

Meeting during Wartime 1943

Von Rescue

Kapitel 1: First Contact

Meeting during Wartime (1943)

The main problem with the EVA-Characters is, there are both women and men to include in a realistic scenario. Now there lays the main problem for you when you're trying to weave a military background for your story. For this little story I decided on a pure Asuka/Shinji setting during WW2 in the USA.

Asuka is a mechanic and test-pilot for North American Aviation, the producer of the legendary P-51 Mustang. She's one of the many quality control people who check the newly manufactured warplanes a final time before they are declared combat ready.

Shinji is a Pilot of the 55th Fighting Group in Nuthampstead/England who's main combat objective is to provide cover for the B-17 "Flying Fortress" and the B-24 "Liberators" of the 8th Air Force against the Me-109 and Fw-190 of the German Luftwaffe (Air Force).

You may ask now 'When Asuka is in the States and Shinji is stationed in Europe, how can there be a romantic set-up?' Well it's easy ... even when it's a little bit sad. Please don't kill me when you find out the reason I mentioned, OK?

One more before we start with the story. The in the story used squadron names, designations, ship names, locations and names of historic persons are used to honour those who have served their country's in the last great war. I may be German by birth, but I have the highest regard for every soldier who fought or died in WW2 regardless their individual home country. Those men stood up for what they thought was just and fair and should be never ever forgotten by the following generations.

Dedicated to all those who died in their fight for peace and freedom all over the world, may the be Americans, Russians, Germans, French or whatsoever. Rest in peace with the thought that your sacrifices will never be forgotten as long as people remember those dark times of mankind.

Prologue - First Contact

Location: NAA P-51 Main Production Line, Los Angeles
(NAA stands for North American Aviation)

Asuka Langley had a wonderful day. Not only was it wonderful sunny and warm. No, the best on that day was her upcoming test-flight of the day. One of the two prototypes for the new D-Model of the P-51 Mustang was finally finished and she was the pilot of the day, so she would have the pleasure of spinning that new beauty through the sky.

She was very proud of her position with NAA. Because of her heritage, half Japanese and half German, her family had to endure a lot of hardship and open hostility, but she simply refused to let that hinder her in her life. In 1940 she had finished her Pilot training and together with her licence she finished her mechanic education at NAA. Her performance was above all other trainees and even the CIA, who had checked her background more than a few times, couldn't find a reason to block her further employment with NAA. Now, in 1943, she was the Pilot of choice whenever there was a problem with one of the new planes, because of her natural talent for flying and mechanics she was able to solve nearly every possibly problem.

Walking in front of the production hall she approached her plane, which was currently checked up once more by a few mechanics, a small smile making her normally stunning features even more stunning.

"Hey, Jeffrey! How's my little baby doing this morning?"

"Morning Asuka. She's ready to burn the sky whenever you wish." Replied Jeffrey. With his 47 years Jeffrey saw sometimes a daughter in the fiery young Pilot and seeing her with a smiling face like that made his heart fill with joy.

"Good to hear that. Say Jeffrey do you know what that memo means? I found it on my desk this morning and I can't make much sense out of it."

Taking the memo in his hand Jeffrey read through the memo. He read:

Miss Langley,

We wish to inform you of the upcoming arrival of Lieutenant Shinji Ikari within the next five days.

Please prepare yourself for a demonstration of the new D-Model of the Mustang you are currently testing.

Sincerely yours
Dutch Kindelberger
NAA - COE

"I don't know Asuka. I've never heard of this Ikari before, but his name sounds

Japanese, like your second last name Soryu."

"Yeah I noticed it to. That's really strange you know. Well, let's worry about that later, now I want to dance a little bit trough the sky with this beauty."

Location: 60 Miles Southeast of Los Angeles

During the next 1 ¼ hour Asuka pressed her Mustang trough some daring manoeuvres which the plane executed willingly and with ease. Asuka was preparing her descent after she finished her test program when she saw a P-38 "Lightning" moving to her 3 o'clock position. Curious at what would happen next, she locked intently at the cockpit of the "Lightning" for any sings from the pilot. She wasn't disappointed when he asked her with hand sings for her radio frequency.

