

IN THE DARK OF THE NIGHT

A Play in Three Acts

By

Alfred D. Benjamin

Cast of Characters

JOE (Pilot), Age 75

JACKIE (Co-Pilot), Age 74

BENNY (Navigator), Age 70

BILL (Bombardier), Age 72

Charlie (Flight Engineer), Age 73

Raymond (Waist Gunner), Age 73

George (Left Waist Gunner), Age 69

Frank (Radioman), Age 69

Shorty (Ball Gunner), Age 72

Vinnie (Tail Gunner), Age 72

Willy (Co-Pilot), Age 74

Ernie (Time Reporter)

Character who does not appear

Narrator

Scene

A typical Conference Room

Time

AUGUST 1995

ACT 1

The crew is sitting in the front row of the theatre. They are watching as the statement about the 8th Air Force slowly crawls on the screen accompanied by the narrator reading it.

The United States 8th Airforce based in England became the largest armada that the world has ever seen.

The average life of an airman in Europe was 13 missions, and some airman flew as many as 35 and more.

The average age of a crewman was 21, and the average age of their flight officers was 23.

The preservation of civilization ended up in their hands. The men of the Eighth reduced the German Air Force to an ineffective defense force by constant attack with our fighters and bombers.

THESE BRAVE MEN WHO DID SO MUCH FOR US ARE NOW IN THEIR SEVENTIES. TO THE MEN OF THE EIGHTH, WE SALUTE YOU.

At the end of the statement the narrator introduces a short film showing a typical mission from start to finish.

At the conclusion of the film the crew stands and proceeds up to the stage and onto the conference room and sits down.

(ERNIE/REPORTER) enters from side door, proceeds to the podium

Welcome to all you B-17 veterans, I am a senior writer at TIME magazine and assigned to interview you to find out what made a crew tick in WWII and how you are doing now 50 years later.

If each of you'd stand and introduce yourself and tell me your crew position and what you are doing now.

THEY ALL STAND ONE BY ONE AND ANNOUNCE THEIR NAME AND CREW POSITION

(JOE)

My name is Joe Fisher, I was the Pilot of the crew. I am now 75 years old and still live in Texas. After the war I worked for the Esso oil company and became an Executive vice president of the company.

(JACKIE)

I am Jacob Trainer Age 74 and I live in Hollywood. I was the original Co-Pilot on the crew. After my stint in the Air Corps I went back to California and followed in my father's footsteps and became a cameraman for many feature films.

(BENNY)

I am Al Benjamin, I was the Navigator... Boston born and bred. I now live on Cape Cod after a wonderful life as a Producer, Technical Director, and eventually President of a Production Studio in Boston. I am 70 years old and I wrote this play. They called me Benny.

(BILL)

Bill Hudson is my name, I am 72 years old now and I served as Bombardier on the crew when I was 22. I came from the South in Appalachia and after the war I worked in the mines as a foreman and later in the office as an executive.

(CHARLIE)

I go by the name Charles Kellog and I went to work for Ford in Detroit after the war. I was always interested in electric automobiles and became the chief engineer of Toyota America and helped design the first Hybrid. I am now 73 and about ready to retire. And Oh yeah: I was the engineer on the crew.

(RAYMOND)

My name is Raymond Villanova, I am also 73, I was the assistant engineer and waist gunner on the crew all through my missions. After the war I left Chicago and moved to the west coast. Jackie found a job for me in the film industry as an assistant cameraman and eventually I became a Film Director.

(GEORGE)

I am George Harmon, I joined the crew late as a replacement gunner and missed most of the missions. I am now 69 and I have my own electrical contracting company. I intend to keep working until I die. No retirement for me.

(FRANK)

My name is Frank Gilette, I was the radioman on the crew. When I came home from the war I was a local hero and I entered politics like my Dad. I ran for Mayor, and won easily. From then on it was to higher and higher office. At present I am a lively 69-year-old a member of the U.S. Congress and am on the Armed Forces Committee.

(SHORTY)

They call me Shorty because I am really short. So my name is Shorty Cristi. I was the lower ball gunner. After the war I went back to college to get my Degree. After that I worked as a salesman and detail man for Johnson and Johnson. I am 72 now and I am retiring next year.

(VINNIE)

My moniker is Vincent Adams, former tail gunner. I am 72 now and glad I reached this age. After service I was very ill and went to the VA for medical services. I have a service connected disability and have lived on my government pension since.

(WILLY)

I guess I am last, my name is William Rosewood. I was the replacement Co-Pilot on the crew. I left Duke Divinity School and after the war I did not want to be a Minister. I have seen too much!! And I certainly did not want to be a Pilot. I went to Washington as an aid to our Senator and when he retired I was elected to his Senate seat. I am now 74 but I've had enough of Washington, I am going to retire at the end of my term.

(ERNIE CONTINUES)

Thank you all. We are here because your Navigator, Benny wrote a poem about your 6th mission back in 1944, and sent it into Time Magazine for publication in our 50th anniversary issue.

(RAYMOND)

Hey Ben, I didn't know you were a poet.

(BENNY) I didn't know either. I just sat down, and the words came out. Maybe I am William Shakespeare reincarnated!

(JOE)

He was more like Christopher Columbus with his navigation.

(ERNIE)

O.K guys, I've got to get this into my editor tomorrow night. Let's get on with it, what made you guys work together and how'd you get there! JOE, tell us how you got to be a pilot.

(JOE Stands)

It's a long story. I grew up in Texas. My dad was a pilot in World War One. And after the war he looked for flying jobs and they were scarce, but he found this new company that was just starting a crop-dusting business. They started with old wood and cloth open cockpit World War One Biplanes. He started flying around the Texas farms dusting crops for them and we were O.K. through the Twenties, but when the depression hit in 1928, he lost his job. Farmers couldn't pay for crop dusting. We went on what welfare we could find.. and it was tough.. I can remember that Mom and Dad went hungry so I could eat.

Then when I was about 14 the crop dusting caught up with us. Nobody knew that the chemicals that they used were toxic to people and my Dad got consumption. I think they call it tuberculosis now. Any way he soon passed on

and Mom and I had to cope by ourselves. Dad died as I was entering Texas A&M on a scholarship. I had to leave my home to go to college and the money was tight so I joined the Texas National Guard to use the stipend to help augment my scholarship money.

(SHORTY)

We all had trouble in the Thirties. It was pretty tough for us too.

