



1 (AMERICAN REPORTERS – BOTH MEN AND WOMEN - AND RUSSIAN WOMEN)  
2 MARIA SOLOKOV MARIA IN OLD AGE, SPEAKING WITH HEAVY RUSSIAN ACCENT  
3 KATARINA KULIKOVA KATARINA IN OLD AGE, SPEAKING WITH HEAVY RUSSIAN ACCENT  
4 EMCEE  
5 REPORTER 1  
6 REPORTER 2  
7 REPORTER 3  
8 REPORTER 4  
9

10 SCENE 1: HEADQUARTERS AT SECRET GERMAN AIRBASE DEEP INSIDE  
11 RUSSIA, 1941

12 HEITZLER (HAVING NIGHTMARE) Oh!...Oh!...NOOO!

13 SGT(KINDLY) Herr leutnant. Lt. Heitzler, wake up!

14 HEITZLER(WAKING WITH A START) Wha...! Oh, thank you, sergeant. I must  
15 have dozed off. (YAWN) What time is it?

16 SGT Just coming on midnight, Russian time.

17 HEITZLER Good. Nine o'clock in Berlin. See if you can get some news.

18 SFX SCRATCHY STATIC, RANDOM STATION PICKUP AS  
19 SOMEONE IS TURNING THE DIAL ON THE RADIO.  
20 SNATCHES OF A RUSSIAN ANNOUCEMENT, "RIDE OF THE  
21 VALKERIES", A HITLER SPEECH, THEN...

22 GERMAN RADIO ...Even as Field Marshall Rommel continues to score victory  
23 after victory in North Africa, our undefeated armies are  
24 swarming across Russia knocking on the gates of Moscow.  
25 Where Napoleon failed, the Fuehrer will succeed! Soon the  
26 communist lie perpetuated by the coward Stalin will be  
27 swept into the dustbin of history...

28 SGT Hey, listen to this! They're talking about us. [MIMICING  
29 RADIO] "We are going to sweep Stalin into the dustbin!"

30 HEITZLER Ha, if only we can use his moustache for a broom. It's the  
31 same old stuff, sergeant. Let's have some real music.

32 SGT With pleasure, Herr Leutnant!

1 SFX RADIO FADES, REPLACED BY A SCRATCHY PHONOGRAPH  
2 PLAYING A FRENCH CHANSON. MUSIC PLAYS SOFTLY IN  
3 BACKGROUND.

4 SGT See Herr Leutnant, a little music, a little schnapps...some  
5 nice Russian girls!... and this war won't be so bad.

6 HEITZLER I'd trade all that for a good night's sleep.

7 HEITZLER & SGT CHUCKLE

8 MUSIC PLAYS SOFTLY, THEN...

9 SOL A (ON SPEAKER, TENSE) Achtung... achtung... This is listening post  
10 three. Aircraft approaching from the west. Repeat: Aircraft  
11 approaching from the west!

12 HEITZLER Danke, post three. Turn off that phonograph!

13 SFX MUSIC DIES WITH A SCRATCH

14 SGT(NERVOUS) You think they're ours?

15 HEITZLER God, I hope so! It's been a whole week and no sign of the  
16 Witches. But...nothing is due to arrive here until tomorrow.  
17 Then we can expect two more Messerschmitts. I don't think  
18 they would be stupid enough to come tonight!

19 SGT Should I try to reach them on radio?

20 HEITZLER No, let's not break radio silence. They might not be headed  
21 here...and they could be Russian.

22 ZOLLER (ON SPEAKER) Flight control – this is fighter group A47 with two Bf-  
23 109 Messerschmitts bound for Zem...Zyem... I can't read  
24 these damn Russian names. Headed for forward air base  
25 Delta 24. Request immediate night landing. Over.

26 SGT Well, speak of the devil and here he comes!

27 HEITZLER(RELIEVED) At least we know they are ours. But what are they  
28 doing here at this time of night?

29 (PAUSE)

1 ZOLLER (ON SPEAKER) Delta 24 do you copy, over?

2 SGT We better say something, Herr Leutnant, or he'll wake up the  
3 Ruskies with all his blabbing!

4 HEITZLER Tell him to head for Bravo 12.

5 SGT (USING RADIO) Fighter Group A47, FG A47. This is Delta 24. We  
6 copy you. Our runway is closed for the night. You are  
7 advised to fly west to base Bravo 12. Over.

8 ZOLLER (ON SPEAKER) Delta 24 - That's where we are coming FROM, you fool!  
9 We have only enough fuel to make it to your base, so turn on  
10 your damn runway lights. Over!

11 SGT FG A47... uh, we are ...restricted ... in using runway landing  
12 lights. Is there any other base you can divert to? Over.

13 ZOLLER(ANGRY) Listen, we are flying on fumes as it is. Who am I speaking  
14 to? Over.

15 HEITZLER Give me the microphone. This is Leutnant Heitzler, Duty  
16 officer. Over.

17 ZOLLER (ON SPEAKER) Well, this is Hauptman Zoller, leutnant, and I am  
18 giving you a direct order to light up your runway before we  
19 lose two Messerschmitts in the Russian mud. Immediately!  
20 Over.

21 (SILENCE)

22 ZOLLER (ON SPEAKER) Delta 24, do you copy? We are almost out of fuel!

23 SFX FAINT SOUND OF MESSERSCHMITTS, GROWING LOUDER

24 HEITZLER FG A47, we can hear your engines now, sounds like you are  
25 due west of us. Can't give you an exact approach bearing,  
26 but the runway runs east-west so you should be able to  
27 make a direct landing. We will light up the runway... for 20  
28 seconds. Over.

29 ZOLLER(ON SPEAKER) Are you mad! That barely gives us time for the  
30 approach! We need at least one minute. Over.

1 HEITZLER FG A47, I am sorry. I can give you 30 seconds maximum.  
2 Good luck! Over and out. Sergeant, light up the runway for  
3 30 seconds, max! I'm going to wake up the Colonel – he will  
4 want to meet these two jokers.

5 SGT Runway lights on - NOW. 30 – 29 – 28 – 27...

6 SFX MESSERSCHMITT SOUND LOUDER, THEN FADE

7 SFX NO MORE BACKGROUND NOISES

8 SFX DOOR SLAMMING, FEET STOMPING INTO ROOM

9 FRANZ What kind of welcome is this to Russia? We fly all day and  
10 most of the night only to be told to go back. 30 seconds of  
11 runway light?!? We both nearly crashed out there.

