





The wingman is arguably the noblest creature to ever step into a barroom.

Who else, with cavalier disregard for his personal reputation, is so willing to throw himself upon the cruel mercies of a brazen man-hater, just so his buddy can hook up with a tidy girl with big gazongas? Who else, with just a hint of a grimace, will selflessly dirty dance with a creature so hideous that no amount of hard liquor will wash the stain from his memory? Who else, especially if he's loaded to the gills, will stand in the deepest depths of hell just so a pal can climb up his back into hook-up heaven?

Whose sterling motto is, "You are going to so owe me, dude."?

None else but the wingman, the King Leonidas of the saloon.

What a Wingman Does

And just as that brave (some say suicidally insane) Spartan king and his hundred warriors laid down their lives against a hundred thousand Persians, so will the wingman, with the right amount of prodding, recklessly lunge into battle against foes twice his size and half his intellect, fully knowing there is no way in hell that the night will end well.

It usually goes down like this:

A male (the flight leader) spots an attractive female (the bombing target) across the bar. But alas, she is not alone. She is paired with a tragically less attractive friend (the cock blocker). And they seem quite close, so close that the BT is unlikely to abandon her CB for a guy she just met.

The FL knows he'll never be able to successfully complete his bombing run without proper air cover, and this is where the wingman comes into play. The wingman will engage the CB and pin her down long enough for the FL to finish his run, and hopefully bomb his target back to his bedroom.

Of course, there's much more to the task than distracting the CB while the FL makes his move. Wingman skills have been honed and passed down since someone decided women should be allowed into bars. Strategies have evolved and tactics have been polished to the point that the wingman has become a super-specialized warrior in the eternal Battle of the Sexes. And like all specialists, they've developed their own lingo.

Wingman Jargon

air superiority when the flight team has established a comfortable conversation with the BT and CB.

BT bombing target; the hot chick.

banzai shot much as kamikaze pilots were given a ceremonial shot of sake before being sealed in their cockpits, the flight leader should buy his wingman a shot prior to a mission.

betty an alliteration of Bombing Target.

bogie a friend of the BT that has not yet been identified as a CB.

CB cock blocker; the hot girl's troublesome friend and sworn enemy of the wingman. Also called a *bandit*.

dogfight dancing with a CB.

FL flight leader; also called the bombardier.

flak snide remarks made by a CB in an attempt to drive the flight team from the skies.

flying blind when the wingman indulges in so much in-flight refuelling he jeopardizes the mission.

getting pinged initial eye contact with a BT.

in-flight refuelling when a wingman orders a flurry of shots to help him complete his mission.

kamikaze mission when the wingman is likely to end up in the clutches of the CB.

landing gear a wingman's self-respect; if a FL asks his wingman to "leave his landing gear behind," he's preparing the wingman for a flak storm or kamikaze mission.

POW Prisoner of a Warthog; to go home with a CB, the supreme sacrifice of a wingman.

Pig Alley a play off of the Korean War's infamous MIG Alley, this describes a BT swarming with CBs.

shite leader a would-be flight leader without the skills to complete the mission.

shoot and scoot an attempt to engage with more than one CB at a time.

tailgunning when the wingman disgracefully abandons his air cover duties and attempts his own bombing run on the BT.

yank and bank an attempt by the FL to manoeuvre the BT away from the wingman and CB for some one-on-one time.

Know Your Cock Blockers



Before you tip that throttle and rocket off the runway, it's best to know what you're up against. There are three types of CBs, namely:

1.) **Cinderella's Sister:** This semi-attractive woman is secretly jealous of her more alluring friend and won't want to see her hook up because she's tired of being the bridesmaid. She's an easy target for flattery, especially if you compare her favourably with her friend.

