

THE TEXAS SECESSIONISTS

INT. SHOTGUN HOUSE IN EAST AUSTIN - NIGHT

Moonlight spills into a single-room; thin cotton curtains barely cover the windows. Three separate double beds arranged side-by-side hold a sleeping family of six.

SUPER: 1954

Blondes, 11-YEAR-OLD JO ANN CANADY and her younger sister, LILLIAN, lie together in one double bed. Beside them, twin toddlers, JIMMIE AND SYDNEY JR., sleep in their own bed. Their parents MARGARET and SYDNEY SR. CANADY occupy a third.

Quietly, Jo Ann slinks out of her bed and tiptoes to the bathroom. She wears a tiny gold locket that she grasps as she looks down at her family members who all appear to be asleep.

After she passes her parents' bed, Sydney Sr.'s eyes open. He slowly rises up out of bed.

END FLASHBACK

INT. SOUTHWEST AUSTIN APARTMENT - DAY

SUPER: APRIL 22, 1997

FIFTY-FIVE YEAR OLD JO ANN CANADY-TURNER looks younger than her years. Coifed, she stands in front of a full-length mirror still wearing the tiny gold locket. She applies red lipstick and makes a kissing pout. From a nightstand, she lifts a glass of Bloody Mary cocktail. She drinks.

EXT. JO ANN TURNER'S AUSTIN APARTMENT PARKING LOT - DAY

Jo Ann carries a full trash bag to a nearby dumpster.

NINE SWAT TEAM MEMBERS approach her on all sides dressed head-to-toe in black with face masks that expose only their eyes and lips. They point semi-automatic weapons at her head.

She drops her trash bag.

SWAT TEAM MEMBER#1

Jo Ann Turner?

JO ANN

Yes?

SWAT TEAM MEMBER#1

You're under arrest. You have the right to remain silent.

(MORE)

SWAT TEAM MEMBER#1 (CONT'D)

Anything you say can and will be  
used against you in a court of law.  
You have the right to an attorney.  
If you cannot afford an attorney,  
one will be appointed to you.

Jo Ann places tosses her trash bag into a dumpster.

SWAT Team member #1 shifts his position slightly, and places  
a finger on the trigger of his weapon.

JO ANN

I am going inside to change. Then,  
I will leave a note for my husband.  
After THAT, you all can arrest me.

SWAT TEAM MEMBER#1 silently motions for seven other SWAT Team  
members to remain in place. He waves his weapon at SWAT TEAM  
MEMBER#2, and then at Jo Ann, indicating to follow her.

INT. SOUTHWEST AUSTIN APARTMENT KITCHEN - DAY

Jo Ann wears pants. She removes her gold locket and places it  
on the counter. She tacks a note on the refrigerator.

ON SCREEN: "BILL. I'VE BEEN ARRESTED!"

Beside her note is another more formal-looking letter.

ON SCREEN: "NOTICE OF DEFAULT" - ALAMO TITLE & MORTGAGE"

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL, BOOKING - DAY

Jo Ann opens her mouth.

ON SCREEN: A gloved hand explores the inside of Jo Ann's  
mouth, teeth and tongue, illuminated by a flashlight.

FEMALE/APD JAILER#1 (O.S.)

Bend over.

Jo Ann closes her mouth. She purses her lips.

Behind her stands a FEMALE APD/JAILER#1 in a blue uniform.

FEMALE APD/JAILER#1

(speaking loudly)

NOW.

Jo Ann bends over. Her eyes widen. She is completely nude.

Beside Female APD Jailer#1 stands burly MALE APD/JAILER#2. He holds a rifle aimed at Jo Ann's head.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Jo Ann enters a bare room with cinderblock walls. She wears a standard jail issued orange jumpsuit and flip-flops.

A PUDGY MAN wearing a dark suit two sizes too small, sits in a chair at a small metal desk with a tape recorder.

Jo Ann slowly sits in a chair directly in front of the man.

PUDGY MAN

Missus Turner I represent the Texas Attorney General's office. You have been charged with writing false liens against the Alamo Title, Travis County and the I-R-S on behalf of the Republic of Texas militia. You will be charged with sedition. Do you wish to make a statement?

JO ANN

No. I WISH for an attorney.

INT. TEXAS ATTORNEY DAN MORALES' OFFICE - DAY

Slick-talking Texas Attorney General DAN MORALES stands in a three-piece suit wearing too much hair gel and makeup. He holds up both hands to quiet an assembled MEDIA THROG.

DAN MORALES

Today I ordered the arrest of the secretary for the Republic of Texas militia. This woman is a paper terrorist! She and others have filed false liens against local, state and national agencies to keep them from conducting business. As part of my campaign promise for re-election, I will arrest more 'ROT' militia in the coming days.

MEDIA MEMBERS raise their hands to ask questions.

MEDIA#1

(Shouting)

Mister Morales. Mister Morales!

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL CELL - NIGHT

Jo Ann lies on a bare mattress in the lower bunk of a metal frame bunkbed. The room's only other furnishings are a stainless steel sink and toilet. Her hands are pressed together beneath her left temple in a prayer-like pose.

INSERT: We hear sounds of scuffling in the dark. We see a rat scurry across the floor.

Jo Ann sits up, squeezes her eyes shut and swallows hard. She presses her back up against a cinderblock wall.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

INT. EAST AUSTIN SHOTGUN HOUSE BATHROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: 40 years earlier.

Pubescent Jo Ann urgently fiddles with a ratty door lock. Her tiny gold locket dangles away from her neck.

Sydney Sr. pushes his way into the bathroom and softly closes the door behind him. He moves towards his daughter menacingly.

Jo Ann moves away until her back hits a tiled wall. She squeezes her eyes shut. Her body grows rigid.

Sydney Sr. securely pins Jo Ann firmly against the wall. He places his left hand over her mouth. She turns away, with her eyes squeezed tightly, and her face grimacing.

END FLASHBACK

INT. PHONE BOOTH INSIDE TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL - DAY

A large MALE TRAVIS COUNTY JAILER#3 stands close to a jailhouse phone booth.

Inside the booth, Jo Ann dials on a rotary phone using a pencil. She has long, expertly manicured nails.

SUPER: APRIL 23, 1997

JO ANN  
(whispering)  
Help me Rick! I'm in jail! I've  
been arrested!

INT. TRASHY TRAILER INSIDE THE DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Einstein look-alike, RICK MCLAREN, talks on a 1990s-era cell phone the size of a man's shoe. Behind him, hangs a flag.

ON SCREEN: The copy of the 1835 "Come and Take It" flag with a hand drawn cannon that sparked the Battle of Gonzales.

RICK

Sit tight, Jo. I'll get you out.  
We'll soon claim our right to  
secede the United States under the  
International Laws of Occupation as  
governed by the Hague Regulations  
and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

INT. PHONE BOOTH INSIDE TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL - DAY

Jo Ann cups her hands around the receiver of the phone.

JO ANN

(whispering)

But...Rick...I'm not safe here! A  
man from the Texas D-A's office  
said I'll be charged with sedition!

INT. TRASHY TRAILER INSIDE THE DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

A bookshelf beside Rick holds shelves of anti-government militia books detailing how to make weapons and bombs.

ON SCREEN: the book, "Heavy Firepower; Turning Junk into Arsenal Weaponry."

RICK

That D-A holds no jurisdiction over  
you. Neither does Travis County,  
nor the United States. We represent  
the sovereign nation of Texas.  
Don't forget that!

INT. PHONE BOOTH INSIDE TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL - DAY

Jo Ann clings to a landline phone.

JO ANN

(loudler)

Nine men pointed guns at my head! I  
was strip-searched!

INT. TRASHY TRAILER INSIDE THE DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

As Rick talks, he stands and dramatically salutes his flag.

RICK

The International Court of Justice  
in the Hague will recognize the  
Republic of Texas militia and me as  
its official ambassador. We will  
secede from the United States! I'll  
talk to you when I declare war!

He hangs up.

CUT TO:

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL CELL - DAY

A husky FEMALE GUARD#2 dressed in a black uniform, pauses in front of Jo Ann's cell.

Jo Ann looks up with tousled hair and smeared mascara.

JO ANN

Did someone post my bail?

FEMALE GUARD#2

No Missus Turner. I'll escort you  
to District Judge Joseph H. Hart.

Female Guard#2 escorts Jo Ann out of the cellblock. They pass neighboring TRAVIS COUNTY JAIL CELLMATES who appear asleep.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY COURTROOM - DAY

Female Guard#2 escorts Jo Ann to a seat in front of Travis County 126th District Court Judge JOSEPH H. HART. Handsome, he possesses a square jaw, wide smile, dimples and blue eyes.

Jo Ann sits up straight and smiles coquettishly at the judge.

JUDGE HART

Missus Turner, you have been  
identified as 'a paper terrorist'  
for the Republic of Texas militia.

JO ANN

What? A paper terrorist?

Jo Ann runs her fingers through her hair.

JUDGE HART  
(in a loud voice)  
Did you file documents on behalf of  
a militia against Alamo Title,  
Travis County or the I-R-S?

JO ANN  
For the second time, I am asking  
for a court-appointed attorney.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Dapper San Antonio attorney NICK MILAM dressed in a dark suit  
and shoes, walks down a hallway with a super polished floor.

SUPER: APRIL 24, 1997

Texas District 250 Judge JOHN DIETZ sticks his bulbous head  
out of the door of his office. He and Milam make eye contact.

JUDGE DIETZ  
Hey, Nick, come in here a minute.

NICK MILAM  
Sure Judge.

Nick enters the judge's office adorned with a nameplate.

ON SCREEN: The nameplate reads "Judge John Dietz."

INT. JUDGE JOHN DIETZ' OFFICE - DAY

Judge John Dietz sits behind a desk. His mouth forms an  
unnatural round "O" shape, toothless and dark, like a frog's.

Milam sits in front of Dietz's desk.

JUDGE DIETZ  
Mister Milam I want you to serve as  
public defense to a fifty-four-year-  
old lady arrested yesterday.

NICK MILAM  
Ok. On what charges?

JUDGE DIETZ  
The Texas Attorney General is  
calling her a 'paper terrorist' for  
filing some false liens.

Milam scoffs and scratches his knee.



NICK MILAM

'Paper terrorist?' That's a new one! Morales is really overreacting. Someone's looking for votes. Why don't you just turn the poor lady loose and file civil actions? She's likely somebody's grandma for Christ's sake!