12 ZOLLER Who is in charge of this dump anyway?

13 SFX CHAIR CREAKING

14 BRENNER (ICILY) That would be me. Col. Brenner, at your service. STAND AT  
15 ATTENTION WHEN YOU ADDRESS ME!

16 SFX HEELS CLICKING

17 ZOLLER & FRANZ Heil Hitler!

18 BRENNER Now, who do you think you are to demand a night landing at  
19 a restricted base?

20 ZOLLER Herr Oberst, I am Hauptman Zoller and this is Hauptman  
21 Liederman. We were sent to augment your squadron with  
22 two Bf-109's. Here are my orders.

23 SFX HANDING OVER PAPERS

24 BRENNER This instructs you to arrive no later than tomorrow. Is there  
25 some problem with arriving in daylight?

26 ZOLLER Herr Oberst, we believed there is some – urgency – in our  
27 drive on Moscow. We intended to land at night, refuel and  
28 be on patrol by dawn.

1 BRENNER Herr Hauptman, you are an idiot. Your intentions may have  
2 doomed us and your precious fighters.

3 ZOLLER (HURT) Sir! With all due respect I do not take lightly to being called  
4 an idiot! I was awarded the Iron Cross by Air Marshal  
5 Goering himself. I have been a combat pilot since Poland,  
6 and have shot down Spitfires, Hurricanes, MiGs...

7 BRENNER Herr Hauptman, spare me your war record. I am sure you  
8 are capable of shooting down something you can SEE. But  
9 even your considerable skills would be tasked to shoot down  
10 something you can NOT SEE. Now if you can shoot down  
11 one of ... Them... at night... I'll see that you get another Iron  
12 Cross.

13 As for you, Leutnant Heitzler!

14 HEITZLER Yes, sir?

15 BRENNER (STERN) Leutnant, I have issued strict orders to maintain  
16 complete blackout from sunset until dawn. You are on  
17 report for disobeying those orders. (CONCILIATORY) Now,  
18 how long were the runway lights on?

19 HEITZLER Sir, no more than 30 seconds.

20 BRENNER No more... no less. Any sign of ...Them?

21 HEITZLER No sir! Ceiling 200 meters and all quiet.

22 BRENNER Just to be safe... Sergeant! Base on full alert and full  
23 blackout! Anti-aircraft guns to be manned, but instruct  
24 them not to fire unless they have a clear VISUAL target. And  
25 don't go sweeping the clouds with the searchlights. That  
26 just gives away our position. No one sleeps tonight!...  
27 Except ...our two guests here. Leutnant Heitzler.

28 HEITZLER Sir!

29 BRENNER (SARCASTIC) Kindly show our ... guests... to the best bunks in this  
30 *dump* so they can get a good night's rest before  
31 singlehandedly taking on the entire Soviet air force in the

1 morning. I will be at the forward listening post. Oh, and  
2 Hauptman Zoller.

3 ZOLLER Yes, sir?

4 BRENNER I should not have called you idiot. Imbecile is more  
5 appropriate! Good night, gentlemen.

6 SFX HEELS CLICK. DOOR SLAMS

7 ZOLLER Donner und Blitzen! What have we gotten ourselves into,  
8 Franz?

9 FRANZ Maybe we should have turned around. I'd rather face a  
10 crash landing than that colonel again.

11 ZOLLER, FRANZ, HEITZLER LAUGH

12 HEITZLER Gentlemen, if you will please follow me.

13 SFX DOOR OPEN & SHUT, WALKING ON GRAVEL

14 ZOLLER Sorry we got you on report, leutnant. When I write MY  
15 report I'll say you saved our skins tonight.

16 HEITZLER Thank you, sir.

17 FRANZ So, Heitzler, what's the story here? We are so far from the  
18 front there is no way their artillery could reach us. And no  
19 bomber could spot a base like this at night. What are you all  
20 so jumpy about?

21 ZOLLER And what did the colonel mean with all that "SEE – CAN  
22 NOT SEE" nonsense?

23 HEITZLER (NERVOUS) It's the Witches! Somehow they CAN see us, even at  
24 night. Especially at night! They come from above. From out  
25 of the darkness. From out of the night!

26 FRANZ What do you mean...the Witches?

27 HEITZLER (SCARED) The Nachthexen.

28 ZOLLER The ...Nacht...hexen? The Night Witches? Are you serious,  
29 Herr leutnant?

1 HEITZLER Yes, Herr Hauptman, very serious – the Night Witches!

2 SOUNDS FADE, MUSIC – SWELLS UP AND THEN FADES

3 SCENE 2 A SOMEWHERE IN THE NIGHT SKIES OVER RUSSIA

4 MUSIC FADES TO SOUND OF SLOW AIRCRAFT ENGINE THAT GRADUALLY  
5 GETS LOUDER AND BECOMES BACKGROUND FOR SCENE 2 A

6 TANYA Bombardier to pilot, bombardier to pilot. Maria! Can you  
7 hear me? [Russian “Maria” is pronounced MA-ri-ya, not like  
8 Spanish ma-RI-a.]

9 MARIA Of course I can hear you, Tanya. What is it now?

10 TANYA I am reporting that it is now officially midnight...Moscow  
11 standard time.

12 MARIA Noted. Put it in the log.

13 TANYA I am also reporting that I am now officially frozen to this seat.

14 MARIA Don’t put that in the log. I thought you LOVED flying?

15 TANYA When I learned to fly my idea was to soar through fluffy  
16 white clouds and land on a distant meadow with wildflowers  
17 and a picnic basket. Not hurtling through a black night over  
18 a frozen swamp.

19 MARIA Ha! I dreamed of flying all over Russia like Marina Raskova,  
20 or even all over the world like Amelia Earheart! But then the  
21 war came.

22 TANYA Yes, the war – so fluffy white clouds became frozen black  
23 skies.

24 PAUSE

25 MARIA Is Valentina still behind us?

26 TANYA Yes, I can just make her out. She is dipping her wings as if  
27 to say “Shtoo, what gives”. Maria, we can’t keep flying like  
28 this all night. We are never going to find that crossroad. We

1                    might as well head back to base and get assigned a new  
2                    target.

3    MARIA            With all our bombs? The girls will call us “wet chickens”  
4                    [Russian slang for coward]. Listen, we have enough fuel to  
5                    get back to base plus some to spare. I’m going to head north  
6                    for another 15 minutes and then we can turn for home.  
7                    Horosho? [Russian: “Good”, “Okay”, pronounced “HA-ro-  
8                    show”]

9    TANYA            Ochen horosho. [Very good]. Hey, maybe after the war you  
10                    can get a job delivering air mail. Then you can fly all over  
11                    Russia, and the children will run into the field shouting  
12                    “Here comes the mail plane, here comes Maria with our  
13                    candies!”

