

OPERATION HAILSTONE

**By**

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FADE IN:

**INT. USS ENTERPRISE — SLEEPING QUARTERS — NIGHT**

**SUPER: "FEBRUARY 15, 1944."**

Ben Thompson writes his letter to his mother while his brother is still sleeping.

BEN THOMPSON [V.O.]

*Dear Mother,*

*We're one step closer to hunting down the last two carriers that hit us at Pearl Harbor. My cousin, Bill, fought at Tarawa against the Japanese garrison while my brother and I fought at Makin Atoll, and I felt bad for Noah. Jack was assigned as the SBD rear gunner. We joined the fighter squadron led by Butch O'Hare until he sacrifices himself to save our pilots from the enemy bombers. Jack is now a flight leader of Air Group 10. I was fear the enemy will use their planes to eliminate our fleet before reaching the heart of Japan. We'll promise we'll be at home after we sank all the carriers and Pearl Harbor will be avenged.*

*Love, Ben and John Thompson.*

Ben puts the letter inside the envelope and puts it away.

GO TO:

**TITLE: WORLD WAR II: THE ANIMATED SERIES**

GO TO:

**EPISODE TITLE: OPERATION HAILSTONE**

GO TO:

**EXT. TRUK ATOLL — DAY**

**SUPER: "FEBRUARY 16, 1944."**

A wave of American Hellcats from *USS Intrepid* speed toward Truk Atoll to prepare for their strafing run on the enemy stronghold.

**INT. ALEXANDER VRACIU'S HELLCAT - DAY**

ALEXANDER VRACIU

(on radio) LOU, this is LIEUTENANT  
VRACIU. Any sign of the Zeros?

**INT. LOU LITTLE'S HELLCAT - DAY**

LOU LITTLE

(on radio) Negative, Lieutenant,  
but I see the Jap Transports at  
Truk Atoll.

ALEXANDER VRACIU [V.O.]

(over the radio) Then prepare for  
a strafing run.

LOU LITTLE

(on radio) But, sir, the Japs  
already scramble for intercept.

Stock footage from *Dogfights: Season 1* shows five Japanese Zeros  
attacking the Hellcats at 3,000 feet above at 7 o'clock.

**INT. ALEXANDER VRACIU'S HELLCAT - DAY**

ALEXANDER VRACIU

(on radio) This is Alex speaking!  
We're under attack! I repeat,  
we're under attack! The Zeros are  
diving on us at 7 o'clock!

LOU LITTLE [V.O.]

(over the radio) We're too late!  
Our Air Group is already attacking  
Truk Atoll!

ALEXANDER VRACIU

(on radio) Then we must fight the  
Zeros ourselves. Follow me.

**INT. LOU LITTLE'S HELLCAT - DAY**

LOU LITTLE

(on radio) Roger. I'm with you.

Two Hellcats bank to the left. After the Zero dives away, the other Zero swings around on Vraciu's tail. They use the chandelle maneuver by pushing the high G maneuver. The Japanese Zero tries to catch up with the Hellcat but it ends up stalling. Before the Hellcats pursue the falling Zero, more Zeros are closing in on two Hellcats. So, the Americans decided to use the Thatch Weave maneuver to evade the attacking Zeros. Vraciu follows the Zero to the water and shoots the Japanese plane down with .50 caliber machine guns. After shooting down the second Zero, Vraciu spots a Rufe floatplane diving towards Truk Atoll. Again, he fires at the Japanese floatplane and explodes. Vraciu spots another Zero at 12 o'clock low. This Zero was ducking cloud-to-cloud. Vraciu takes out the Zero with .50 caliber rounds at 5 o'clock causing the Zero to plummet in a flaming spiral.

DISSOLVE TO:

**INT. USS ENTERPRISE — SLEEPING QUARTERS — DAY**

Meanwhile, on *USS Enterprise*, Caden told Noah about the last battle at Makin.

NOAH

So, Jack taught you while he's in rear gunner position at Makin?

CADEN

Yep. At least he didn't shoot down any Zeros.

NOAH

I know. The Japs don't know where we hit them.

CADEN

I was thinking of the same thing, Noah. Alexander Vraciu and 11 Hellcats of *USS Intrepid* already made a free-ranging fighter sweep but they didn't know the Zeros were diving on them.

NOAH

But one of them is a floatplane version of the Japanese Zero.

CADEN

A floatplane? You mean the Rufe?