JUDGE DIETZ

We've got to hold her. Morales thinks she may have inside information about the Republic of Texas militia holed up in the Davis Mountains. And there's more...

Dietz pushes a file across his desk towards Milam.

Milam removes a pen and notepad from inside his suit coat.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Jo Ann and attorney Nick Milam sit in an interrogation room.

NICK MILAM

For the life of me Jo Ann, I can't figure out what has everyone so riled up about you. Texas does not currently have any laws to prohibit someone from filing false liens.

JO ANN

What is a false lien Mister Milam?

NICK MILAM

A lien is a notice attached to a business to collect a debt, freezing all assets. But you're charged with filing 'false liens,' meaning: there are no debts owed.

Jo Ann wrings her hands.

JO ANN

I was just delivering forms. Rick said that would keep my house from foreclosure. He said I did not have to pay my back taxes. He said Texas is a sovereign nation that the U-S annexed illegally in 1845.

Nick Milam pats her hand.

NICK MILAM

Rick forgot to mention that Texas joined the Confederacy during The Civil War. Afterwards, the Union reclaimed Texas. In 1869 The Supreme Court ruled in 'Texas versus White' that the United States is an 'indestructible union.' Those who rebel or declare war against the union, may be reasonably charged with treason.

Jo Ann runs her hands through her hair and hangs her head.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY PRISONER TRANSPORT BUS - DAY

Four armed TCCF GUARDS #1, #2 and #3 usher Jo Ann into a bus seat in front of a window covered in metal mesh. TCCF GUARD #1 attaches shackles on Jo Ann, with metal U-shaped cuffs on her legs and wrists that connect to her waist.

TWELVE MALE AND FEMALE TCCF PRISONERS sit opposite one another dressed in orange standard jail-issued garb.

SUPER: APRIL 25, 1997

She looks at the other TCCF prisoners wearing handcuffs.

JO ANN

Why am I the only one wearing all this metal? I can barely move!

TCCF GUARD #2

Morales ordered 'em.

The TCCF guards #1, #2 and #3 watch male and female prisoners. TCCF GUARD #4 drives the bus.

TCCF GUARD #3

(to prisoners)

Sit tight y'all. We're takin' a long ride into the countryside.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CELL INSIDE TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

In her bottom bunk, Jo Ann opens her eyes.

A Caribbean woman, ZAZA, turns on a sink faucet. Zaza's eyes are exotic. She is thin to extreme. She faces Jo Ann.

ZAZA  
Whatchoo in for?

Jo Ann stands up, walks to the opposite wall.

JO ANN  
I'm not quite sure. I'm Jo Ann  
Turner. What is your name?

ZAZA  
Zaza.

JO ANN  
Za-za? Why are you here?

ZAZA  
Yeah Zaza. As 'dey say, drugs.

Zaza sits on Jo Ann's lower bunk. On the opposite wall are  
taped photos of children. Jo Ann points at the photos.

JO ANN  
Zaza are those your children?

Zaza picks at a scab on her elbow.

ZAZA  
Yeah. 'Dey be in Port-au-Prince. I  
gotz five childs. And 'choo?

Zaza gets up and motions for Jo Ann to continue.

JO ANN  
My daughter is an airline  
stewardess. My son is a ski  
instructor. I have a grandson. I'm  
a grandmother - not a criminal.

Zaza leans forward and grabs both Jo Ann's hands in hers.

ZAZA  
Youse a granny wit money! Deez  
nails talk big rich. Yeah.

INT. COMMON ROOM OF TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Zaza leads Jo Ann to a table with FIVE BLACK TCCF INMATES.

A large woman prisoner, NATASHA, stands nearly 7 feet tall  
with striking looks, gray eyes, and long cornrow braids.  
Slowly, she walks around the back of Jo Ann, scrutinizing.

NATASHA  
Missus Turner, what'd youse do?

TCCF WOMEN INMATES stop their eating and talking.

JO ANN  
A judge called me a 'paper  
terrorist' for a militia.

Natasha laughs loudly. Other TCCF inmates laugh.

NATASHA  
Youse don't say!

JO ANN  
I was just one man's secretary.

NATASHA  
'Das de reason we women goes crazy,  
'cause de 'tings men do.

Zaza chuckles.

ZAZA  
And dat's why we killz' 'em!

NATASHA  
Sit Missus Turner. Tell me 'bout  
you. How's did you git here?

Jo Ann sits.

JO ANN  
I lived in a beautiful home in  
Westlake, the wealthiest suburb in  
Austin. But I could no longer pay  
my mortgage nor my property taxes.

Natasha waves to TCCF inmates to resume their eating.

FLASHBACK

EXT. OF JO ANN TURNERS' WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

Jo Ann opens a mailbox in front of her gorgeous 5,000-square-foot mediterranean-style home.

SUPER: DECEMBER 28, 1993

From the mailbox, Jo Ann removes a postcard and reads.

ON SCREEN: The Republic of Texas militia:

"If you're about to lose your home  
to foreclosure, give us a call."

INT. TURNER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

Large lumbering J.C. VAN KIRK, dressed in a cheap pinstripe suit with a loud tie, sits on a overstuffed sofa.

Jo Ann sits across from Van Kirk in a Queen Ann chair. She holds a full glass of white wine.

JO ANN

Your postcard mentioned that you  
are able to help someone like me?

J.C. VAN KIRK

That's correct. The Republic of  
Texas militia has been very  
successful in the arbitration of  
foreclosures and with tax evasion  
by filing with the United States  
Tax Court in Washington D.C.

She takes a long drink from her wine glass.

J.C. Van Kirk picks his nose.

JO ANN

May I offer you something to drink  
Mister Van Kirk? Some wine?

From a bottle nearby, she pours more wine into her glass.

J.C. VAN KIRK

No thank ya' Missus Turner. I'll  
git right to the bid-ness' at hand.  
For a fee, my associates and I can  
offer y'all legal representation.

JO ANN

A fee?

J.C. VAN KIRK

Initial registration is fifteen  
hundred. Another fifteen hundred  
will be collected after our  
counselor files a lien against  
Alamo Title. That'll freeze 'em  
from continuing your foreclosure.

Jo Ann gulps the remaining wine in her glass.

JO ANN  
I'm embarrassed to say this Mister  
Van Kirk, but I'm nearly broke.

J.C. VAN KIRK  
Own any liquid assets? Anythin'  
that can be pawned for cash, quick?

A beat.

Van Kirk eyes Jo Ann's expensive-looking necklace.

J.C. VAN KIRK (CONT'D)  
What 'bout some of that?

ON SCREEN: Jo Ann's diamond necklace.

Jo Ann inhales deeply and holds her hand over her necklace.

INT. JO ANN'S 1990 BLACK MERCEDES - DAY

Jo Ann parks. She drinks from a chilled wine tumbler.

ON SCREEN: the wine tumbler bears her initials "J.T."

EXT. TRAILER PARK IN NORTHEAST AUSTIN - DAY

Trash litters the front yard. A dog house stands empty.  
Carefully, Jo Ann climbs wobbly wooden steps and knocks on a  
rickety screen door. She waits, then knocks again.

JO ANN  
(in a raised voice)  
Hello? It's Missus Turner. I have  
an appointment. With June?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(shouting)  
It's open. Best you come on in.

Jo Ann hesitates. She enters the trailer trepidatiously.

INT. JUNE DOE'S DOUBLE-WIDE TRAILER - DAY

Jo Ann cringes as she enters a ramshackle living area.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
Back here.

Following a pathway through trash and debris Jo Ann stops in  
front of a bedroom doorway. She hesitates, then enters.

INT. JUNE DOE'S BEDROOM - DAY

JUNE, a woman of more than 400 pounds dressed only in a thin nightgown, lies propped up in a kingsize bed. Empty Styrofoam food containers and a large urine stain covers the mattress.

Jo Ann holds a finger up to her nostrils.

JO ANN

June? I am Jo Ann Turner. Mister  
Van Kirk sent me. He said that you  
might help me fight my foreclosure?

From her purse, Jo Ann removes a tissue to hold to her nose.

JUNE

Oh honey, dontcha' cry. Did youse  
bring the fifteen hunnerd' cash?

Jo Ann hesitates again, but reaches into her purse. She slowly hands a fat envelope of money to June.

JO ANN

How long will it take to file the  
necessary paperwork?

June counts the cash inside the envelope.

JUNE

Hard to say. Things move slow.  
Dem' judges is worthless. I'll be  
in touch witcha'. Let yourself out.

Jo Ann exits in a rush.

END FLASHBACK

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Jo Ann sits with Natasha, who doles out half of the food from Jo Ann's plate onto her own.

JO ANN

I realize some of the people I  
entrusted were unscrupulous. But  
there was this man...

NATASHA

Dey always is.

ZAHA

He handsome?

JO ANN

Not particularly. But he has  
charisma, power and money.

Natasha waves a hand to other inmates who begin eating.

NATASHA

Money? Now Missus Turner, how 'bout  
we discuss youse security fees?

JO ANN

I will arrange for money to be sent  
here to you. The man I mentioned,  
Rick? He leads the newly reformed  
nation of Texas. He will clear my  
debts. He has millions of dollars.

Natasha smiles.

ZAZA

Howse he gonna do dat?

JO ANN

Rick will take Texas back.

RETURN TO  
FLASHBACK

INT. RIVERCREST DRIVE TURNER HOME IN AUSTIN - NIGHT

Rick McLaren sits at Jo Ann's dining room table in jeans, a  
plaid shirt, and tennis shoes. His common-law wife, EVELYN  
HORAK MCLAREN, is a Clairol bleached blond wearing a  
polyester pantsuit, blouse and loafers.

Jo Ann delivers a tray of sandwiches along with soft drinks.

RICK

(to Jo Ann)

How much do you owe Alamo Title on  
your home mortgage Jo Ann?

JO ANN

Rick, I'm embarrassed to say that I  
owe two hundred and thirty-four  
thousand dollars at an adjustable  
interest rate of seventeen percent.

Rick whistles as he types.

RICK

And how much do you owe in back  
taxes to Travis County?



JO ANN  
Thirteen thousand.

RICK  
How much to the I-R-S?

JO ANN  
About sixty thousand--not  
including interest.

He types again.

RICK  
Well Jo, the good news is, the  
Republic of Texas militia will  
dissolve all of these debts for you  
once we reclaim sovereign Texas.

Evelyn holds out her hands and clasps Jo Ann's.