14    MARIA            I would love that – to see all of Russia, ever city, town and  
15                    village.

16    TANYA            With a boy friend in each one.

17    MARIA            Of course! Kanyeshna [Russian “of course”] Well, this is  
18                    getting us nowhere. The whole German army could be down  
19                    there and we wouldn't see it in this gloom. Better start  
20                    plotting a return heading.

21    TANYA            Right away. Want some tea?

22    MARIA            Yeah! Pass me the thermos.

23    TANYA            (DISAPPOINTED) Ah! I can officially report that the tea is  
24                    also frozen.

25    MARIA            Well, put the thermos between your thighs and maybe it will  
26                    remind you of –

27    TANYA            Maria! Look! Look! Lights over there! At 10 o’clock low.

28    MARIA            I see it! It looks like a runway! Quick – get a bearing!

29    TANYA            I make it, uh, 2..8..3 degrees. About 20 kilometers off.  
30                    What do you think? Is it one of ours?

1 MARIA Nyet! We have nothing in this sector. Has to be German,  
2 but so close to the front!

3 TANYA Maybe it's a trap?

4 MARIA (HUMOURED) You mean the Germans are inviting us to land for the  
5 night?

6 TANYA Ah, that would be nice! Hot meal, champagne...

7 MARIA Bath and a warm bed! Hoopa! [Russian: "Wow!"] Look! The  
8 lights just went out.

9 TANYA You think they heard us?

10 MARIA No, we are too far away. Changing course to 283. Is  
11 Valentina following?

12 TANYA Yes, she's flapping her wings like an angry goose and turning  
13 with us. She must have seen it too.

14 MARIA (SERIOUS) Horosho. Bombardier, prepare for bombing run on  
15 suspected enemy airstrip!

16 TANYA Readying bombs.... Bombs are ready.

17 MARIA We will fly at this altitude for a bit more, then idle engines  
18 and glide in. Bomb release at altitude 30 meters.

19 TANYA Roger, coming in low and slow.

20 MARIA Keep an eye on Valentina.

21 TANYA Now she's about 100 meters behind. Looks like she is falling  
22 back more so not to crowd us.

23 MARIA Good girl. Here goes. Idling engines... now.

24 SOUNDS OF ENGINE FADES TO SILENCE, PAUSE

25 SCENE 2 B GERMAN AIRBASE AGAIN

26 REPLAY OF END OF SCENE 1

27 ZOLLER The ...Nacht...hexen? The Night Witches? Are you serious,  
28 Herr Leutnant?

1 HEITZLER Yes, Herr Hauptman, very serious – the Night Witches!

2 FRANZ Have you been reading too many Grimm fairytales?

3 HEITZLER No fairytales. They are all too real! They are Russian night  
4 bombers, but we call them the Night Witches. You can't see  
5 them, you can't hear them, and they come at you all night,  
6 one after another after another. The only thing that saves  
7 you is the dawn.

8 In fact, that's why we are here at this new base. We were  
9 farther south near the supply area and we were hit every  
10 night – for weeks! The colonel got permission to move the  
11 base here, just so we could get some sleep. We've been here  
12 a week now, camouflaged in daytime, blacked out at night.  
13 We were waiting for your planes to arrive...tomorrow... so we  
14 could go operational. Tonight is the first time I've even  
15 turned on the runway lights!

16 FRANZ Now, look – you can hear bombers from 20 kilometers away.  
17 There is no way they're going to sneak up on you!

18 HEITZLER Not these bombers, Herr Hauptman. They glide in!

19 ZOLLER Bombers don't glide. Trust me on this.

20 HEISZLER These do. Because they use biplanes.

21 ZOLLER Biplanes??? This is 1941. No one uses biplanes for combat  
22 anymore!

23 HEITZLER Well, the Ruskies do! They have thousands of them. Every  
24 time we shoot them down, twice as many come back. They  
25 swarm in like mosquitoes! We can't stop them.

26 FRANZ Very well, you have mad Russians flying obsolete planes in  
27 the dark. But why call them Witches?

28 HEITZLER That's the best part, Herr Hauptman! The crews are all  
29 women!

30 ZOLLER & FRANZ Women!!

1 HEITZLER Yes! Well, actually girls. Some quite pretty too. I've, uh,  
2 seen the bodies.

3 FRANZ Bodies?

4 HEITZLER We haven't taken any alive. If we hit one they usually blow  
5 up in midair. There's no protection on those biplanes. One  
6 hit on the fuel and they burn up like a Roman candle. And if  
7 they do crash land, well... the girls blow themselves up.

8 PAUSE

9 HEITZLER Is there something the matter Herr Hauptman?

10 ZOLLER You...are...all...MAD! We landed in a lunatic asylum!  
11 I must see that colonel right away! Where is he?!

12 HEITZLET Right there – at the listening post.

13 ZOLLER HERR OBERST!

14 BRENNER Quiet! I thought you gentlemen would be in bed by now,  
15 with a warm cup of cocoa. What brings you out on this fine  
16 night?

17 ZOLLER Herr Oberst, two weeks ago I was fighting Spitfires over the  
18 English Channel.

19 BRENNER Again with the war record.

20 ZOLLER Real men in real planes in real dog-eat-dog fights!  
21 Now I learn that I am to fly against suicidal Russian girls in  
22 obsolete biplanes! You think I'm the bloody Red Baron?

23 BRENNER I see Leutnant Heitzler has informed you about the Night  
24 Witches.

25 ZOLLER Sir, it's preposterous!

26 BRENNER You find this weapon preposterous? Think for a moment.  
27 The Russians have their back to the wall. Soon we will over  
28 run Moscow. This is their endgame. What better choice do  
29 they have but to send in hundreds of expendable planes with

1 expendable crews. This only proves that this is their last  
2 resort before they collapse!

3 ZOLLER Sir, what I find preposterous is the fear invoked by these...

4 BRENNER Do not say another word Hauptman Zoller! The word fear  
5 can NOT be used in the context of the German army or the  
6 Luftwaffe! To even suggest it is a hanging offense.

7 The German army knows no fear... but they do know  
8 FATIGUE. I know it first hand – from the last war, in the  
9 trenches! We were bombarded for days on end. Now, we  
10 were perfectly safe in our bunkers, but the constant shelling,  
11 the lack of sleep, the FATIGUE ... drove men mad, made  
12 them commit suicide, made them shoot their best friend! We  
13 welcomed going over the top. Then we knew fear, which we  
14 could control. But fatigue...it can poison a whole army.

