

STAND-OFF at HWY#37

By

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CAST

THE GUARDSMEN:

THOMAS LEE DOXDATER(Tuscarora) [24] PFC - accomplished, confident, a perfect soldier,

LINDA BALDWIN (African American) [19] PFC - ambitious, small but scrappy, competitive

CAPTAIN DONALD HEWITT(Caucasian) [34] Military lifer, disappointed ambitions

THE PROTESTORS:

DARRIN JAMIESON(Cayuga) [30] - no settled home or reservation, gets by on his looks and his charm

SANDRA HENHAWK(Mohawk) [32] raised in the city, officious.

AUNT BEV(Mohawk) [62] - Charming and flirtatious, a slightly glam version of the Grandma/Auntie type. Always has snacks.

SETTING

Upstate New York. The border of a small town and the local Haudenosaunee reservation (the protest site). Aunt Bev's house on the Rez.

The back-drop is a multi-media display where photos and slides can be projected. (Or solid, selected photos) At different times, the slides will be of untouched reservation lands, and photos of land claim protests.

During the protest, STAGE LEFT there is picnic table with a large flat of the Haudenosaunee wampum belt (the Iroquois flag) hung on its side. CENTERSTAGE is a sign...*WELCOME TO THE SITE OF THE NEW HIGHWAY #37 BYPASS.*

For AUNT BEV'S HOUSE, a traditional quilt hangs center stage. There is a small sofa, the armchair and a dinner table with chairs.

Pronunciation Guide

Haudenosaunee (*Ho-danno-SHOW-knee*)

Ongewehonwe (*UNG-gweh-hone-WEH*)

Iroquois (*Ear-oh-QUOYSE*)

Wampum (*whom-pum*)

Onondaga (*Aw-non-DAH-gah*)

Seneca (*Sen-eh-KAH*)

Mohawk (*MOW-hawk*)

Cayuga (*Kah-YOO-gah*)

Oneida (*Oh-NIGH-dah*)

Tuscarora (*TUSK-ah-ROAR-ah*)

Sago (*SAY-goh*)

NDN (*In-DIN*)

Chi'wen (*Chey-WEN') *Tuscarora hello

Concurrent Resolution 331

100th Congress 2nd Session, Concurrent Resolution 331 Passed
October 21, 1988 RECOGNIZING CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE UNITED STATES
by the IROQUOIS CONFEDERACY AND OTHER INDIAN NATIONS -

framers of the Constitution, including, most notably, George Washington and Benjamin Franklin, are known to have greatly admired the concepts of the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy;

Whereas the confederation of the original Thirteen Colonies into one republic was influenced by the political system developed by the Iroquois Confederacy as were many of the democratic principles which were incorporated into the Constitution itself; and -

Whereas, since the formation of the United States, the Congress has recognized the sovereign status of Indian tribes and has dealt with Indian tribes on a government-to-government basis and has entered into three hundred and seventy treaties with Indian tribal Nations; ...

Now, therefore, be it Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That-

(1) the Congress, on the occasion of the two hundredth anniversary of the signing of the United States Constitution, acknowledges the contribution made by the Iroquois Confederacy and other Indian Nations to the formation and development of the United States;

(2) the Congress also hereby reaffirms the constitutionally recognized government-to-government relationship with Indian tribes which has been the cornerstone of this Nation's official Indian policy;

(3) the Congress also acknowledges the need to exercise the utmost good faith in upholding its treaties with the various tribes, as the tribes understood them to be, and the duty of a great Nation to uphold its legal and moral obligations for the benefit of all of its citizens so that they and their posterity may also continue to enjoy the rights they have enshrined in the United States Constitution for time immemorial. Agreed to October 21, 1988.

PROLOGUE:

LIGHTS UP on the STAGE. DAWN.
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 331 (of The Constitution) is projected on the video screens. As AUNT BEV ENTERS there is a recording playing the sounds of recent land claim protests. Pictures from OKA Caledonia, Wounded Knee and other land claims flicker past on the screens. OVER THE CACOPHONY, we hear New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's statement from his AUG 13th 2010 radio show (this can be the original or an actor reading the statement). FAINT SOUNDS of a protest in the background.

BLOOMBERG'S VOICE

"I've said this to Governor Paterson, I said, you know; Get yourself a cowboy hat and a shotgun. If there's ever a great video, it's you standing in the middle of the New York State Thruway saying, you know, Read my lips - the law of the land is this, and we're going to enforce the law."

AUNT BEV listens as the protest sounds get louder, and smiles.

AUNT BEV

(To audience)

Seems like somebody doesn't really know the Law of the Land. The original law. The Great Law. The law before New York was New York and before America was America. Our law.

(A SPOTLIGHT goes up on AUNT BEV. She is in storyteller mode.)

Many, many years ago the Haudenosaunee - that's us, by the way, The Ongewehonwe, The One People. We have a lot of names but the one everybody knows is "Iroquois."

It's WRONG. It's taken from an insult by some smart-ass Algonquins. Means "little snakes" - "little snakes" they're ones to talk, I've dated Algonquins -

(She makes a measuring gesture with her thumb and forefinger.)