JO ANN  
I don't know how to ever thank you.

Rick gets up to stand directly behind Jo Ann and Evelyn. He  
leans forward close to Jo Ann's ear.

RICK  
(whispering)  
Don't you worry Jo. I'm confident  
we'll figure something out soon.

EXT. THE ALAMO PLAZA IN SAN ANTONIO - DAY

ONE HUNDRED SEPARATISTS dressed in military-style camo, rally  
in front of a distinctive Eighteenth Century Franciscan  
mission. SEPARATIST#1 holds a vintage flag.

SUPER: NOVEMBER 12, 1994

ON SCREEN: a reproduction of the 1835 Texas Revolution flag  
made by Captain William Brown with the word "INDEPENDENCE."

Rick steps forward with a bullhorn to make an announcement.

RICK  
(shouting)  
This building once served as the  
site of Texas' thirteen-day war of  
independence from Mexico, fought  
from February twenty-third through  
March sixth, 1836. Today we stand on  
the same precipice to declare our  
independence from the U-S.

Portly BILL UTTERBACK, coordinator of the Southern Region of the Texas Constitutional Militia, takes the bullhorn.

UTTERBACK

We shall return Texas to a  
Republic.

The Separatists cheer.

SEPARATIST#2

(shouting)

Texas is an independent nation!

The Separatists cheer louder.

SEPARATIST#3

Fight for self governance!

The Separatists' chants erupt into a deafening roar as some raise handguns into the air. Jo Ann's eyes widen.

DESSIE ANDREWS, a short-haired woman wearing a vintage man's leisure suit and cowboy boots, approaches Jo Ann.

DESSIE ANDREWS

(shouting)

Missus Turner?

Jo Ann looks away and behind Dessie Andrews.

DESSIE ANDREWS (CONT'D)

(louder)

Jo Ann Turner!

She does not respond, so Dessie Andrews steps closer.

DESSIE ANDREWS (CONT'D)

(shouting even louder)

RICK sent me!

Dessie leads Jo Ann by the arm to a spot beneath some trees.

DESSIE ANDREWS (CONT'D)

I'm Doctor Dessie Andrews. You  
lease a real estate office in north  
Austin. The Republic of Texas  
militia will need to meet there.

JO ANN

No. I don't think so. I didn't sign  
up for that. Neither Rick nor his  
wife mentioned anything...

DESSIE ANDREWS  
Rick's common law wife? She's just  
a pocketbook. Rick McLaren is the  
ambassador of sovereign Texas.

INSERT: We hear the shot of a gun.

CUT TO:

INT. JO ANN'S REAL ESTATE OFFICE IN AUSTIN - DAY

Jo Ann holds the door open as TWENTY MALE MILITIA MEMBERS  
with holstered guns enter single file. None make eye contact.

INT. JO ANN'S REAL ESTATE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

At the head of a long conference table surrounded by 12  
chairs of ROT MEMBERS, sits President J.C. Van Kirk.

ON SCREEN: his name tag reads "President J.C. Van Kirk."

Rick stands beside him.

Dessie Andrews stands in one corner along the back wall.

Just outside the room's open doorway, Jo Ann eavesdrops.

J.C. VAN KIRK  
The United States did not properly  
annex Texas in Eighteen Forty-Five.  
Under international law, a treaty  
must be signed between two  
sovereign nations - in this case  
Texas and the United States -  
before annexation may occur.

RICK  
The Senate rejected the treaty  
thirty-five to sixteen, far short  
of the two-thirds majority quorum  
required for ratification. The  
annexation was illegal. We will  
reestablish the Republic of Texas  
as a free country and claim  
independence from the U-S-of-A.

ROT members cheer.

ROT MEMBERS  
(shouting)  
Independence! Independence!  
Independence! IN-DE-PEN-DANCE!

J.C. Van Kirk quiets the crowd by holding up a hand.

J.C. VAN KIRK  
As the newly established government  
reconstituted under the 1836 Texas  
Constitution, y'all will become  
leaders of our renewed nation.

In the back of the room, TWO BURLY MALE MILITIA MEMBERS begin to argue and shove one another.

BURLY MILITIA MEMBER #1  
I'm gonna be the sergeant major,  
you son-of-a-bee-ach!

BURLY MILITIA MEMBER #2  
Best you watch your mouth mother-  
fucker, 'elst I'll fill it full of  
holes.

Both militia members draw their guns and point.

Rick rushes in and holds up his hands between the men.

RICK  
Patriots! Stop! We'll need more  
than one sergeant of arms to lead  
our Republic of Texas militia. Soon  
we will march to the capital and  
tell Governor George Dub-ya Bush to  
vacate his office.

The two men holster their guns and smile sheepishly.

Watching, Jo Ann places her hands over her heart.

CUT TO:

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Rick sits in a folding chair at a metal frame table in a dilapidated kitchen. He writes on a yellow legal pad.

SUPER: September 18, 1995

Rick's wife Evelyn McLaren comes up behind him to read over his shoulder as he writes.

RICK  
We'll file liens against several  
businesses including Stewart Title,  
Alamo Title, Travis County and the  
I-R-S. Jo Ann will deliver them.

INT. OFFICES OF THE INTERNAL REVENUE, AUSTIN - DAY

Dressed in a two-piece suit and pumps, Jo Ann passes through a metal security screening device. She carries an envelope.

AN ARMED IRS SECURITY GUARD escorts Jo Ann down a hallway.

A stodgy FEMALE IRS TELLER sits behind a bullet-proof Plexiglass window with a small opening.

Jo Ann smiles as she pushes an envelope through the window.

The IRS Teller does not return Jo Ann's smile as she opens the envelope.

ON SCREEN: A document reads: "Lien against the Internal Revenue Service of the United States."

The IRS Teller time stamps the documents.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. TEXAS ATTORNEY DAN MORALES' OFFICE - DAY

Texas Attorney General Dan Morales dictates while jingling the coins in his pants' pocket. He stands behind a desk that bears his nameplate.

ON SCREEN: "Texas Attorney General Dan Morales."

Dandy dressed deputy Press Secretary WARD TISDALE, wears a name tag and sits in a chair while he takes notes.

DAN MORALES

(to the executive clerk)

Send a directive to all county clerks across the state to stop accepting Richard McLaren's filings of false liens against businesses.

WARD TISDALE

These guys seem like buffoons. Their liens are cloggin' up the courts with their costly nonsense.

DAN MORALES

We've got to stop 'em now. My Nineteen Ninety-Eight re-election campaign depends upon it Ward.

EXT. TEXAS CAPITOL FRONT STEPS IN AUSTIN - DAY

ONE HUNDRED ROT MILITIA MEMBERS rally.

SUPER: January 16, 1996

Barring the front doors to the capitol building, 200 TEXAS NATIONAL GUARDSMEN hold guns, and the front row takes aim.

TWENTY ROT MILITIA MEMBERS led by Rick McLaren step forward.

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1  
Halt. You all are prohibited from  
entering the Capitol by order of  
the Texas Attorney General.

Jo Ann, Dessie and Evelyn McLaren stand along the periphery.

DESSIE ANDREWS  
(to Jo Ann)  
Things are about to get dicey.

J.C. Van Kirk and Rick hold bullhorns. Rick steps forward.

RICK  
We have notified the United Nations  
and the World Court in the  
Netherlands of our intentions.  
Today we declare Texas free from  
control by the United States.

The ROT MILITIA cheers.

J.S. VAN KIRK  
Governor George Dub-ya holds no  
jurisdiction over sovereign Texas.

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1  
Remove yourselves. Dispersal orders  
are enacted when armed protests  
such as yours represent a clear and  
present danger to the public.

Jo Ann walks up to Rick's side. She leans in and grabs him.

JO ANN  
Rick? Those National Guardsmen look  
like they want to SHOOT you--us.

RICK  
They wouldn't dare!

Rick waves like a homecoming queen at the National Guardsmen.

NATIONAL GUARDSMAN #1  
Comply or face arrest.

RICK  
We're leaving. But we shall return!

The ROT militia disperses, slowly.

INT. JO ANN TURNER'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

Jo Ann sits and drinks a Bloody Mary as she stares out of her living room window at a peaceful view of Town Lake. In her backyard ducks swim by beneath the shade of pecan trees.

SUPER: MARCH 11, 1996

INSERT: We hear the sound of knocking at the front door.

EXT. FRONT DOOR OF JO ANN'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

Travis County Precinct Two Constable KAREN MARIE SONLEITNER knocks loudly on the front door.

CONSTABLE SONLEITNER (O.S.)  
Missus Turner. We're here to move  
you out. You are under foreclosure.  
Come unlock this door at once!

INT. JO ANN'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

Jo Ann peeks through the keyhole.

INSERT: The knocking grows louder and more aggressive.

JO ANN  
You don't have a right to be here.

CONSTABLE SONLEITNER (O.S.)  
You were notified of foreclosure by  
mail in January. We have a 'power  
of sale' document signed by a  
judge. Open this door NOW!

Jo Ann clasps a hand over her mouth.

A beat.

INSERT: We hear more urgent banging on the front door.

INT. JO ANN'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

From her pants pocket, Jo Ann removes a pill bottle.

ON SCREEN: Label on the pill bottle reads "Diazepam."

She pops a pill into her mouth as she takes a long drink.

INSERT: We hear the sound of firetruck sirens outside.

CONSTABLE SONLEITNER (O.S.)  
Don't make us break down the door.

Jo Ann looks out the front picture window of her home.

INT. JO ANN'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

Jo Ann opens her front door.

Constable Karen Sonleitner pushes her way inside. She nearly knocks Jo Ann down as she passes. Sonleitner briefly flashes a document in Jo Ann's face.

ON SCREEN: "POWER OF SALE UPON FORECLOSURE."

AN AUSTIN FIREFIGHTER carrying an axe, follows Sonleitner.

Jo Ann looks out her front door.

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF JO ANN'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

A firetruck and two Alar Moving trucks are parked. Exiting the truck cabs are FOUR MALE ALAR MOVERS. The men open the back of the trucks and extend lifts. They remove dollies.

INT. JO ANN'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

Alar movers begin packing boxes of her possessions:  
paintings, antique clocks, lamps, and framed photographs.

JO ANN  
(shouting)  
Those are my baby pictures!

The movers carry boxes and furniture out of the house.

Going into the dining room Jo Ann removes a chest of silverware and struggles to carry it up a spiral staircase.