15 SOL A Herr Oberst! Faint sounds coming from the south east. I  
16 think it's Them.

17 BRENNER Leutnant Heitzler, get these pilots to the air raid trench!  
18 Mach Schnell!

19 HEITZLER(IN PANIC) Come on, sirs, to the trenches! Quickly!

20 SOUND OF HEITZLER RUNNING AWAY

21 FRANZ Hey, aren't you coming?

22 ZOLLER (LAUGHING) Don't you get it?

23 FRANZ Get what? What are you talking about?

24 ZOLLER Franz, do you hear anything?

25 FRANZ Well, no. It's quiet. Unusually quiet.

26 ZOLLER And look up. Do you see anything?

27 FRANZ Nothing. Low ceiling. Not even a star. So what's your  
28 point?

29 ZOLLER It's a joke, Franz! It's all a joke.

1 FRANZ What?

2 ZOLLER It's how they treat the newcomers. "Let them spend a night  
3 in a slit trench pissing their pants, then we'll all have a good  
4 laugh in the morning!"

5 FRANZ You can't be serious.

6 ZOLLER Think about it! "Oh, pretty Russian girls flying biplanes or  
7 broomsticks around all night keeping us awake!" It's got to  
8 be a joke. In the morning they'll say "Ha! You guys fell for  
9 that Russian witches story! It always gets them. Welcome to  
10 Russia, Ha Ha Ha!"

11 FRANZ Well, that colonel took it pretty serious.

12 ZOLLER He's the one that put them up to it! Him and his [MIMICING  
13 BRENNER] "There is no fear but fatigue". Well, I am fatigued.  
14 Let's find a nice bunk and get some sleep.

15 PAUSE

16 ZOLLER Aren't you coming, Franz?

17 FRANZ Shhh! I hear something!

18 ZOLLER(EXASPERATED) Oh, now don't you start it too!

19 FRANZ Be quiet! Listen! Can't you hear it?

20 SILENCE

21 ZOLLER I DO hear...something. But it can't be a machine; it sounds  
22 more like a glider.

23 FRANZ Like one of our Switzer gliders coming in for a landing. It  
24 must be nearly over us but I don't see a thing.

25 SFX WHISTLING OF BOMBS

26 FRANZ Mein Gott! That's a bomb! Run for it!

27 SFX WHISTLING BOMBS, FOLLOWED BY TWO JARRING  
28 EXPLOSIONS

1 ZOLLER (ANXIOUS) Franz – are you hit?

2 FRANZ (PUFFING) Just knocked the wind out of me. Help me up. Danke! ...  
3 Now wait.... I hear it again.

4 ZOLLER Where? Where?

5 FRANZ Somewhere over there! Yes, there's another one coming! DO  
6 YOU STILL THINK THIS IS A JOKE?

7 SFX FAINT LOW RUSHING SOUND, GROWING LOUDER

8 SFX WHISTLING BOMBS, FOLLOWED BY TWO JARRING  
9 EXPLOSIONS

10 SFX SCREAMS. RUNNING FEET. BURNING SOUNDS. ALARM  
11 BELLS

12 SGT Alarm! Get those fires out! Get those fires out now!

13 SFX SOUNDS OF PANIC, FADE OUT

14 MUSIC – SWELLS UP AND THEN FADES

15 SCENE 3 A: RUSSIAN AIR BASE, THE SAME NIGHT

16 MUSIC FADES

17 SFX SOUNDS OF REPAIR WORK, HAMMERING, SAWING,  
18 MIXED WITH LIGHT RUSSIAN MUSIC FROM A RADIO IN  
19 BACKGROUND

20 ZELLINA Careful with that propeller! We don't got no spares.  
21 Make sure them bolts are tight, and retighten these strut  
22 wires while yer at it.

23 SFX FOOTSTEPS ON GRAVEL

24 CM Sergeant Zellina.

25 ZELLINA Yes, ma'am, uh, Comrade Major.

26 CM How is the work coming?

1 ZELLINA Well, mostly minor repairs and patches. Just finishing up  
2 on plane 48. All planes are refueled and rearmed and ready  
3 to fly. Except 41 and 36. Not back yet.

4 CM That's Maria and Valentina, right? How much fuel do they  
5 have?

6 ZELLINA Enough to get 'em back by 1 am. So they got, maybe, 20  
7 more minutes.

8 CM Very well, keep the runway lighted and let me know if you  
9 hear anything. Maria is one of our best pilots and we don't  
10 want to lose her in the dark. Sergeant Zellina, this is a new  
11 cadet pilot: Cadet Bobrovsky.

12 ZELLINA Pleased to meet ya.

13 CADET Ochen priyatna. [Russian "pleased to meet you."]

14 CM Sgt. Zellina is in charge of our ground crew and engine  
15 repair. Believe it or not, underneath all that grease there is  
16 a very pretty girl.

17 ZELLINA (EMBARASSED) Thank you, ma'am.

18 CM Sgt. Zellina, be so kind as to show the cadet to the briefing  
19 room. Cadet, you are to report to the Commissar Natasha. I  
20 am going to wait at the flight line for the planes. Off you go.

21 CADET Thank you, Comrade Major.

22 SOUND OF WALKING ON GRAVEL

23 ZELLINA Hey, Raisa!

24 RAISA Yo!

25 ZELLINA Is that wing fixed yet?

26 RAISA Sewing on the last patch now. Then I'll varnish it.

27 ZELLINA Give it two coats if we got time. [TO THE CADET] That's  
28 Raisa. Before the war she was a "seam-stress". You know,

1 sewing fancy clothes? Now she sews patches on the planes.  
2 She'll sew you up too, if you get some shrapnel in your butt!

3 LAUGH

4 CADET So, how did you learn to fix aircraft engines?

5 ZELLINA Well, I used to work at the tractor factory down in Stalingrad.  
6 Compared to them tractors, fixin' these airplanes is like  
7 bicycle repair.

8 CADET But with that job you could have stayed out of the fighting.

9 ZELLINA Nah, I wanted to be where the action was. Nothing's ever  
10 gonna happen around Stalingrad. So I volunteered for the  
11 air force. Just breezed through mechanics school and here I  
12 am. And, uh, here you are – the Dacha [Russian resort  
13 cottage]. That's what we calls it. It's the eating and meeting  
14 room for you officers.

