

OFFICER X

PILOT

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Inspired By True Events

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OFFICER X

"JUSTICE BY NIGHTSTICK"

TEASER

EXT. BEACH LANDING ZONE - DAY

HOWLS and SCREAMS of wounded and dying MEN rise above the THUNDEROUS ROAR of BATTLE.

SUPER: "HOLLANDIA ISLAND - NEW GUINEA CAMPAIGN, 1944"

An Amphibious Landing Craft lists on its side. Oil and smoke spews from its WHINING ENGINE. Wooden crates of supplies fill the cargo hold.

SERGEANT ISAAC WOODARD JR., 24, African American, tall, lean, and battle-hardened, rushes across the beach.

Machine gun fire kicks up sand all around Isaac. He darts between the bodies floating in the water.

A HORRIFIED RECRUIT, in wide-eyed shock, paces back and forth in the tide like a child searching for seashells.

Isaac takes him by the arm.

ISAAC
(shouts)
Come with me.

The Horrified Recruit stares past Isaac.

HORRIFIED RECRUIT
I can't... can't find my helmet.

Isaac leans down. Takes one of the many helmets tumbling in the surf. He puts it on the Horrified Recruit's head. Seawater pours over the Recruit's face.

ISAAC
Come on.

Isaac drags the Horrified Recruit aboard the damaged Craft.

Isaac grabs a rope handle on one of the crates. The Recruit grabs another. Both men drag their crates off the craft and across the sand.

A shell hits the landing craft. Jagged metal flies skyward.

The Horrified Recruit stares in disbelief. Starts to speak --

MACHINE GUN FIRE tears through him. Blood and bone splatter over Isaac.

Without hesitation, Isaac grabs the handles on both crates. Struggles to drag them out of the line of fire.

BOOM. Another shell explodes. The BLAST blows Isaac back.

Black smoke from the explosion billows up the beachhead. Isaac tries to peer through the inky waves of darkness that surrounds him.

EXT. FOXHOLE - EVENING

Isaac sits in his foxhole. Stares off into the distance. His face covered in sand, oil, and the Horrified Recruit's remains.

WILKES, 33, black, war-weary, squats down next to Isaac.

WILKES

Sarge.

ISAAC

Wilkes.

Wilkes gestures to his face.

WILKES

You got...

Isaac runs a hand over his face. Eyes the muck in his palm.

ISAAC

Poor bastard.

Isaac grabs his canteen.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

He couldn't find his helmet. Water was full of 'em.

Isaac pours the canteen over his head. Washes his face.

EXT. SMALL HILL - DAY

Isaac, Wilkes, and THREE BLACK SOLDIERS load supplies onto a transport truck.

The truck pulls away and Wilkes notices--

The bodies of four Japanese soldiers, charred beyond recognition, their remains melded into each other.

WILKES

We don't stand a chance.

ISAAC

What's that?

WILKES

If they're willing to burn for this shithole, what are we gonna be up against when we invade their homeland?

ISAAC

We just take one island at a time.

A BLACK PRIVATE shakes his head.

BLACK PRIVATE

He's right, Sarge.

ISAAC

Every man on this island is scared. And for the rest of our lives, we're all gonna wake up screaming over the shit we do and see over here.

The Soldiers huddle around Isaac.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

But that's living. And that's what I intend to do. No matter how many of them I gotta kill.

He looks hard at each of his Men.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

We're all gonna keep ourselves alive over here. Right?

One by one, the four Soldiers nod in agreement.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Okay.

Another Transport truck pulls up the ridge.

Isaac breaks up the huddle -- and loads a box onto the truck.

END TEASER

ACT ONE**INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY**

SUPER: "GEORGIA. FEBRUARY 12, 1946. TWO YEARS LATER"

Isaac, 26, handsome in his dress uniform, shares a bench with PRIVATE JENNINGS STROUD, 25, white, cherub-faced, sprawled out and fast asleep.

Isaac plays a harmonica.

A YOUNG MOTHER, 24, white, sits across from Isaac. She rocks her sleeping BABY to Isaac's music.

YOUNG MOTHER
That's nice. She never sleeps.

Isaac grins. Nods to Stroud.

ISAAC
It works on this sad sack, too.