INT. OF JO ANN'S WESTLAKE MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

Jo Ann places the silverware chest in a large suitcase. Frantically she goes to her walk-in closet and fills suitcases with her clothes and jewelry.

EXT. OF JO ANN'S WESTLAKE HOME - DAY

Jo Ann struggles to place packed suitcases into her Mercedes. She closes the trunk, gets behind the wheel and drives away.

CUT TO:

INT. US DISTRICT COURT IN PECOS, TEXAS - DAY

An imposing judge for the U.S. 83rd Judicial District Court LUCIUS DESHA BUNTON III wears a black robe at the bench. At his sides, federal and Texas flags hang.

SUPER: APRIL 4, 1996

Houston Attorney MICHAEL T. MORGAN, impeccably dressed in a black suit and matching shoes, stands in front of Bunton.

MICHAEL MORGAN

Your honor I represent Stewart Title Company in this civil suit against Richard Lance McLaren who has filed ten million dollars in bogus liens against my client.

U.S. MARSHALLS stand beside Rick, who is handcuffed.

JUDGE BUNTON

Richard Lance McLaren, as the so-called ambassador for The Republic of Texas militia, you have accumulated more than forty one billion dollars in unpaid civil contempt fines. What do you say?

RICK

(sneering)

Judge, I think I should let YOU know that the Republic of Texas grand jury will indict YOU.

Michael Morgan takes a couple of steps back. His eyes widen.

A beat.

Judge Bunton smiles like a Cheshire Cat.

JUDGE BUNTON

Let me know how that works out.

Timidly stepping forward with documents, Morgan speaks.

MICHAEL MORGAN

Your Honor, I present to you  
evidence that Mister McLaren has  
failed to cease and desist in his  
filing of false liens.

He hands a folder to Judge Bunton, who reads it briefly.

JUDGE BUNTON

Mister McLaren I hold you in  
contempt of court. You'll spend the  
next thirty days in Ward County  
Jail for your actions.

INT. WARD COUNTY JAIL IN MONAHANS, TEXAS - DAY

Dressed in standard issued orange jail garb, Rick talks on a  
wall-mounted jailhouse phone.

RICK

The judge is holding me on a ten  
thousand dollar bond. I FAXED a  
statement to you to forward to the  
U-S Secretary of State. Bunton's  
court order has no jurisdiction.

INT. OF HOME OF DESSIE ANDREWS - DAY

Dessie Andrews talks on her own landline phone.

DESSIE ANDREWS

Rick we'll FAX it A-S-A-P.

INT. OFFICE OF US SECRETARY OF STATE WARREN CHRISTOPHER - DAY

WARREN CHRISTOPHER reads a FAX document.

ON SCREEN: The Ambassador for the Republic of Texas militia  
Richard Lance McLaren demands his release as a prisoner of  
war under the third Geneva Convention."

Warren Christopher picks up the phone.

WARREN CHRISTOPHER

Get me the District Court Judge  
Lucius Bunton in Pecos, Texas.

He waits.

WARREN CHRISTOPHER (CONT'D)  
Judge, what crazy lunatics are you  
dealing with down there in Texas?

INT. VAN OWNED BY DONALD VARNELL - DAY

Prissy ROT Secretary DONALD J. VARNELL drives. Rick rides  
shotgun. Dessie leans forward from the back seat to listen.

DONALD VARNELL  
I can't believe Warren Christopher  
ignored your FAX.

RICK  
No worries Donald. Now we'll file a  
multi-million dollar reparations  
claim against the United States.

DONALD VARNELL  
Our newly printed checks bearing  
the official seal of Texas allow us  
to withdraw funds from the state  
treasury's financial coffers.

RICK  
The Federal War Powers Act gives me  
authority to appropriate funds held  
by the state of Texas!

From the back seat Dessie taps Rick on the arm.

RICK (CONT'D)  
Dessie, Mister Varnell was talking.

DESSIE ANDREWS  
Sorry, but militia members leased a  
Lear jet and spent hundreds of  
dollars at Neiman Marcus this week.

RICK  
Necessary goods and services.

DESSIE ANDREWS  
In Dallas last week Darrel Franks,  
the ostrich farmer from Shiner,  
told folks that for two thousand  
bucks EACH they could become  
bankers for the R-O-T militia.

RICK  
Yes. Franks sold banker positions  
for the Republic of Texas. So?

She leans over the back seat closer to Rick's ear.

DESSIE ANDREWS

(whispering)

Rick, he told folks they will EACH  
receive one hundred million in gold  
from the official Texas coffers.

RICK

Yes. Dessie, don't question my  
business as Ambassador of Texas!

END FLASHBACK

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Sitting at a table, Natasha and Zaza listen intently as Jo  
Ann tells them her story about her involvement with Rick  
McLaren and the Republic of Texas militia.

ZAZA

Dis Reek, is he in de joint too?

JO ANN

No. A judge released him on bond. I  
called him when I arrived here.  
He's living out in West Texas,  
inside his EMBASSY.

Natasha leans forward.

NATASHA

His em-bass-ee?

JO ANN

Yes. His headquarters. He describes  
it like a CASTLE where a large  
group of followers serve him.

Natasha gets up from the table and walks around the back of  
Jo Ann. She touches Jo Ann's hair.

NATASHA

Tell me mo' 'bout dis Reek.

ZAZA

And Reek's crew!

RETURN TO  
FLASHBACK

EXT. THE WOODS OF CANYON LAKE, TX - NIGHT

Jo Ann parks her Mercedes deep in trees and brush. She exits and looks around cautiously. She carries a suitcase as she creeps dressed in a dark suit and matching kitten heels. She stops at a manufactured home and sneaks around to the back.

INT. DESSIE ANDREWS' HOME IN CANYON LAKE, TX - DAY

Dessie Andrews sees Jo Ann standing outside a sliding glass kitchen door. She opens it.

Jo Ann enters limping and holding a shoe with a broken heel.

DESSIE ANDREWS

You should lay low here for a couple of days. Rick's arrest was a warning. Any of us could be next.

JO ANN

I hurt my ankle. I think it's broken. Will you take a look Doc?

Dessie removes a bag from a refrigerator's freezer.

DESSIE ANDREWS

My doctorate is from Timothy Bible College. In religion. Here...

Dessie places a frozen bag of peas on Jo Ann's ankle.

INT. OF DESSIE'S LATE MODEL SEDAN - NIGHT

Dessie drives.

Jo Ann sits shotgun and fusses with her ankle.

DESSIE ANDREWS

When Evelyn retires next month from the postal service she's gonna donate her pension to the militia. What can you contribute? Anything?

JO ANN

Alamo Title foreclosed on my house. They took everything. I'm broke.

DESSIE ANDREWS

Rick's gonna put you to work.

INT. EVELYN MCLAREN'S DALLAS APARTMENT - DAY

Jo Ann and Dessie Andrews enter carrying suitcases. Rick peeks out the door and then closes it behind them.

Evelyn greets the women in the foyer. She hugs Jo Ann.

RICK

Evelyn, help Jo Ann find the guest room so that she may unpack.

Evelyn obediently picks up a suitcase and Jo Ann follows.

Dessie and Rick stay behind.

INT. EVELYN MCLAREN'S DALLAS APARTMENT - DAY

Rick sits at the kitchen table drinking coffee.

Jo Ann enters. She goes to a coffee maker and pours herself a cup. Rick holds out his cup and she pours coffee for him.

RICK

Jo Ann, you'll utilize your expert clerical skills by typing some legal documents while you're here.

She sits down at the table. She reads Rick's papers.

JO ANN

(reading aloud)

'A Diplomatic Notice of Perfection of International Relations Between the United States of America and the Republic of Texas?'

RICK

We will demand that the United States recognize the sovereign nation of the Republic of Texas.

CUT TO:

INT. APPLEBEE'S RESTAURANT, DALLAS - NIGHT

Jo Ann sits with Rick and Evelyn McLaren at a table with empty plates.

An APPLEBEE'S WAITRESS arrives with a bill. Rick hands her a Bank of America credit card. She exits.

JO ANN  
Thank you for dinner Rick.

RICK  
Thank the Republic of Texas  
militia. Our meals are paid for  
with money from Texas' coffers.

INT. WHITE HOUSE OVAL OFFICE - DAY

U.S. PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH pulls documents from a stack  
and signs one after another without pausing to read them.

His chief of staff JOE ALLBAUGH stands obediently beside him.

RICK (O.S.)  
We filed a U-C-C-one financing  
statement signed by Governor George  
Dub-ya Bush on behalf of his former  
state of Texas. It was easy money!  
Dumb Dub-ya signed our ticket  
without reading it. We're nearly  
home free. Tomorrow I'll tie up  
some loose ends in Jeff Davis  
County to secure my embassy's land.

CUT TO:

INT. JEFF DAVIS COUNTY COURTROOM - DAY

Rick stands at a microphone before a panel of A DOZEN MEMBERS  
OF THE CONCERNED PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION (CPOA,)   
representing the Davis Mountain Resort (DMR.)

In the audience sit middle-aged male and female DAVIS  
MOUNTAIN RESORT RESIDENTS dressed in dusty ranch wear.

Retired Texas Border Patrol Chief and Jeff Davis County  
Commissioner JOHNNY WOFFORD steps up. His gray hair is  
crewcut; he wears a tailored western suit and eel skin boots.

JOHNNY WOFFORD  
Mister McLaren, you're currently  
squatting on land that has been in  
my wife's family five generations--  
since Nineteen Thirty-Nine.

RICK  
Jeff Davis County records do not  
show you own a clear title.  
(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

Thanks to the Texas' Adverse Possession Law, I can claim all four hundred and sixty-two acres.

Disgruntled CPOA MEMBERS stand up from their seats.

A burly CPOA MEMBER#1 points at McLaren and flips him off.

Tattered old timer JOE ROWE stands up from a seat amidst the crowd. At 100 pounds, and only 5 feet tall, he wears layers of flannel shirts, jeans and hiking boots.

JOE ROWE

(shouting)

You're just wantin' somethin' for nuthin'. This ain't no gravy train!

THE CPOA CROWD cheers.

Johnny Wofford sits back down.

RICK

Quit sticking your nose into my Republic of Texas business.

Joe Rowe steps up to the mic. He scowls.

JOE

(Shouting)

Your bid-ness? Your bid-ness is takin' folks' money that's tied up fightin' your fake liens and lis pendens, Slick Rick McLaren.