15 CADET Thank you, Sergeant... Zellina, was it?

16 ZELLINA At yer service. Welcome to the Witches!

17 CADETS Thank you. ...Oh, the what?

18 ZELLINA (VOICE FADING) Hey, careful with that bomb! Treat it like a day-old  
19 egg!...

20 SOUND OF DOOR OPENING – NADIA, NATASHA AND KATARINA ARE  
21 CHATTING

22 CADET Excuse me.

23 NADIA Is that Maria!?

24 KATARINA Valentina? Oh, some new girl.

25 NATASHA Well, don't keep the door open. It's cold enough in here  
26 already!

27 DOOR CLOSES

28 CADET I am to report to Commissar Natasha?

1 (NADIA & KATARINA GIGGLE)

2 NATASHA That would be me. But don't call me Natasha. I am  
3 Lieutenant Popovna to you, but address me as Commissar  
4 when the Comrade Major is present.

5 CADET Yes, Lt. Natasha – I mean Commis...I mean Lt. Popovna.

6 NATASHA Right. Now let me see your papers. I see you have 15 hours  
7 of flight time. Good. We will give you a check-out flight  
8 tomorrow. For now let me introduce to some of the  
9 squadron. Comrades! Please welcome our new Cadet Pilot  
10 Anna Borisnova Bobrovsky.

11 NADIA & KATARINA: SOUNDS OF WELCOME, GREETINGS

12 NATASHA Cadet Bobrovsky, I welcome you to the 14<sup>th</sup> Squadron of the  
13 588<sup>th</sup> Night Bombing Regiment!

14 NADIA The Fighting 14<sup>th</sup>!

15 KATARINA The Missus who never misses!

16 LAUGHTER

17 NADIA So where are you from, Anna Borisnova?

18 CADET Georgia. Tbilisi.

19 NADIA Ah! From the land of Comrade Stalin! Well, with two  
20 Georgians fighting this war we can't lose! Come here to the  
21 map. There is a pin for every girl, so stick a big red pin into  
22 Tbilisi.

23 ALL Hoopa!

24 NADIA Well, you are now the southernmost girl on the map. If only  
25 we could get someone from Murmansk...

26 CADET What are all the black pins for?

27 SILENCE

28 NATASHA (SOLEMNLY) Those are for the comrades who have flown on before  
29 us.

1 SILENCE

2 NATASHA           Officers, brief the cadet on our mission here. Cadet, listen  
3                       and observe. I am going to find the Comrade Major. And  
4                       assemble all the crews here for a briefing in 10... oh, make it  
5                       15 minutes.

6 NADIA & KATARINA    Yes, Lieutenant!

7 SOUND OF NATASHA LEAVING, DOOR OPENS & SHUTS

8 ATMOSPHERE BECOMES MORE RELAXED.

9 CADET                And I called her Commissar Natasha! I hope she's not mad  
10                       at me.

11 NADIA               Oh, she's alright. Just uptight. That's her pin in Smolensk .  
12                       She hasn't heard anything from her family since the Nazis  
13                       took the city.

14 CADET               I'm so sorry.

15 NADIA               Forget it. First the greetings. I'm Nadia...

16 KATARINA           And I'm Katarina.

17 CADET               Is it just the two of you?

18 NADIA               The other girls are in the back snoozing. We are just waiting  
19                       for Maria and Valentina to get back before we go out again.  
20                       Now observe... Observe Katarina putting on her makeup for  
21                       the third time tonight!

22 KATARINA           I say a girl always has to look good. You never know when  
23                       you are going to be flying past some handsome fighter pilot  
24                       in a MiG.

25 NADIA               And that's why they only let her fly at night.

26 KATARINA           Ha! Now, what did you bring us? Any cosmetics?

27 NADIA               Any vodka? Cigarettes?

28 CADET               I have some lipstick... and some nail polish!

1 KATARINA Oh, let's see! Hoopa! Shocking red! Are you sure you're not  
2 a Party member?

3 CADET And I have some magazines... and a tin of smoked fish.

4 NADIA A feast! We will save it for breakfast!

5 CADET Are both of you pilots?

6 NADIA Well, all us girls can fly, but we take turns being pilot and  
7 bombardier. Right now I am bombardier for Natasha... the  
8 Commissar.

9 KATARINA And I'm the pilot for my bombardier, Grushenka. She gets  
10 her beauty sleep while I do all the work.

11 NADIA Don't let her fool you. We bombardiers also do the  
12 navigating. It's a lot of work, especially in the dark.

13 KATARINA So you've met the Comrade Major, and that funny Sergeant  
14 Zellina?

15 CADET Yes, ...I think she said something about...Witches?

16 NADIA Ha! That's US! See the broomstick over the map? Well,  
17 that's sort of our battle flag. The Germans call us the  
18 "Nacht Hexen". The Night Witches!

19 CADET Really!? What a strange name. It sounds kind of romantic  
20 and insulting at the same time.

21 KATARINA Don't count on any romance from the Germans. They are  
22 pretty mad at us right now. We blew up a big bridge tonight  
23 with many tanks still on it.

24 CADET Wow! Where was it?

25 KATARINA I'll show you on the map. Right here. Funny thing, I used  
26 to ride my bicycle over that bridge. Tonight I blew it up.

27 CADET Wasn't it heavily guarded?

28 KATARINA Yeah, I'll say. They had that bridge pretty well surrounded  
29 with searchlights and anti-aircraft guns.

1 NADIA But the searchlights just make it easier for us to find them!  
2 They light up as soon as they hear us, then Lyuba and I dive  
3 in and go left-right, drawing their fire, while Katarina glides  
4 in from behind for the kill.

5 KATARINA Then we switch the lead and do it all over again.

6 NADIA Until all the bombs are dropped.

7 KATARINA It's risky, but it works. Hey, we blew up a lot of Germans  
8 tonight, right?

9 NADIA & KATARINA Yeah! Huu-rah!

10 PAUSE

11 CADET (SCARED) You... really...are... Night Witches...

12 KATARINA (COLDLY) Yes. And now you are one of us.

13 MUSIC – SWELLS UP AND THEN FADES

14 SOUND OF WALKING ON GRAVEL.

15 NATASHA Comrade Major? Comrade Major?

16 CM Over here, Natasha. By the runway.

17 NATASHA Comrade Major! You must be frozen out here! Let me get  
18 your coat.

19 CM No, I'm coming in now. I was just waiting for Maria and  
20 Valentina to return.

21 NATASHA How much fuel?

22 CM Zellina said until 1 am, but I know she gives them all some  
23 spare. I'm sure they will make it back.

24 NATASHA And if they don't...they don't. This is war.

25 ZELLINA Comrade Major. Oh, good evening, Commissar!

26 NATASHA Comrade.

1 ZELLINA Planes approaching from the west, ma'am. Sounds like ours.  
2 That prop on 36 clacks like an old sewing machine!