Young Mother LAUGHS. Her Baby COOS. Squirms.

ISAAC (CONT'D)
Uh-oh.

Isaac resumes playing. A kindness in his eyes.

YOUNG MOTHER
Thank you.

The Baby settles.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

A bus pulls up.

White bus driver ALTON BLACKWELL, 36, stocky, friendly, pops out of the bus. Stretches his legs and back.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

PASSENGERS stand. Collect their luggage. Isaac shakes Stroud.

ISAAC
Rise and shine, Stroud.

Stroud wakes slowly. Looks around. Wipes sleep from his eyes.

STROUD

It's a wonder I could sleep with
all that racket you were making.

Elated, both men grab their duffle bags and head outside.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - DAY

Alton takes the Passengers' bags. Stows them in the baggage hold under the bus.

ISAAC

Hope this 'Hound's fast. I been
dreaming 'bout my wife for three
years. I'm gonna walk in that house
and look at her until I believe
she's for real.

Stroud, happy-go-lucky, takes out a well-worn photograph of a YOUNG WOMAN. Petite, pretty.

STROUD

Look? Shit, I've been lookin' since
boot camp.

Alton takes Stroud's bag. Packs it with a grin.

Isaac eases up next to Alton. Holds out his bag.

Alton's grin fades. He side-eyes Isaac. Notes the four medals on Isaac's uniform. Gestures to the baggage hold.

ALTON

Toss it in yourself.

Isaac hesitates. Alton ignores him. Wanders off.

Isaac stows his bag. Follows Stroud to the bus door.

Alton blocks their path.

ALTON (CONT'D)

I 'spect there'll be more room for
ya in the back.

Isaac flashes a winning smile at Alton.

ISAAC

Whatever gets me home.

Alton steps aside. Isaac and Stroud climb on board.

EXT. TWO-LANE ROAD - DAY

The bus tears down a stretch of road.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - DAY

Isaac plays an upbeat, sing-along folk tune on his harmonica. Stroud claps and sings.

Passengers sing along.

The song ends. Passengers erupt in laughter and applause.

ISAAC

Thank you, thank you.

Stroud swigs a fifth of whiskey. Offers it to Isaac.

Isaac waves it away. Slips the harmonica into his shirt pocket. Closes his eyes.

Alton adjusts his rearview mirror. Eyes the soldiers.

EXT. GREYHOUND GAS STATION - NIGHT - HOURS LATER

The bus pulls up to a pump.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT

Isaac shifts in his seat. Bounces his leg.

Alton turns to the Passengers.

ALTON

We're only here to refuel, so
everyone please stay seated.

Alton steps outside.

Isaac grabs his crotch. Scurries down the aisle.

INT. GREYHOUND GAS STATION - NIGHT

The ATTENDANT, 20, white, pumps gas.

Alton spots Isaac leaving the bus.

ALTON

Back on the bus, please.

Isaac grabs his crotch again. Squeezes hard.

ISAAC
Sir, if I could, I sure need to use
the latrine.

ALTON
Boy, stop grabbing your pecker and
get your black ass back on the bus.

ISAAC
Why are you talking to me like
that? I'm a grown man fixin' to
piss hisself.

Alton spits on the ground.

ALTON
Don't think I won't leave your ass.

Isaac trots off. Alton watches him go.

ALTON (CONT'D)
(to Attendant)
Got a phone?

The Attendant points toward his office.

INT. ORSON WELLES'S HOME - SWANKY LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

A star-powered cocktail party filled with the best of Hollywood, all jubilant and tipsy. The men are in tuxes, the ladies in gowns. It's high-society, high-glitz and highballs all around.

RITA HAYWORTH, 28, flits about the room, chats with GUESTS. Her famous red hair curls around her pin-up-girl face.

ACROSS THE ROOM

ORSON WELLES, 31, handsome, intelligent, with an oversized personality and ambition, hands a cigar to--

SAM SPIEGEL, 45, pompous, entitled. He takes in the room.

SAM
Orson, I hope you didn't do all of
this just for me.

Orson lights Sam's cigar. Sizes up the party.

ORSON

All what?

CLAUDETTE COLBERT, 43, an exquisite, flirtatious redhead, cozies up between Sam and Orson.

CLAUDETTE

Talk about two boys up to no good.