"Hello there buddy, so that's the new D-Mustang. Doesn't look that impressive to me after all the fuss made about it."

"Yeah, what would someone knew about a good fighter who's flying a museum like the P-38."

The radio had the nice effect that it masked the true gender of Asuka and so the foreign Pilot didn't know that the other was a women.

"Museum he? Let's see if you're able to follow me."

"You're on. Lead the way."

The next 30 minutes were truly interesting. The unknown Pilot in his P-38 was leading Asuka through some really hard manoeuvres, like a Cuban Eight, an Inverse Looping even a Tail-Slide. Especially the last manoeuvre, the Tail-Slide, made Asuka sweat in her cockpit.

Explanation: Tail-Slide means, that you bring your plane in a 90° climb and reduce your power until the plane drops back over it's tail. This manoeuvre is extremely dangerous, because the plane is almost uncontrollable in that phase of the manoeuvre.

'Ether he's really dump or he's combat experience with his plane. That manoeuvre was really something.' "Hey you Pilot. I'm tired and I have not much fuel left. Let's call it a day and let me head back to my base so I can finish my reports in time."

"All right Mustang that's fine with me. I follow you down to NAA, I'm ordered to report there ... by the way, do you know the other Pilots of NAA?"

"Of course do I knew my colleagues at NAA. Why do you ask?"

"Well ... that's better to talk face to face on the ground and with a nice cool beer in

front of you, you're on?"

"OK, follow me down."

The two warplanes were standing at their respective parking positions when Asuka noticed something under the canopy of the P-38. 'What are those marks under his cockpit? They look like ... OH MY GOD!!! Those are kill marks, but ... there at least a dozen marks, he's an ace combat pilot.' Asuka thought in awe. Her respect for the unknown pilot went up several steps.

Climbing out of the cockpit, she handed her headgear to Jeffrey, who was looking curious at the female Pilot. "Asuka, who's that "Lightning" you brought back?"

"I really don't know Jeffrey. He appeared suddenly out of nowhere, challenged me for an aerobatics match and told me afterwards he's ordered to report here. Otherwise I have no clue."

"Mmh, strange." Jeffrey mumbled.

"Something wrong Jeffrey?"

"I don't know Asuka, but have you taken a real look at the "Lightning" of that pilot? Both tails are covered with repair patches and the gun muzzles are scorched black. That plane has seen a lot of action if you ask me."

"Well Jeffrey, let's find out some more about that mysterious pilot."

Asuka reached the P-38 when the pilot was checking his starboard pylon for reasons only he knew. Stepping behind the men Asuka cleared her throat to get his attention. Moving from under the starboard tail of his plane the pilot turned to look at Asuka and Jeffrey. Asuka prided herself with her nerves of steel, but what she now saw made her gasp and take a step back.

It was a young pilot, around 25/26 with a muscular built, but what shocked Asuka was his face. His whole right side was horrible burned. Just looking at him made Asuka wince in pain.

The Pilot had a surprised look on his face, obviously he hadn't expected a female Pilot to greet him. That look quickly changed into a sad one when he noticed the shocked look in the faces of the two persons in front of him.

"I'm sorry, but my face is what it is. Just say where I can find Mister Kindelberger and you won't have to look at me again." Even when his eyes were sad his stance told everyone he was a proud person, proud to be alive and able to make a difference where it counts.

Asuka was speechless (I know. Hell will freeze over before our Asuka is speechless,

but hey come on. This is an AU-Story) and so Jeffrey took the initiative and answered the Pilot. "Please excuse our behaviour Sir. We are sorry if we have offended you, but ..."

"It's all right. I'm still learning to come accustomed with such reactions toward my appearance."

"May I ask ..."

"You want to know what happened with my face?"

"I'm sorry but to be frankly, yes I would like to know what happened."

"Is that's OK with the lady?" Asuka just nodded.

