

THE SEVEN FIRES

Written by

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Based on, "Amelia Earhart Knew Seven Latin Words for Fire"
by Joe Kapitan



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EXT. PACIFIC OCEAN - NIGHT

Loud sirens permeate a black screen.

The whine of an engine in failure rapidly descending.

Text appearing over the black screen: "IGNIS"

AMELIA
MAYDAY, MAYDAY, PLEASE RESPOND

A Bright orange hunk of metal and fire fall from the sky. The whine tears through the silence.

FRANK
AMELIA BRACE, BRACE, GET BACK

The plane hurls into the inky black ocean. A crunch as metal comes to a sudden stop- a hiss grows louder, flames climb higher and brighter.

Amelia slowly stands in what used to be the cockpit.

AMELIA
Frank? Frank where are you?

The jagged metal juts out and surrounds Amelia as if she was in the jaws of a shark.

Frantic she looks for an escape, for Frank, for anything that isn't fire or sharp.

Climbing through a tear in the hull Amelia sees the open ocean awash in orange light.

On pure instinct Amelia dives into the water and claws at the waves trying to get away from the wreckage.

EXT. UNKNOWN ISLAND - CONTINUOUS

Amelia drags herself up and grabs fists full of sand desperate to find anything solid to anchor herself on.

A moment of peace, she rests along the beach. Cold and still.

FRANK
AMELIA?! AMELIA?!

She twists back to look at the bright blue pyre of flame that used to be her plane.

Horror. It's obvious there is no chance for escape.

FRANK (CONT'D)
HELP, PLEASE GOD HELP ME, ANYONE
PLEASE SAVE ME-

All she can do is turn away.

Her small frame is enveloped by the blue inferno behind her.

CUT TO BLACK.

EXT. UNKNOWN ISLAND - DAY

A Black Screen, text: "INCAENDIUM"

Amelia sits with her knees in her chest staring at the smoking wreckage.

The beach behind her is dense with foliage. The only sound is the wind blowing leaves back and forth.

She looks up at the rising sun.

Behind her a rough patch of dirt forms the shape of a mound.

A small cross made from sticks sits next to it, as well as a pile of still smoking clothes.

EXT. AIRFIELD - DAY

A Black Screen, text: "FLAMMA"

Fingertips run along the smooth chrome and polished aluminum of an airplane. Amelia traces the rivets running up and down the hull.

She stands looking at the large props on an engine in blissful wonderment. The props are longer than she is tall.

With an inquisitive expression she crouches down and knocks on the tires.

Exploring around the side Amelia ascends through the threshold and enters the fuselage.

PLANE INTERIOR

The dials, the gauges, the straps and metal harnesses. There is so much and Amelia is drinking it all in.

Examining the cockpit Amelia flips the switches and sits in the pilot's seat. She grabs the yoke slow and steady, a large smile fills her face with enviable excitement.

From behind her-

FRANK

What do you think? Is this the plane that'll take us around the world?

AMELIA

I think so, Frank, its just right. The flap angles are shaved down, and the rivets are smoother than I've ever seen.

FRANK

What's left to check?

A devilish grin envelops Amelia's face.

AMELIA

We have to see how it flies.

The engine churns to life and the exhaust ports vent strong ORANGE FLAMES.

EXT./INT. AMELIA'S PLANE - CONTINUOUS

Swimming through the clouds the plane bobs and weaves unbound by gravity, guided by impulse.

Amelia peers into the vast blue sky and pushes on the throttle making Frank chuckle nervously.

FRANK

So, uh, you think this is the plane?

AMELIA

This is it, Frank, feel how she handles. I push, she pushes with me. She's not a plane, she's my partner.

With a battle cry Amelia pulls on the yoke and the plane rises into the sun.

EXT. UNKNOWN ISLAND SHORE - NIGHT

A Black Screen, text: "USTRINA"

Where once there was the sun, now sits a dull fire resting on top of a warped mast a few feet off the beach.

Amelia sits with her knees held against her chest. Desperate for warmth but too tired to fight.

