Episode 1

Bob Freeberg lands his unmarked Dakota cargo plane on a remote beach in southwest Java, where Republican soldiers believe he is a Dutch spy.

American freelance journalist Cameron Bishop interviews Petit Muharto about his experiences running the Dutch blockade in RI-002 with Bob Freeberg.

Muharto receives an unexpected telephone call from Pang Soeparto in Tasik, telling him of a foreigner landing on Cilotok beach.

Muharto tells Cameron that this aircraft, a Nikosoren, was one of a score of aircraft the Japanese left behind as not-airworthy. The air force mechanics kept the aircraft flying through skill and guesswork, but Muharto was aware that any flight could end in disaster. To keep his mind from this fate, Muharto thought about the American pilots he had met during the blockade runs he had organized from Singapore to Jogjakarta. He decided that only Bob Freeberg possessed the skill and nerve to land at night on a narrow beach. Bob had been the pilot of the third blockade run. Though these had been standard charter flights – they even had a flight attendant, a lovely Filipina named Miss Brown – the third flight would test the skills of any aviator.

Muharto guides Bob Freeberg to Jogja during a blockade run from Singapore.

Suryadarma orders Muharto to stop organizing blockade runs and return to his desk duties in Jogja.

Muharto tells Cameron that he was pleased at this display of crucial international support, but dismayed that once again he will be desk-bound. However, this last fight will be memorable, as Suryadarma asked Bob to make a couple of detours on the way back to Singapore. Bob cheerfully agreed.

At thre request of Suryadarma, Bob test lands on a disused wartime airstrip in southern Sumatra.

Freeberg expertly drops Air Force engineers onto a damaged airstrip in Bukittinggi to affect repairs.

Muharto tells Cameron he bid Freeberg farewell in Singapore and returned to Jogja some days later on VT-CLA. Two months later, Muharto flew into Tasik, meeting Pang Suparto, who confirmed that the pilot was indeed Bob Freeberg. They loaded two barrels of aviation fuel into a jeep and drove to the beach.

Muharto convinces villagers to tear apart their village in order to use the bamboo-mat walls as a makeshift runway for Freebergs stranded Dakota.

Suryadarma commissions Bob to fly a cargo of high-value quinine to Manila and return with essential medicines and spare parts.

Muharto takes Bob to meet Soekarno, and the Indonesian president implores Bob to aid the beleaguered Republic by flying in critical supplies.

Bob is embarrassed when a waiter insists he be served the last can of American corned beef left behind by visiting United Nations officials.

Bob, Muharto and Boedi fly Republican economists and other experts to Manila to meet with United Nations representatives in the hill town of Baguio.

Muharto reluctantly accepts his promotion to Major and resigns himself to piloting a desk.

Two farmers stumble across the crash site, and an Air Force team investigates but fails to find any gold.

The unidentifable remains from the crash site are buried with military honors.

In a telephone call, Richard, Cameron’s editor in Hong Kong, tells him to confirm Muharto’s account with newspaper archive research.

At the National Library, Julia assists Cameron in finding relevant material, impressing him with her competence and knowledge.

During a break from his research for coffee, Julia informs Cameron that her father, though a senior military officer, is not corrupt and so cannot pay for a post-graduate degree at an American college.

Richard grudgingly accepts Freeberg story for publication, but tells Cameron to stick to financial reporting from now on.

Muharto tells Cameron of his frustration in his previous investagation of the mystery, and Cameron offers to help him.