

Writing Sample

## **Burning Blue**

By

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(Shooting Script 2014)

Based on the play by DMW Greer

88 EXT. ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY - MINUTES LATER 88

DAN walks to his car in a daze... the automatic door lock beeps, he opens the door and is about to get in...

COKELY (O.S.)

Dan!

Dan turns to find him several yards behind him.

COKELY (CONT'D)

I need you to come with me.

89 EXT. PENTAGON - ARLINGTON VIRGINIA - LATER 89

We push in on the monolithic building beside the Potomac River.

90 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM- DAY 90

It's been several hours since he was first detained. Cokely continues to question Dan.

COKELY

You can circle the wagons but  
you're always gonna be surrounded.

JONES crashes into the room.. Cokely jumps to attention.

JONES

Well, well. What's goin' on here?

COKELY

Uhh, we were just--

JONES

Gettin' acquainted? Did he tell  
you about his bailout over  
Pensacola Bay?

COKELY

No, sir, I didn't see anything-

JONES

That's cause it'd been expunged.  
(paraphrasing a document)  
Bird strike. Five years ago.

(MORE)

JONES (CONT'D)  
 He had command of the aircraft...  
 took a direct hit... after an  
 unauthorized touch-n-go from an  
 abandoned airfield.

JONES hands the expunged report to Cokely who has DANS' FILE  
 on the desk in front of him.

JONES (CONT'D)  
 (to Dan)  
 He's new at this.

DAN  
 There was an accident review, a  
 thorough investigation. The case  
 was closed.

Cokely... fumbling... tries to regain his footing in front of  
 Jones.

COKELY  
 Last weeks mishap... why do you  
 think Blackwood lost control of his  
 plane?

DAN  
 What makes you think he did?

Cokely places a photo of the exterior of Will & Susan's house  
 on the desk... DAN and MATT are just visible through the  
 kitchen window..

DAN (CONT'D)  
 ... You're stalking me?

JONES  
 In my business it's called  
 surveillance. What were you doin'  
 here?

DAN  
 Nothing.

JONES  
 There you go lyin' again.

DAN  
 I'm not lying.

JONES  
 You and Blackwood were seen in a  
 gay club in New York you fuckin'  
 homo! If you guys thought less  
 about your dicks-

Dan jumps to his feet and goes for Jones. Cokely separates them...

JONES (CONT'D)

Secure him!

Cokely HANDCUFFS Dan's hands behind his back... JONES OPENS THE DOOR... Cokely leads him out...

91 INT. PENTAGON HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 91

From inside a room across the hall... WILL SEES DAN being strong-armed down the corridor.

92 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 92

COKELY ENTERS another small, fluorescent-lit room... extends his hand.

COKELY

Special Agent John Cokely...

SUSAN gets up from a metal chair...

SUSAN

Where's my husband?

COKELY

Maybe you should take a seat.

She sits paralyzed with fear. He places THE PHOTO of the exterior of Will & Susan's house... DAN and MATT are just visible through the kitchen window.

SUSAN

... My kitchen.

COKELY

Yes. What do you think they might be doing here?

SUSAN

(unsure)  
... Talking?

Cokely shakes his head ominously.

COKELY  
Your husband and Lt. Lynch seem to  
be unusually close.

Beat. It sinks in.

SUSAN  
I think I can say with absolute  
certainty that my husband is--

He places a picture of the four NAKED MEN imitating  
Michelangelo's "Creation" in front of her.

SUSAN (CONT'D)  
(bursts out laughing)  
You've got to be kidding me.

She looks at him... then the picture... we see a flicker of  
doubt in her eyes.

93

INT. PENTAGON INTERROGATION ROOM - LATER

93

AGENT JONES interrogates WILL.

WILL  
I told you I didn't meet up with  
them.

JONES  
Do you know where they went?

WILL  
Sightseeing?

JONES  
"Sightseeing"? Is that code?

Will is confused.

JONES (CONT'D)  
Pink triangles... rainbow flags?

COKELY ENTERS.

WILL  
(to Cokely)  
How much more of this bullshit do I  
have to tolerate?

COKELY HANDS WILL the photo of 'The Creation.'

COKELY

Can you identify the men in this photo, Will?

WILL

(embarrassed)

I'm pretty sure that's me...  
Stewie, Dan, and Boner in Italy  
last year.

JONES

That is you... in the middle?

