

Broken Heart

By

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Chapter 1

It was a beautiful sunny Thursday morning over the countryside west of Pine Cove, Florida. It was June 1978.

Today was a perfect day for flying with scattered puffy clouds at six thousand and two hundred feet, and the winds were around eight knots from the northeast.

A white with red Piper Warrior Cadet airplane, with the tail number of N986ZT, flew straight and level at three thousand five hundred feet just west of Lake Downing.

Inside the Warrior Cadet was Jason Jenkins, a fifty-seven-year-old certified flight instructor, and owner of the plane. Jason was distinguished looking with a three-inch-long scar above his left eye and had salt and pepper hair. He was still a looker as lots of women had felt.

Jason was the owner of the High Flying Adventures aviation services company located in the north area of the Sandbar Island Airport. Jason's business was small, and he only had two employees. He had a female office manager and a part-time mechanic.

Jason had dreams of expanding his business with more instructors and more planes, which included a Piper J-3 Cub seaplane. He submitted a request from the airport authority to build a small restaurant, with docks, just north of runway 29 by the Indian River. Besides, he went to the bank to secure a loan.

In the pilot seat of the Warrior Cadet was a student pilot named Kimberly Brookes. She was thirty-five years old and a beautiful chubby blonde with blue eyes and spoke with an English accent.

Jason kept a watchful eye on while Kimberly made a shallow turn to the right with the Warrior. "You're doing

great Kimberly,” he told her.

She flashed a proud smile while she glanced over at him.

“Now, let’s perform a power-off stall,” he said.

Kimberly’s proud smile quickly vanished, and she suddenly looked nervous and hesitated.

Jason noticed her hesitation in performing this required maneuver. “You can’t be a private pilot by being afraid.”

Kimberly took a deep breath for some courage and decided to be brave.

She performed a clearing turn to the right in the Warrior.

She performed a clearing turn to the left in the Warrior.

“Excellent, Kimberly. I’m impressed that you remembered the clearing turns this time.”

She flew the plane straight ahead then she took many deep breaths. She pulled back on the throttle to the idle position.

She cringed while she pulled back on the control yoke. The nose of the Warrior rose upward.

She continued to pull back on the control yoke.

The nose of the Warrior rose higher.

The stall alarm soon blared from the console indicating the wings of the Warrior were stalling. The sound of that alarm scared Kimberly, and she shut her eyes. “Ahhh!” she lightly screamed out and let go of the control yoke the second the plane dropped.

The second Jason saw her hands let go of the controls, he quickly sprung into action, and he grabbed his control yoke. Jason resumed control of the plane and recovered from the stall.

“Okay, we’ll have to work on these stalls some more,” he calmly told her while he flew the plane straight and level.

“I’m never going to get the hang of performing that maneuver,” she replied and felt a little ashamed with her recent performance.

He looked over at her and gave her a warm smile. "Don't worry, you'll be mastering them after some more practice. And there's one thing you have to remember, this Warrior Cadet is a very stable airplane. Watch this," he told her.

Jason made a right clearing turn, and then he made a left clearing turn in the Warrior.

He pulled back on the throttle to idle and pulled back on the control yoke. The nose of the Warrior rose higher. The stall alarm blared. He let go of the yoke.

Kimberly's eyes widened with fright thinking they were going to crash to the ground. But she watched while the plane eventually settled into a straight and level configuration all by itself.

"See, I told you that this plane is very stable," Jason said while he grabbed his control yoke and pushed in the throttle to the proper setting.

"I see what you mean," she replied and looked surprised at the performance of the plane.

The plane was soon flying straight and level at three thousand and four hundred feet.

"Okay Kimberly, she's your plane and let's call it a day. Take us back to the airport," he told her.

Kimberly felt better while she grabbed the yoke and took control of the plane.

Five minutes later, Kimberly descended and flew the plane at one thousand feet and was five miles southwest of the Sandbar Island airport.

"Okay, Kimberly, make your call," he told her.

"Sandbar Island traffic, this is Warrior nine eight six Zulu Tango, five miles southwest of the airport. Inbound for a forty-five degree downwind entry for runway two niner, Sandbar Island," she said into the radio.

