

GROUNDED, SIDE #1

(Lights rise on THE PILOT, a woman dressed in an Air Force flight suit.)

THE PILOT.

I never wanted to take it off
Staring at myself in the mirror
Myself in this
I had earned this
This was me now
This was who I was now who I'd become through sweat
and brains and guts
This is me

It's more than a suit
It's the speed
It's the G-Force pressing you back as you tear the sky
It's the ride
My Tiger
My gal who cradles me lifts me up
It's more
It's the respect
It's the danger
It's
It's more
It's
You are the blue
You are alone in the vastness and you are the blue
Astronauts
They have eternity
But I have color
I have blue
I'm in the blue for a reason
I have missiles to launch

I have Sidewinders
 I have Mavericks
 I rain them down on the minarets and concrete below
 me
 The structures that break up the sand
 I break them back down
 Return them to desert
 To particles
 Sand
 At least I think I do
 I'm long gone by the time the boom happens
 Tiger and I are on to another piece of sky
 Boom
 Boom goes Saddam's dipshit army and then I'm home
 on leave
 Wyoming
 Leave is fine but it's slow
 Slow and the blue is there everywhere but far away
 Far
 So I go to a bar
 Pilot bar
 I drink with my boys and we tell stories about flying
 We try to make it into words
 You can get close
 But you never can
 A guy comes up to me
 A guy always comes up
 No not always
 It takes balls
 Hard to casually sidle up to a bunch of drunk Air Force
 on leave
 Maneuver yourself through all the boys to get to me
 That takes some offensive flying of its own
 But the guy makes it through

Gets up from a card game and runs the gauntlet to get
 to me
 He's kinda cute
 I tell him straight off who I am what I am
 I've learned not to wait
 Once they find out
 They tend to run away
 Most guys don't like what I do
 Feel they're less of a guy around me
 I take the guy spot and they don't know where they
 belong
 But not this one
 This one's eyes light up
 This one thinks it's cool
 This one kisses me in the parking lot like I'm the rock
 star I am
 He's not afraid to kiss me
 Eric
 He's Eric
 I take him home
 We fuck
 First time's okay
 Then he asks me to put my suit on
 He says please
 I tell him just once
 Just telling him is enough
 He's hard as a Sidewinder
 It's a good three days
 A very good three days
 He tells me he can feel the sky in me
 I tell him he's crazy
 But something shifts
 Something's breached
 I'm back downrange

First time I'm sad leave is over
 Shit
 For Eric who works in a hardware store the family store
 Shit
 Like some 50's movie
 I've got my little woman at home know who I'm
 fighting for
 All that true corn
 True cheese
 Lucky I got shit to distract me
 I got tracer fire
 I got RPGs
 And I've got the blue
 It's good to be back in the blue
 Alone in the blue
 Back at base I got webcams
 I got Eric with a little delay
 He misses me
 I miss him too
 I gain weight
 Does love make you heavy?
 I feel the harness tight against my waist
 Try to watch the burgers in the caf
 Hold the burgers
 It's not the burgers
 I'm up in the blue and I almost hurl in my mask
 Make it down just in time to puke on the tarmac
 Tell the boys I drank too much last night
 Do a test
 Pink
 I'm pink
 Pink
 Fuck
 I can't fly with it

With her
 I know it's a her
 I can't
 Rules and regulations
 It's the ejection seat
 'Cause an ejection would be an ejection
 A G-Force abortion
 I want the sky
 I want the blue
 But I can't kill her
 I can't kill her
 I can't
 I take one last flight
 The both of us
 So she can have a taste of what it means
 Get it in her blood
 Let her know that there is this
 That this could be hers one day
 That she will not be a hair-tosser
 A cheerleader
 A needy sack of shit
 There is this
 There is blue