

From an airfield in the south of England, there flew a pilot. This pilot was neither big-headed and bragging about his achievements constantly nor was he a quiet introvert whom hid in clouds whenever the enemy came into sight: he was an R.A.F. pilot and that meant great skill and courage yet tempered with humility and magnanimity and that is why his colleagues loved him.

Douglas, or as his friends liked to call him, Duggy was a small man with dark hair and a black moustache plastered across his top lip. He walked with a slight limp as he had injured his left leg while bailing out when he had been shot down twelve months earlier. He spoke with a Yorkshire accent which set him aside from his fellow airmen but they all knew that if push came to shove, he would back them up continually.

All the airmen were laid in deck chairs sleeping outside number one hanger. For the previous three days, they had flown fifteen to twenty sorties each, intercepting the Luftwaffe bombers and fighters on their way up to London. Douglas had never been so tired. Every couple of hours, the scramble phone would ring with orders to take off but now there seemed to be a lull.

Hitler had been pounding, first the airfields and then London on a daily and nightly basis. Every man, woman and child knew that the air force had to hold their own against the might of the Luftwaffe or they would be learning German for the next forty years.