Jason looked satisfied with her radio call and watched while she flew into a forty-five-degree entry into the downwind leg for runway 29.

“Sandbar Island traffic, Warrior nine eight six Zulu Tango making a forty-five degree downwind entry for runway two niner, Sandbar Island,” Kimberly said into the radio after she made the forty-five-degree entry into the downwind leg of runway 29.

A few seconds later, Kimberly configured the power and flap setting when she was abeam the numbers for runway 29.

“Sandbar Island traffic, Warrior nine eight six Zulu Tango turning left base for runway two niner, Sandbar Island,” she said into the radio when she turned onto the base leg of the pattern over the Indian River.

She configured the flaps while she was on the base leg of the pattern.

“Sandbar Island traffic, Warrior nine eight six Zulu tango turning final for runway two niner, full stop, Sandbar Island,” she said into the radio when she turned onto the final leg of the pattern.

Kimberly configured the plane and power was at idle when she knew the plane could make the runway.

While the Warrior glided down over the Indian River to runway 29, Jason looked out the front window and glance at the spot where he wanted to build his restaurant. It’s going be nice! He thought to himself while he looked at the area by the river and runway 29.

Kimberly leveled out the Warrior once she was in the ground effect over the runway.

“Fly me down to the end of the runway,” Jason told her.

She pitched up the nose of the plane, and it floated a little, but eventually, the plane landed after a few bounces.

“Good landing, Kimberly,” Jason praised her.

She taxied the plane off to the right at the nearest taxiway.

Kimberly parked the Warrior next to Jason’s other airplane, which was a light brown Cessna 172.

After the Warrior was parked and secured, Kimberly and Jason, with small flight bags in hand, walked to his small office that was next to his small hangar. He also had a clipboard and the keys to the plane in his hand.

Jason's High Flying Adventures building was small and consisted of a counter, his office, bathrooms, and a pilot's lounge.

Behind the counter, was Mandy Jepson, a twenty-seven-year-old female where she greeted the pilots, issued the keys to the planes, and processed all the required paperwork. She had worked for Jason since the first day he opened up his business three years ago. She sang along to Rod Stewart's *The First Cut Is The Deepest* song that played on the radio while she completed filing some maintenance paperwork.

She heard the bell ring indicating someone entered the building. She stopped singing when she saw Kimberly and Jason enter the lobby. Mandy smiled at Jason while he walked up to the counter and dropped off the clipboard and keys to the Warrior.

He then walked Kimberly to the small pilot's lounge to the left of the counter.

The pilot's lounge consisted of a small cubbyhole with a snack vending machine, couch, two chairs, a table, and magazine rack with current and old issues of *Plane and Pilot* and *Flying* magazines.

Kimberly removed her logbook from her flight bag and handed it to Jason.

He opened up her logbook and annotated today's one-hour lesson.

"Okay Kimberly, next time, I really want to concentrate on those power-off stalls. I know you can handle them, so don't be afraid. The Warrior won't crash," he said with a comforting tone and a warm smile.

"I know Jason. I'll get the hang of them soon," she replied, as Jason always made her feel at ease when her flying

wasn't going smooth.

He handed her back her logbook, and she placed it inside her flight bag.

Kimberly and Jason stood up from the couch.

She looked at him, and her eyes indicated there was something personal she wanted to ask him. She hesitated for a few seconds while she debated in her mind. After flip-flopping for a few seconds, she decided to go ahead and ask him. "Jason, I've meant to ask you something," she said.

"Ask away," he replied.

Kimberly fidgeted for a second while she wondered if she was making a mistake. "Ah, my mother's a private pilot and owns a couple of planes, and I would love it if you would meet her. She lives about eighty-five miles southwest of here down in West Haven," she finally blurted out and looked hopeful.

Jason cringed a little while he looked at Kimberly's hopeful eyes and hesitated on answering.

"She's beautiful, and I have a picture," Kimberly replied while she reached inside her flight bag and pulled out her wallet.

Jason placed a hand on her hand and stopped her from opening her wallet. "Thanks for the offer, Kimberly, but I'll pass. I really don't care to date right now since my business keeps me extremely busy," he said.