Tagline: *"Doesn't she have great breasts? Too bad they're fake."*

2.) **Den Mother:** She's such a wonderful, responsible, caring person that she feels the need to watch over her "wild" friend and keep all the naughty boys at length. She's been honing her CB skills since high school and knows all the tricks, but can be cracked with a "you should really let

your friend live her own life, she's all grown up now" attack.

Tagline: *"Come on, Sweetie, you've had enough to drink and it's time to go home."*

3.) **Brumhilda:** Tempered by the hot fires of spite and bitterness, she dislikes men in general, either because she's been denied their attention or due to past romantic difficulties. She is the most dangerous CB because no amount of charm can flatter her into letting your FL fly off into the sunset with her friend. Only the most skilled and dogged of wingmen can neutralize her, usually by pretending he's gay and equally bitter.

Tagline: *"Hey you. Yeah, **you**, asshole. It's girls' night out. No men allowed. So why don't you go play Hide and Go Fuck Yourself?"*

The Wingman Creed

Without hesitation I'll accept any mission given me, no matter how impossible it may seem.

I will never show interest in the target, even if it's obvious she is much more interested in me.

No cock blocker is so beastly or boring that I will not aggressively engage her in stunning conversation.

Gallantly will I engage the enemy. No lie is too large, no shame too great, no cock blocker too gargantuan to deter me.

My personal reputation does not concern me, even though I become known far and wide as "The Beast Master."

Always shall I be ready to back up whatever insanely monstrous lie my flight leader tells.

Never shall I abandon my flight leader. By any means necessary I will see the mission through, though it means waking up next to what is, for all practical purposes, a buffalo.

Snapshot of a Flight Mission, Pt. 1 : Target Sighted!

FL: "I'm getting hella pinged by the redhead in the corner. I spy a solitary bogie. It's gonna be a milk run."

WM: "Oh good. 'Cuz after last time, my rep is a little ragged and—"

FL: "Nix that recon! Two more bogies are buzzing on the peripheral."

WM: "Three bogies? It's Pig Alley! And look at them! They're all Brumhildas! I'll be eaten alive!"

FL: "That's why I want you for this mission. You're the best damn shoot and scooter in the business."

WM: "I . . . I . . . I won't do it. You can't make me."

FL: "Goddamn you! I went kamikaze for you last week, didn't I? Let me get you a banzai."

WM: (whimpering softly) "All right. All right."

FL: "Here's how it's going down: I'll give you a one-minute lead in. You shoot and scoot like a motherfucker, and for Godsakes watch your six, heaven knows how many more CBs she brought

with her. Give me the high sign when it's safe for me to boom in, and once we attain air superiority, I'll yank and bank with the betty. And let's leave that clunky landing gear behind, shall we? You're going to be eating a lot of flak and I don't want it slowing you down."

WM: "Dude, you are going to *so* owe me."

Points to Remember

After the BT has been reconned, it's always best if the wingman goes in first. If he wings in with the FL or after, it will smack of a setup.

Once the wingman has successfully engaged the CB, the FL sweeps in, first making contact with the wingman, then turning his attention to the BT.

The moment the conversation is rolling, the FL will want to focus fully on the BT, so the wingman should attempt to lure the CB to the dance floor, jukebox, pool table or bar. If the CB refuses to budge, the FL will attempt to "yank and bank" the BT well out of cock blocking range.

A good wingman will accept the fact that he will most likely have to remain with the CB for the rest of evening, because once he breaks off the attack, the CB will make a beeline to the BT and try to shoot down the FL.

Keeping the CB pinned down is not always easy. The wingman must use all his charms to keep her entertained, he must listen to psyche-grating life-stories, he will learn the names of all her cats and all their wonderful little quirks. And if need be, he will feign romantic interest.

When closing time rolls around, a lesser wingman will wish his FL all the luck in the world and hightail it home. A good wingman, however, will carry on his mission even though it extends to someone's domicile, knowing full well he will find himself deep in enemy airspace, and may be asked to make the ultimate sacrifice.

Snapshot of a Flight Mission, Pt. 2: Ambushed!