(JOE CONTINUES)

Well, 1941 rolled around, the draft started and the Texas National Guard was activated into federal service. That was the end of my college days! As it turned out this was Texas and the National Guard was still a horse cavalry outfit. But, I never even got to ride a horse; all I did was muck out the stables and brush down the horses as an army private. One day I went into the day room and saw a bulletin that they were looking for soldiers with two years of college credit to take the aviation cadet exam to become a flying Officer in the Air Corps. I jumped at the chance, and ended up as a B-17 pilot.

(SHORTY)

He just wanted to stop shoveling Horse Shit.

(ERNIE)

That's quite a story JOE. How old were you when you were activated?

(JOE)

I was 20, and just starting to understand the world!

(ERNIE)

JACKIE you're next in the pecking order let's hear from you.

(JACKIE)

I grew up in Hollywood among the stars. My Dad was a movie cameraman and my Mother was a bit actress. We lived in a typical Hollywood middle class neighborhood. I went to public school and Hollywood High and had a lot of friends whose parents were movie stars. Gregory Peck's son was one of my High School buddies and I dated Greer Garson's daughter. It was an exciting life and I got to go to the movies free when my dad's movies opened.

When I graduated High School I was troubled. I never was a great student and had a problem getting into UCLA, but after studying with a tutor (who had some pull in UCLA) I finally was accepted. I struggled through two years and then trouble. I knocked up a movie starlet who was shopped around pretty much. She wanted to continue her career and I sure didn't want to be a Dad. I decided to take the cadet exam and get out of town. I took the exam 3 times before I passed. Again, I needed help from a tutor that my Dad paid for. I

entered the next cadet class in 1941, I was also 20, and I went through pilot training ending up in Sioux City to join the crew.

(FRANK)

Did your girlfriend have the baby?

(JACKIE)

I don't know, Frank, I left town and never saw her again.

(FRANK)

Well that's really a sin, you should have taken on the responsibility for that kid.

(JACKIE CONTINUES)

Let me tell you I could not take her home to Momma, her reputation preceded her. She was screwed by everybody in show business.

(ERNIE)

Let's not get into this kind of stuff, please. I want to hear from BENNY.

(BENNY)

My story starts when I was 4 or 5 years old. That was the time that Charles Lindbergh flew the over the Atlantic Ocean from New York to Paris. I heard all the people talking about the great deed, and I started to think that I would like to be an aviator, too. As I grew up I was obsessed with aviation. I built model planes out of balsa wood and Japanese tissue.

(BILL)

I built models, but they always crashed!

(BENNY CONTINUES)

I read every magazine about flying that I could find and every book about learning to fly and how to navigate. When the war in Europe started, I knew that at some point the U.S. would be involved. I wanted to be a pilot and that was that. The first thing that I did was find out that training manuals about flying were being published by the U.S. Army. They had a training manual on Air Navigation and I bought the book and taught myself all the basic rudiments of navigation. When the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, I was 17 and eager to join up. When I turned 18 they began to draft 18 year olds and I wanted to get into the Aviation Cadet program, but I didn't have the required 2 years of College. In July 1942 the Army announced that they needed aircrew members. If you could pass the Aviation Cadet exam, they would accept you without the college education.

(GEORGE Interjects)

Now you tell me, I wish I had known that before I enlisted, I would have applied also.

(BENNY CONTINUE)

I passed the exam easily because I was well prepared and I was sworn into the Army Air Corps Reserve and waited to be called into active duty. As it turns out, the Army had such a flood of applicants, that they were hard pressed to call them all up. So they came up with a unique idea. They asked the empty Colleges and Universities to open their Facilities to Aviation Students to help them supplement their education to become officers.

I was sent to Canisius College in Buffalo, a Jesuit School, to prepare to become an Aviation Cadet. My dream of becoming a pilot was on its way to reality.

(BILL Interjects)

I went through almost the same routine, but I was sent to Ole Miss, and went to school with all the Co-Eds. It was great: all that Pulchritude.

(BENNY)

What kind of word is Pulchritude?

(BILL)

Didn't they teach you anything in that Catholic College? Look it up!

(BENNY CONTINUES)

Next, I was sent to the Cadet Classification Center and was assigned to Preflight Ground School at Maxwell Field. I was a star because I already knew the curriculum from having studied on my own. We went to class every day until 4, then PT, mess hall for dinner and back to class to do course work. After I graduated pre-flight school, I went on to flight training in Avon Park, Florida. I sailed through flight instruction and soloed in 4 hours. Here I was flying around Florida, sometimes solo and other times with my instructor. I was looking forward to completing my training and becoming a fighter pilot but fate intervened.

Waiting on the flight line, for my turn to fly, when I was called into the office. A Full colonel was there and he had other plans for me. He said I was sent to ask you to transfer over to become a Navigator. We've been informed that you are a natural. We have thousands of applicants for pilot training, but few really talented Navigational students. From combat experience we know that Navigation is one of our weaknesses. You can save lives in this role. I had to transfer, but I did learn to fly and later had a Private Pilot License.

(JOE) Well you must be pretty good, you got us across the Atlantic just like Lindbergh.

(VINNIE)

I hear that Lindy was something like a turncoat. He thought that Germany and Hitler were great.

(CHARLIE)

Yeah he hated everybody, Jews, Catholics, and Blacks.

(REPORTER)

Well let's get on with BILL, he is the last of the Crew Officers.

(BILL)

My story is simple. I fell in love with the richest girl in my home town of Henderson, Kentucky.

(VINNIE INTERJECTS)

I can't hear you, why don't you go use the Mike. (Bill goes to Mike and Restarts). My story is simple. I fell in love with the richest girl in my home town of Henderson, Kentucky. My family lived across the tracks and Susan's Dad did not think I was worthy of his darling daughter. After many trials and tribulations, we ran off and got married and I had to become an officer to live up to my father-in-law's standard, or I never would live it down. He wanted to have our marriage annulled, but it was too late: Susan was pregnant. Eventually I graduated Bombardier School and became a 2nd Lieutenant.

(ERNIE)

That's short and sweet BILL. And how old were you when you enlisted?

(BILL)

I was 19, just a kid!

(GEORGE)

How many kids did you have, BILL?

(BILL)

Only one, George, Susan and I divorced after the War. Her father convinced her that I was a gold digger. I couldn't find a good job and bombardier jobs were sort of scarce after the war.