"Well my squadron and I, together with two other squadrons, were escorting a group of B-17 "Fortress" from the 306th BG(H) (Bomb Group, Heavy) to a target in France, when we were attacked by German 109's. That wasn't so bad, we had become accustomed with their attack stile. What made it bad was the fact that we were under continues attack for more that 1 ½ hours. We were all low on ammunition and fuel and were forced to turn around and head back to base, when we were ambushed from out of the sun. It was a swarm (a group of 4 planes) of those damned Fw-190's, they danced through our formation as if we were sitting ducks. One of the Krauts made a pass on my wingman and I tried to disturb his line of fire, so that my wingman could make an escape. That Pilot was really good and now I was his chosen target, he hung on my six as if he was clued to my plane. We danced our deadly tango for about seven minutes in which I brought my "Lightning" near her tolerance border and well above said border. That damn Focke-Wulf was pumping my plane with bullets as if it was trying to make me appear like a Swiss cheese. One of the fire bursts hit my nose compartment and set my left over ammunition on fire. I was lucky that I had only a few shots left and a fire extinguisher for the gun compartment installed by the tech's for the whole squadron two months ago that rescued my live together with my squad mates who busted that Kraut out of the sky. To my bad luck were there enough flames to ignite my flight-combo and that burned my upper right body half. After that fight I was barely able to fly back to my base in England and only the fact that my squad mates were flying the whole way with me in tight formation and keeping me awake the whole time by screaming over the radio enabled me to make a save return. That was five months ago, the last four were spend in hospitals in England, after that I returned to the States."

"Sir, please accept my apology and thanks for your trust by telling us this story." Jeffrey thanked the Pilot. "May I ask you for your name Sir? I'm chief mechanic Jeffrey Thomson."

"Of course Mr. Thomson. I'm Lieutenant Shinji Ikari from the 55th FG (Fighter Group). It was nice to meet you. See you someday."

"Good luck and clear sky's Lieutenant."

"Thank you Mr. Thomson, Ma'am." With that said Shinji left the pair standing beside his old "Lightning" and made his way toward the office building of NAA.

Jeffrey followed the young Pilot with his eyes until he turned the hangar corner and vanished from his sight. He maybe had a soft spot for Asuka, but what had happened here made him angry, real angry.

"OK Asuka, what the hell happened here?" Asuka just stood there for several more seconds until she looked at him.

"Jeff ... I don't ... I don't really know what happened. I was ..."

"Asuka, I see you sometimes as if you were my own daughter, but what you did right now was inexcusable. That young Pilot put his life in danger so that others could someday live a normal and peaceful life. For that ideal he was wounded and marked for the rest of his life and you looked at him as if he was something disgusting to look at."

"Jeffrey please I ..."

"Don't "Jeffrey please" me Asuka. I'm truly disappointed in you young Lady. I know your life wasn't always milk and honey, but you had the chance to pull yourself together and it brought you to where you are now, here at NAA as one of our best Pilots. That young man hasn't that chance anymore. He has to live with the result of his decision to make a difference for the rest of his life."

"That's not it Jeffrey!!!" Asuka yelled startling the older man. "It's just ... he looks like ... I don't know ... he reminds me of someone special."

Now it was Jeffrey's turn to be speechless. "Someone special Asuka? Our little princess had someone special once in her young life?" Jeffrey couldn't withstand the sudden urge to tease his young protégée.

"JEFFREY! DON'T TEASE ME!" Asuka said through clenched teeth. "When I had my final exams for my pilot license in 1940, my flight instructor was visited by a group of Air Force members. They wanted to take two of the schools "Stearmans" out for a spin. Just to relax from their own trials to become qualified combat Pilots and I think that Pilot was one of them. He had such a nice smile and such a gentle way to speak with you ... I felt some kind of ... well ... connection with him."

"Asuka dear. I'm sorry that I snapped at you, but I'm so sick of such reactions toward returning soldiers who were injured during combat."

"Jeffrey, I don't mind his injury. What really captured me then were his eyes, they were like a window to his soul and now ..."