"I understand," Kimberly replied while she hid her disappointment behind her fake smile then placed her wallet back into her flight bag.

Jason walked her to the counter where Mandy had her bill ready.

Kimberly paid for her lesson by personal check. "I'll see you on Tuesday," she said while she dropped her checkbook into her flight bag.

"Next Tuesday it is," Jason replied then escorted her to the door to show her he wasn't upset with her offer to date her mother.

Jason opened the door and watched while she stepped outside.

He closed the door then walked over to the counter.

“Has she shown any improvement?” Mandy asked while she got up and walked to the coffee pot on a credenza behind the counter.

“Mandy, let’s say I felt safer when the Germans were shooting at me when she first started. But she’s slowly showing signs of improvement,” he told her while she poured him a cup of coffee.

Mandy chuckled while she walked back and handed him his coffee.

“But I remember my niece being the same type of challenge,” he said then sipped his coffee.

Mandy smiled then she reached down by her paperwork.

She set an invitation to her wedding on the counter in front of Jason. “Speaking of a challenge, I wish you would reconsider coming to my wedding, Jason,” she said with a warm smile.

Jason frowned while he looked down at the invitation. “No offense, but I don’t do weddings. But I would like to give you a little fatherly advice about your present. Stay single!” he said then he winked at her, grabbed his coffee cup, and walked over to his office, which was located to the right of the counter.

Mandy looked hurt while she removed her wedding invitation off the counter. She set it down by her paperwork then saw two letters that came in today’s mail.

She grabbed the letters and walked away from the counter.

Jason sat behind his desk in his small office and stared out his small office window while he sipped his coffee. His mind wondered while he thought about his future then his mind wandered off in another direction, and he thought about his past.

“I forgot these letters came for you today,” Mandy said while entered his office.

She walked up to his desk and dropped off the two letters. “Your next lesson is in twenty minutes with Doctor Elroy. You have a cross-country trip with him,” she reminded him while she walked out of his office.

Jason looked at the letters, and his eyes widened with anticipation of good news.

He opened up the first letter from Sun Bank and read it.

“Dear Mister Jenkins, we’re sorry to inform you that your loan request for expanding your aviation business at the Sandbar Island has been disapproved,” he read from the letter signed by Bobby Wilson, Loan Manager.

He looked disappointed then quickly opened up the other letter from the local airport authority.

“Dear Mister Jenson, we’re sorry to inform you that your request on the building of a restaurant on Sandbar Island airport property has been denied,” he read from the letter from Kent Guise of the local airport authority.

Jason was disappointed while he crumpled up the two letters then tossed them into his trash can.

He heard the bell ring when someone entered the building.

“Good afternoon, Doctor Elroy,” Mandy called out from behind the counter.

Jason got up from behind his desk and walked out of his office.

Jason walked up to Dr. Elroy, who waited at the counter by Mandy. “Hey doc, are you ready for our little cross-country trip?” he asked Dr. Elroy.

“I’m ready,” Dr. Elroy replied with a look of confidence.

“Great, go out there, and preflight the one seventy-two and I’ll be out shortly,” Jason responded.

Mandy handed Dr. Elroy the clipboard and keys for the

Cessna 172.

Dr. Elroy took the clipboard and keys and headed to the front door.

While Dr. Elroy went outside to preflight the Cessna 172, Jason went off to the bathroom.

Twenty minutes later, Dr. Elroy and Jason took off from runway 29 and made a left crosswind departure to the south and headed to Vero Beach.

Later that day, Dr. Elroy performed a touch-and-go at the Vero Beach airport then they headed northwest to West Haven.

Later that afternoon, Dr. Elroy made his final approach to runway 5 of the West Haven Gilly Field airport and flew over Lake Jess.

“Keep an eye for seaplanes taking off or landing with the lake down below. They shouldn’t be a threat since they maintain a five hundred foot traffic pattern,” Jason warned Dr. Elroy since there was Jack Brown’s seaplane training base there at the north end of the lake.

“Dr. Elroy saw a seaplane on the lake, but it wasn’t a threat to their approach to the runway.