3 SOUND OF PLANES APPROACHING AND LANDING.

4 NATASHA Bombs are gone. Looks like they got the crossroad.

5 ZELLINA All thumbs up! They're okay, ma'am.

6 CM Very good! Sergeant, see that the planes are refueled and  
7 rearmed immediately. Ask the crews to report the Dacha.

8 ZELLINA To the Dacha, yes ma'am. (SHOUTING) Hey, put down that  
9 knitting! We got some planes to turn around!

10 SOUNDS OF NATASHA AND CM WALKING BACK TO THE DACHA

11 NATASHA You really shouldn't worry about them so much, Comrade  
12 Major. They know the risks. They are pilots, they are  
13 soldiers!

14 CM You are right, Natasha, but I do worry about them. I worry  
15 about them more than my own daughters. How could we let  
16 girls so young be sent into this slaughter?

17 NATASHA We didn't do it. The Nazis did. If we don't stop them now,  
18 no man, woman or child in Russia will survive. These girls  
19 know what they are fighting for. What they are dying for.

20 SOUND OF DOOR OPENING

21 NATASHA Attention for the Comrade Major!

22 SOUND OF MANY GIRLS COMING TO ATTENTION, CHAIRS PUSHED ASIDE

23 CM Good evening, comrades!

24 ALL WOMEN Good evening, Comrade Major.

25 CM Good work on your bridge attack tonight.

26 KATARINA Thank you, ma'am. I saw the Nadia and the Commissar  
27 score a direct hit on the center span. Tanks were flying  
28 everywhere.

1 NADIA Any sign of Maria or Valentina?

2 NATASHA They just landed. Bombs are gone, so they must have hit  
3 the crossroads.

4 MARIA (COMING INTO ROOM) Sorry, Commissar, but with Tanya's lousy  
5 navigation we never found that damn crossroad!

6 TANYA (HURT) Maria!

7 CM Maria , Valentina – don't frighten me like that! Now, report.  
8 Did you land in a haystack for a quick nap?

9 MARIA No Comrade Major. As I said we were unable to find the  
10 crossroads, so we headed north looking for an opportunity  
11 target.

12 TANYA Then some nice German airmen invited us to a party. They  
13 provided the runway, we supplied the PUNCH!

14 SOUNDS OF AMAZMENT, OH'S AND AH'S

15 CM A runway! Show me on the map!

16 MARIA I make it about... here. We saw the runway lights for only a  
17 few seconds. I think they must have had some emergency  
18 landing. It looked like a short runway, perfect for fighters.

19 CM Shtoo...? Fighters this near! They have been keeping their  
20 airbases far to the rear [hitting the map] so they waste hours  
21 of fuel getting to the battle. But this close to the front, they  
22 can stay in the fight all day.

23 NATASHA But then they are close enough we can pound them all night!

24 NADIA 'Stretch out your pretty neck so I may kiss it,... said the fox  
25 to the goose.'

26 CM Yes, we can pound them...if we can find them again. Any  
27 hits?

28 MARIA Nothing definite on my attack, but then Valentina dropped  
29 in behind me and – Hoopa! Big explosion!

1 TANYA She must have hit a fuel dump. You can see the flames from  
2 Moscow!

3 SOUNDS OF EXCITEMENT AMONG THE WOMEN

4 C M Well what are we waiting for! Maria, Valentina – get back in  
5 the air as soon as your planes are ready. Prepare to lead all  
6 flights back to your secret air base.

7 TANYA (BEING FUNNY) Do I have time to freshen my makeup?

8 C M Nyet! You started this party, and now you have to come as  
9 you are!

10 SFX SOUND OF GIRLS LAUGHING, AND RUNNING FOR THE  
11 DOOR

12 SILENCE

13 NATASHA I will join my plane now. Ah, an airbase. That would be  
14 quite a trophy.... Are you alright, Comrade Major.

15 CM Yes, Natasha. You are correct. They know what they are  
16 fighting for, what they are dying for. I only hope not many  
17 more have to die... for I have so few tears left in me.

18 MUSIC – SWELLS UP AND THEN FADES

19 SCENE 3 B: GERMAN AIR BASE, SAME NIGHT

20 SOL A (SCREAMING) They're back! The Night Witches are back!

21 SFX FAINT SOUND OF WIND RUSHING OVER WINGS,  
22 GROWING LOUDER

23 SFX WHISTLING BOMBS, FOLLOWED BY TWO JARRING  
24 EXPLOSIONS

25 SFX SCREAMS. RUNNING FEET. BURNING SOUNDS. ALARM  
26 BELLS

27 SFX SOUNDS OF WIND, BOMBS AND EXPLOSIONS  
28 CONTINUOUS IN SCENE 3 B

29 SOL B Oh, God! Not again!

1 SOL C How long until dawn?

2 SGT Anyone seen the colonel?

3 SOL A He was at the listening post. It took a direct hit.

4 SFX NEARBY EXPOLSION, SCREAMS

5 SOL C Medic! Medic!

6 SGT Get water on those fires NOW!

7 SOL B Pumps are shot – clogged with mud.

8 SGT Shovel dirt then. They can see us! They can see us!

9 SFX ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE

10 HEITZLER Have you hit anything?

11 SOL A I think we got two. Saw some flames in the distance.

12 SOL B But they took out C battery and D battery. 10 men dead.  
13 So... we are even?

14 HEITZLER The colonel said don't fire unless you can see them.

15 SOL A What do you want me to do!? They are staying in the clouds.  
16 There is nothing TO see! Wait, I hear something over there,  
17 from the north this time.

18 SFX ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE

19 SOL B No! It's from the west!

20 SFX ANTI-AIRCRAFT FIRE

21 ZOLLER Franz! Franz – there you are. We should never have come to  
22 this hell hole. We gotta get out of here! Sergeant! We need  
23 to refuel at once!

24 SGT With what, sir? Piss? All the fuel dumps are hit, even the  
25 reserves.

26 FRANZ Heitzler! Where are our planes? We need to get them under  
27 cover!

1 HEITZLER(LOSING IT) Your precious planes are scattered all over the runway,  
 2 what's left of the runway. It was my fault! I should have  
 3 never let you land! Better the two of you – imbeciles! -  
 4 crashed in the mud than lose the whole base.

5 ZOLLER (ANGRY) Leutnant Heitzler!!

6 HEITZLER Oh, and those Grimm fairytales? The Nachthexen? Well,  
 7 here they come again, riding their broomsticks! BUT  
 8 THEY'RE JUST A FAIRYTALE! RIGHT!?!