(ERNIE CONTINUES)

Charlie, tell us about your life and how you got there.

(CHARLIE)

Well, I came from Detroit Michigan, and the business of Detroit was cars. My Dad was an engineer for Henry Ford. He worked in the plant that made the Model T. My earliest recollection of my Dad was when he was in the back yard, under his Model T, trying to re-engineer the transmission shifting system. He was with Ford when they introduced the Model A and was the chief engineer of the new V8 engine that they introduced in 1932. All this business about cars rubbed off on me and I wanted to follow in Dad's shoes. I went to the University of Michigan to study auto design and joined the ROTC. Dec 7 1941 came and I

was called up and ended up in the Air Corps. After basic training, I was assigned to B-17 engineering school, then was sent to Buckingham Air Gunnery School in Fort Myers, Florida just in time to join this crew training in Sioux City Air Base as the flight engineer. After the war, I wanted to design electric vehicles.

(ERNIE)

Well I don't know if we'll see electric vehicles but I hear you were a great B-17 Flight Engineer.

(RAYMOND)

I think that Charlie was the official dreamer on our crew. He came up with the weirdest ideas. And it's my turn to tell you about myself. But there's not much to tell. I was born near Chicago, we lived in an Italian neighborhood where all my relatives lived. I had 2 sisters, aunts and uncles and 34 first and second cousins. All living within 3 blocks of each other. It seems that every girl I dated was a friend of a cousin. I could not get away with anything. I graduated High School at 18, just in time to be drafted. I was sent directly to Air Gunnery school at Buckingham Field. I never had a real girlfriend either. After the war I moved to California. To get away from all this family and worked in the movie business as a cameraman.

(ERNIE)

Some guys would love to have their family nearby, I know because my family lived far away.

(GEORGE Interjects)

I sure would have liked some family nearby. I grew up on a wheat farm in South Dakota. We were 70 miles from the nearest city. And 35 miles from the nearest town. My mother home schooled me until the 7th grade. I had farm chores to do every day. I milked the cows, collected the eggs from the henhouse, and generally helped. We were so far from civilization that we had to produce our own food and be completely self-sufficient.

When I was in the 7th grade, they sent me to live in Rapid City to live with my aunt and uncle so that I could go to public school. My aunt and uncle never had any kids so they were at odds with me, and I didn't know how to cope with them. Anyway, we stuck it out and I went to High School in Rapid City. I really did not want to go back to the farm. At 18, I knew that I would be drafted so I decided that I would join the Army and hoped that they would assign me to the Air Corps. After basic training in Biloxi, Mississippi, I was also sent to Buckingham to get my wings as an air gunner.

(ERNIE)

I never knew how young you all were!! So young and with so many responsibilities. Let's continue. I think we're making great progress. Frank, you're next.

(FRANK)

Let me tell you about my life! My life was very uneven. I was born and brought up in Atlanta, Georgia. My dad is a Congressman from the 3rd district. As a Congressman, we sometimes lived in Washington, and other times we were in Atlanta. It was very disconcerting to a young kid. I had friends in Washington, but they were always changing as new politicians come and go. The only stabilizing thing in my life was the Church. My Mother and Dad are devout conservative Christians. And my education was based around the Church and my connection with Jesus Christ. I guess you could say that I am following in my parents' conservative footsteps.

I do have a hobby. I was a radio ham and had my own licensed ham radio station. I talked to a lot of people which helped me to understand what was happening all over the world. I also joined the Air Corps when the rules were relaxed and I passed the Cadet exam. I went to flight school and it was a great disappointment when I washed out before I soloed. But then I was assigned to radio school where I excelled because of my ham radio experience. That's how I was assigned to this crew.

(ERNIE)

I just read that about 30 per cent of all Cadets washed out of flight school. Frank you still had an important job to do, and I am sure you did it well.

(FRANK)

I know. I survived the war with the help of Jesus!

(ERNIE)

AMEN: Shorty it's up to you. Let's keep this going.

(SHORTY)

When I enlisted, I wanted to fly. I wanted to be a Pilot or a Bombardier. I had the College credentials. I passed the Cadet exam. But I could not pass the physical requirements, I was too short. I don't know why a short guy cannot do the job, but they have requirements.

(JOE)

Shorty, how could you reach the rudder pedals or the brake pedal? In most planes you could not see out of the front windshield, especially in the fighters.

(SHORTY)

I know, but I tried anyway. They found a flying job for me. I was the ball gunner. I went to gunnery school and I became proficient at my job, but it was confining and dangerous.

(JOE)

Remember, you were protecting our underside from attack from a Messerschmitt. And your position added so much protection to our flight formation. You were a small man who did a big job.

(ERNIE)

Did the nickname Shorty bug you?

(SHORTY)

I would rather they called me Shorty than my real name which is Florence. Please don't spread it around.

(ERNIE)

I get that (he laughs). Vinnie, are you ready?

(VINNIE)

Here I am, last member of the original crew. The tail gunner rides again. I am the only crew member who did not know where he was going. I only knew where we were coming from. It was unreal, it felt like I was alone in space. I looked down and there was nothing under me, but my guns could be lethal. I kept those Mess-of-shits and Fucken Wolfs off our tail.

(ERNIE)

VINNIE, they were Messerschmitts and Focke Wolfes.

(VINNIE)

You can call them what you want; I'll call them Mess-of-shits and Fucken Wolfs.

(ERNIE)

Well, guess you had the right to call them what you want. Willy how did you join this crew as co-pilot?

(WILLY)

Well, I'm a little reticent about talking about myself, but here goes. I replaced JACKIE after the 6th mission when he got sick and went to the base hospital. He never came back to the crew, and I became the permanent Co-Pilot.

My home is in North Carolina. Yep, I am a Tarheel. My father was a Methodist Minister and definitely was against my going into the Army. He wanted me to be a conscientious objector. He feels that war is against God's will and killing of any kind is wrong. My mother agrees with him, but I could not stand by and

let Hitler commit atrocities and do nothing. I felt that God would want reasonable people to stop him. I was attending Duke Divinity School and had one year left for my degree. I was going to follow in my father's footsteps, but I guess that is out. I did not know if I'd go back after the war or not. I volunteered for the Air Corps in 1941 after we entered the war. I was exempt from the draft because of the Divinity School. Of course I had the educational requirement and am in perfect health, so it was a snap to finally get into the Pilot Program. I was in class 44B, graduated in early February 1944 and started B-17 4-engine training. I finished in June, was shipped overseas by troop transport, and ended up with this crew.