WILL

We'd been to the Sistine chapel.  
We were recreating one of the  
murals we saw painted on the  
ceiling.

JONES

And who instigated the gay orgy  
afterwards?

WILL

We posed for a picture. That's it.

COKELY

You do realize, Will, you are  
subject to certain expectations  
regarding your conduct?

WILL

Gimme a break, we were on leave.  
There was nobody around for miles.

JONES

(walking behind Will)

Pensacola. Birdstrike. Five years  
ago. Somethin's fishy 'bout the  
post mishap medical. What are you  
hidin', lieutenant? Says that you  
waited in the woods six hours  
before the SAR Team located you--

WILL

On the beach! We were on--

JONES

That you both returned with  
hemorrhoids.

Will shakes his head.

JONES (CONT'D)

Scared yer Daddy's gonna find out  
that you like gettin' plugged by  
men?

WILL

You ever punch out of a plane at  
400 miles an hour? Do your  
homework. Jet jocks get  
hemorrhoids. I'm not gay.

They stare each other down.

JONES

We'll see about that.

Jones shares a look with Cokely.

JONES (CONT'D)

Your buddy was seen engaged in a  
homosexual activity with Blackwood  
during your last port call in New  
York.

Will, incredulous, looks at Cokely.

COKELY

He just confessed, Will.

COKELY produces A PHOTO of Dan and Matt moments before they  
kissed.

COKELY (CONT'D)

Looks like they had a secret life  
that didn't include you.

Will looks like he's been kicked in the gut.

94 INT. PENTAGON BATHROOM - MOMENTS LATER 94

Cokely, flushed and shaken, splashes water on his face... pats  
it dry with paper towels... regains his composure.

95 INT. HOLDING CELL - LATER 95

DAN is seated in a small, darkened cell. JONES APPEARS...  
snaps his fingers signalling Dan to approach.

DAN walks over to him...

JONES  
Turn around.

Dan follows orders... Jones reaches through the bars and removes Dan's handcuffs... stares at him in silence.

JONES (CONT'D)  
If you're not back here by 0700  
Monday morning I'll have you locked  
up where nobody will ever find you.

Jones unlocks the cell door and Dan walks out.

96 EXT. LINCOLN MEMORIAL - WASHINGTON D.C. - NIGHT 96

Dan stares blankly ahead... a nearly broken man... behind him the monument... in deference, DAN REMOVES his cap and TURNS to consider the man... Lincoln comes into focus.

DAN'S VISION

TWO MEN in uniform walk side by side past pillars of white marble... as they approach and share a glance...

WE RECOGNIZE MATT... alive... and Dan... both together, in a more just world.

97 INT. SHIP'S STATEROOM - DAY 97

THE FLOOR strewn with PHOTOS from DAN'S RANSACKED LOCKER. HE SEES Matt's bunk has been stripped... throws a stack of photos in the trash as CHARLIE ENTERS.

CHARLIE  
Where ya goin'?

DAN  
Gotta talk to my Dad.

DAN continues packing his things. CHARLIE RETRIEVES a photo from the trash bin...

DAN (CONT'D)  
(snatching it from him)  
What the hell are you doing?



Dan tosses it back in the bin and begins shoving the last of his things into a duffel bag.

CHARLIE

Sure you wanna throw that away?  
 (no response from Dan)  
 Ya know, you and Iron Man weren't  
 the only Navy guys in that club.

DAN

What were you doing there?

CHARLIE

C'mon, Dano, the music's better and  
 the people are more fun.

DAN

Did Cokely question you?

CHARLIE

I did not bilge ya, buddy.

CHARLIE retrieves the photo from the trash and studies it.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

He sure was a handsome dog.

DAN

Keep it if you want.  
 (to Charlie without  
 looking at him)  
 Did you talk to Wilbur?

CHARLIE

He's all right, he'll come around.  
 He's just freaked out about the  
 accident.

Beat. He finally looks at Charlie.

DAN

What really happened up there?

CHARLIE

Wilbur called a rendezvous. Matt  
 was on top... Wilbur was in the  
 slot... I was joining from below...  
 and--

CHARLIE shakes his head... holds up his hands in defeat...  
 close to breaking...

Dan picks up his bags... OPENS THE DOOR to leave.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)  
 (stopping him)  
 My whole life I've been waitin' for  
 somebody. Can't imagine how much  
 you must hurt right now.