"Asuka what's wrong?"

"They were so empty, like he lost that kind spirit I last saw in him. Oh Jeffrey, it's so unfair. Why has such a good man to suffer so much? Why?" Asuka's eyes had become wet during her talk, a sight that unnerved Jeffrey who had never seen Asuka displaying her emotions so openly. Gently he pulled the young woman in his arms and tried his best to reassure her of herself again.

"Asuka dear, sometimes bad things happen, you know that better than most people. It's then up to each person to make the best out of it and by the way that young Ikari was keeping himself upright I'm sure he had come to terms with it."

"Haven't you heard what I said Jeffrey? His eyes lost what made him so special! That's what shocked me so hard!"

"OK Asuka, I understand. Now breathe in deeply a few times and calm down, all right? We still have to finish out paperwork for today and I want to go home today before my wife sends the MP to haul me back home."

"Come on Jeffrey. That wasn't so bad, at least we had a reasonable excuse for working overtime then."

"Reasonable in your eyes Asuka, but not for my Catherine. She was ready to fry me the moment I stepped through the door and only the fact that you were with me kept her at bay."

With that successful change of topic Jeffrey and Asuka made their way into their offices beside the hangar where a group of NAA technicians was busy checking the N.A.109 (NAA Internal designation for the two prototypes of the P-51D) for any damages caused by the latest test flight.

Office of Dutch Kindelberger COE of NAA

"Mr. Kindelberger?" came the voice of Jacqueline Carlson, the secretary through the door. "The Lieutenant you were awaiting is here. Shall I send him in or are you currently busy?"

"It's OK Jacqueline send him in." Replied Mr. Kindelberger. 'Well, let's take a look at that liaison the Air Force had send to me.' Shinji stepped through the door, but not before he thank Miss Carlson for her help. 'At least this one has some manners, not like the last they send. What a self absorbed bastard that was!'

"Mr. Kindelberger, Lieutenant Shinji Ikari reporting as ordered." Shinji said and stood at attention in front of his desk.

"At ease Mr. Ikari, we're not the military here, please have a seat."

"Thank you Sir. If you would excuse me Sir, but were you informed about my duty's here? I have to admit that my orders were a bit vague in that point."

"Well Mr. Ikari a group of smart people from the Air Force decided some time ago that the experience from combat pilots should be included in the in development of the new fighter models and you were chosen to be one of them here at NAA for the new D model of our Mustang."

"But Sir, I'm a Lightning Pilot! I have not the necessary knowledge required for such a task!"

"Quite the opposite is true Mr. Ikari. You have everything we need to fulfil your role here with us."

"Please forgive me Sir, but I don't see how I can me of use for your company."

"Than let me explain the idea behind that all. As a successful Lightning Pilot you knew about the advantages and disadvantages of the P-38 Lightning. Am I right?"

"That's correct Sir."

"We here at NAA now want to know what you think abilities a plane should have that could outperform your Lightning."

"Outperform the Lightning? That could be really difficult Sir."

"How so?"

"Well, if you overlook the slight engine problems of the Lightning and the fact that because of her dimensions the Lightning is not a close combat fighter, is the P-38 one hell of a fighter plane. Her capability of handling combat damages is nearly unrivalled besides the new Navy plane, the Vought F4U Corsair. She can carry a drop last of 1,8 tons (4.000 pound) and her armament with one MK and four MG's is very effective in combat. Every new fighter who should peak those performances would be hard to develop and consume way to much time. Why are you looking that way at me Sir?"

"You have proven yourself perfect for our situation here Mr. Ikari. The indicated performances are indeed hard to top, but we don't plan to top each single one with our new Mustang model. We planed to enhance certain areas and we want the insight only experienced combat pilot have to decide in which order we should arrange the improvements."

To be continued

This should be enough for an appetiser, don't you agree. Regarding the feedback to that little story I will decide when or if I continue this scenario.

As usual keep please in mind that I'm German and as such my English knowledge is limited.