(RAYMOND Interjects)

Hey JACKIE, is it true that you caught the clap from that floozy you were dating and that's why you went to the base hospital?

(JACKIE Responds)

I had pneumonia not clap. Stop trying to ruin my reputation.

(JOE)

When Willy joined the crew we flew a couple of Slo-Time flights to familiarize Willy with our routine and break-in new engines. I hated Slo-Time flights, they scheduled them late in the afternoon and into the night. There was a crew that came down in the dark, crashed in the woods and everyone perished. Combat was tough enough without crashing on a training flight.

(REPORTER)

I think I've got all I need now to write the story. You guys are really diverse, you came from all over the country and had so many different life experiences. I think that's why our country is strong. I want to thank you for your cooperation and I'll let you know when the story will be published.

(RAYMOND)

Ben, I want to hear this poem. If Time Magazine is going to publish a story about it, it must be good.

(BENNY)

I think it's more of a tribute to the 8th Air Force.

(ERNIE)

I'll go and get it projected on the screen. It will start in a couple of minutes, and you guys can have a pit stop. Then you can tell me more of your combat experiences.

END ACT 1

ACT 2

In The Dark Of The Night

C'mon airmen, get out of the sack
They want you at briefing to plan the attack
It starts before dawn! In fact it's still night
Time to get ready for a morning of flight
The Colonel will tell us what we'll soon face
How in the world did we get caught in this race
Now we are heading out to our plane
This predawn take-off is really insane
Down the runway there's four engines roaring
With a bomb load that keeps us from soaring
Finally we scratch up into the air
And find scores of others are already there
Where is our leader firing flares of green-red?
At last we do find him flying way up ahead
Night is still with us, but dawn's growing near
Is the flash off our left the one we should fear?
Two aircraft collided--and started a dive
Twenty airmen went down, will any survive?
Now we are ready, our group is together
We head for the coast in much too clear weather
The enemy can see us from miles away
They will send up their fighters to join in the fray
We're crossing the coast and here comes the flak
We see it exploding in the front, side and back
Some flak just hit us, thank God it was spent
It poked a hole in the plane with malicious intent
Here comes the enemy; at 12 o'clock high
Will they attack right now, or perhaps just fly by?
It looks like they passed us and went to the rear
And probably will hit another group near
They're passing again and this time to the right
I really can't stand any more of this fright
Maybe if everyone started to pray
Perhaps we can make this nightmare go 'way?
The group up ahead is under the gun
The fighters attacked them coming out of the sun
Our bombers are falling right out of the sky
The survivors will jump but others will die
The enemy is taking a big beating too
We saw six of their fighters fall out of the blue

We are nearing the target amidst all of the flak
We fly straight and true as if on a track
The bomb bay is open, the bombs are away
We fervently hope we hit our target today
Amidst the flak we turn the group 'round
And finally we're heading homeward bound
The ball gunner tells us we've got trouble galore
He spotted oil leaks on engine two and on four
We took some flak hits in a vulnerable spot
Oil pressure is dropping, those engines are shot
We'll feather the props and drop from formation
We need plenty of luck to get back to our station
Maybe the enemy is too busy to see
That a straggler alone is trying to flee
The Channel's ahead, it looks like we're set
At the rate we are going we won't even get wet
The air war that we fight is so very strange
We never see our enemy at real close range
We drop our bombs and do our tricks
And hope the target is cement and bricks
England's below us, this trip's almost over
We just flew over the white cliffs of Dover

ACT 2, SCENE 1

(VINNIE)

I bet they'll put your picture on the magazine.. maybe make you "Man of the Year."

(RAYMOND)

Hey Bennie, that's great. It's exactly what happened on the 6th mission, I remember shaking in my boots when the bandits flew by us the first time. When they returned, I was sure they would hit us. And the flak was everywhere.

(VINNIE)

It was so cold at 30 thousand feet that I was shivering and sweating at the same time. A piece of flak whizzed by my head when it broke through the fuselage.

(RAYMOND)

You don't know anything about cold! We were standing in front of an open bay, manning the twin machine guns. It was so cold that the oxygen mask froze to my face.

We were flying in a plane that had no heat. We didn't even have electric heated suits. Just those fleece jackets that they wear in Alaska.

(VINNIE)

My microphone froze up from the moisture in my breath, I could hear, but couldn't speak.

(RAYMOND)

I had a throat mike and it worked. You had a mike in your oxygen mask. I wondered why we didn't hear from you, the intercom was so quiet.

(SHORTY)

When the flak hit engine two and the oil started to leak, it got all over my window screen. I had to lean way over to see anything, and then engine 4 started to leak and oil covered up the window screen entirely. I was a blind man with two 50 caliber machine guns. If that oil had caught fire I was a goner.

(JACKIE)

If that oil caught fire, we all would have been goners.

(JOE)

When the flak hit us it was bedlam!! Shorty jumped on the intercom to tell us about the oil leaks!!

I yelled at Willy to feather engine number 2 and I reached over to feather engine number 4. I was fighting the loss of power and the damn prop kept windmilling. Willy finally flicked the switch and the prop came to a standstill.

(BENNY)

I was trying to figure out our position and the quickest way back to base, when a hunk of spent flak broke through the Plexiglas nose and hit my leg. It hurt like hell but it did not break my skin. I got on the intercom and told JOE to fly at 270 degrees. The only thing I knew for sure was that home was West of us. After we leveled off, I found our exact position and we were on our way home.

(JOE)

It happened so fast. One minute we were in formation and the next minute we lost two engines and were losing altitude and alone in the sky. When BENNY gave me a course, I wondered how he knew so quickly. I turned to 270 degrees and in about a minute or so, he gave me a course correction.

(SHORTY)

I still could not see anything and the Ball Turret was useless. I called Charlie on the intercom to help me get out of the Turret. He struggled to turn it manually as the electric and hydraulic system was gone. He finally cranked it around so the escape door was facing the correct way. And I climbed out.

(RAYMOND)

Chief Wild Bear and I were still manning the waist guns and we were freezing. Bear signaled to me that he could not see any bandits and I saw that my side was clear also. At that point everybody was on the intercom, so we used hand signals.