AUNT BEV (cont'd)

- But I'm getting sidetracked. Haudenosaunee. The People of the Longhouse. Now, way, waaaaaay back (long before the Invaders came) there was a time of terrible conflict and bloodshed amongst the Five Nations.

Brother was killing brother. It all seemed hopeless until the Creator sent someone to restore peace, love, and harmony amongst the people. He was the Peacemaker and his Great Law ensured that every Haudenosaunee had the right to be heard whenever a decision was made. That law brought us all together. That law still governs the now Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee.

(Gestures to the Haudenosaunee Flag.)

This wampum was made to commemorate that coming together. It represents the original Five Nations. In the center is the Tree of Peace, where the Nations buried their weapons. The Tree represents the Onondaga (the keepers of the Central Fire); the two outside squares are the warrior nations - the Senecas (the keepers of the Western Door) and the Mohawks (the keepers of the Eastern Door). The Cayuga and the Oneida, (the two Younger Brothers) are the squares in between and the Tuscaroras, well - they're the little bit of that white line that extends off the edge. That's what happens sometimes, when people don't find their path. They can go off the edge.

SCENE 1:

P.F.C. THOMAS LEE DOXDATER[24]
ENTERS. He circles the stage,
checking the perimeter. He
spots AUNT BEV.

AUNT BEV

Sago, dear -

THOMAS

Hello Ma'am. Protest starting already?

AUNT BEV

Gotta get here early to beat those bulldozers - ennit?
(Beat.)

Ennit?

THOMAS

I'm not here for the protest.

Oh. Okay then. I thought - AUNT BEV

Yes? THOMAS

You're NDN, right? AUNT BEV

Yep. THOMAS

You look Haudenosaunee - AUNT BEV

Yes ma'am. THOMAS

You're not here for the protest? AUNT BEV

Not the way you you think. THOMAS

CAPTAIN HEWITT [34] ENTERS
with PFC LINDA BALDWIN[19].
AUNT BEV EXITS unseen.

Doxdater! Report? CAPTAIN HEWITT

Perimeter clear. Except for the Elder, Sir. THOMAS

"Elder?" You're so weird. BALDWIN

Its respect. What would you call her? THOMAS

Nothing. No one's there. BALDWIN
(looks around)

Cut the chatter. Eyes on me! Follow the line. CAPTAIN HEWITT

CAPTAIN HEWITT takes position in front of the sign. He carefully walks a straight line from the sign to center upstage. BALDWIN AND THOMAS watch attentively.

CAPTAIN HEWITT (CONT'D)
(gestures STAGE LEFT)

This area is undisputed reservation territory, a safe zone for the protestors. As long as they stay on their side of the line, they're fine. That same rule applies to us.

BALDWIN

Sir - what if things start getting out of control? If people start getting violent or something -

THOMAS

Not happening.

BALDWIN

This is a protest. Could happen.

THOMAS

Why? Because we're a pack of Wild Indians?

BALDWIN

I didn't mean that.

THOMAS

(to CAPTAIN HEWITT)

Trust me sir. This isn't gonna be violent.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I do. You're in charge. I have to check the other sites up the line.

BALDWIN

Wait -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Problem Baldwin? Doxdater is uniquely qualified. Do you know why we can't cross the line?

BALDWIN

No - but -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater, explain.

THOMAS

Sovereign territory Sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

It's Indian land.

BALDWIN

But Doxdater /is Indian.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

/Doxdater is representing the interests of the United States of America. While he's on duty and in uniform, he's one of us.

THOMAS

Yes /Sir!

BALDWIN

/But Sir -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Our job is to make sure the protestors are safe, but also to ensure they do not cross into the disputed territory.

(He gestures STAGE RIGHT)

This is the area in contention.

THOMAS

Yes Sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

This should be an easy one, probably will be just a bunch of old folks. Sometimes there are a few troublemakers - but nothing that we need worry about.

THOMAS

/Right Sir!

BALDWIN

/Sir, I don't think -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

The rule is - they keep it civil, we keep it civil. There are rumors that they may try to blockade the bridge and the railway, but that's only if things get out of hand. We're not gonna let that happen.

THOMAS

No Sir!

BALDWIN

Not gonna happen, sir.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater?

THOMAS

Yes Sir?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I'm off to make the rounds - It's your game here.

BALDWIN

SIR!

BEAT.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

What NOW, Baldwin? It better be lady problems because I've answered your concern.

THOMAS

(aside to CAPTAIN HEWITT)

Woah, look at that face! Definitely lady problems.

CAPTAIN HEWITT finds this
hilarious. BALDWIN doesn't.

BALDWIN

It seems like a conflict of interest.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater!

THOMAS

Yes Sir?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Anything changed since our earlier conversation?

THOMAS

No. Like I said - it's not my Rez.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Good enough.

CAPTAIN HEWITT EXIT.
DOXDATER and BALDWIN
post-up.

THOMAS

(Calls after him.)

Thank you Sir!

BALDWIN

You're a deadman.

THOMAS

It was a joke.

BALDWIN

It wasn't funny.

THOMAS

You're too sensitive.

