

# Ace In The Hole

By Scribblesinink

"Left.... Left!" Jake squeezed into the gap between the Impala's two front seats and gestured urgently. "Go left!"

"That's the airfield...." Dean hesitated for a heartbeat, and Jake was afraid they'd overshoot the turn-off. But at the last possible second, Dean swung the Impala down the road Jake had indicated.

Jake dipped his head and peered out through the windshield. "I know." The car bounced over a pothole, jostling him hard, but he held onto the seat back with a death grip. "I have an idea." He quickly scanned the small airfield and the cluster of buildings, looking for—. "There!" Again, he jabbed with his hand to tell Dean where to go, and again the Impala heeled against its springs as Dean threw over the wheel and aimed for the Cessna Jake had spotted on the tarmac.

Jake checked out the plane as they raced toward it. At first sight and as far as he could tell from a—quickly decreasing—distance, nothing seemed wrong with it, and the way the aircraft's nose pointed toward the landing strip suggested they'd been prepping it for a flight. If he was wrong about that.... He shoved the thought away; he could only hope they'd had time to fuel up before everyone had gone... *something*.

To be honest, he still didn't quite understand what had happened. Flesh-eating zombies? Those things only existed in bad horror movies, right? Except that, one minute he'd been hitchhiking his way back to San Diego after another unsuccessful job interview in Flagstaff, and the next, he'd found himself facing a slavering mob wielding bloodied butcher knives and axes. If not for the Winchesters.... Jake swallowed down the terror that rose at the memory.

Just when he'd thought he wasn't gonna make it out alive, a large black Chevy came screaming to a halt at the mouth of the dead-end alley he'd been chased into, spitting out two guys brandishing shotguns before it fully stopped moving. They'd killed three of the monsters, and the rest had scattered, allowing Jake to dash over to the car. Though he'd skittered to a halt fast enough when both guns had swiveled in his direction.

"Did they bite you? Cut you? Bleed on you?" The string of rapid-fire questions had come from the taller guy. Jake found out later he was called Sam, while the other guy was his brother, Dean.

"No...." Jake had rolled his shoulder, which throbbed from being nearly wrenched out of

its socket as he'd torn himself loose from an impossibly strong grip. He'd thought he'd seen every horror humanly possible in Iraq, but he'd been wrong: the creatures that had cornered him—kids and old ladies, and even what had seemed the local minister among them—had been the stuff straight out of nightmares. "No, they didn't get a chance."

"Get the hell in, then," Dean had ordered, already sliding back behind the wheel himself. Jake hadn't needed to be told twice.

Getting out of town proved mission impossible, though. No matter which way they turned, cut-down trees blocked the roads, and all bridges had been blown. Whatever those creatures were, they weren't stupid.

Now, as they headed for the Cessna, Jake shot a glance across his shoulder. At the moment, they weren't being followed, but he knew it was only a matter of time before the monsters caught their scent again: for the past few hours, the mob had chased the three of them back and forth along the highways, while the Winchesters desperately sought a route out. They'd been fast running out of places to try when Jake had noticed the road signs pointing to the airfield, and inspiration had struck.

They just needed a bit of luck.

They'd drawn level with the Cessna, where it sat at the end of the landing strip, but Dean was making no move to slow the car down; instead, he aimed straight for the runway and pushed the gas pedal down even further.

"Whoa, stop!" Panic made Jake shout. "Stop!"

Dean slammed on the breaks hard enough that Jake was flung forward. If he hadn't been holding on so tightly to Sam's seat, he'd have ended up face-first on the console in the front. He winced as the force of the impact jarred his injured shoulder again.

Dean twisted in the seat, glaring at Jake, his hand clapped to his ear. "What the hell—?"