9 SFX WHISTLING BOMBS, FOLLOWED BY VERY LOUD  
 10 EXPLOSIONS

11 SFX SCREAMS. BURNING SOUNDS. ALARM BELLS

12 MUSIC – SWELLS UP AND THEN FADES

13 SCENCE 3 C: RUSSIAN AIR BASE

14 SFX SOUND OF AIRCRAFT APPROACHING, LANDING. NOW  
 15 ENGINES NOISES ARE ERRATIC, INDICATING SHOT UP  
 16 PLANES. SOUNDS OF COMMOTION ON THE GOUND.

17 ZELINNA Plane 48 – That's Lyuba and Galina. Looks shot up pretty  
 18 bad.

19 SFX LANDING SOUND, ENGINE SPUTTERING AND DYING

20 LYUBA Galina is hit! Get the doctor.

21 GALINA (WEAK) I am fine. Just some shrapnel in my thigh. I tied my  
 22 beautiful silk scarf around it and now it's ruined!

23 CM Get her out of that cockpit. Ground crew! Move that plane  
 24 off field.

25 SOUNDS OF COMMOTION, WOMEN GIVING ORDERS -“Get her down! Gently,  
 26 gently! Get under it! Hurry it up!”

27 ZELLINA Plane 41 – Maria and Tanya -- coming in too low. The tail is  
 28 shot clean off! She's having a hard time steering. She's not  
 29 going to make it!

1 SFX SOUND OF PLANE SKIDDING AND CRASHING

2 CM Ground crew assist for 41!

3 SFX ALARM BELLS, FEET RUNNING

4 ZELLINA(BREATHLESS) We got 'em out, ma'am. Both safe.

5 SFX FOOTSTEPS, STAGGERING, APPROACH

6 CM Maria! Tanya! Are you hurt?

7 MARIA (TIRED) They tried to trim Tanya's ponytail. But we got away.

8 TANYA Ho! I could use a cup of tea.

9 CM Any sign of Natasha or Katarina?

10 MARIA We saw two planes hit. Don't know whose. One blew up...  
11 in midair. The other was heading east trailing flames... the  
12 last I saw.

13 CM(ANXIOUS) Was it Natasha? Was it the Commissar?

14 MARIA(ANNOYED) I don't know! It was dark! There was a lot of anti-  
15 aircraft fire. I can't believe any of us made it out of there  
16 alive. But if you want I will fly back myself and look for...for  
17 the Commissar!

18 CM No. I am sorry. We will ask forward patrols to keep an eye  
19 out for a downed plane. Come to the mess room.

20 TANYA Please find them before the Germans do!

21 CM Of course, girls. Now get inside and warm up.

22 SFX FOOTSTEPS WALK AWAY

23 ZELLINA Comrade Major!

24 CM Report.

25 ZELLINA As of sun up all planes are back for except numbers 23 and  
26 36. One pilot and two bombardiers wounded, but not shot  
27 up too bad. The planes took a lotta hits. But I think we can

1 repair everything by tonight. 'Cepting number 41, it's too far  
2 gone to fix.

3 CM Thank you, sergeant. I will see the wounded later. For now I  
4 will be in the Dacha.

5 ZELINNA Yes, ma'am. Musta been a real hornet's nest up there!

6 SFX SOUNDS OF RUNWAY COMMOTION FADE

7 SFX DOOR OPEN & CLOSE

8 CM Well, girls, who wants to report.

9 MARIA Uh... I think I can sum it up, Comrade Major.

10 CM Go ahead, Maria.

11 MARIA Well, after our initial discovery and raid on a forward  
12 German air base, in the (YAWN) somewhere sector.

13 CM That's alright. Take your time.

14 MARIA We made three –

15 TANYA Four.

16 MARIA Right. Four more raids until dawn dropping a total  
17 of...uh...40 bombs –

18 TANYA 48. Or 52 including our first raid.

19 MARIA (ANNOYED) Would you like to give the briefing, Tanya?

20 TANYA No, it's just I was good at math in school.

21 GROUP CHUCKLES

22 MARIA (LOSING IT) Anyway, Comrade Major, I CAN report heavy damage  
23 to that DAMN base...

24 CM Maria!

25 MARIA Planes destroyed! Runway cratered! Fires everywhere! Men  
26 running, screaming, dying!...

1 TANYA Maria, it's okay.

2 MARIA And our girls... burning ...in midair. (CRYING) Crashing  
3 where only God knows!

4 CM Maria, Maria – sit down. Drink some tea.

5 TANYA Drink some vodka.

6 MARIA Sorry Comrade Major.

7 CM Thank you for your report, Lieutenant. Would anyone like to  
8 add to the lieutenant's report?

9 TANYA I don't think the Germans will be trying anymore forward air  
10 bases for a while.

11 CM Very well, then your raid was a great success and I will  
12 report it as such. The Germans are less than 100 kilometers  
13 from Moscow. You girls are all that stands between the Nazi  
14 invaders and our capitol. Every minute we can delay them,  
15 or keep them from sleeping, or eating, or even going to the  
16 latrine...

17 TIRED GROUP LAUGHTER

18 CM ...is another minute for our army to organize and dig in. You  
19 are very brave comrades and I am proud to serve with you.  
20 Now, get plenty of rest ...because we go out again tonight.

21 SFX DOOR OPENS

22 ZELLINA Comrade Major!

23 CM (ANXIOUS) Yes, sergeant? Any news?

24 ZELLINA Got a radio message a plane landed near the village of  
25 Zyemkova. It's our number 36!

26 CM And the crew?

27 ZELLINA They said they was burned... but alive. The plane was all  
28 burned up, nothing left. The villagers are bringing the girls  
29 back in a wagon.

1 GROUP CHEERS, SOUNDS OF RELEIF

2 CM(SERIOUS) So it was Natasha's plane that blew up...in midair. Natasha  
3 and her bombardier, Nadia. They were good pilots, good  
4 soldiers. They knew what they were fighting for. Valentina,  
5 hand me two black pins.

6 PAUSE

7 CM There. One pin in Leningrad, ...and one in Smolensk.

8 ALL(SOLOMNLy) FOR THE COMRADES WHO HAVE FLOWN ON BEFORE US.

9 [CADENCE: For the comrades...who have flown on...before  
10 us.]

11 TANYA You hear that, Maria? Katarina and Grushenka are alright.  
12 They made it out.

13 MARIA (FALLING ASLEEP)Horosho...horosho....horosho ...

14 FADE

15 EPILOGUE: SEATTLE AIR MUSEUM, SOMETIME IN THE PRESENT

16 MUSIC – "USAF ANTHEM" SFX SOUNDS OF MODERN JETS FLYING OVER  
17 AS IN A SALUTE. MUSIC FADES.

18 EMCEE Col. Solokov, Major Kulikova. Welcome to Seattle!

19 MARIA(WITH RUSSIAN ACCENT) Please, call me Maria.

20 KATARINA(WITH RUSSIAN ACCENT) And I am Katarina.

21 EMCEE I am so happy you could come. It is a big honor for us that  
22 you are here for the unveiling of the plane. One just like the  
23 planes you were flying.