Dr. Elroy made a smooth landing and taxied over to the FBO and parked.

After they refueled the plane, they took a bathroom break, bought some cookies and candy bars from a vending machine.

They sat down in the small lounge and ate their snacks while they relaxed.

After ten minutes had passed, Dr. Elroy performed a quick preflight on the Cessna 172.

While this was being done, Jason looked around the airfield. He thought this would be a good location for a business. In fact, he felt the one end of the airport property by Lake Hartridge would be a perfect location for his restaurant.

Jason then looked over at another area of the airport

near Highway 292 and saw a large hangar and a smaller hangar that was a new aviation museum. He thought nothing of it and while he walked over to Dr. Elroy and the Cessna 172.

A little while later, and Dr. Elroy took off from runway 5 and headed back northeast to Sandbar Island.

After his workday of flying was done, Jason went home.

He went into the kitchen, where he made a pot of coffee.

He walked over to the phone and saw he had a message from his answering machine. He played back the recorded message from the machine.

“Jason, it’s me, Katie. I haven’t heard from you since our date in two weeks, and I was wondering if you wanted to go out tomorrow night. Maybe dinner and a movie? Call me,” Katie’s message stated from the tape.

Jason erased her message, as he wasn’t interested in getting involved with Katie.

While the coffee was brewing, Jason walked over to the refrigerator and opened up the freezer. He removed a frozen dinner and walked over to the oven.

It was later that evening, and Jason relaxed in his den while he drank some more coffee.

The walls of his den were decorated with numerous pictures from his thirty-year Air Force career, as a pilot. He retired in 1973, as a Colonel and used the money he saved for years to start up his aviation business.

While he sipped on his coffee, he looked over at his blueprints for his restaurant he called High Flying Eatery. The main building had twenty tables, and he wanted to decorate the walls with numerous pieces of airplanes.

There was an outside wooden deck with tables where some people could eat outside and enjoy the view of the Indian River or watch the airplanes take off or land on the runway.

He looked disappointed while got up and folded up his blueprints.

He walked them over to the closet. He opened the doors and placed the prints on the top shelf for good.

His phone rang in the kitchen, so he walked out of the den.

He walked into his kitchen and picked up the phone.

“Jason Jenkins residence,” he answered the call.

“Hey, Uncle Jason, it’s me, Robyn,” his niece answered the call.

“Hey baby,” he replied with a smile.

“I should be landing tomorrow morning at around ten in the morning. I’m so looking forward to spending the weekend with you,” she said.

“Me too and I’ll see you tomorrow at the airport,” he replied with a warm smile then he hung up the phone.

Jason left the kitchen and retired to the living room to watch TV for the evening.

Chapter 2

It was Friday morning.

Jason woke up bright and early at six for the start of another day of flying. But this time it would be for pleasure and not for business.

After he took a shower, he made some scrambled eggs and drank his morning cups of coffee to get things started.

Jason closed down his business today and for the weekend so he could spend time with Robyn. Mandy loved having these days off with pay, as it gave her additional time to work on her wedding plans.

After breakfast, Jason drove to his office to take care of some paperwork while he waited for Robyn.

A few hours later, and it was now nine fifty-two that morning.

Jason was finishing his third cup of coffee while he reviewed some paperwork at his desk. He had on the radio so he could listen to the radio calls made by the pilots.

"Sandbar Island traffic, this is Piper Arrow eight seventy-four Alpha Hotel, five miles to the southeast of the airport. Heading for a forty-five-degree entry for downwind on runway two niner, Sandbar Island," Robyn called out from the radio.

Jason smiled after hearing her radio call, and he got up from his desk with his coffee cup and walked out of his office.

He walked to the door and stepped outside, keeping the door open while he looked to the south of the airport.

"Sandbar Island traffic, Arrow eight seventy-four Alpha Hotel entering downwind around mid-field for runway two niner, Sandbar Island," Robyn called out from the radio.

After a few minutes of scanning the blue sky from his office window, he saw a Piper Arrow while it headed downwind for runway 29. He smiled, watching the Piper fly down the downwind leg of the pattern.