(JACKIE)

I called on the intercom that we would have to lighten the ship if we tried to get home. All hands should loosen the Ball turret, undo the machine gun mounts and drop everything overboard. JOE was busy trying to control the plane and I was trying to coordinate the action and also helping JOE. I told BILL and VINNIE to stay at their position in case one of the Messerschmitts tried to come at us from the front or rear. They had to keep their guns ready.

(BENNY)

I was sure of our position and we were heading the correct way. I had calculated that we would have enough fuel, but would we have enough altitude? I started to dismount the cheek guns and dumped them overboard, but that opened up the air into the nose, and boy it was cold. BILL motioned to me to look out at 2 o'clock. I looked over and saw a fighter approaching. It turned out to be a P47 on his way home from his mission. He tucked under our wing and escorted us until he needed to head home. For the moment we were safe from attack and we all pitched in to lighten the ship.

(CHARLIE)

I was trying to loosen the guns on the Top turret and hoped that we all could flip them out to further lighten the ship. At about this point, JOE called and said we could remove our oxygen masks. This made it much easier to move around. But it also meant that we were losing altitude very quickly. We were down to 10,000 feet at that point and still over enemy territory.

(BENNY)

I could see water ahead it looked like the English Channel. And the P47 pilot was wagging his wings and saying goodbye.

(CHARLIE)

What was the altitude at this point?

(BENNY CONTINUES)

The altitude was about 5500 feet and still dropping, JOE and Willy were trying to stretch out the rate of drop and I was trying to find a local RAF field that was close to Dover. I finally found an RAF fighter base that had a long runway. We were approaching the white cliffs and breathing a lot easier.

(JOE)

I tried to lower our wheels and they would not move. We lost our hydraulic system at the target. All able bodied guys one at a time started to crank the wheels down manually. It was an exhausting job and everyone chipped in. We finally got the wheels down just as the RAF field appeared I tried to land on the first part of the runway because we could not apply brakes. We rolled and rolled, finally rolling to a stop about 100 feet from the end of the runway.

(JACKIE)

I suddenly realized that through all the action and tension we had not heard a peep out of Frank in his radio room.

(FRANK)

You guys did not know that I was unconscious after we were hit by flak at the target. I must of hit my head, when I became conscious; I was bleeding and trying to call out. My intercom microphone was missing and I was leaning against the door and could not get it open and let anyone know my condition. Thank God that my wounds were not serious and I received the Purple Heart.

(JACKIE)

I rushed back, forced the door open and rescued you.

(FRANK)

Better late than never!!

(BENNY)

I can hardly wait to see what Time will do to our story. If they think that this one is good, they should know about our Thirteenth Mission.

(JACKIE)

Or how about the one when you won the war!!

(JOE)

Or our second trip to Merseburg. When Colonel Kelly threatened to Court Marshal BENNY for trying to tell him to change course or that he was heading for our suicide.

(BENNY)

I hated to fly with Kelly. Every time we flew with him there was a screwup. Once he missed the IP, and once his group was late to the rendezvous point in the lineup over England and we had to go to the end of the line. By the time you got to the target, the Nazi's have your altitude down pat. They knew the target and that your fighter escort is low on fuel. The last one in is in mortal danger and always had the most casualties. Usually first in and last out was rotated among all the groups.

(BENNY CONTINUES)

One time with Kelly, we bombed the wrong target. And one time we could not drop our bombs at all. It was an aborted mission. I understand that Kelly was up for Brigadier General. Somebody in Washington had their head up their ass.

(JOE)

You flew 31 missions. They only screwed up 4 times, you were lucky!

(BENNY)

Lucky, my ass. Our Capt Bogart was an anti-Semitic prick. I am probably the only Lead Navigator in the whole 8th who was not promoted to captain and never even received the Distinguished Flying Cross. He gave all his Jewish flying officers the worst efficiency marks. At one time I flew all the lead missions that our squadron flew. 8 missions as a Lead Navigator. When he was Flight Commander, he never talked to me, or even said "Good Job."

(JACKIE)

One day, I was in the Day Room and he came up to me and asked "Hey Jackie, is that Jew kid a good navigator? I need somebody for my next squadron lead." I knew by his question that he didn't like Jews.

(JOE)

He always treated me with great respect.

(BENNY)

You were not Jewish!! Anyway I got the last laugh on him. He died at 55. I saw his obituary in the paper. Can we get a drink or a cup of coffee before we continue? And some of us with old bladders need to go.

(ERNIE)

That reminds me how did you pee on a mission?

(BENNY)

I had a relief tube. It was a funnel attaches to a rubber tube that went outside of the plane. I pissed all over Germany.

END ACT 2 SCENE 1

ACT 2, SCENE 2

(ERNIE)

JACKIE, you had a comment?

(JACKIE)

I was with the crew in Sioux City for phase training back in May 44. I remember on the training missions that BILL was a hotshot Bombardier. How did you do in combat?

(BILL)

I never had a Norden Bombsight on most of my missions. The only planes that had Bombsights were the Lead plane and the Deputy lead of each squadron. But I was a great togglier.

(JACKIE)

What in hell was a togglier?

(BILL CONTINUES)

He armed the Bombs, set up the method of drop, opens the Bomb Bay Doors, and watched the lead plane. When the bombs start dropping out of the lead plane, he flips the bomb release switch and it's Bombs Away. That's what they call a Precision Bombing. The bomb pattern on the ground is bigger than 3 football fields. The Air Corps wanted their crews to think that all we bomb are factories and marshalling yards. We never kill people.

(JACKIE CONTINUES)

What about Dresden? The British RAF and the US 8th leveled and burned the city with incendiaries. There were thousands and thousands of deaths at the end of the war.

(BILL)

That was a special case. In the early days of the air war, the Nazi's leveled the English City of Coventry. The British thought that this attack was only to kill thousands of people and to break down British morale. It was the first attack of this kind intended to kill civilians. At the end of the War, Churchill took revenge by destroying Dresden, one of Germany's most beautiful cities, and we participated in the carnage.

(BILL CONTINUES)

Speaking of Sioux City, JOE, did you marry the girlfriend you were seeing there? I think Dot was her name!

(JOE)

I never saw Dot again. She kept writing to me in England, but I had other fish to fry. Great Sex while it lasted.

(BILL)

BENNY didn't you have a girlfriend in Sioux City? I think her name was Dolores.