24 MARIA Honor is ours.

25 EMCEE Now, if you will please wait here, I will go and see that  
26 everything is ready. Then I will introduce you to the  
27 reporters and we will unveil the plane. Do you understand?

28 MARIA Yes, understand.

1 EMCEE Good! I'll be right back.

2 KATARINA(NO ACCENT) Reporters? Maria, what are we doing here?

3 MARIA(NO ACCENT) I guess our English is better than the others.

4 KATARINA But you know I hate cameras.

5 MARIA Katya, you look fine. You just wear too much makeup, as  
6 always.

7 KATARINA Ha. When I was young I wore makeup to look more beautiful.  
8 Now I use it to hide the scars.

9 MARIA Katya, you can't even notice the scars.

10 KATARINA But I feel them! Every day I feel them burn. Every night I  
11 dream my hair is still on fire. It was the night we hit that  
12 German airbase, remember?

13 MARIA I will never forget. The night we lost Nadia and the  
14 Commissar. ... What was her name?

15 KATARINA Popovna. Natasha Popovna. I forget her patronym.

16 MARIA I think it was "Alexandrovna". Yes, Natasha Alexandrovna  
17 Popovna.

18 KATARINA Such a noble sounding name for a communist!

19 EMCEE Ladies, we are ready if you are.

20 MARIA(WITH RUSSIAN ACCENT) Yes, we are ready. Come Katya, I will hold  
21 your hand.

22 APPLAUSE

23 SFX CLICK CLICK TEST OF MICROPHONE

24 EMCEE Thank you all for coming today to the Seattle Museum of  
25 Flight. This afternoon we will be unveiling the latest addition  
26 to our World War II Combat Aircraft collection. But first, I  
27 have the honor of introducing two surviving pilots who flew  
28 this amazing aircraft. Please let me introduce Retired

1 Colonel Maria Solokov and Retired Major Katarina Kulikovna,  
2 both Heros of the Soviet Union.

3 (APPLAUSE)

4 EMCEE Colonel Solokov and Major Kulikovna served during World War II  
5 in a unique Soviet combat group officially known as the 588<sup>th</sup>  
6 Night Bomber Regiment. But unofficially, and more significantly,  
7 to the Nazis they were the “Night Witches”. Now what was unique  
8 about the Night Witches is that they were an all-female group.  
9 Pilots, bombardiers, ground crew, commanders were all women.  
10 Each plane had a two man -- excuse me – two WOMAN crew, and  
11 they flew some of the most daring and dangerous combat missions  
12 of the war. Many women died in combat, twenty-three were  
13 awarded the highest medal Russia had to offer for bravery – the  
14 Hero of the Soviet Union.

15 Now, with the help of our two heroes, let’s unveil a vintage World  
16 War II Soviet night bomber, the Polikarpov-2. [po-li-KAR-pov]

17 SFX SOUNDS OF UNVEILING

18 GASPS OF SURPRISE

19 REP 1 It’s a biplane!

20 REP 2 It’s so small!

21 REP 3 It looks like a crop duster!

22 EMCEE It is a crop duster. The Po-2 [Pee Oh 2] was designed to be  
23 an all-round aircraft for training, mail delivery, crop dusting.  
24 But it was never meant to be a combat plane. Designed in  
25 1928, it was obsolete before the war even started, but they  
26 were pressed into service because so many of them existed  
27 around the Soviet Union. In fact, to this day the Po-2 is the  
28 most produced biplane in aviation history.

29 REP 4 It’s an open cockpit. What did you do in the winter, the  
30 Russian winter?

31 MARIA We freeze.

1 KATARINA Especially nose.

2 REP 1 Where are the guns?

3 MARIA No guns. Just bombs.

4 REP 2 How many bombs.

5 MARIA Two bombs. One for each wing.

6 KATARINA After drop bombs, we go home, get more bombs, come back.

7 REP 4 How many missions would you fly every night?

8 MARIA 10, 12. So Germans don't get much sleep

9 KATARINA We also don't get much sleep.

10 EMCEE Col. Solokov flew over 1,000 missions during the war.

11 MARIA One thousand, one hundred eleven missions. Nice number –  
12 One one one one.

13 EMCEE In total the Night Witches flew over 20,000 missions and  
14 dropped over 3,000 TONS of bombs during the war.

15 REP 2 From that little plane?

16 MARIA Yes, very little.

17 KATARINA Or we have grow bigger.

18 LAUGHTER

19 REP 3 Could we get a picture of you in front of the plane.

20 KATARINA Maria, you go.

21 MARIA No. We go together.

22 REP 3 That's it. Stand by the wing... and hold onto that, uh, strut.

23 MARIA Shtooo... Katya, look here!

24 KATARINA It can't be. Impossible!

25 EMCEE It there something the matter?

1 MARINA Where did you get this plane?

2 EMCEE Oh, I'm not sure. Some dealer in Russia was selling war  
3 junk and happened to have this. It was in many pieces  
4 when we got it. Did we put it together wrong?

5 KATARINA (ANGRY) Junk? You say junk?

6 MARIA We know this plane.

7 GASPS OF SURPRISE

8 MARIA See this patch? It was sewed on by Raisa. She used to sew  
9 wedding dresses before the war. Then she sew airplanes.  
10 This is Plane 48.

11 KATARINA Lyuba's plane.

12 MARIA I never thought to see this plane again.

13 KATARINA And you say "Junk!"

14 EMCEE I am so sorry! Please, any more questions for our heroes?

15 REP 3 After the war, did you continue to fly?

16 MARIA No. After war I have never fly. Well, never as pilot.

17 KATARINA Sometimes I can't believe I used to fly. I think I forgot how to  
18 fly already.

19 MARIA And... Soviet Union forgot us. After war we were just...  
20 women.

21 KATARINA But we remember each other. We meet every year.

22 MARIA Fewer and fewer every year. Many friends have flown on  
23 before us.

24 PAUSE

25 REP 4 What do you think when you see this plane?

26 KATARINA I think, I was just little girl, interested in makeup and  
27 dancing. How could I fly this little plane? How could I DIE  
28 in this little plane?

1 MARIA I think of so many beautiful young girls, all gone now.

2 KATARINA Yes, we were beautiful then. Now we look like real witches.

3 (LAUGHTER)

4 MARIA (COLDLY) Yes, Night Witches.

5

6 THE END