and death were very much on these young minds.</p>	
<p>2. STEINHOFF: (O/C) "There is an encounter between the two of us. (V/O) We came together in battle. We intend to destroy each other. You don't hear the machine gun. You don't see any blood. Shooting in a plane is a relatively clean affair. So you really don't think about the person who sits in the aircraft."</p>	<p>239G-8: (3:16:33) ["Well,] () there is an encounter between the two of us. We come together in battle. We intend to destroy each other. () [...] (approx. 3:16:00) () You don't hear the machine gun. You don't see any blood. Shooting in a plane is a relatively clean affair. So you really don't think about the person who sits in the aircraft." ()</p>

<p>3. KINGCOMBE: (O/C) "Another reason why people like myself who find it difficult to squash flies joined the air force is because you're not killing people, you're killing aircraft. (V/O) And it used to come as a huge shock if you were firing at an airplane and suddenly a body came out in a parachute. It suddenly brought home the fact that there were people there."</p>	
<p>4. NARRATOR: Saburo Sakai, a top ace of the Japanese Air Force.</p>	

<p>5. SAKAI: (O/C) "To shoot down the enemy during a battle means not only shooting down a plane, but a pilot in the plane will die, too. (V/O) "Shoot down" means to kill another person. So all the battles were very important for me. (O/C) I remember all the battles. I should because I killed people. If I forgot anyone of them, I will become inhuman."</p>	<p>187J-10: (11:16:14) "To shoot down the enemy during a battle means not only shooting down a plane, but a pilot in the plane will die, too. 'Shoot down' means to kill another person. So all the battles were very important for me. I remember all the battles. I should, because I killed people. (11:16:39) [...] () If I forget any one of them, I will become inhuman." (11:17:36)</p>
<p>6. NARRATOR: For many pilots, the deadly hunt became a sport, somehow separated from any cause or flag. It was a way to cope with levels of stress beyond the pull of any G-force.</p>	
<p>Andrew Mackenzie, Royal Air Force.</p>	

<p>7. MACKENZIE: (V/O) "We used to look at those crosses on the aircraft and try to hit the cross. But it was almost -- almost like a pinball machine. (O/C) You never thought about his next of kin or whether he had kids or not, or anything like that. I think if you had of you probably would have -- it would have taken the fire out of the whole thing, you know?"</p>	
<p>8. NARRATOR: Medal of Honor Winner, Marine pilot, Joe Foss.</p>	
<p>9. FOSS: (O/C) "Anyone who gets silly ideas about -- when you're in a battle with those birds about worrying about their welfare, it's off the end of the plank and into the deep."</p>	

<p>10. NARRATOR: The game was for very high stakes. Another sunrise. Another day, week, month. Survival. Death found a rich harvest in the skies.</p>	
<p>11. FOSS: (O/C) "There's no one that in the short span of life we have here that likes to leave ahead of schedule. (V/O) And of course, war will cause you to leave ahead of schedule, I guarantee you. I've seen it firsthand."</p>	
<p>12. NARRATOR: Arsenii Vorozheikin, Red Air Force.</p>	

<p>13. VOROZHEIKIN: (V/O) "I was like a child. Like a child who doesn't know what fear is and rushes into battle. And only then, when he feels pain, the child then feels fear. Fear is a great thing. It's a great instinct for self-preservation. It's absolutely necessary. People who don't experience fear are not normal."</p>	
<p>14. NARRATOR: Facing inner fear. Seeing friends die. It was all part of the job.</p>	
<p>15. ROSSI: (O/C) "I think it hits you worse though, when the guy who was shot down or disappeared was one of your closer friends. (V/O) When that guy was your close friend, I think it was the worst. (O/C) You felt it the deepest."</p>	

16. NARRATOR: The pilots faced burn-out and fatigue.	
17. BECKHAM: (O/C) "After sort of a long mission and some combat and returning home, I'd would say to myself, 'I hope I don't see anymore Germans today. I'm, I don't feel like it.'"	
18. NARRATOR: They shared a closeness that gave them strength.	
19. DUNDAS: (O/C) "I think that there always was a certain -- sort of -- feeling of camaraderie between airmen, you know? (V/O) And, they were, after all, just young men doing their duty in the same way as we were."	
20. NARRATOR: They knew the elation of flight and the hunt.	

<p>21. STEINHOFF: (O/C) "I loved flight. I loved the sport of the third dimension. (V/O) It was always like a drug to me. I flew passionately."</p>	<p>239G-6: (3:12:45) [...] () "I loved flight. I loved the sport of the third dimension. It was always like a drug to me. I flew passionately." ()</p>
<p>22. NARRATOR: Wing Commander Geoffrey Page, Royal Air Force.</p>	
<p>23. PAGE: (O/C) "I had a very smart uniform with a pair of wings on it. (V/O) I had a lovely fast airplane. We were considered rather sort of glamorous characters, I suppose, in a way. (O/C) We didn't have any time to chase the girls, sadly. We were in the air all day and too tired at night to deflect our interests."</p>	
<p>24. NARRATOR: And they knew a special kind of pride.</p>	

<p>25. PAGE: (O/C) "When the day is over, and you get back, and you have a glass of beer or something, it tastes just that much better because you stuck your neck out."</p>	
<p>26. NARRATOR: Times change. Skies change. Some memories grow dimmer with the years. But some will blaze brightly for <u>all</u> time.</p>	
<p>27. OBLESER: (V/O) "The fascination of flight can't be expressed in words. Once you've experienced it, you will never be able to forget it."</p>	<p>241G-2: (5:02:19) "The fascination of flight can't be expressed with words. (_____) [But it really lies beyond the capabilities of human endeavor. It's a challenge.] (_____) And once you've experienced it, you will never be able to forget it." (5:02:38)</p>
<p>28. CHANDLER: (V/O) "You know when you go up there, that's it's a very cruel and real world that you're in and you may not come back from that mission."</p>	

29. GALLAND: (V/O) "Then for moment you feel a feeling of hate. But it is more important to be successful."	237G-11: (approx. 1:26:00) () "Then for a moment you feel a feeling of hate. (1:26:10) But it's more important to be successful." ()
30. GABRESKI: (V/O) "And when you think that you're probably a lot better than anybody else, you better be better than anybody else."	
31. TANIMIZU: (V/O) "We were all the same. I think that all pilots have the same feeling. But the war created devils."	198J-11: (approx. 00:14:20) () "We were the same--pilots. (00:14:26) I think that all the pilots had the same feeling. But the war created devils." (00:14:55)
32. SHEEN: (V/O) "They had a job to do which was to shoot us down and we had a job to shoot them down. And that's the way it goes."	
33. PAGE: (V/O) "You see these tracer bullets coming at you and you know that every one of them is lethal and its pointed at you."	

34. ARCHIPENKO: (V/O) "And the most important thing is not to be a coward."	
35. ILFREY: (V/O) "The hunters are the ones that go out and kill. And the others will be the hunted."	
36. YONAGA: (V/O) "Our pilots, one by one, I felt, 'Oh, they have died too young.'"	191J-2: (00:33:05) "When we were losing our pilots one by one, I felt, 'Oh, they have died too early!'" (_____)
37. WALSH: (V/O) "You're up their to win. You play to win. And you've just got to love what you're doing. That's what makes a good fighter pilot."	
38. NARRATOR: Looking back on a terrible war, for all the terror and the horror, still the wind will whisper, "Yes there <u>WAS</u> glory!"	

END ACT III --	--
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