CPOA members grow angry.

CPOA MOB

(shouting)

Land grabber! You land grabber!

Joe concedes the mic to DONALD DAVENPORT MCIVOR, who wears expensive Western wear and fancy boots. He quiets the crowd.

DONALD DAVENPORT MCIVOR

The Davenport family has raised cattle on forty thousand acres since Eighteen Eighty-Two. Your claims on our natural spring have cost me more than sixty thousand dollars in legal fees. I'm finished! You can take it.

Donald Davenport McIvor returns to his seat.



Rick smiles mischievously.

RICK  
That spring will provide water to  
my embassy for the newly re-  
established Republic of Texas.

CPOA MOB  
(shouting)  
Rick McLaren is a thief! A thief!

Joe returns to the mic. He quiets the angry mob.

JOE  
(in a loud, angry voice)  
That shit hole you call your  
embassy ain't nuthin' but a broken  
down trailer and a lean-to. And you  
ain't even from Texas! You're from  
Missouri!

RICK  
Neither were our fellow heroes from  
The Alamo: Bowie, Travis and  
Crockett. Just like them, I intend  
to free us from a false government.

The CPOA mob advances upon Rick.

CPOA MOB  
(shouting in unison)  
GET OUT! OUT! OUT!

Rick retreats from the courtroom chased by the angry mob.

INT. JEFF DAVIS COUNTY MOUNTAIN DISPATCH OFFICE - DAY

Graying newspaper editor, BOB DILLARD, types on an old IBM  
electric typewriter. A landline phone rings. He answers.

BOB DILLARD  
Jeff Davis County Mountain  
Dispatch, editor Bob Dillard.

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY, FORT DAVIS - DAY

Rick McLaren talks on a large 1990's mobile phone.

RICK

Bob, Rick McLaren here. I want to run a full page AD in your paper to remind folks that the United States illegally annexed Texas in 1845.

BOB DILLARD

That's a big ask, Rick. It'll cost you one hundred and seventy-five bucks. In advance. And no R-O-T checks this time. Cash or nothing!

RICK

No problemo Bob.

INT. JEFF DAVIS COUNTY NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

Bob Dillard loads paper into an electric typewriter. He cradles the phone's receiver between his jaw and his ear.

BOB

Ok Rick. Shoot. I mean GO.

RICK

I'm soliciting patriots to join our cause. We want to free the sovereign nation of the Republic of Texas from the United States.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

One of Jo Ann's acrylic fingernails breaks off as she works on her hands and knees scrubbing the vile floor of a shower.

Zaza holds a bucket of cleaning liquid. Natasha watches.

INT. MIDLAND REGIONAL OFFICE FOR TEXAS RANGERS - DAY

SUPER: APRIL 26, 1997

Handsome 39-year-old Texas Ranger CAPTAIN BARRY CAVER sits behind a vintage desk. He reads a newspaper.

ON SCREEN: The Jeff Davis County Dispatch newspaper with McLaren's ad reads "CALL TO UNITE TEXAS' 10TH CONGRESS."

In front of Caver sits ALBERT VALADEZ, a richly dressed middle-aged Hispanic attorney.

## CAPTAIN CAVER

We've performed deep research on Jo Ann Turner. No priors. All we know about Rick McLaren is that he moved to Fort Davis from Missouri in the early 1990s and he worked a series of odd jobs. McLaren began exploring deeds at Jeff Davis County Courthouse and acquired more than 900 acres by squatting.

## ATTORNEY VALADEZ

Captain Caver, every claim that Richard Lance McLaren has filed against his neighbors' land has been legal under Texas' Adverse Possession Law.

Beside Valadez sits SHERIFF STEVE BAILEY, dressed in boots, Wranglers, and matching blue jean shirt bearing a silver star. He beats a ten-gallon cowboy hat against his leg.

## SHERIFF BAILEY

He's stealin' land from folks just 'cause they cain't find no clear titles. And he ain't paid nuthin', yet folks pay plenty to fight him.

Valadez taps his pencil against Caver's desk.

## ATTORNEY VALADEZ

The law dates back to when Mexico owned this land called 'Tejas.' Native Americans lived here, and the Mexicans wanted them gone. So they sold land to American settlers who called themselves 'Texians.'

Sheriff Bailey puts his hat back on his head.

## SHERIFF BAILEY

You don't need to be schoolin' me Mister Valadez. Folks livin' in these parts today have owned land goin' back five generations.

## ATTORNEY VALADEZ

Sheriff Bailey, without clear and present titles, McLaren may assume ownership. That's how he acquired those nine hundred acres and what he calls his R-O-T 'embassy.'

Sheriff Bailey shakes a pointer finger at Valadez.

SHERIFF BAILEY

I don't care what fancy name that  
cuckoo McLaren's givin' it. He's  
playin' war games up in the  
D-M-R on weekends. It ain't right!

CAPTAIN CAVER

It's McLaren's private land.  
Legally he can fire weapons on it  
and there's nothing to stop him.

Sheriff Bailey loudly raps his knuckles on Caver's desk.

SHERIFF BAILEY

What about this? Joe Rowe's been  
providing intel about them R-O-T.  
He says them idiots are modifyin'  
semi-automatic weapons and buildin'  
bombs up at the D-M-R.

CAPTAIN CAVER

Well, if that's true, the R-O-T are  
violating the National Firearms  
Act. I suggest that you ask Mister  
Rowe to alert you when any one of  
them exits the compound. Then  
search the vehicle for evidence.

Sheriff Bailey stands and shakes Captain Caver's hand, but  
he fist bumps Valadez.

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY, DAY

A propane-fueled generator powers a computer where Rick  
types. Over his shoulder, we see a website on his monitor.

INSERT: We hear sounds from 1990s dial-up Internet service.

ON SCREEN: "CALL TO ARMS! Embassy of the Republic of Texas,  
Certified Diplomatic Immunity, United Nations. Office of  
Foreign Affairs Diplomatic Unit on Location."

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY - DAY

SUPER: APRIL 26, 1997

Rick stands beside GREGG PAULSON, who exaggeratedly points  
his nose as he adjusts his military fatigues and name tag.

ON SCREEN: his name tag reads "General Gregg Paulson,  
Republic of Texas militia."

RICK

They arrested Jo Ann. Next the feds  
will come here to exterminate us.

GREGG

I told you. That spy Joe Rowe has  
been surveillin' us for a year!

EXT. DAVIS MOUNTAINS, A MILE OUTSIDE ROT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The hillsides around Rick's trashy trailer and lean-to have  
been littered with 5-gallon drums, old cars, and tents.

A wormy male militia member with thick eyeglasses, 19-year-  
old RICHARD KEYES, fires a rapid-fire assault weapon. Five  
hundred feet away, not one bullet hits any intended targets:  
life-size human silhouettes with bullseyes painted on them.

Gregg observes.

GREGG

(shouting)

Discriminate, Lieutenant Keyes. Aim  
for a kill. Enemies won't wait!

Keyes reloads. He fires. Shaking a bit, he misses again.

KEYES

I'll blow 'dem dudes full o' holes.  
That I promise Mister General sir.

EXT. DAVIS MOUNTAINS, A MILE OUTSIDE ROT HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Gregg supervises a GASOLINE TRUCK DRIVER unloading liquid  
from a long hose extending to a 5-gallon metal drum.

ON SCREEN: "FLAMMABLE" is printed on the truck's tank.

A motley-looking 43-year-old ROBERT SCHEIDT, ties off a  
gasoline hose, seals the drum and moves to another drum.

GREGG

Officer Scheidt after these tanks  
are full, position them to roll  
down the hillside against an  
imminent attack by enemy forces.

Robert Scheidt salutes Gregg, who returns the gesture.

ROBERT

Sir, yes sir General.

Gregg walks 500 feet to ROBERT "WHITE EAGLE" OTTO, in red face paint, wearing Native American beads, and camo fatigues as he secures perimeter trip wires.

GREGG  
Excellent execution Major Sergeant  
White Eagle! Booby trap, tip, top.

White Eagle salutes Gregg and stands at attention.

WHITE EAGLE  
Thank you, General Paulson, sir.

Gregg walks to a small shed. He opens the door and enters.

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS STORAGE SHED - DAY

Dressed in camo, KAREN PAULSON, a heavy set woman with cropped red hair looks up, but does not stop working. She assembles pipe bombs. She also wears a name tag.

ON SCREEN: Her name tag reads "Pvt. Karen Paulson."

GREGG  
How is it coming along Private?

KAREN PAULSON  
Good General. We'll have three  
dozen ready to go by seventeen  
hundred hours today.

GREGG  
Wooo-hah. Roger that. Time for P-T.

From behind, Gregg nuzzles his wife's neck and breasts.

INT. ROWE HOME KITCHEN - DAY

Joe Rowe shouts into a landline phone attached to a wall.

JOE ROWE  
Sheriff, this R-O-T crap has gone  
on long enough. That militia is  
shootin' modified weapons into the  
hills around McLaren's so-called  
embassy. They're plantin' trip  
wires, and buildin' pipe bombs.

INT. SHERIFF STEVE BAILEY'S HOME KITCHEN - DAY

Sheriff Steve Bailey flips pancakes with one hand at a stove. He talks into a landline phone wearing an apron over his Jeff Davis County uniform and a John Wayne style cowboy hat.

SUPER: APRIL 27, 1997

SHERIFF BAILEY  
(speaking into the phone)  
I cain't arrest on private land.

Bailey pours some syrup on a pancake, rolls it up and bites.

EXT. ROWE HOME - DAY

A white van stops along the dirt road out front.

In camo fatigues, chunky and hairy ROBERT SCHEIDT, with a tool bag exits the van. He switches the rear license plate.

INT. ROWE HOME KITCHEN - DAY

Still holding the phone, Joe Rowe looks out a window.

JOE  
Damn, one of 'em is switchin' a  
license plate on a white van and  
leavin' the D-M-R right this here  
minute. Git 'em NOW, 'afore he gets  
out on the One-Sixty-Six.

INT. SHERIFF STEVE BAILEY'S HOME KITCHEN - DAY

Bailey shuts off the stove while still holding the phone.

SHERIFF BAILEY  
He won't git far!

EXT. TEXAS STATE HIGHWAYS 166 AND 17 - DAY

With lights flashing, a Jeff Davis County Sheriff's patrol car pulls up behind Scheidt's white van.

Robert Scheidt pulls the van over onto the side of the road.