NOAH

Yes, Rufes is also used as night-fighters of the Pacific. They take off and land on the water instead of landing on the runway.

CADEN

I didn't know the Japs can take off and land on water, but there are other Jap floatplanes in the Pacific such as Pete and Dave.

NOAH

We missed the night interception mission last year, but you, Caden, were present for a dive-bombing mission at Makin with Jack.

CADEN

I know and I'm sorry you missed out at Makin, Noah.

NOAH

That's alright, Caden. I'll be happy as your rear gunner.

Jack and THE BOMBARDIER enter the sleeping quarters.

JACK

Caden and Noah, this is Thomas, he'll be joining you as the bombardier.

NOAH

Hello, Thomas.

THOMAS

I'm surprised that you survived the crash-landing on the carrier flight deck, Noah.

NOAH

Yeah. It's scary when I land on the carrier's flight deck and catch fire.

THOMAS

And you must be Caden.

CADEN

Yep, it's me alright.

THOMAS

We had a briefing earlier and CAPTAIN GARDNER ordered us to attack Truk Atoll. The Thompson Brothers are already preparing for a dive-bombing mission to sink the enemy ships and you two will join me to bomb the enemy ground targets to fly the TBF Avenger.

NOAH

What? Are you kidding me?

THOMAS

No, I'm not. Jack and the Hellcats will cover us at Truk Atoll in case any Zeros attack us.

CADEN

So, no torpedo attack on the ships?

THOMAS

That's right, Caden. As your bombardier, I'll drop as many bombs to hit every Jap ground targets as possible at Truk Atoll.

CADEN

Good. We don't have to worry about missing the ground targets at Truk Atoll.

THOMAS

I'm pleased to hear about you and Noah, Caden. Now let's go to plane and hit the enemy ground targets at Truk Atoll.

Caden and Noah follow Thomas to the flight deck.

**EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - FLIGHT DECK - DAY**

Caden climbs inside TBF's cockpit while Noah is in the rear gunner position. Thomas is the only TBF Bomber Crew who enters the middle seat.

CADEN

Thomas? I thought you would lead *Enterprise's* Torpedo Squadron.

THOMAS

No, I'll be the bombardier today, because nobody was using the middle seat of TBF for a long time, but I'll be happy to guide you and Noah.

CADEN

What should I do with it, Thomas?

THOMAS

Just don't get hit by the anti-aircraft fire.

CADEN

I understand, Thomas.

THOMAS

Noah, are you OK back there?

NOAH

Yes, Thomas. Hopefully, the Japs won't find us.

THOMAS

Good. Let's get the plane moving.

MALE ANNOUNCER [V.O.]

(over P.A.) ALL SQUADRON, PREPARE  
FOR TAKE OFF.

32 American Hellcats, 30 SBDs, and 16 TBFs are preparing for  
takeoff from the carrier flight deck.

**INT. JACK'S F6F HELLCAT - DAY**

Jack leads the formation of F6F Hellcats to protect the bombers  
at Truk Atoll.

JACK

(on radio) This is where the  
fighters of *USS Intrepid* attacked  
Truk Atoll earlier.

**INT. NATE'S F6F HELLCAT - DAY**

NATE

(on radio) Jack, it appears Truk  
Atoll is untouched before the  
Zeros attack the fighter squadron.

**INT. JACK'S F6F HELLCAT - DAY**

JACK

(on radio) Speaking of Zeros, they  
should be right about now.

NATE [V.O.]

(over the radio) Bandits! 12  
o'clock high!

Four Japanese Zeros are diving towards them.

JACK

(on radio) It's four-on-four then.  
All fighters, shoot them down!

Stock footage of *Battle 360* shows three out of four Zeros is  
shot down by three Hellcats. NATE is the only Hellcat pilot who  
didn't line up the shot on the last Zero.

**INT. NATE'S F6F HELLCAT - DAY**



NATE

(on radio) Jack, the last Zero got away!

JACK [V.O.]

(shouting over the radio) What?!  
You let the Zero get away?!

NATE

(on radio) You need to take a shot  
at the Zero for me, Jack.

**INT. JACK'S F6F HELLCAT - DAY**

JACK

(on radio) Alright then, I'll deal  
with the last Zero myself.

Jack maneuvered his position at the Zero and fires. The Japanese pilot bails out from the burning plane. The Japanese pilot's clothes are on fire while parachuting as the Zero plummets to the ocean. The Hellcats and the Zeros continue dog fighting as 12 TBFs prepare for bombing run on the Japanese airfields at Eten, Moen, and Parra.

