



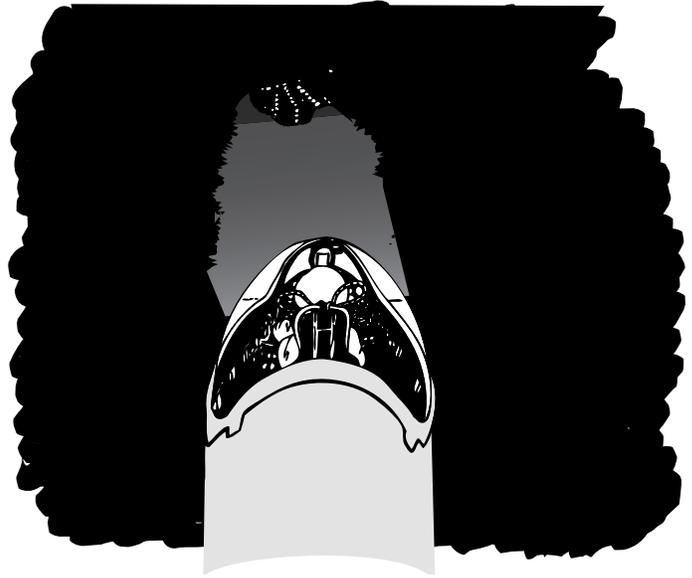
It was not hot and dusty that night at sea — it was your basic dark and stormy, with rain and lightning and waves and wind and pitching deck of USS Boat. Lesser men might have whimpered, but not LT(jg) Youthly Puresome, intrepid Naval Aviator Fighter Pilot, who was airborne keeping the carrier safe for democracy. Indeed, all the time he was holding on autopilot in his F-8 *Crusader* at the Combat Air Patrol station, his radar sweeping the black of night for the wily MiG, his jaw jutted and his steely eyes glittered the glitter of the righteous.

I Got it, God

But, as his petrol expended and the time for the carrier controlled approach (CCA) approached, Puresome increasingly consulted his Tacan needle and DME, which bearing and distance seemed to magically match that of a fierce thunderstorm anchored overhead USS Boat. Except for the lightning flashes that strobed the churning clouds, the night was as dark as the bowels of Grong, the goat god.

As he headed for the marshal stack and CCA, Puresome sensed that the night was turning to guano, which, of course, it was. Marshal was, indeed, in the clag. Rain pelted the sleek 55-foot long, supersonic *Crusader* which, despite expert aviating, began making weird night noises from the excessive dark that was flowing through the mighty J57 while the night air sucked lift from the wings. CCA controllers howled hysterically while aircraft bolted and screamed for a tanker. As demonic forces conspired against him, Puresome contemplated the worst: “I’d rather be dead than look bad!”

Then, as a lightning flash illuminated the dimly-lit cockpit, Puresome consulted The Big Guy: “Lord, I ain’t much for speechifying, but if You’d just fly this one approach and trap, I promise I’ll give up happy hour, cigars, acey-deucey, and humiliating attack pukes.”



Knowing Puresome to be a damn-near 4.0 fighter pilot, The Big Guy shook the controls and said, “I’ve got it, son!”

God was a natural stick — he pushed over from marshal to the second of his EAT, slid down the final bearing at exactly 4,000 fpm and 250 knots, slowed appropriately at the platform, dirtied at 10 miles, flew exactly on glideslope through the clag to a perfectly centered meatball at half a mile.

“Jehovah, ball, state one point oh,” God reported.

“Roger, ball,” responded the LSO.

God flew an underlined OK-3 wire.

As the sleek fighter rolled out from the trap, Puresome grabbed the stick and shook it, snarling, “I got it, God, you never could taxi worth a shit!”

— *With thanks to John “Flaps” Braly, VF-162*