INT. ROBERT SCHEIDT'S VAN - DAY

Scheidt remains seated behind the wheel. He opens the van's glove box to place a heavy-duty pistol inside.

EXT. TEXAS STATE HIGHWAYS 166 AND 17 - DAY

Sheriff Bailey exits his patrol car with a loaded M-16 and immediately points the weapon directly at Scheidt's head.

SHERIFF BAILEY  
(to Scheidt)  
Outta the vehicle. NOW!

Robert Scheidt's eyes widen. He exits the van and raises his hands above his head.

SHERIFF BAILEY (CONT'D)  
Driver's license?

ROBERT SCHEIDT  
Ain't got one.

SHERIFF BAILEY  
Name?

ROBERT SCHEIDT  
Robert Scheidt. What's yours?

SHERIFF BAILEY  
Robert 'SHIT?' is it? I'll be  
askin' the questions! Turn 'round.

Scheidt turns around.

ROBERT SCHEIDT  
My name's Scheidt. S-C-H-E-I-D-T.

Bailey handcuffs Scheidt and leads him into a bar ditch.

ROBERT SCHEIDT (CONT'D)  
You gotta tell me my rights.

SHERIFF BAILEY  
I'll tell you this: if you move an  
inch I'll shoot you and your whole  
R-O-T bunch if I have to. Y'all are  
a bunch of nuts. Now sit, Shit!

Scheidt sits and stares into the barrel of Bailey's gun.

Sheriff Bailey returns to Scheidt's van. He peers inside.

ON SCREEN: Several modified assault weapons.

Sheriff Bailey returns to his patrol car and with one hand he reaches inside the dash. He removes his police radio transmitter, all while keeping his gun pointed at Scheidt.



SHERIFF STEVE BAILEY  
(speaking into the radio)  
Dispatch come in. This is Sheriff  
Bailey. Ten-seventy-two. Over.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)  
Ten-four Sheriff. What's your  
Twenty?

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY - DAY

Atop a makeshift table, Rick McLaren's police scanner comes to life to broadcast a convoluted series of 3-way miscommunications across 31,00 square miles of Trans-Pecos-Texas desert land.

SHERIFF STEVE BAILEY (O.S.)  
(static sounding)  
I'm at the intersection of Texas  
One-Sixty Six and the Seventeen. I  
got a man down--Robert Shit. That's  
S-c-h-e-i-d-t. No I-D. Over.

Rick, dressed casually, leans forward to better listen.

FIVE MILITIA MEMBERS face Rick, revealed only by the backs of their heads. They sit in folding chairs.

RICK  
Man down? The sheriff shot Robert!

Members rise up out of their seats. Turning are familiar faces: Gregg and Karen Paulson, Richard Keyes, and Otto.

A fifth member, MIKE MATSON, rises with an automatic machine gun. He wears full survivalist gear including a military helmet with camouflage. His face is painted brown and green.

EXT. U.S. HIGHWAY 67 ROADSIDE ACCIDENT SCENE - DAY

Roadside a demolished truck has crashed. A male corpse hangs out of the broken dashboard window.

Tall TEXAS RANGER DAVID DUNCAN stands beside his patrol car. Through an open driver-side window he reaches inside to grab his police radio transmitter from the dash. Duncan interrupts the broadcast of the 2-way police radio communications already underway between Sheriff Bailey and the dispatcher.

RANGER DUNCAN  
Dispatch, I need a coroner. Over.

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY - DAY

Rick, the Paulsons and Keyes move closer to listen to the 3-way communication broadcasts coming from their radio scanner.

RANGER DUNCAN (O.S.)  
(static sounding)  
I can't move the body until the  
coroner arrives. Over.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)  
Ten-four. Stand by. Over.

Rick turns off his police radio scanner.

RICK  
He's killed Robert! This is WAR!

MILITIA MEMBERS  
(chanting)  
WAR! WAR! WAR!

RICK  
Secure your positions men. It's go  
time! Take the Rows' place by  
force. Take Joe out if you have to.  
More militia will join us soon.  
Make ready for war! GO! GO! GO!

MATSON  
We'll guard you Ambassador!

The Paulsons and Keyes exit. Otto and Matson remain.

Rick moves to the HAM radio located behind him and he turns some dials. He speaks into a transmitter.

RICK  
Mayday! May day! Calling all  
friends of the Republic of Texas  
militia. Assemble at the embassy.  
Repeat: assemble at the Davis  
Mountain embassy A-S-A-P. Clear.

EXT. THE HOME OF JOE AND MARGARET ROWE - DAY

With duffle bags slung over their shoulders, Gregg and Karen Paulson, wear matching camo military fatigues, and carry long, modified rapid-fire assault rifles.

The Rows' front door opens a crack. Only a pistol appears.

JOE (O.S.)  
Y'all get your sorry R-O-T asses  
outta here. You too Gregg.

GREGG  
That's General Paulson to you, Joe.

JOE (O.S.)  
McLaren givin' you a title don't  
make it so, Gr-AY-Egg.

Gregg Paulson moves closer onto the porch. Karen Paulson  
slinks around to the side of the Rowses' house.

EXT. ROWES' HOUSE - DAY

At the entrance to the Davis Mountain Resort (DMR) on  
Tomahawk Trail, a Volkswagen arrives, stirring up dirt.  
Richard Keyes, hops out pointing a sawed off shotgun  
indiscriminately left and right. Keyes shoots the tires out  
of his own car. He runs to the porch to stand beside Gregg.

KEYES  
I blocked the road REAL good  
General. Ain't nobody gettin' in  
nor out of the D-M-R now any how.

Joe's face appears from his cracked doorway.

JOE  
(shouting)  
Yur' an idiot boy! You done shot  
out the tires of yur' getaway car!

Gregg aims his gun once again at Joe.

GREGG  
We aim to take the place Joe.  
There's more of us than you.

A beat.

JOE  
I see that, but I've got my sight  
set on YOU, Gr-AY-Egg.

Joe's mongrel dog LUCA, appears on the front porch and barks.

GREGG  
And I see THAT.

Luca stands ready in attack mode, growling.

JOE  
Don't shoot my dog! Don't shoot!  
I'm puttin' down my weapon.

INT. ROWE HOUSE MUD ROOM - DAY

Joe puts down his gun. Sunlight filters through a window behind him revealing his silhouette as an easy target.

EXT. FRONT PORCH OF THE ROWE HOUSE - DAY

Gregg fires a rapid three rounds from his modified assault rifle through the Rows' front door, shattering it.

INT. ROWE HOUSE MUD ROOM - DAY

Glass flies everywhere, spraying Joe's body. He falls down severely wounded on his face, his chest, and left shoulder.

JOE (CONT'D)  
Sons-a-bitches! I put down my  
weapon. I said 'don't shoot!'

INT. THE ROWES' KITCHEN - DAY

Tiny but fiery MARGARET ANN "M.A." ROWE stands screaming into a telephone mounted to a wall. She wears jeans and a flannel shirt and hiking boots.

M.A.  
Dispatcher, git my sheriff!

EXT. SHERIFF BAILEY'S PATROL CAR - DAY

Sheriff Bailey listens to the broadcast from the driver's side open window, while still aiming his gun on Scheidt.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)  
Sheriff hold on. I've got a nine-  
one-one civil distress call comin'  
over the speaker phone here. Over.

INT. TRANS PECOS TEXAS DISPATCH OFFICE - DAY

The DISPATCHER, a slight black man, rolls his chair from his radio desk to a speaker phone positioned just behind him.

DISPATCHER  
Caller repeat?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(screaming)  
HELP! Git my sheriff!

DISPATCHER  
Caller please identify?

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(from the phone's speaker)  
It's M-A Rowe. Them R-O-T done shot  
Joe in our home. He's bleedin'!

The dispatcher's face shows alarm.

EXT. SHERIFF BAILEY'S PATROL CAR - DAY

Through his own police radio scanner Sheriff Bailey hears M.A. Rowe's pleas broadcasting live from the speaker phone inside the office of the Trans Pecos Texas dispatcher.

M.A. (O.S.)  
(static sounding)  
Help! Joe's a'bleedin'!

INT. TRANS PECOS TEXAS DISPATCH OFFICE - DAY

The dispatcher rolls his chair back to the radio desk.

DISPATCHER  
Calling all units to one-zero-one  
Tomahawk Trail, inside the D-M-R.  
Ten-eighteen. Possible ten-ninety-  
four in progress. URGENT. Over.

INT. ROWE HOUSE MUD ROOM - DAY

The Paulsons and Keyes rush in. They step right over prostrate Joe, who lies bleeding all over the floor.

Keyes goes to M.A. Rowe and rips the phone out of her hands and hangs up. He points his gun at her.

M.A. looks at Joe lying on the floor, then at the Paulsons and then back at Keyes.

M.A.  
You fools! What have you done?

She leaps a foot toward the kitchen counter.

ON SCREEN: a loaded handgun sits upon the kitchen counter.

Keyes goes to the gun. He looks hard at M.A. Rowe and he grins wide. He pushes the gun closer to her.

KEYES

Go on missus. Try for that gun. I'd love to blow 'ya full of holes.

M.A. shakes her head. She looks at Joe.

M.A. ROWE

What 'bout Joe? I gotta stop his bleedin' or y'all are gonna fry for first degree murder.

With his gun, Gregg points at M.A.

GREGG

Ok. See what you can do to stop the bleeding. We don't want no dead civilians. At least not YET.

She grabs some kitchen towels to create a tourniquet for Joe.

Karen also holds an automatic weapon pointed at M.A. and Joe.

GREGG (CONT'D)

(to Karen Paulson)

Private, go upstairs and fill the bathtubs with water. We'll need water when the feds shut it off along with the electrical power.

KAREN PAULSON

Yes sir!

She exits upstairs.

Gregg continues to aim his gun at Joe and M.A.

M.A.

Joe needs stitches. I don't know how to give 'em. I only just began my volunteer C-P-R trainin'.

JOE

Oh I'll survive, but not you Gr-AY-Egg. You'll burn in an electric chair as I live and breathe.

EXT. INTERSECTION OF TEXAS STATE HIGHWAYS 166 AND 17 - DAY

Limpia Hat Creek owner BUSTER MILLS drives a late model Chevy pickup truck. Sheriff Bailey flags Buster down to a stop.

Buster stops and exits his truck wearing a T-shirt and overalls. He sports an enormous Adam's apple, and stutters.