Behind her we see very few salvaged supplies.

The mound now has a sign that reads "Frank Noonan".

With a free hand Amelia picks up a stick and starts etching into the sand in front of her.

In the sand there is an extensive map detailing her flight path across the Pacific Ocean.

She sketches possible directions her plane could've gone.

A line to a land mass, then thinks to herself, makes a silent prayer, then looks up to the stars.

With her finger she reaches out to the sky and traces the constellations, reciting their names under her breath.

Her face drapes and for a moment her eyes appear heavy. She looks back down at her map, and crosses an "X" over the land mass she just drew to.

Once more she traces another line from the same starting point, this time to a different land mass.

Conferring with the constellations, she is let down again.

In quiet protest Amelia throws her stick into the dark ocean, making a splash near the plane's wreckage.

At the sight of the wreckage her eyes begin to well with tears. Not sadness, not relief, but anger.

Amelia screams at the plane with what energy she has, her voice hoarse and dry.

The stick wasn't enough.

She grabs a rock, and lobs it at the plane making a satisfying ding.

A piece of scrap metal. It scratches paint off the hull.

All that's left is sand, and she throws that too. Until she's out of breath and her face is red. She pulls her knees in tighter than before.

The tears stop, she can't spare the moisture.

With nothing else to distract her mind, Amelia reluctantly looks up at the signal fire. The flames dance in her eyes.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A Black Screen, text: "IMPES"

Polite applause and the shuffling of expensive shoes.

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT stands on a small stage behind a decorative podium. Banners and ribbons drape the wall behind her.

ELEANOR

Now, now lets all find our seats.
I'm not the center of attention in
today's conference. I'm here to
introduce a very close and very
good friend. That applause I heard
better return ten-fold when she
gets up here as well.

A coy smile. The audience laughs with her.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Us women have been fighting for
recognition up and down these great
United States, and when we got the
right to vote, dare I say, we
started to see some real positive
change. That victory inspired us to
achieve more, to prove ourselves on
bigger and bigger stages. Gosh darn
it, pardon my French, we told
ourselves to shoot for the stars.
Now, it is my duty to introduce,
and more importantly celebrate a
woman who didn't just shoot for the
stars, but conquered the sky's.
Ladies and gentlemen. Amelia
Earhart!

A little overwhelmed, but confident Amelia steps on stage and walks up to greet Eleanor. They kiss each other on the cheek and embrace.

Eleanor takes a step back and ushers Amelia down stage.

With Amelia front and center the crowd applauds with polite cheers.

Notably the most inspired are the young women sitting front row all donning suffragette sashes.

Taking her place behind the podium, Amelia clears her throat.

AMELIA

Well this is quite the hello.
Please forgive my public speaking,
there's not many crowds to talk to
up in my plane. I have to thank
Eleanor for not just her wonderful
introduction, but her continued
friendship. There's not much you
can't do when you have someone like
her rooting for you. I look out
today and see such promising young
faces filled with passion and
dreams that I'm sure I can only
hope to envision myself. When I
talk about my own dreams with
Eleanor there has always been
something in the back of my mind.
What more can I do for women.

Flashes of archival footage of her achievements and those of
women of the times.

AMELIA (CONT.) (CONT'D)

Some may say I do a great deal for
women, because I fly in a man's
world. I proved my merit surely I
proved that all women can fly. I'm
sorry to say that I haven't changed
anything. Women were always capable
of flight, I was just the first one
to force those boys to take notice
and respect us. I'm also sorry to
say that I didn't start flying for
women, I started flying for me.
Flight has been my own dream for so
long it feels like one day it'll be
all I'm known for. To me that's not
enough anymore. I don't want to be
known as a woman who flew, I want
to be known as one of the many
women that fly.

Before she can continue speaking. Eleanor begins clapping.

In response the crowd lights up and claps.

As the applause dies down-

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Thank you. So in front of friends,
and so many bright young woman, I
want to announce that I Amelia
Earhart will be making my largest
statement yet.