DAN  
 Fly safe.

98

EXT. DAN'S PARENTS' HOME - D.C. - NIGHT

98

The sounds of a large COCKTAIL PARTY. Tiki Torches  
 illuminate DAN'S expression of grim expectation as he makes  
 his way up the palm-lined walk.

INSIDE

A THEME PARTY. One hundred GUESTS and dignitaries jam the  
 Living Room. DAN'S MOTHER, wearing a long Hawaiian Mu-Mu,  
 gushes to a similarly dressed WOMAN.

GRACE  
 Well, I thought... that a candle  
 light ceremony... in the National  
 Cathedral.

GRACE'S FRIEND  
 Oh... you're kidding... you can't  
 be serious!

GRACE  
 Don't you think it's fitting...

IN THE KITCHEN

A bustle of activity... STEWARDS mix drinks and place Hors  
 d'oeuvres on trays as...

DAN ENTERS through the back door and steals up the back  
 staircase...

GRACE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
 She's an actress in New York. She  
 is blonde, gorgeous...

IN THE LIVING ROOM

GRACE (CONT'D)  
 Darling... perfect manners.

GRACE'S FRIEND

Oh, they must be a perfect couple--

GRACE

They are made in heaven.

99 INT. DAN'S PARENT'S QUARTERS - THE FOLLOWING MORNING 99

GRACE and DAN at the breakfast table... she's a nervous wreck...

A Filipino STEWARD APPEARS from the kitchen...

GRACE

(turning to him)

Oh, Romi... I was wondering... see if you could-- I can't quite-- I don't know why--

SHE SHAKES like a bird as ROMI PINS a broach on her dress.

ADMIRAL LYNCH appears with his Golf bag...

DAN STANDS... GRACE makes a hasty exit past DAN'S FATHER... ROMI disappears into the kitchen.

Dan and ADMIRAL LYNCH stare at each other in silence.

DAN

Can we talk?

ADMIRAL LYNCH

I've already been briefed.

His father leaves the room. DAN remains alone in the room.

100 EXT. PENTAGON - THE FOLLOWING DAY 100

A cold, grey day. DAN, in his black Service Dress Blue uniform, ascends a huge expanse of granite steps.

DAN SEES A MAN... RUNNING along the road in the distance... is it Matt?

DAN STOPS... watches him.

VOICE(O.S.)

Daniel.

He turns to find ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN... pale but jovial.

DAN  
Admiral. I thought you were at  
home taking it easy?

ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN  
Had enough of that, son. Full  
speed ahead. No other way.

DAN  
Yes, sir.

ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN  
I understand you're getting some  
heat from the spooks downstairs.

DAN  
Nothing I can't handle, sir.

ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN  
Well, I'm gonna check into it.  
(places a hand on Dan's  
shoulder)  
Don't let the bastards get you  
down.

DAN  
Yes, sir. Thank you, Admiral.

THE ADMIRAL continues down the steps. Encouraged, Dan turns  
back toward the river one more time... the runner is long gone.

101 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

101

Both exhausted, Dan and Jones have reached an impasse.

JONES  
Gorden says you were all over  
Blackwood in that night club.

DAN  
He saw us dancing. Period.

JONES  
And you don't remember anybody else  
in that club, other than Blackwood?

DAN refuses to respond.

JONES (CONT'D)

You sure you don't wanna make this  
easy for yourself?

Dan says nothing.

JONES (CONT'D)

So you break up with your lady  
after eight years? That must've  
been difficult?

DAN

She's a lot of things I thought I  
wanted. Things my family wanted me  
to want.

Jones nods thoughtfully.

JONES

Life would be a lot simpler if  
you'd just accept who you are.  
Hell, it took me years but I found  
my peace. Eventually.

DAN

So you're gay?

JONES

No. I'm black.

102

INT. CARRIER STATEROOM - ATLANTIC OCEAN - NIGHT

102

WILBUR asleep in his bunk dreaming... Charlie at the desk  
writing a letter...

Clouds obscure the setting sun... BIRDS HURTLE TOWARDS US as  
they take flight.

CHARLIE LOOKS over at the bunks and SEES WILBUR'S DISTRESS  
goes and sits on his bunk...

Three F/A-18's COLLIDE and EXPLODE in a fireball. WILL BOLTS  
UPRIGHT in his bunk... panicked, sweating from a nightmare.