**INT. TBF AVENGER - DAY**

CADEN

There's our target, Thomas! The  
Jap airfield at Eten Island.

THOMAS

Good work, Caden. I'll move to the  
bombardier position.

NOAH

Are you going to be okay down  
there?

THOMAS [V.O.]

I'll be fine. Just don't let the  
Japs find us!

Thomas moves down to the bombardier position as the Japanese anti-aircraft guns open fire at the TBFs.

Flaks burst all around them with their anti-aircraft barrage. Thomas looks through the bomb sight and sees the target. Three TBFs dropped their bombs on Eten Island. Both the hangar bays and workshops were destroyed, and the explosion cratered the runways, and the parked bombers were destroyed. As Thomas went back to the seat, Caden exited the harbor along with two TBFs and didn't see the Japanese ships firing at them.

THOMAS [CONT'D]

Caden, where are we going?

CADEN

We're taking a shortcut.

THOMAS

Caden, wait! There are enemy ships firing at us!

CADEN

Damnit! Why didn't you say so?

Three TBFs pull up away from the Japanese ships as Thomas looks up at the enemy flaks.

#### **INT. SBD DAUNTLESS - DAY**

Ten SBDs are on a mission at Truk Atoll to sink as many Japanese ships as possible. Ben is in the pilot's seat while his brother, John, is in the rear gunner position.

BEN THOMPSON

Any sign of the carriers?

JOHN THOMPSON

Negative, Ben. I only see 18 Jap warships and 50 merchant ships.

BEN THOMPSON

These sons of bitches aren't at Truk Atoll? No way!

JOHN THOMPSON

It's a same thing what the Japs did to us at Pearl Harbor three years earlier!

BEN THOMPSON

The Jap carriers may have left at Truk Atoll, but we can still sink them to the bottom of the sea.

JOHN THOMPSON

Then let's make them quick.

BEN THOMPSON

(on radio) All squadrons, follow me for a dive-bombing run on the ships.

The SBDs prepare for dive-bombing run on the Japanese ships. Flaks burst all around them as they approach toward enemy vessels. The SBDs drop their bombs onto the Japanese ships and pull out of their dive.

BEN THOMPSON [CONT'D]

Bullseye!

JOHN THOMPSON

Nice hit, Ben! Let's get out of here!

BEN THOMPSON

Wait, John! Let's deal with the Jap vessels first and then we'll return to the carrier.

JOHN THOMPSON

(sighs) Alright, Ben, but it quick.

The Thompson Brothers strafe on two Japanese vessels. Ben fires the first Japanese vessel with .50 calibers on the nose while his brother fires at the second Japanese vessel on the rear. The Thompson Brothers sank two Japanese vessels and return to the carrier.

**INT. USS ENTERPRISE - MESS HALL - NIGHT**

Thomas, Jack, Nate, Weston, Theo, Caden, Noah, and the Thompson Brothers are playing poker. Each player holds five cards in their hand to determine who wins the poker game.

THOMAS

How was the flight today, Nate?

NATE

I didn't line up for the shot, but Jack managed to shoot down the Zero.

JACK

That's what I did earlier at Truk Atoll. Nate is a rookie, but Weston and Theo are veterans of Midway, Guadalcanal, and Makin Atoll.

THEO

I agree with Jack. We've dive-bombed at the enemy carriers at Midway, clearing a path for the Marines at Guadalcanal, and attack the Japanese at Makin Atoll.

CADEN

What about Operation Hailstone?

WESTON

Theo and I flew the Hellcats into ariel combat with Jack and Nate.

THEO

Three of us shot down Zeros in four-on-four battle, but Nate hasn't shot down any Zeros before since we're in a dogfight with the Japs.

NOAH

And why do the Thompson Brothers fly the SBD instead of us?

THOMAS

Because we flew the TBF with you and Caden to bomb at Eten Island.

BEN THOMPSON

Yeah, we came here to avenge the Pearl Harbor attack against the Japs, but there is no sign of the carriers at Truk Atoll.

JOHN THOMPSON

But we've lost Liam, Quintin, David, and Tripp at Pearl Harbor, including *Yorktown* and *Hornet*.

JACK

And we missed the Battle of Coral Sea.

THOMAS

But there are three *Essex*-class Carriers that were named after the sinking carriers two years earlier. The CV-12 is already participated in Operation Hailstone.