BUSTER  
(stuttering)  
W-what's up m-my s-sheriff?

Bailey points to Scheidt who sits handcuffed in a bar ditch.

SHERIFF BAILEY  
If this varmint gives you any  
trouble at all, kill 'im.

BUSTER  
Say-y w-what?

SHERIFF BAILEY  
I heard some of 'dem R-O-T nuts  
just took the Rows' place. I'm  
deputizin' you right now, Buster.

Sheriff Bailey helps Buster aim the gun steady at Scheidt.

Buster trips and sends stray bullets into the dirt surrounding Scheidt, unharmed. Buster shrugs sheepishly.

SCHEIDT  
Damn! Y'all gonna kill me or what?

Bailey gives Scheidt a thumbs up and jumps into his patrol car and drives away.

INT. ROWE LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Gregg carries several guns and places them on a sofa.

Joe and M.A. sit silent in recliners.

GREGG  
Is this all of y'all's guns? You  
got more elsewhere in the house?

JOE  
The rest is locked up in the safe.

GREGG  
And there they'll stay for now.  
Handover the key Joe.

Perspiring and looking pale, Joe passes a key to Gregg.

Karen comes downstairs.

GREGG (CONT'D)

Bring the prisoners upstairs and be on lookout for sight of the law. This house marks the only entrance in or out of the D-M-R. It'll be our fortress when the war begins.

KAREN PAULSON

Yes sir. Will do.

EXT. INTERSECTION OF TEXAS STATE HIGHWAYS 166 AND 17 - LATER

As the sun rises high in the sky, Buster frets and sweats, all the while holding Sheriff Bailey's gun on Scheidt.

A Texas Ranger patrol car arrives.

Newly deputized Buster Mills still guards Robert Scheidt.

Ranger Duncan exits his patrol car and walks toward Buster.

BUSTER

Whew wee. Am I h-happy to see y-you R-ranger. I ain't n-never no how shot no g-gun at n-nobody 'afore.

RANGER DUNCAN

I'll take over from here Buster. I responded to an unrelated traffic fatality out near Presidio when I overheard the Pecos' dispatcher's call for backup. Give me a minute.

Buster continues to hold a gun pointed at Scheidt.

Ranger Duncan empties Scheidt's van of several modified weapons and places each inside the trunk of his patrol car.

Duncan lifts Scheidt up out of the bar ditch and places him in the back seat of the patrol car.

ROBERT SCHEIDT

(whining)

The sheriff stopped me without cause. He pointed a gun at my head. He's crazy! C-R-A-Z-Y!

RANGER DUNCAN

That may be, but you're in possession of illegally modified weapons. That's a F-E-L-O-N-Y.

Scheidt starts to cry. He slumps his head onto his chest.



Ranger Duncan closes the back door to his patrol car.

Buster jumps back into his truck.

Ranger Duncan drives away with Scheidt.

INT. TEXAS RANGER DAVID DUNCAN'S CAR - DAY

Ranger Duncan makes a call on his police radio.

RANGER DUNCAN  
Ranger Duncan here requesting a  
private channel. Over.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)  
Ten-four. Standby. Over.

A beat.

RANGER DUNCAN  
I'm transporting prisoner Robert  
Scheidt to Brewster County Jail.  
Contact Captain Barry Caver in  
Midland. Over.

A beat.

CAPTAIN CAVER (O.S.)  
This is Captain Caver. Over.

RANGER DUNCAN  
(speaking into the radio)  
Captain Caver, looks like we've got  
a code SILVER situation here. I'm  
'fraid it's McLaren's Republic of  
Texas group that Sheriff Bailey  
warned you about...

CUT TO:

INT. HOME OF RANCHER JOHNNY WOFFORD - DAY

Sheriff Steve Bailey, guards the door.

Captain Barry Caver, with Texas Ranger negotiator JESS  
MALONE, stand dressed in state-issued tan uniforms.

Long, tall Texas oilman BOBBY HOLT, wears political clout and  
charisma in an expensive suit and Italian-made shoes.

BOBBY HOLT  
I have U-S Attorney General Janet  
Reno ready to talk to you.

Bobby Holt hands Caver a sleek military satellite phone.

INT. JANET RENO'S OFFICE ON CAPITOL HILL, D.C. - DAY

JANET RENO sits at her desk speaking into a satellite phone.

JANET RENO  
Captain Caver I want the Texas  
Rangers to lead this situation. I  
have been informed that a group of  
nationalists out there are  
attempting to secede. No A-T-F is  
ordered at this time. We do not  
want another Waco. Understood?

INT. HOME OF RANCHER JOHNNY WOFFORD - DAY

Captain Barry Caver talks into Holt's satellite phone.

CAPTAIN BARRY CAVER  
Understood loud and clear Miss  
Reno. We'll handle this. We'll  
attempt to negotiate an exchange of  
our prisoner for the hostages  
quickly and without violence.

Rancher JOHNNY WOFFORD enters. He takes the satellite phone  
from Caver and listens.

JOHNNY WOFFORD  
Affirmative Madam Attorney General.  
McLaren's a walkin' target within  
easy strikin' range. We'll standby  
for your further instructions.

Johnny Wofford shuts down the satellite radio, hands it back  
to Bobby Holt.

JOHNNY WOFFORD (CONT'D)  
Captain Caver allow me to offer you  
my home as your base of operations.

Captain Barry Caver shakes Johnny Wofford's hand.

CAPTAIN BARRY CAVER  
Mister Wofford thank you for your  
hospitality. Ranger Jess Malone  
will serve as our negotiator.

Johnny Wofford shakes Texas Ranger Jess Malone's hand.

JOHNNY WOFFORD

My pleasure. I trust that you Texas Rangers will do a remarkable job. In the meantime, three hundred law enforcement agents from seventy-two counties have assembled at a nearby volunteer fire station which will serve as your command headquarters.

Sheriff Steve Bailey tips his hat.

SHERIFF BAILEY

This's what I call a standoff!

CAPTAIN BARRY CAVER

We have inside information from a volunteer E-M-T that there are just three militia members holed up at the Rows' place. Next we'll try to ascertain how many there are up in McLaren's so-called 'embassy.'

INT. THE ROWES' KITCHEN - LATER

Richard Keyes talks on the landline phone attached to a wall.

KEYES

I'm part of something bigger than just me now, Daddy. I gotta do this for the Republic of Texas. Rick McLaren says we'll make history here today. Sorry you don't understand. I gotta go, bye.

As Keyes hangs up the phone, it rings. He answers.

KEYES (CONT'D)

Daddy? No?... Sorry Captain Caver.

Gregg motions for Keyes to hand over the phone.

Keyes passes the phone to Gregg.

GREGG

This is General Paulson of the Republic of Texas militia speaking.

A beat.

GREGG (CONT'D)

Texas Ranger Captain Caver huh?  
What do we want? Fuck you, you  
sorry son-of-a-bitch. This is WAR  
mother fucker. Tit for tat. For  
killing lieutenant Robert Scheidt.  
What?...He ain't dead?...Well if  
you haven't got shit for brains  
you'll trade 'im for the Rows.  
We're holdin' 'em both hostage.

Gregg hangs up the phone as M.A. enters the kitchen.

M.A.

Let me call my volunteer E-M-T,  
Jerry Rhea. He can bring me a  
medical jump kit and some bandages.  
Joe may bleed out without 'em.

Gregg appears to consider M.A.'s suggestion.

GREGG

I'll speak to Mister Rhea.

M.A. Rowe goes to her two-way HAM radio to call.

M.A.

M-A. Alpha, Bravo, Charlie. Clear.

A beat.

JERRY RHEA (O.S.)

C-Q. Jerry Rhea here. Clear.

Gregg takes the HAM radio transmitter away from M.A.

GREGG

Mister Rhea, we'll allow you to  
administer aid to Joe Rowe's  
shrapnel wounds. You and your  
ambulance crew must arrive here  
stripped down to your underwear. No  
tactical squad gear. Clear.

A beat.

JERRY RHEA

C-Q. We're on our way. Clear.

EXT. ROWES' HOUSE - DAY

JERRY RHEA, dressed only in his tighty-whities, parks an ambulance in front of the cattle guard positioned at the entrance to the Davis Mountain Resort along Tomahawk Trail. Blocking the road sideways just a few feet away rests Richard Keyes' Volkswagen with all four tires blown out.

INT. JEFF DAVIS COUNTY VOLUNTEER EMS TRUCK - DAY

Jerry turns to his wife, KAREN RHEA, who sits shotgun in just a bra and panties. He takes her face in his hands and looks at her as though it may be for the last time. He looks back into the passenger seat and acknowledges EMS attendants LARRY and LINDA SIMS, also stripped down to their skivvies. Larry and Linda Sims smile weakly at Jerry Rhea and nod affirmatively. Larry swallows hard. Karen snuffles and nods.

EXT. ROWES' HOUSE - DAY

Jerry Rhea knocks on the shattered glass front door.

Gregg opens the door and extends his loaded rifle, by touching the end of the weapon to Jerry Rhea's forehead.

GREGG

No funny business Jerry.

JERRY RHEA.

No. No funny business Gregg.

Gregg moves his rifle away from Jerry as he enters.

INT. ROWES' HOME - DAY

Jerry enters ahead of Gregg. They walk through the kitchen into the living room. Jerry appears to notice the loaded pistol laying on the kitchen counter, but he keeps walking.

Joe and M.A. come down the stairs with Karen who holds a rifle pointed at their backs.

M.A. and Joe sit on a couch.

Jerry Rhea unwinds bandages from Joe's arm.

Gregg and Karen Paulson stand guard over the three.

Keyes stands above in the loft aiming his rifle downwards.

JERRY RHEA

M-A you did a fine job with Joe's  
tourniquet. You stopped the  
bleedin'. I'd say you passed your  
first volunteer E-M-S test!

Gregg points his gun at M.A.

GREGG

You got any food in this house?

M.A. appears taken aback.

M.A.

I got some leftover lasagna.

GREGG

We'll eat that. Go get it hot.

Gregg points his gun towards the kitchen.

M.A. heads in that direction.

INT. ROWES' KITCHEN - DAY

Gregg and Keyes sit at a table as M.A. serves them lasagna.

INT. ROWES' LIVING ROOM - DAY

Karen Paulson holds her gun pointed at Jerry Rhea as he  
finishes up bandaging Joe's wounds and applying a sling.

GREGG (O.S.)