THE CREW STARTS TO SING DOLORES__

How I love the kisses of Dolores

Aye-aye-eye Dolores

Not Marie or Emily or Doris

Only my Dolores

(BENNY)

Cut it out. She was a pretty Irish girl with red hair, young and unsophisticated, she was sweet, and she was pure as the driven snow. I met her because she was Dot's kid sister and Dot dragged her around with her for protection. JOE wanted to get rid of her, so he arranged a double date and I was the pigeon.

Back home I never had a real girlfriend. Boston High Schools were segregated. Boys and girls did not mingle. This was my first real crush and hers, too. When she started to get serious, I told Dolores there was nothing in the future for us. The only thing she gave me was a Saint Christopher Medal and sent me to war with a kiss and a prayer. She wrote to me once a week, but I ignored it. Finally she wrote that she met somebody else and the letters stopped coming. How could I bring a Catholic girl home to meet my Jewish mother? But I wore the St. Christopher medal next to my Dog Tags all through the war. Maybe it helped us survive?

(JOE)

All the original crew from Sioux City didn't survive! Our original tail gunner Jimmy Mason flew one mission with another crew and they went down over Hamburg. Our left waist gunner was killed by a Flak burst and he died in front of Charlie, and one of our replacement waist gunners, Chief Wild Bear disappeared when we were shot down during the Hamm mission.

(GEORGE)

I joined the crew after you were shot down, and I replaced Chief Wild Bear the American Indian who lived in Sioux Country. What Happened to him?

(JOE)

His real name was Isaac Bear. And he was a wild kid, boy could he drink. We think that he was captured by the Germans when we bailed out, or maybe he found French Cognac and probably drank himself to death. Or maybe he deserted! He really was scared on every mission, we never heard from him.

(BENNY)

Remember that other guy from Portland? He was a replacement Navigator. He flew with us twice and I was assigned to familiarize him to the area. After he left us, he went to Henry Hunt's crew. They had a milk run to Holland. They encountered Flak at the coast on the way back. And he was the only one who was hit, and he died in front of their eyes.

(GEORGE)

Benny, tell me about the mission when Chief Wild Bear disappeared.

(BENNY)

Most of us here were on that fateful mission, and I'm sure they'll help me. When I'm asked to talk about my War experiences, I always include this story. It was our thirteenth mission, and it lived up to its billing. The unlucky 13th.

(JOE)

I remember we were a flying spare. Our group did not have any openings. We were approaching the coast ready to turn back, Charlie called on the intercom. He could see that the 303rd Bomb Group had 2 B-17s missing from their formation. The 303rd was a sister group in our Wing and they would welcome us to fly along with them. It was also an opportunity for us to get mission credit that we would not get if we turned back. So we joined them.

(BENNY)

I had a lot of work to do because their flight times were different than ours. We were heading to the same target, but our preflight check points were all different. After the first checkpoint, I could adjust everything on my flight plan and we were O.K.

(BILL)

On this mission I didn't have a bombsight so I was a toggler/gunner. I armed the bombs, set the timer, and waited for the Initial Point to open our Bomb Bay doors.

(VINNIE)

When we joined the 303rd, we had to take a tail end position. I had to be extra mindful of an enemy attack from the rear. I test fired my guns and one of them jammed. So for half the mission, I was working to fix the jam. It was so confining in the tail that it took forever.

(BENNY)

We ran into some flak as we crossed the coast, and then again as we crossed the Rhine River. The enemy had these flak barges that they floated up and down the river. We never knew where they were, and when you crossed the Rhine, it was always dangerous.

(BILL)

As we were approaching the target area, we turned left at the initial point, I opened the Bomb Bay doors, and from the nose I could see that the flak was very heavy, and the group ahead of us was taking heavy casualties. The bomb run lasted about 8 minutes and the flak was decimating our formation.

(JOE)

Willy and I were fighting the wheel, trying to keep straight and level so that BILL could toggle the bombs out on cue. When the plane jumped at bombs away, I heard a tremendous explosion on the left side of the plane. Engine 3 was afire! I yelled at WILLY to hit the extinguisher, and I feathered the prop. Luckily we were in the tail position and we fell away from the group as I leveled off. Shorty warned us on the intercom that engine 2 was leaking oil, and we had to feather it. By this time we were about a thousand feet below the group, falling back, and struggling to keep any altitude. I increased the throttle settings to stop the descent as much as I could, and asked BENNY for a route to the nearest known American battle line. If nothing else happened we could possibly make it back to friendly territory. This seemed similar to our 6th mission, so we were experienced.

(CHARLIE)

I was watching the temperature of the remaining two engines and then went into action. I went back and gave the crew instructions to lighten the ship. They started to throw everything overboard. This time we threw all the machine guns and all the ammunition belts as well as the Ball turret. Even the flak suits went out.

(BENNY CONTINUES)

I grabbed the flak map that I had accumulated on previous missions. Whenever we entered a flak field I noted it on a flak map so that if possible we could avoid these areas. In the morning I outlined where the supposed battle lines were on my mission map. Now it was time to put all this to good use. I called JOE on the intercom and asked the rate of descent. He answered about 300 feet per minute. We were at 23,000 feet, so I calculated that we would have approximately 77 minutes before we crashed. Our groundspeed was about 155 miles per hour. So we could travel about 200 miles in total if things stayed the same.

I then used my plotter and drew an arc 200 miles from our approximate position to find the nearest battle line. I planned a zig-zag course to miss the known flak fields and gave JOE the initial course.

(JOE)

Things were hairy in the cockpit. One of the remaining engines was running rough and the temperature was rising to the danger point. If the engine failed, we were done for. As we approached 15 thousand feet and kept dropping, I

ordered the crew to remove their oxygen masks, which gave them more freedom of movement. Charlie came back to his station, he saw the problem and he knew of a trick to try and make the balky engine clean itself up. He said to cut way back on the throttle and after the engine slowed down to suddenly apply full throttle. When I did this, the engine backfired and then roared to full power. Charlie later told me that the Model T would do the same thing and that the backfire would clean the spark plugs. Another trick that helped save us.

(BENNY)

We kept losing altitude. We avoided the flak by using the flak map to stay away from dangerous areas. I guess we should of zigged instead of zagged when suddenly we were hit by four quick flak blasts that blew out the Plexiglas nose and a jagged piece of flak hit me in the left hand. BILL was jolted out of his perch, and he grabbed the maps and we went back to the waist because the nose was not livable with all the wind and debris. I crawled back with a trail of blood on the floor from my hand. I was still wearing a silk glove and the wound seemed not too serious but it bled like hell and I could not stop the bleeding. My maps were bloody but usable. BILL and I kept up with the progress of the plane by looking out of the waist portal and finding landmarks.