(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

To prove that women are capable of more than just flight, but adventure too. I will be circumnavigating the globe marking every inch of sky above, the territory of women everywhere.

More applause, at a volume that puts the other cheers to shame. Eleanor stands next to Amelia and puts their hands in the air for the photographers to capture.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

Flanked on all sides by eager-to-chat young woman, and male reporters wanting their own scoop, Amelia seems exhausted.

Just in time-

ELEANOR

Oh there you are dear, come come, I have to introduce you to someone.

Eleanor pushes through the group and whisks Amelia away.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

You can all hound her later, I have pressing matters.

Warding through the crowd Eleanor brings Amelia to a familiar face: FRANK NOONAN.

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Amelia I'd like for you to meet, Mr. Frank Noonan. Frank dear this is Amelia Earhart.

FRANK

Oh Mrs. Roosevelt I do believe I should be able to recognize the famous Amelia Earhart. Nice to meet you miss.

Frank tips his hat and puts out his hand.

Taking it Amelia seems somewhat confused.

AMELIA

Nice to meet you as well, Frank was it?

FRANK

Indeed it is, happy to make your acquaintance.

Amelia looks to Eleanor for some explanation.

ELEANOR

Well you see Amelia Frank here was in the Navy and has the quite the long list of experience working as a navigator, particularly over the pacific. I know you mentioned you may need some trusted help island hopping, so I thought I would make the introduction.

FRANK

I believe the First Lady is being too polite. I did my duty during the war, but I've never made waves like you Amelia.

AMELIA

Well if what she says is true I may appreciate the help. I can do all the heavy lifting you see, I just need somewhat of a tour guide. I'm afraid my knowledge of the skies doesn't translate well on the sea.

FRANK

Well in all honestly I should hope you'd want to avoid the sea. I'd recommend sticking to the islands and dry land when dealing with aircraft.

They both share a laugh.

AMELIA

Well Mr. Noonan, I'm making my way out to inspect my plane in a few months, why don't we see about you joining me?

FRANK

It would be my pleasure. Though I have to say Amelia, I don't think you need me. If anyone can make it around the world in a plane, I'd trust you over any other pilot.

Eleanor flags a photographer to come over.

ELEANOR

Wonderful wonderful, I just knew we'd find the right duo for this adventure.

(MORE)

ELEANOR (CONT'D)

Photographer would you be so kind
as to capture to the meeting. I
want to look back at the photograph
when they're on their victory tour.

The group gathers around. The camera clicks and the bulb
flashes. We see the wires slowly burn away to ash.

EXT. UNKNOWN ISLAND SHORE - HIGH NOON

A Black Screen, text: "TRAGICUM"

The sun bakes down on the sand the heat can be heard.

The leaves of the trees sit perfectly still, the water rests
as a crystal pane of glass. Even the birds quietly hide.

Amelia sits under the lackluster shade of a palm tree. Her
skin is cracked and red, her lips are white and flaked, every
inch of her body screams in pain, but she sits still.

What little supplies she had are now all gone. She sits on
torn sheets and ripped clothes. A few fish skeletons stick
out of the sand.

Amelia stares up at the bright unrelenting sun.

The end is near. We can only hope she has accepted it.

Without looking away from the sky Amelia stretches her legs
out and slowly lies back flat on the sand.

EXT. UNKNOWN ISLAND SHORE - MUCH LATER

A Black Screen, text: " "

What remains of Amelia is bone, and a few threads of the what
used to be clothes.

The beach is alive again with wind, birds, and waves.

The plane is all but submerged completely, the sign that read
Frank Noonan is now rubbed blank. Almost no sign that anyone
was ever here is left.

From the bones of her outreached hand a pile of sand or ash
sits in her palm.

The wind blows harder, the birds chirp louder, and waves
crash higher.

Riding that gust of wind the sand and ash from Amelia's body take flight.

They ride the wind high above the tree tops and into the bright blue sky.

The cloud of ash flies right into the sun and fades from sight beyond the horizon.

THE END.