CHARLIE

(comforting Will)

Hey, hey... go back to sleep. We  
don't brief for another hour.

103 EXT./INT. BOQ ROOM - ARLINGTON - NIGHT

103

A bare tree casts a shadow against the institutional looking red brick building.

A DARK ROOM... spare, utilitarian. DAN, still in his uniform, has fallen asleep on the bed...

He SITS UP... MATT... in his flight suit... stands at the foot of his bed. They share a perfect moment of reunion...

MATT puts his finger to his lips... smiles at Dan... then evaporates into the blackness...

KNOCKING

DAN AWAKENS... sits up on his bed... disoriented...

MORE KNOCKING... Dan opens the door to his room.

SUSAN stands in the doorway. Dan absorbs this... clearly affected. He retreats into the room... she makes a tentative entrance.

SUSAN

Agent Cokely called. He said you've implicated Will. He wants names or--

DAN

He's lying.

SUSAN

I don't know what to believe.

Silence.

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Have you spoken to Nance?

(no response)

Just call her, Dan, I'm sure she'd be happy to come down here. They'd see you're with a woman and--

DAN

No.

Beat.

DAN (CONT'D)

It's okay to have sex with a man as long as it's an 'isolated incident'. It's true. It's in the regs.

SUSAN  
 (going to him)  
 Don't you see that's what this was?  
 An isolated incident...

DAN  
 (grabbing her)  
 Susan, I was in love with Matt!

Beat. Susan finally gets it.

SUSAN  
 Oh... oh, Dan... I'm so sorry... I  
 didn't--  
 (breaking down)  
 ... I'm so sorry!

She rushes out.

104 INT. DAN'S BOQ ROOM - DAY

104

DAN in his white uniform shirt...

He pulls a black necktie over his head... tightens it. Adjusts his tie pin... buttons his black uniform jacket... pushes his Naval Academy ring on his finger...

MONTAGE

DAN is ESCORTED up a staircase by AGENTS COKELY & JONES...

DAN dusts off his uniform cap... STOPS to LISTEN to his CD PLAYER...

COKELY & JONES lead Dan down a long corridor...

DAN removes a CD from his player... a silver disc labelled with a black marker:

"MWB --> DFL"

He places it back in the player... pushes play and listens...

COKELY LEADS DAN into a mahogany panelled room leaving JONES TO WAIT in the corridor.

DAN.. overcome with grief... sits on the bed and cries.

105 INT. PENTAGON CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

105

TWO SENIOR OFFICERS stand up. Dan freezes as he recognizes his father and Admiral Stephenson in full uniform.

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
Take a seat, Daniel.

Cokely places his briefcase on the mahogany table.

COKELY  
If I may, Admiral, I'd like to start by--

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
That'll be all, Special Agent.

Cokely looks over, confused.

COKELY  
Umm... sir, I'm the only person that knows--

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
I have copies of everything right here. You're dismissed.

Cokely is blind sided. He looks to Dan for support. The irony is not lost on him.

Humiliated, Cokely walks out.

ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN  
Sit down, son.

Dan sits. Lynch lets Dan feel the heat of his silence.

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
Your lack of judgment has put me in an impossible position.

DAN  
Yes, sir.

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
Not to mention the Navy.

DAN  
Yes, sir, I know.

ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN  
That punk out there believes all three mishaps can be attributed to some kind of perverse cult.



DAN  
Sir, you should--

ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN  
Best not to talk right now, son.

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
If the press got a hold of this it  
would tarnish the Navy irreparably.  
So... I'm gonna take care of this  
thing so we can get on to more  
pressing matters and pretend this  
never happened.

(scanning a regulation  
manual)

'Given that you had no intention of  
setting up house... and that you do  
not identify yourself in that way...  
or with that group'... etcetera.

He places a document on the table in front of Dan.

ADMIRAL LYNCH (CONT'D)  
Sign this affidavit indicating it  
was an 'isolated incident'.  
Blackwood coerced you into the damn  
place... forced you into lewd  
behavior...

DAN  
(standing)  
That's not true!

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
The facts are unimportant! This is  
damage control.

DAN  
I went there willingly. We danced  
together.

ADMIRAL LYNCH  
You're a disgrace to the uniform.

ADMIRAL STEPHENSEN  
That was it, son?

Beat.

DAN  
No, sir.