

Sample of Rex's War

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EXT. RAF HENDON - NIGHT - 1940

Holding a mug of tea, REX sits under a Blenheim's wing. GEORGE sleeps on the grass next to him. A copy of "The War of The Worlds" by H. G. Wells slides from his hand. MALLARD pulls an aircraft cover over him. REX stares at the plane.

REX  
Think they'd notice if I took it out  
for an hour?

MALLARD  
You know how to fly?

Jovial laughter comes from the pilot's mess behind them.

REX  
No.

MALLARD  
They'd notice the crash.

SIR ARCHIE walks over from mess and hands the engineers glasses of spiced rum.

SIR ARCHIE  
A thank you for repairing my plane.

REX  
You didn't have to.

REX leans back and drinks. MALLARD watches SIR ARCHIE walk back to the mess and greet his friends inside.

MALLARD  
Not what you'd expect from a Baronet,  
is he?

REX sits up.

REX  
A baron-

INT. THE ROYAL OAK PUB - NIGHT - 1940

REX, EDDIE, ISOBEL, and BERT sit at a small table in the corner. EDDIE takes a couple of pork scratchings from his brother while ISOBEL stirs her cocktail. The buzz of the regulars nearly drown out the singer at the piano.

REX (CON'T)  
Et!

BERT laughs and pushes the pork scratchings away from EDDIE.

EDDIE  
Just comes up to you and has a chat?

REX  
Made me a cup of tea once too. And  
I've met a handful of Olympians.

EDDIE finishes his drink and adds it to his collection of empties on the table.

ISOBEL  
Promise you'll invite me if they hold  
any dances-

REX  
(immediately)  
Of course!

Suppressing laughter, EDDIE raises his eyebrows at REX, who sips his pint to hide a smile.

BERT  
(laughing)  
I can see the headlines now,  
"Millionaire marries hairdresser".

REX isn't smiling anymore. ISOBEL sits upright and sticks her little finger out as she sips her cocktail.

ISOBEL  
(in a posh accent)  
I'll remember you when I'm rich.

She breaks into laughter that her two brothers amplify. The bartender rings for last orders and ISOBEL excuses herself.

EXT. PUB - NIGHT - 1940

ISOBEL exhales cigarette smoke. She leans against the pub's brick wall and listens to a muffled "Moonlight Serenade" by Glenn Miller. The song is loud as the door opens, then quiet as REX shuts it. He puts his hands in his pockets.

ISOBEL  
My brothers leave soon.

REX  
Eddie can't wait.

ISOBEL  
He just wants to get out that  
scratchy trainee uniform.

REX laughs, ISOBEL doesn't.

ISOBEL (cont'd)  
Did he tell you they tried to get him  
to climb a mast? Who do they think  
they're fighting? The Spanish Armada?

REX  
I bet he told them where to go.

ISOBEL nods and taps her cigarette. Ash falls onto the  
concrete. There's laughter in the pub.

ISOBEL  
They'd have fired him on the spot if  
he wasn't such a good engineer.

REX  
See, he can hold his own.

She looks up at REX, suddenly panicked.

ISOBEL  
But then there's Bert. You know, they  
took a blunt needle to his arm so he  
doesn't get sick. But you don't need  
a vaccine for Germany, so where on  
Earth are they sending him?

REX looks through the window at BERT and EDDIE laughing  
together in the pub.

REX  
Bert's a smart man. Put him anywhere  
in the world and he'll figure out how  
to handle himself.

ISOBEL holds out her cigarette. REX takes it, leans against  
the wall next to her, and brings it to his lips. They both  
look out to the full moon.

REX (cont'd)  
They'll be OK.

ISOBEL  
I won't.

REX  
You'll have to be.

His tone is too harsh. REX passes the cigarette back.

REX (cont'd)  
(softer)  
I'll be here.

ISOBEL turns to face REX. He mirrors her.

ISOBEL  
You'll still come over?

REX  
Of course.

ISOBEL drops the cigarette and REX stamps it out.

ISOBEL  
I've decided against marrying a  
millionaire. Lady Isobel doesn't have  
a ring to it.

She walks to the door, then turns.

ISOBEL (cont'd)  
You can still take me to those dances  
though.

REX  
23rd of May, 9 o'clock. There's a  
little Spring celebration.

ISOBEL nods and walks into the pub. REX is elated.

INT. RAF HENDON BRIEFING ROOM - DAY - 1940

Posters for the Spring dance are dotted around the briefing room. People crowd inside, some excited, others nervous. REX looks out over the crowd to ROGER, late 20s, who stands facing his squadron. Scars burst around his left eye.

ROGER  
Split into two halves.

The squadron part down the middle. He points at a few men and they swap sides. Women are ordered to the left. REX's half is on the right. ROGER checks with the officials at the front, who nod.

ROGER (cont'd)  
(to the right half)  
Bon voyage, you're off to France.

MALLARD claps REX on the back as his half celebrate. REX looks to the nearest poster and frowns.

INT. BRISTOL BOMBAY - DAY - 1940

Still frowning, REX looks out the window. As the plane accelerates on the runway, the force throws him to the back of his seat. The wheels leave the ground and REX smiles.

EXT. MERVILLE AIRFIELD - DAY - 1940

Several muddy fields form the airfield. Tents are on the outskirts and a Hurricane graveyard lies in the middle. REX carries his rifle and a pocketful of ammunition as he walks to the stores. He wears a leather jacket and a tin hat.

INT. MERVILLE STORES - DAY - 1940

REX searches the small hut for the items on his list. Save for a few spares and the odd tool, the shelves are empty. CLAUDETTE, 30s, peaks over her newspaper behind the counter.

CLAUDETTE

(in French)

What are you looking for?

REX gives himself a moment to interpret. CLAUDETTE only bothers to wait a beat before resuming her article.

REX

Dope and fabric, please.

Finishing her sentence, CLAUDETTE tosses her paper to the side. She passes REX a bucket of dope from the back shelf.

REX (cont'd)

And fabric, please.

CLAUDETTE shakes her head.

REX (cont'd)

(in French)

Please.

CLAUDETTE

Just dope, no fabric.

REX

But-

A plane crashes outside.