(JOE)

When the blast hit the nose, a piece of Flak hit the prop on engine 1. The plane started to wobble and shake. I had to feather Number 1. I knew that we would not make a landing and told Willy to go back and jettison the door and get the crew ready to jump.

(WILLY)

When I got back to the waist, BILL was on one side and BENNY was on the other side trying to find our position. I told BENNY that we were going to jump and turned to tell BILL. BENNY grabbed me and said we only needed a couple of minutes to be safe. He reminded me that if we jumped, he being Jewish, would not survive. He suggested that maybe we could use engine 2, activate it and use it until it seized up. It could give us a couple more minutes.

I plugged in my intercom and called JOE in the cockpit, and we decided that the plane was done anyway, maybe this would work. JOE proceeded to crank it and the engine roared into life. We were lucky we had enough oil left in the engine to reverse the feather and make it work.

(JOE)

When Willy asked me to reactivate the engine, I thought that it wouldn't work, but we had nothing to lose. In fact that act saved the whole crew. The Germans were still in the area attempting to pull out as the Allies advanced. When we finally jumped, we were in territory controlled mostly by Belgian Freedom Fighters, but the Nazi's were still around.

(CHARLIE)

We were approaching an altitude of 10,000 feet. I was watching engine 2 and the temperature was off the top. It was running out of oil. Suddenly, one of the cylinders blew off through the cowl and it burst into flame. JOE rang the bailout bell and we were jumping!!

(WILLY)

I shoved Ray in front of the open door and he walked off into space. BENNY was next. He walked over to the door and I sensed a hesitation, so I booted him out. We all went out one at a time, some by themselves, some I booted out, and we looked like a bunch of descending paratroopers.

(JOE)

Charlie was still on his station helping me with the plane. When Willy called on the intercom that everyone was out and he was going, I motioned Charlie to jump through the Navigators escape hatch and quickly followed him out.

(BENNY)

I had never jumped before. I was out in the slipstream and I counted to ten before I pulled the Ripcord. I was falling headfirst. I waited and waited for the chute to open. It seemed to me that there was something wrong. I threw away the handle and was going to try to rip open the chest chute. Suddenly, I was jerked upright when the chute popped open. I heard a roar. When I looked up, I was just under the plane and the whole episode probably took mini-seconds in actuality. The plane limped away and I watched as the other chutes came out one by one.

After the plane disappeared it became eerily quiet. I was detached from the world. I could not see the ground because of the cloud cover, and there was a slight hiss as air moved through my descending parachute. About 300 feet away I saw Raymond wiggling around in his chute. I became concerned that something was wrong and tried shouting to him. Amazingly, he answered as the sound traveled to me easily. 'I'm trying to light a cigarette' he shouted. It may be my last one. We were falling at about 1000 feet a minute and I took advantage of the time by trying to learn how to control the chute. I pulled on the risers to make it slide here and there. Suddenly I broke through the clouds and could see the ground.

(BENNY CONTINUES)

Below I saw a large barn. About 10 feet away from the barn there was a fence. On the other side of the fence there seemed to be a large bovine. It seemed I was heading right for the barn roof. I knew if I hit the roof I would probably fall off. Or I could try for the area between the fence and the barn. Or finally, if the bovine was a cow and not a bull I could land on that side. I decided I would land on the udder side and I was crushed to the ground. I was in pain

from the landing and as I tried to pick myself up, I was surrounded by men with machine guns pointed at me.

END ACT 2, SCENE 2

ACT 3

(ERNIE)

What happened next? Were they Nazis?

(SHORTY)

Let me tell the story here. When I hit the ground I injured my ankle and was in pain. I looked over about 300 feet away and I saw that BENNY was surrounded by these men with guns. I didn't know if they were friend or foe, but I knew BENNY was in danger. Our flying suits were black and had no identification on them. Perhaps these guys thought that BENNY was a German! I started limping towards them yelling, "He's an American, He's an American." They turned to me and one of them said American? And the others were murmuring in French. BENNY's hand was still bleeding and he looked like he was gonna pass out from blood loss. They took both of us to a nearby farmhouse to hide out as they said the Nazi's were still in the area, and would be looking for us. When nightfall came, they drove us to the town hospital and had a doctor look at us. They treated us, fed us and arranged a room for us. During the night I heard a commotion in the hospital room. They were bringing in another patient. We didn't know that VINNIE was hit by shrapnel in the tail and he needed medical attention, too. There we were, 3 musketeers in a Belgian Hospital without a musket.

(SHORTY Continues)

I awoke early the next morning as the nurses were bustling around our hospital room. They were making sure that everything was neat and in its place. BENNY and VINNIE were awakened by the noise. Some of the nurses spoke English and I asked them what was going on? They replied that the townspeople were lining up outside of the hospital and they wanted to come and visit us. After we had breakfast the visitation started. We were the first Americans that they were seeing since the occupation started. They came to thank us for bringing back their freedom. They came with little gifts for us. They came with tears, and some came with joy.

(BENNIE)

A little old lady took my hands and kissed them and started out in French. An English speaking nurse translated for me. The old lady told me that she had three sons. One was killed fighting with the British earlier in the war. One was executed by the Nazi's as a freedom fighter, and the other younger one was hidden until we came to liberate them. It brought tears to my eyes.

(VINNIE)

A middle aged man shook my hand and thanked me for rescuing them. I told him that I was an aviator and really was not there. He said you are an American and they will never forget. He went on and told me about his 16 year old

daughter who was raped by a German Soldier and was then used as a sex slave for the troops. She was killed trying to escape.

(SHORTY)

A little old lady asked me if any of us were Jewish. When I said that Benny was Jewish, she ran over to him crying.

(BENNY)

She told me that She and her two children were hidden in a root cellar for almost 3 years. One of the Belgians risked their lives by hiding and feeding them for this whole period. She gave me an envelope with a New York address and asked me to please mail it when it was safe. She had a sister in New York and wanted her to know that they were alive. And so it went all day long.. Story after story.

(JOE)

I found out that you were in the hospital and I came by to see how you were and then I then reported to the Army that you were there and needed to be evacuated.

(BENNY)

They came with an ambulance and before we knew it, after a stay in a Paris army hospital we were back at the base. We never flew as a crew again.