JACK

What about the fighters from *USS Intrepid*?

THEO

His name is Alexander Vraciu, a Lieutenant Junior Grade who participated in Operation Hailstone before we arrived at Truk Atoll.

WESTON

He shot down three Zeros and a Rufe floatplane.

**INT. *USS ENTERPRISE* - COMMAND BRIDGE - NIGHT**

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN WALTER REEVES JR. and Captain M.B. Gardner witnessed the explosion of *USS Intrepid* and the American warships fighting against the Japanese Betty Bombers from the distance at the horizon.

JOHN WALTER REEVES JR.

The *Intrepid* has been hit. Are there any casualties?

MATTHIAS BENNETT GARDNER

The Japanese Bombers made a slightly damaged on one of our warships.

JOHN WALTER REEVES JR.

Send the TBFs for a night-bombing mission at Truk Atoll.

CAPTAIN M.B. GARDNER

Yes, sir.

**EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - FLIGHT DECK - CONTINUOUS**

**SUPER: "FEBRUARY 17, 1944. 2:00 AM."**

Using stock footage from *Battle 360*, 12 TBFs launched from the carrier's flight deck.

**INT. TBF AVENGER - NIGHT**

Caden flies the TBF with Thomas and Noah once again, but this time, they prepared for their nighttime chaos for the first time in the Pacific War against Japan.

CADEN

Thomas, we're approaching Truk Harbor.

THOMAS

Excellent, stay close to our target.

CADEN

But I can't see it in the dark!

THOMAS

Then turn on the running lights so we can see what the Japs are up to at Truk Atoll.

**SFX: AIR RAID SIREN WAILING**

The Japanese soldiers manned their anti-aircraft guns waiting for incoming American bombers. As the TBFs are closing in at Truk Atoll, the Americans are taken heavy fire with Japanese anti-aircraft barrage while the Japanese used their searchlights to spot the enemy planes.

CADEN

Thomas, we've been spotted!

THOMAS

Turn off the running lights,  
Caden! I'll be in the bombardier  
position.

NOAH

Be careful down there!

Thomas gives Noah a thumb down as he descends to the bombardier position. 12 TBFs split into groups of four and approach in Truk Harbor in different directions. To gain momentum, the Americans must climb to thousand feet. Then, the Americans swoop down to 250 feet above the water. Their target: sink the enemy tankers and freighters at Truk Harbor. Thomas drops the delay fuse bombs on the enemy ships. As the TBFs pulls away, all Japanese tankers and freighters are left with burning wreck.

THOMAS

All the Jap ships are sunk or  
damaged. Let's go home.

The Americans fly away from the carnage.

**EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - FLIGHT DECK - DAWN**

Only 11 TBFs return to the carrier as the sun begins to rise over the horizon.

**INT. USS ENTERPRISE - CORRIDOR - DAWN**

Caden, Thomas, and Noah came to see Jack.

JACK

How is your night mission?

CADEN

One of the TBFs is missing in  
action at Truk Atoll.

NOAH

And we're not sure what happened during the night bombing raid at Truk Harbor.

THOMAS

Let's not worry about what happened at Truk Atoll. Let's have some breakfast at the mess hall.

CADEN

Okay.

THOMAS

And here's your letter from your father, you two.

John opens the envelope and looks at the letter from their father.

RALPH THOMPSON [V.O.]

*Dear Ben and John,*

*I have some bad news for you two. The Nazis brought their secret weapon to terrorize the people of London, the same way that the Luftwaffe did four years ago during the Battle of Britain. The Germans attack England once and they'll do it again. Your sister and I will be waiting for you at Framlingham Airfield when Operation Hailstone is over. Good luck hunting down the Jap carriers, boys.*

*Love, Ralph Thompson.*

BEN THOMPSON

John, it's time to go. We've got a dive-bomb on Truk Atoll again.

JOHN THOMPSON

I'll be right with you, Ben.



The Thompson Brothers went to the flight deck.

**EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - FLIGHT DECK - DAY**

The Thompson Brother board the SBD again. The American planes launched from the carrier flight deck to attack Truk Atoll for a second time.

**INT. SBD DAUNTLESS - DAY**

Ben Thompson leads the SBDs once again to attack the ships at Truk Atoll.

BEN THOMPSON

(on radio) All squadron, prepare  
for a second attempt on the Jap  
fleet.