ORSON

Just admiring you from afar,
Claudette.

CLAUDETTE

I prefer being admired up close.

Rita eases between Orson and Claudette.

SAM

Rita, everything is perfect.

RITA

Thank you, Sam.

Orson kisses Rita on the cheek.

SAM

Well now.

Sam drifts over to a bookcase -- observes an Oscar statuette. Takes it from the shelf.

CLOSE ON OSCAR INSCRIPTION: "ORSON WELLES FOR WRITING ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY OF CITIZEN KANE."

Claudette takes the Oscar from Sam.

CLAUDETTE

I saw it in his trailer on the set.

Rita draws away from Orson. It's subtle. But Orson notices.

SAM

You deserved Best Director.

ORSON

I deserved Best Picture.

SAM

No reason we can't win both with
The Stranger.

Claudette puts the Oscar back on the shelf.

SAM (CONT'D)

Of course we'll need to discuss the changes you requested.

ORSON

Think of them as improvements.

RITA

(to Orson and Sam)
It's official, I'm bored.

Rita takes Claudette's glass.

RITA (CONT'D)

Let's freshen that up.

The two redheads sashay to--

THE BAR

Rita and Claudette reach for new martinis.

RITA

How was he?

CLAUDETTE

Pardon?

RITA

Please. I know you slept with him.

CLAUDETTE

Rita... you're serious? I'd never.

RITA

Why else would he carry that stupid Oscar from set to set.

Rita scrutinizes Claudette. Knocks back her drink.

RITA (CONT'D)

It's gotten him more women than work, I'll give him that.

Claudette wiggles her index and middle fingers.

CLAUDETTE

Darling, if I wanted to screw someone with an Oscar, I'd simply put my fingers to work.

She saunters off.

RITA
(to BARTENDER)
Numb me.

Rita slams her glass on the bar.

ACROSS THE ROOM

Sam and Orson huddle in a haze of cigar smoke.

SAM
Regarding The Stranger, I'm seeing
Robinson in the lead.

ORSON
Edward's a sonuvabitch.

SAM
He's bankable. You need that.

ORSON
You assured me that I could expect
some control.

SAM
Some control.

Sam puts a hand on Orson's shoulder.

SAM (CONT'D)
Only the great Orson Welles would
want to use footage of the
concentration camps.

ORSON
The entire film centers around the
search for a Nazi war criminal.
Logic dictates we show the crime.

SAM
Actual footage!

ORSON
I need it, Sam. It's a deal
breaker.

SAM
Orson, you're not going to walk
away from this film. Hell, you're
more apt to get fired.

ORSON
Just give me the camp footage.

Sam looks skeptical.

SAM
Keep it tasteful.

ORSON
They're death camps, Sam.

SAM
Don't make me regret this.

Sam raises his glass and drifts off.

Orson gazes over his party. Spots Rita by the bar. They lock eyes and exchange half-hearted smiles.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT

Passengers sleep. Air brakes sneeze. The bus slows.

EXT. GREYHOUND BUS STATION - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

SUPER: "BATESBURG, SOUTH CAROLINA."

The bus eases into the lot. Two cop cars wait. Flashing bubble tops cast a blood-red glow.

INT. GREYHOUND BUS - NIGHT

Isaac stirs. Looks out the window at the cop cars.

Alton opens the door.

CHIEF LYNWOOD SHULL, 40, cocky, arrogant, burly, gray hair cropped short, steps inside.

Alton points to Isaac.

Chief Shull marches down the aisle. Shines his flashlight into Isaac's eyes.

CHIEF SHULL
Get up.

ISAAC
Excuse me?

CHIEF SHULL
Get off the bus.

Chief Shull lowers his flashlight. Stares Isaac down.

INT. ORSON WELLES'S HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rita, in a silk nightgown and heels, brushes her hair at a vanity.

IN THE VANITY MIRROR

Rita sees Orson behind her. He leans in for a kiss.

Rita flips her hair into Orson's face.

ORSON
What's wrong?

RITA
Feeling guilty?

ORSON
I'm feeling tired. Too tired for
this, anyway.

Orson heads to the bed. Plops down.

ORSON (CONT'D)
Did you see Sam ambush me tonight?