(ERNIE)

I never realized how much hell you guys went through. All the attention was on the ground war and you guys did not have a foxhole to jump into.

(FRANK)

They made movies about the 8th Air Force but they never really did show what we went through. You had to be technically dead to get rotated back to the states. 30 percent of the crewmen ended up dead and 35 percent were seriously wounded. I guess we were some of the lucky ones. Remember when we won the war. Let's tell Ernie about that.

(BENNY)

Before we start this story I want to tell you about something. I have three sons and as they were growing up I told them tales about the war. I always told them how our crew was responsible for winning the War. They pooh-poohed it and didn't believe. I couldn't convince them that it was true. When JOE visited Boston on business I picked him up and brought him home to meet the family. When he walked in the house and was introduced the first thing he said was "Did you ever tell everyone how we won the war?" And all my tales became legend.

(JOE)

This is the story, it was my 25th mission, we were flying as Wing Lead. Our Group the 384th, the 303rd and the 379th were assigned to bomb a Marshaling Yard deep in Germany, near Leipzig. Our Commander was Lt Colonel Barton and I was the Pilot.

(JOE CONTINUES)

The weather was marginal at takeoff, and it was still dark and as we assembled the 3 Groups, it got worse.

(CHARLIE Interjects)

You call it marginal. It was ceiling zero and socked in until 5000 feet. We never should have taken off!

(VINNIE Interjects)

Even the birds weren't flying, it was so bad.

(JOE CONTINUES)

We broke out of the overcast, and it was a real mess. The entire 8th was milling around the sky trying to assemble. Charlie started firing flares and our planes joined up slowly. BENNY called and said that we had to get to the first rendezvous point. And we had to go even if we were not completely assembled. The laggards would have to catch up. Let me tell you, it was a mess. How we avoided mid-air collisions was an absolute miracle. Charlie kept firing flares, so that our planes could find us. We finally finished assembly as we were departing the English Coast.

(BENNY)

There was a solid cloud layer and neither the bombardier nor I could see anything. I was using our G Box to navigate. The G box was a system developed by the British. A series of Radio signals that could help find the position of the plane. However, the system was only good for about 85 miles beyond England. We also had a radar system on board. It was called Mickey after Mickey Mouse and usually failed when you needed it most.

(CHARLIE)

As we crossed the coast of Holland, the Flak started and before we knew what happened, two of the B-17s in the 379th group were hit and turned back.

(JOE)

We kept climbing and could not see anything. BENNY called me and warned me that he could not guarantee our position when the G Box signals faded out and that the rest of the mission was Dead Reckoning and information from the Mickey Navigator, unless the clouds broke up. I conferred with the Commander, and we decided to proceed with the mission.

(BENNY)

We were nearing the target area and still could not see the ground. We were above the clouds, and it was as clear as a bell. The Mickey system identified Leipzig, but we couldn't bomb blind. Frank got a radio signal that the Mission was scrubbed, and that we should try the secondary target.

(JOE)

BENNY gave me the course correction for the secondary, and we proceeded to turn the entire flight around to the new heading.

(CHARLIE)

From my vantage point in the top turret, I could see that there were clouds everywhere and we were not going to bomb anything.

(BENNY)

We were deep in enemy territory. I started to chart a course avoiding the flak areas traveling west. If we could find a target of opportunity, it would be on the way home. I wasn't gonna hang around Germany if I could help it. Our altitude was about 29,000 feet, and we still had this cloud cover and it seemed solid. Our groundspeed was about 150 miles per hour because we were also fighting a headwind. At this rate, if we didn't find a target soon, we were going to be in trouble. The other two groups broke off to look for their own target.

(FRANK)

Headquarters sent a coded weather bulletin, to all groups, and they reported that the clouds were breaking up south of our flight line I relayed this information to BENNY.

(JOE)

Col. Barton was monitoring the intercom and he gave me thumbs up to go Southwest.

(CHARLIE)

From the Top Turret I thought that I could see some smoke on the near horizon, and pointed it out to BILL.

(BILL)

I started to get ready to bomb this unseen target. And miraculously the clouds were clearing. And dead ahead we could see a small factory with smoke coming out of the tall chimney. We centered the PDI on the autopilot and I took over control of our formation. I opened the bomb bay doors and all the planes in the entire group did the same. 36 aircraft dropped tons of bombs on this small factory.

(JOE)

After bombs away I took back control of the plane and I asked BENNY for a course home. In the meantime the Hot Camera Plane left us at high speed going back to our base.

(BENNY)

The rest of the trip was uneventful. We encountered some Flak over the Rhine. But suffered no casualties or damage.

(BILL)

By the time we landed and we were being debriefed, the strike photos from the Hot Camera Plane were developed and they had identified our target. We demolished a shoe and boot factory. And if you go back and look at all the newsreels you will see that after that point in time all the German soldiers had rags on their feet.

And that's how we won the War!!!

END ACT 3, CURTAIN DOWN

EPILOGUE

(ERNIE) Well that was an interesting session. I could write a book about your experiences. I want to thank you for all your help and wish you good luck.

Everybody is talking about the reunion. JOE quiets the group.

(JOE)

This is probably the last reunion that we all will be together. It's our last hurrah.

(WILLY)

We're all lucky that we made it to our seventies. There was a point back there when I wouldn't give a nickel for our chances.

(BENNY)

When I found out how many planes we lost, how many deaths, how many injuries, and so many prisoners of war, I realized how lucky we were.

(VINNIE)

We were so young and full of piss and vinegar that we didn't think anything would happen to us.

(FRANK)

My faith kept me going. I prayed for myself and for the whole crew. I knew Jesus would help me.

(BENNY)

Remember, I had the St Christopher Medal and a virgin's prayer. That's what worked for us.

(JOE)

I hope that the Time article and this play will help to remind people of the sacrifice of our flying crewmembers.

Everybody gets up and they shake hands all around. One by one they exit through the doorway. BENNY's last in line to leave. He reaches the doorway, pauses, turns and walks to the front of the stage.

BENNY (addressing the audience)

We leave one by one and soon we will all be gone. None of these men, they are men now but they were really just boys, they came from all corners of the country and all walks of life. They left behind homes and families and loved ones. Many went to serve and many never returned. They fought for America and the world. Their mission was to win a war. Our mission is to never forget.

BENNY turns and slowly walks through the door. The stage is empty.

FINAL CURTAIN

=====30=====