The SBDs dive-bombed the Japanese ships for a second time  
sinking and damaging the warships, auxiliary ships, and merchant  
ships.

**EXT. TRUK ATOLL - CONTINUOUS**

The TBFs attack the Japanese airfield again but this time, all the Japanese bombers are destroyed on the ground and the Japanese anti-aircraft guns are disabled. Oil fields, hangars, and ammunition dumps are also blown to bits.

**INT. JACK'S HELLCAT - DAY**

Jack and his squadron encounter the Japanese Zeros again.

JACK

(on radio) Bandits at 10 o'clock.

The American Hellcats and Japanese Zeros clash at the skies above Truk Atoll. Jack and his squadron shot down more Zeros with a loss of 24 Hellcats of their own.

**EXT. USS ENTERPRISE - FLIGHT DECK - DAY**

The American planes land on the *Enterprise's* flight deck. The Thompson Brothers exit the SBD Dauntless.

JOHN THOMPSON

Ugh, still no sign of the Jap  
carriers. What about you, Ben?

BEN THOMPSON

No, but we did sink six Jap warships, nine auxiliary ships, including three auxiliary cruisers, and 32 merchant ships, leaving nine Jap vessels damaged at Truk Atoll. What about you, Thomas?

THOMAS

All the Jap bombers are destroyed on the ground thanks to Caden and Noah.

CADEN

I agree with Thomas. Noah and I bombed the Jap airfields on the ground except there are no Betty Bombers at Truk Atoll.

NOAH

How was your combat flight, Jack?

JACK

Nate's got his first kill at Truk Atoll today.

NATE

Yeah! I finally shot down a Zero.

WESTON

That's great to hear, Nate!

THEO

You're a true fighter pilot.

NATE

Thank you, guys! I can't wait to fly with Jack again.

COMMANDER W.R. KANE [V.O.]

We're not the only one to fly with Jack.

TWO HELLCAT PILOTS, COMMANDER W.R. KANE AND LIEUTENANT R.W. SCHUMANN came to see Nate along with SBD DAUNTLESS PILOT, LIEUTENANT COMMANDER JAMES D. RAMAGE AND TBF AVENGER PILOT, LIEUTENANT COMMANDER BILL MARTIN.

NATE

(feeling shocked) Commander Kane  
and Lieutenant Schumann?

LIEUTENANT R.W. SCHUMANN

That's right, Nate. Kane leads Air  
Group 10, and I joined you and  
Jack at Operation Hailstone.

JAMES D. RAMAGE

And you must be the Thompson  
Brothers.

BEN THOMPSON

Yeah, what about it?

JAMES D. RAMAGE

My friends call me "Jig Dog".

JOHN THOMPSON

I didn't know you had a nickname  
and why did we follow you for a  
dive-bombing run on Truk Atoll?

JAMES D. RAMAGE

Because that's my duty to lead the  
SBDs to attack the Jap ships at  
the harbor.

BILL MARTIN

I agree with Jig Dog. Captain  
Gardner ordered us for our first  
bombing run on Truk Atoll to  
destroy the Jap planes on the  
ground and cratering runways. That  
way the Japs won't use their  
support against us in the future.

CADEN

What future are you referring to,  
Martin?

BILL MARTIN

The future of the Pacific will  
lead us to end the war in the  
Pacific.

NOAH

So, this whole time, we didn't use  
torpedoes at Truk Atoll?

BILL MARTIN

Yes, as matter of fact, we used  
the bombs to destroy the enemy  
airbases, workshops, and cutting  
off their oil and ammo supplies.

THOMAS

What about the Jap carriers?

JAMES D. RAMAGE

I looked at Truk Atoll, but the  
Jap carriers have already left the  
harbor. However, we gave the Japs  
their taste of their own medicine.  
The Japs hits us earlier and now  
we hit them as payback.

BEN THOMPSON

For hitting us at Pearl Harbor?

BILL MARTIN

Exactly. You and your brother have  
been in aerial combat for the  
first time at Pearl Harbor.

JOHN THOMPSON

Does that mean we're going after  
the Jap carriers at the Philippine  
Sea?

JAMES D. RAMAGE

That's right, John. You and your brother will get a chance to sink the Jap carriers and avenge Pearl Harbor attack.

BEN THOMPSON

Let's hunt down the Jap carriers and end their threat once and for all.

JOHN THOMPSON

For Pearl Harbor.

BEN THOMPSON

For my friends.

FADE OUT.

THE END