"Come on!" Ignoring Dean's annoyed expression, Jake shoved open his door, the hinges creaking with age, crawled out of the back seat and headed for the plane. It wasn't until he'd almost reached it that he realized that neither Winchester had followed him. He glanced back and saw that, although they'd both climbed out of the car, they were staring after him in bewilderment and, in Dean's case, with a dash of mistrust.

"That's a plane." It seemed Dean truly had a knack for stating the obvious. He was squinting at the Cessna suspiciously, as if he expected it to come alive and try to devour them.

Jake snorted to himself: if even half of what they'd told him in the past few hours was true, that probably wasn't as crazy as it sounded.

"Yeah." He swung open the Cessna's door and reached in for the fold-out steps. "And I'm a pilot."

Sam barked a laugh, full of wry relief but Dean stayed where he was and crossed his arms in front of his chest. "I'm not gettin' on any friggin' plane."

"What?" Jake frowned, puzzled enough to interrupt his inspection of the plane and turn back to Dean. "Whyever the hell not?" If they didn't get out of here, and *soon*, they'd end up monster ground meat.

"Dean's got this thing about flying." Sam had already emptied out the trunk and was hurrying up bent under the weight of duffels and backpacks. He shot Jake a smirk as he lumbered up the steps and disappeared inside.

"I do not," Dean protested. "I'm just saying: look at it. It's... It's *tiny*. It's a goddamn beer can with wings!"

Jake scowled at him, offended on the plane's behalf. He ran a hand across the nearest wing and ducked under it as he continued around the aircraft, looking for visual signs she wouldn't fly. With her sleek lines and pointed nose, the Cessna Mustang was beautiful, and she appeared well-maintained. There was nothing about her that said they couldn't —.

Suddenly, Jake got it. He dodged around the nose of the plane. "You're afraid of flying?" It seemed ridiculous. "You rather deal with those..." He swallowed. "...those *things* than get on a plane?"

"Zombies." Dean twisted his face in a disgusted grimace. "And yeah."

"Dean." Sam, presumably having stashed their bags in the cabin somewhere, reappeared in the doorway. "Don't be an idiot."

For a few seconds, Dean faltered, clearly scrambling for an excuse, until his gaze settled on the Impala. "Can't leave the car behind." He shuddered visibly. "God knows what they'd do to her."

That, Jake decided, as he dipped low to take a look at the plane's undercarriage, was a sentiment he could understand. He still didn't like thinking about his own Roadrunner,

gathering dust in a parking garage in Denver.

"We'll get her back when this is over," Sam suggested in a reasonable tone. "Look, no sense in becoming zombie chow over the car. Even Dad couldn't argue that."

Dean hesitated a breath longer. In the distance, sirens had started up, growing louder. Seemed like the zombies had found their trail again, and were using squad cars and fire trucks to catch up.

"Come on, let's go!" Jake cast a worried glance along the track leading back to the highway. It would take a few minutes before he could get the plane up in the air. "We're wasting time."

Dean threw up his hands. "Aw, crap." He sprinted over and bolted up the stairs. Before his foot had fully left the top step, Jake sprang up after him, pulling in the small staircase by the short chain, and sealing the door. As soon as he reached the cockpit, he started flipping switches, going through the most rudimentary preflight check he'd ever conducted, while he settled himself in the pilot's seat.

By the time their pursuers raced in among the hangars, the emergency lights flashing crazily in dusk of nightfall, Jake had the Cessna wheels-up. Looking down to where the monstrosities were pouring from their rides to watch their prey disappear into the clouds, Jake suppressed the strange urge to stick out his tongue. Instead, he shuddered; he'd never look at a burger quite the same way again.

**Disclaimer:** this story is based on the Warner Bros. Television/Wonderland Sound and Vision/Eric Kripke/Robert Singer series *Supernatural*, and the Junction Entertainment/Fixed Mark Productions/CBS Paramount Television series *Jericho*. It was written for entertainment only; the author does not profit from it nor was any infringement of copyright intended. Please do not redistribute elsewhere without the author's consent.