Jake watched while Robyn turned her Arrow on the base leg of the pattern after making her call on the radio.

He watched while she turned her Arrow on final approach for runway 29 after making her call on the radio.

He watched while Robyn landed the Arrow on the runway.

A few minutes later, Robyn parked her Arrow in a spot next to Jason's Warrior Cadet.

After she shut off the engine, Jason walked over to her airplane.

"Robyn!" he called out when she stepped out of the airplane and walked down the wing.

Robyn White was a beautiful twenty-eight-year-old brunette with soft brown eyes.

She rushed over and immediately gave Jason a hug and kiss on his cheek. "It's so good to see you, Uncle Jason," she said.

She went over and opened the baggage door and removed a small overnight bag and set it down on the tarmac.

Jason tied down her plane while she went inside her plane and finished securing the cockpit.

Fifteen minutes later, Jason drove Robyn to his house, in Waterway Manor, which was located off Courtney Parkway.

Meanwhile, back at the West Haven Gilly Airport, the Spencer's Aviation Museum was about ninety-eight percent ready for its grand opening tomorrow. It was located on the airport property situated on the main entrance from Highway 292.

The museum contained numerous vintage aircraft in the main room of the twenty-eight thousand square foot

hangar. Located along the side walls were multiple smaller rooms that housed various pieces of aircraft and other World War I and II military items and uniforms.

In the Bombers Room, there were various pieces of the insides of different bombers in this five thousand square foot room. There were consoles, seats, radios, bombardier equipment, etc., salvaged from World War II bombers that crashed. Each display had a display board that provided information about the particular item and the bomber.

The various items were laid out in a maze in the room.

Cindy Grant Spencer was fifty-three years old and still a beautiful blonde with blue eyes and spoke with an English accent. She kept in shape by jogging and spending time at the gym.

Kimberly Brookes was Cindy's daughter, and she drove down here to spend the day with her mother.

Cindy and Kimberly walked around the maze while she looked at her clipboard double-checking that the items were in their proper place.

"You'll have to keep working at it. Power-off stalls aren't that difficult, Kimberly," Cindy told her while she checked off some of the items on her checklist.

"I know and having a patient instructor is helping," Kimberly replied.

"He sounds really nice," Cindy said while she checked off some more items on her checklist.

Kimberly took this as her opportunity. "Jason's great and about your age and his only defect is a scar above his eye. I asked him if he wanted to meet you. I think you two would get along great."

"Kimberly, please don't try to fix me up," Cindy said with a frown.

"But there's something about him. It's like I've known him all my life. Plus he was a pilot in the Air Force. Retired as a Colonel," Kimberly responded, hoping that would change her mother's mind.

"Honey, I really don't want a relationship right now. What I really want is a grandchild to keep me busy," Cindy said to throw that out as a hint. Again.

"I know. Rob and I will work on that after I get my pilot's license."

"Do it before I'm put in an old folks home and forget who I am," Cindy jokingly replied.

"I know," Kimberly said while she chuckled.

They walked over to a huge wooden crate with "Sweet Bird" stenciled on it located in the center of the maze.

Cindy got a little nervous when she saw the crate and worried it wouldn't be ready by tomorrow.

Kimberly saw at the crate. "You got a new piece. Where did it come from?"

"Germany," Cindy replied while she looked around the room. She felt relieved when she saw Lenny and Henry, two museum workers, walk over with some crowbars in their hand.

Lenny and Henry walked over to the Sweet Bird crate and started prying it open with the crowbars.

"Let's put some fresh flowers on dad's grave," Cindy told Kimberly while the workers continued to tear apart the wooden crate.

Cindy and Kimberly turned around and walked toward the exit.

Back over in Sandbar Island, Jason and Robyn jogged south down the sidewalk along Courtney Parkway.

"I wish Jerry and Patty could have come along."

"He couldn't get away from work since he has this court case on Monday and Patty had a birthday party to attend on Saturday. But they both wanted to wish you a happy birthday," Robyn replied.

"That's too bad he had to work," he said.

"How's the business going?"

"Great. My female student yesterday freaked out and took her hands off the controls during a power-off stall," he

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