

Flight to Ploesti

by

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The familiar sound of the jeep scurrying from tent to tent
Awakened us this Sunday morning with a purpose and intent.
Out over the horizon, the dawn was just beginning to break
And the sun was slowly rising; emitting a bright golden light.
This was a beautiful morning, as many Sundays have been in the past.
Only this particular Sunday, there was a difference, it could be our last.
This is the first day of August in nineteen forty-three
When one hundred fifty Liberator bombers were heading for Ploesti.
There was more than the usual excitement as we prepared for this flight.
It seemed as if we were all concerned about each other's plight.
This was a mission to be flown, at one hundred fifty feet
And for a four-engine bomber, this is an incredible feat.
The crews were getting ready and wishing each other luck
As we hurried to our ships and jumped off the squadron truck.
Quickly we assembled and together we silently prayed,
Then as an after-thought, some last-minute plans were made.
Every man for himself; no matter what might be
That's the way each of us wanted it to be.
We sapped a few pictures; poked a little fun, smoked a cigarette, then decided we were done.

Boilermaker was waiting, so in we went.

We re'ved up her engines and then waited to be sent.

As we taxied to position our engines suddenly roared

And we were racing down the runway gaining speed to soar.

Suddenly the tension, a momentary fear

Seems to overtake you until you're lifted into the air.

Climbing and climbing high up into the sun

We gently circle and become as one.

The fear has ended as we fly with our team

Yet it all seems unreal, more like a dream.

All of a sudden; far below, a puff of smoke rises in the air

Needless to say, some of our buddies gave their lives right then and there.

We fly along side by side, every man ready and alert

When all of a sudden, a ship blows up,

And man, somebody really got hurt.

The hours drag by, and we wonder why the enemy has refused to attack us.

Unmolested we go, still flying our planes low

Hoping they never come after us.

All of a sudden, clouds appear and as we fly onward, we cannot see

But suddenly, there's a clear blue sky and before us lies Ploesti!

So down we dive to make our run

We release our bombs and then give her the gun.

Down and down as close to the ground as one can possibly be
The liberators speed over the cornfields, a remarkable sight to see.
Bombs and cannon and machine guns galore
Explode around you with a deadening roar.
Ships in flame, fall to the ground,
Others blow up, nowhere to be found.
All hell breaks loose, and death is near,
For this is the moment of flight and fear.
You pray as you flight, there's no time to choose;
You either win, or your life you lose.
Then suddenly, all the chaos comes to an end.
We crash in flames, but our lives don't end.
We jump from our ship, every man for himself
For these were the rules that we brought about.
As I look overhead, the Liberators still fly.
I wave them onward, to do or to die.
But before they all leave, me and my crew
We salute these men and bid them adieu.
Off we go, to the cornfield close by.
We gather together, to determine our lie.
But before we can begin our journey to the west,
A little boy appears; pointing to our nest.

Suddenly, machine gun bullets ripple through the air with zest.

For we have been surrounded and are put to the test.

So, with hands held high we walk slowly to our plight;

For we are prisoners from the Ploesti flight.