The wingman skims in smoothly, overshooting the BT and striking up a conversation with the bogie. Within seconds he IDs her as a half-hearted Den Mother, less an enemy fighter than a lazily floating blimp (and she sorta resembles one too.) He glances back at his FL, ready to give the “all clear” signal, when he notices the FL’s alarmed eyes are tracking two bogies screaming in from the pool table. There’s no mistaking them—one Sister, the fast-moving Messerschmitt of the cock-blocking arsenal, and one Brumhilda, the equivalent of a rapid-firing, heavily-armoured flak cannon. He deftly shifts position, putting himself between the BT and the pair, forcing them to dock with the Den Mother. Panicked, he hastily exchanges introductions and desperately barrel rolls into a “You guys want to play some pool?” gambit. The blimp says “Sure!”; the pair say “No.” He checks his six, and here comes the FL, grinning like an idiot. The wingman tries to wave him off, but it’s too late, he’s locked onto the BT, coming in high and wide with the worst pick-up line the wingman had ever heard. The blimp nudges him toward the pool table and the Messerschmitt immediately moves in, taking up an attack position on the BT’s flank, while the flak cannon digs in and loads up for a furious barrage. The wingman glances back at his FL, whose eyes have darkened with horror and doom.

The Risks

It’s true that sometimes terrible things befall wingmen.

Sometimes it’s as innocuous as enduring a dull conversation or getting a drink thrown in his face. Sometimes his public reputation becomes so mangled he can no longer fly in the same theatre of operations.

Sometimes he will get locked in so steep a dive he can’t pull up in time to save himself from crash landing in a CB’s bed. The experience can shatter him completely, taking him off the duty roster for weeks, sometimes months. Sometimes he *never* comes back. Finally, worst of all, a wingman might go so far and so often into enemy territory that he will “go native,” and develop strange tastes in women.

So if you find a good wingman, make sure the missions are worth his risk and sacrifice. If the bombing run is successful, buy him a bottle of the good stuff, especially if he served as a POW.

Keep him happy, serve as his wingman when he needs one, and hold onto him with an iron grip. Good wingmen are as rare as diamonds.

Snapshot of a Flight Mission, Pt. 3: Dive! Dive!

*“Go ahead and break, I have to use the men’s room,” the wingman tells the blimp and wings it back to the strike zone. It’s immediately evident that the FL is going down in flames. The Sister is hanging on the BT’s arm and whispering in her ear and the Brumhilda is unleashing a “Let’s go somewhere else” salvo. It’s time for desperation tactics. “Hey, who wants a shot?” he fires off and unsurprisingly they all agree. He ushers the CBs toward the bar while slipping his FL a “yank and bank” signal. The FL’s eyes light up with hope and he stalls the BT halfway to the bar. The wingman glances back at the brooding blimp, who looks as if she’s ready to float back to the BT. Thinking quickly, he waves the blimp over with a “come do a shot” gesture. She starts drifting in his direction. He orders three girly shots and one banzai. “What about Beth and your friend?” the Brumhilda asks. “Let them get their own,” the wingman says, glancing back at the laughing couple. “Here’s to me, the best pool player in town,” he baits. The CBs scoff and the wingman makes his move: “Yeah? Well, I’ll bet you the next round that me and the bli—that me and my partner here can whip the hell out of you two girlies.” Her feminist pride stung, the Brumhilda growls, “You’re on.” His FL, deep in conversation with the BT, gives him an almost imperceptible nod of approval as the wingman escorts the CBs to the pool table. I **am** the best in the business, he thinks, then flinches as he feels the blimp’s arm encircle his waist. He looks into her voracious eyes and she says, “Hey partner, do you want to go to a party later?” His knees buckle a little and he gropes for a pool cue to steady himself. “Maybe so,” he says, thinking: “That motherfucker is going to **so** owe me.”*

—Frank Kelly Rich