RITA
He's asked you to direct, write,
and star in his next movie. He's
entitled to ambush you.

ORSON
That's the problem, it's his movie.

Rita glides over.

RITA
You're just upset that Sam doesn't
realize you're a genius.

ORSON
I'm upset that he doesn't care.

She slips out of her heels and into bed.

RITA
Make Sam happy. Then he'll let you
direct me.

ORSON
I can't afford you.

RITA
Probably not.

Rita turns out the light.

Orson laughs. He can't help it. He fucking loves her.

EXT. BAPTIST HOSPITAL - DAY

SUPER: "AIKEN, SOUTH CAROLINA. TWO WEEKS LATER"

INT. BAPTIST HOSPITAL - DOCTOR MEADE'S OFFICE - DAY

WALTER FRANCIS WHITE, 52, a light-skinned African American with blue eyes, blonde hair, and an air of composure and intelligence looks out the window of a small office.

DOCTOR MEADE, 30, white, all business, hustles in.

WALTER
Doctor Meade, I'm Walter Francis
from the National Association for
the Advancement of Colored People.

Dr. Meade eyes Walter with surprise.

DR. MEADE
Mr. Francis?

Walter extends his hand. The men shake.

WALTER
Thank you for contacting us.

DR. MEADE
Honestly, I didn't know who else to
call.

Walter grabs his briefcase as Doctor Meade takes off down--

THE HALLWAY

Walter follows Doctor Meade.

WALTER
How is he?

DR. MEADE
Bad. His eyes were gouged.

Walter stops in his tracks.

WALTER
Gouged... out?

DR. MEADE
For all intents and purposes.
Officers told the admissions nurse
he resisted arrest.

WALTER
About that.

Walter pulls a form out of his briefcase.

WALTER (CONT'D)
There's no name on Mr. Woodard's
admission form. No arresting
officer. No identification of the
officer or officers who dropped him
off. Even the police report is
unsigned.

DR. MEADE
He's hardly the first negro to be
dropped off anonymously.

WALTER
He's a decorated soldier.

DR. MEADE
A negro with medals. That bullseye
just got a lot bigger.

Dr. Meade softens.

DR. MEADE (CONT'D)
Look, he's had a rough go. I'm just
relieved they sent you instead
of...

Walter looks at him quizzically.

DR. MEADE (CONT'D)
Instead of another negro. Last
thing we need is the blind leading
the blind.

Walter doesn't bat an eye.

Doctor Meade points to a door down the hall.

DR. MEADE (CONT'D)
He's just down there. Last bed on
the right.

Doctor Meade heads back down the hall. Walter hurries into

INT. BAPTIST HOSPITAL - AFRICAN AMERICAN WARD - CONTINUOUS

Beds line both sides of the room.

BLACK PATIENTS mingle about, some on crutches or in wheelchairs.

Isaac lies in bed. His forehead and eyes covered in bandages.

Walter approaches Isaac's bedside.

WALTER

Mr. Woodard, I'm Walter Francis. We spoke on the phone.

Isaac holds out his hand. Walter shakes it.

ISAAC

Did you reach my wife?

WALTER

She'll be here soon.

Isaac works a finger under the bandages. Scratches his cheek.

ISAAC

I want these off before she sees me.

WALTER

That's up to your doctor.

ISAAC

Ain't no doctors here, you ask me.

WALTER

That's why we want to move you into the VA Hospital in New York.

ISAAC

Whoa. Whoa.

WALTER

Your parents live there, correct?

ISAAC

My home is in South Carolina. My wife is in South Carolina.

WALTER

I understand, but you need a hospital specifically for the blind.

ISAAC

These doctors don't know if I'm blind. And you for damn sure don't know.

WALTER

We just want to get you the proper care.

ISAAC

And I'm just suppose to sit here wrapped up and shut up.

WALTER

Far from it. I'm here to personally take a sworn affidavit for any trial--

ISAAC

--Already tried my ass. Judge didn't listen to me then, and you ain't listening to me now.

Isaac swings his legs over the side of the bed. Stands.

ISAAC (CONT'D)

Just leave me be.

Isaac feels around his bedside table. Grabs a white plastic urinal jar. Fumbles with the lid.

He turns his back to Walter. Pisses.

END ACT ONE