That'll do Mister Rhea. Go now.

Jerry Rhea picks up his jump kit slowly and exits.

INT. REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY - DAY

Less than 800 square feet of a travel trailer attached to a  
wooden shanty serves as both a kitchen and living room. Rick  
and Evelyn McLaren sit with Robert "White Eagle" Otto at a  
table eating.

WHITE EAGLE

I love me home cookin' Miss Evelyn.

EVELYN

Thank you White Eagle. It's just  
Van Camp's pork 'n beans.

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

The roadside rest area just off Texas Highway 166 West features an outcrop of large volcanic boulders 500 feet tall. The desolate place is swarming with LOCAL YOKELS.

TWO GOOD OLD BOYS wear sports gimme caps and overalls, and cook at a big black 250-gallon homemade barbecue smoker.

Propane generators hum as they fuel mobile NBC, CBS, ABC, and CNN media trailers topped with large satellite dishes.

Meanwhile master electrician, CARL COVINGTON, wears a white jumpsuit as he installs utility poles and runs electrical conduit from power boxes to the media trailers. His eight-year-old daughter, JOH COVINGTON, carries a loop of conduit.

Jeff Davis County Courthouse clerk, SUE BLAKELY, well-dressed in a suit and white pumps, stumbles over rocky soil to deliver pizza to a MEDIA CREW and THRONGS OF REPORTERS.

A middle-aged nondescript MALE NBC REPORTER holds a microphone and stands in front of an NBC CAMERAMAN.

NBC REPORTER

We interrupt our regularly scheduled program for breaking news from here in the Davis Mountains of West Texas. Some three hundred law enforcement agents have begun a standoff against an antigovernment militia holding two hostages. D-P-S media chief Mike Cox has the story.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Jo Ann sits at a table with TCCF WOMEN INMATES watching a soap opera on television. The program is interrupted.

ON SCREEN: "A SPECIAL REPORT BY NBC NEWS."

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

A heavily mustachioed man wears thick metal frame eyeglasses; Department of Public Safety media chief MIKE COX, stands in his official beige and brown uniform holding a microphone.

MIKE COX

(speaking on camera)

Early this morning, members of the Republic of Texas militia led by Richard Lance McLaren, took Joe and Margaret Ann Rowe hostage in their own home within the Davis Mountain Resort. In exchange for the Rowes' release, militia members demand the release of two of its members: Jo Ann Turner, arrested in Austin five days ago and Robert Scheidt, arrested early today in Fort Davis.

A MALE NBC NEWS REPORTER raises his hand.

Mike Cox points to the reporter.

MALE NBC NEWS REPORTER

Chief Cox, will we see another catastrophe today as we witnessed four years ago in Waco with the Branch Davidians when eighty-two lives were lost?

MIKE COX

U-S Attorney General Janet Reno has requested that the Texas Rangers and local law enforcement agents resolve this standoff quickly. At this time, the A-T-F is not involved and only one F-B-I agent will remain as a consultant.

A DOZEN DMR RESIDENTS form a picket line and wave signs of protest in front of the media cameras.

ON SCREEN: a sign reads "Leave us alone! Let us go home."

DMR RESIDENTS

(chanting)

No feds! Leave us alone!

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

A MALE HORSE RANCHER stands front and center in overalls.

MALE NBC NEWS REPORTER

You sir. Why are the residents of the DMR protesting the presence of local law enforcement here today?



MALE HORSE RANCHER

We were evacuated from our homes. I have horses that need to be fed. I have plenty of guns and I can protect myself from these militia nuts. I don't need the law here.

A LARGE DESERT WOMAN wearing a dusty ankle-length pioneer dress and a cowboy hat pushes her way forward.

LARGE DESERT WOMAN

Texas Rangers took over my home, and are probably eatin' my food. Meanwhile, I'm here gettin' burnt.

A FEMALE ABC NEWS REPORTER raises her hand.

Mike Cox points to the ABC female reporter.

FEMALE ABC NEWS REPORTER

Chief Cox. Texas Attorney General Danny Morales ordered the arrest of Jo Ann Turner, a grandmother from Westlake, five days ago. Do you expect that the R-O-T militia members will attempt a jail break?

EXT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

A military helicopter flies low overhead. The sound reverberates the tin roof, and iron-barred glass windows.

INSERT: We hear the rumbling sound dissipate slightly before returning a second and then a third time before disappearing. Dust devils swirl and tumbleweeds whirl.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

A TCCF FEMALE GUARD#4 appears at Jo Ann and Zaza's cell.

TCCF FEMALE GUARD

Those were Travis County's helicopters. They're keepin' their eyes peeled for any attempt by the militia to break you out Missus.

The guard lights a cigarette, inhales and blows smoke.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - NIGHT

Zaza and Jo Ann look upwards, and listen.

ZAZA  
(whispers to Jo Ann)  
Is de somebody comin'?

Jo Ann slowly shakes her head and closes her eyes.

INT. THE TURNERS' AUSTIN APARTMENT - DAY

Jo Ann's musician husband, BILL TURNER, stumbles through the front door. He looks like a disheveled Buddy Holly impersonator carrying a bass guitar. In the kitchen he reads the note left by Jo Ann earlier. He crumples and tosses it.

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Indistinguishable chatter erupts from the MEDIA THRONG.

MEDIA THRONG  
(shouting)  
Chief Cox! Chief Cox! Chief Cox!

Mike Cox holds up a hand to quiet the media throng.

MIKE COX  
The Texas Rangers will now assume negotiations with members of the R-O-T who demand an exchange of Robert Scheidt for hostages Joe and Margaret Ann Rowe held in their home the past twenty-four hours.

Texas Rangers Captain Barry Caver and negotiator JESS MALONE step forward to join Mike Cox to face the media throng.

CAPTAIN BARRY CAVER  
Like-minded individuals might attempt to join up with McLaren this weekend. We'll try to thwart that. As for Missus Turner, she will remain in Travis County Correctional Facility for now.

INT. TRAVIS COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Inmates together with Jo Ann watch the live news broadcast on a mounted television. Jo Ann holds her hand up to her mouth.

NATASHA gets up to stand directly behind Jo Ann.

NATASHA  
Oh Missus Turner, youse famous now!

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Mike Cox still holds a microphone in front of a media throng.

MIKE COX

FBI consultant Gary Noesner, also served as a negotiator at the Branch Davidian standoff in 1993. He will share a few insights.

FBI agent GARY NOESNER, in a blue suit, white shirt, and a striped patriotic tie, addresses 300 LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENTS. He takes the microphone from Mike Cox.

GARY NOESNER

Thank you Chief Cox. The Republic of Texas militia have used their perch in these Davis Mountains...

EXT. 6000-FOOT RIDGE LOCATED BEHIND THE ROT EMBASSY - DAY

A Black Hawk helicopter hovers and gently drops FOUR MILITARY SNIPERS dressed in black and carrying rifles to the ground. The snipers establish hiding places behind mesquite brush.

EXT. SNIPER RIDGE BEHIND THE ROT EMBASSY - DAY

SNIPER #1 repositions and aims his long-range rifle.

Insert: We hear the nearby sound of a rattlesnake.

ON SCREEN: a rattlesnake rattles its tail menacingly.

GARY NOESNER (O.S.)

...to exert their perceived sovereignty by forcing legitimate law enforcement officers, with no recourse, but to take action...

SNIPER #1 crushes the head of the snake with his gun butt.

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Gary Noesner continues addressing the media throng.

GARY NOESNER  
Sharing key lessons we learned at  
Waco--both the positive and the  
mistakes--I have informed the Texas  
Rangers of the challenges they face  
today and how to achieve the best  
outcome for all involved.

An attractive blonde CNN FEMALE REPORTER raises her hand.

CNN FEMALE REPORTER #1  
Agent Noesner, what role does Jo  
Ann Turner play in this event?

GARY NOESNER  
Missus Turner is not a hardened  
criminal nor a psychotic individual  
intent on evil, but rather an all  
too human woman dealing with  
insurmountable problems. She became  
Richard McLaren's messenger, hoping  
that he would solve her problems.

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Gary Noesner shifts his weight from one leg to another.

MALE CNN REPORTER #2 has raised his hand.

Gary Noesner points to him.

CNN REPORTER #2  
Who is Robert Scheidt?

GARY NOESNER  
Robert Scheidt is not unlike most  
antigovernment followers...

INT. OF BREWSTER COUNTY JAIL, MARFA, TEXAS - DAY

TWO BREWSTER COUNTY GUARDS open Robert Scheidt's  
cell. BREWSTER COUNTY GUARD #1 handcuffs Scheidt and places a  
dark burlap sack over his head, then secures it at the neck.  
BREWSTER COUNTY GUARD #2 leads Scheidt from his cell.

GARY NOESNER (O.S.)  
...they tend to be uneducated, with  
no family support, no meaningful  
work history, some mental health  
issues and a criminal background.

EXT. 6,000-FOOT RIDGE DIRECTLY BEHIND THE ROT EMBASSY - DAY  
SNIPER #2 speaks into a military Walkie Talkie-type radio.

SNIPER #2  
Team in position. Locked and  
loaded. Targets in sight. Out.

EXT. POINT OF ROCKS, DAVIS MOUNTAINS - DAY

Gary Noesner continues speaking to the PRESS ENTOURAGE.

GARY NOESNER  
Presented with certainty, backed up  
by fuzzy logic, and delivered with  
manifested self-assurance, such  
leaders convince their followers of  
the righteousness of their cause.

EXT. YARD IN FRONT OF REPUBLIC OF TEXAS EMBASSY - DAY

Robert "White Eagle" Otto and Rick cook steaks on a grill.

GARY NOESNER (O.S.)  
...People like Rick McLaren know  
how to exploit followers like  
Robert Scheidt and Jo Ann Turner  
and to control every facet of their  
lives. Such followers either want  
or need that kind of direction.

INT. DPS TRAFFIC LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION - DAY

Assistant DPS chief, 50-something CHARLES GRAHAM, reads a  
computer screen with the ROT website post of McLaren's  
previous message followed by a posted reply.

ON SCREEN: "Defense Forces on our way to you from Balmorhea."

Gram goes to an automated telegraph machine. He types and  
sends a teletype message.

ON SCREEN: "All points bulletin. Heavily armed sympathizers  
believed to be heading to Fort Davis on Interstate 20 West  
from Balmorhea to support the Republic of Texas militia."

**END OF PILOT**