BALDWIN

"Sovereign territory Sir!" - so that's how to get ahead.
Pimp your background.

THOMAS

I earned this.

BALDWIN

Right. The fact that you're an Indian and we're here to
control a protest by a bunch of Indians is just a coincidence.

THOMAS

It's why they pay us.

BALDWIN

"It's not my Rez" - what does that even mean?

THOMAS

Just what I said - it's not my Rez.

BALDWIN

But it is your people.

DARRIN JAMIESON [30] ENTERS.
He carries an overstuffed
armchair and a large colorful
tote bag.

DARRIN

(calling offstage)

Hey Aunt Bev, where do you want your chair?

AUNT BEV ENTERS.

AUNT BEV

Oh, I don't know, somewhere cozy...I want a view of
everything.

They survey the stage and
DARRIN spots BALDWIN.

DARRIN

Hey, how YOU doin?

BALDWIN

Forget it.

AUNT BEV grabs the chair and
pulls it into place while
DARRIN bothers BALDWIN.

DARRIN
I never thought I'd say this - on you that outfit looks good.

BALDWIN
Nice...purse. Pretty colors -

DARRIN
Aunt Bev, please tell this lovely lady I'm holding your bag
for you. Because, I'm a gentleman.

AUNT BEV
You are a good boy, now give it back to me, I'm hungry.

AUNT BEV sits in her chair,
directly under the Highway
Expansion sign.

BALDWIN
She can't sit there.

DARRIN
C'mon sweetheart - be nice.

BALDWIN
Ma'am? We're gonna need you to move your chair.

AUNT BEV
Don't worry dear, I just want to be able to see everything,
that's all.

THOMAS spots AUNT BEV and
moves toward her.

THOMAS
Ma'am, you're on disputed territory.

DARRIN
Hey, Tommy! Long time no see! Look at you, all official and
everything. How you doin' man?

THOMAS
Ma'am, can you please move your chair?

AUNT BEV
Sago again, Officer.

THOMAS
I'm not a policeman.

AUNT BEV
Sago Soldier -

DARRIN
He's National Guard, Aunt Bev -

AUNT BEV
Sago Guardsman.

CAPTAIN HEWITT ENTERS.

THOMAS
Ma'am - you can't sit here.

DARRIN
Hey Tommy back off. She can sit where she wants.

CAPTAIN HEWITT joins them.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Correction. She can't sit here.

AUNT BEV
Chair too big?

CAPTAIN HEWITT
When she's on Indian Land, she can sit wherever she wants.

AUNT BEV
She wants to remind you, it's all Indian land.
(She turns to Thomas)
Isn't it, Guardsman?

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Not according to the government, ma'am.

AUNT BEV
Which one?

THOMAS
The US Government, ma'am.

CAPTAIN HEWITT stalks over to
STAGE RIGHT.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
DOXDATER! Front and center!

DARRIN
Uh-oh!

AUNT BEV
Are you in trouble, hon?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater!

THOMAS steps over to CAPTAIN
HEWITT, BALDWIN follows.

BALDWIN

The Indian-thing isn't helping, is it?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Baldwin, Were you called?

BALDWIN

I'm as well-certified as Doxdater, in fact in some categories
I'm rated higher -

THOMAS

Hah! You beat me in spit and polish, Baldwin, that's it.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I'm well aware of your qualifications.

BALDWIN

Is this a gender thing, Sir? Because I think she might be
more receptive to another woman.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

(Cuts her off.)

Do you speak Mohawk?

BALDWIN

Pardon me?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater can speak to these people.

THOMAS

I'm Tuscarora. And they all speak English.

BALDWIN

It's his Tribe, Sir -

THOMAS

The word is Nation, Baldwin and yeah, we're all Haudenosaunee
- but they're Mohawks.

BALDWIN

Which means?

DARRIN

It means, secretly, Tommy would love to tell some Mohawks to
suck it, but never would in front of white people.

THOMAS
Pipe down, Darrin!

BALDWIN
Hah, so you do know him!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Baldwin, Doxdater!

THOMAS
(salutes)
/Sir!

BALDWIN
(salutes)
/Sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Doxdator, I don't understand the difference between Tribes
and Nations and all that - my question is...are you good?

THOMAS
Yes, Sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
I can put in a good word. Reassignment doesn't guarantee
demerit. We tried something, it didn't work - that's all. No
issue.

BALDWIN
(mutters)
Boys Club strikes again.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Pardon me, Baldwin?

BALDWIN
Nothing Sir!

THOMAS
I can handle it, Sir.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Okay. Taking your word. Now go be nice to the little old lady -

He gestures towards AUNT BEV,
who gives him a friendly wave.
CAPTAIN HEWITT nods.

CAPTAIN HEWITT (CONT'D)
She's positioned herself right on top of the contested
portion of the land. I'm sure that's no mistake.

THOMAS

No Sir.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

You have an "in" here. Use it. Charm her. Get her to trust you. I'm sure she'll listen to a nice young Tuscarora man/

BALDWIN

(mutters)

/seriously?/

CAPTAIN HEWITT

(ignoring BALDWIN)

If you get her to move maybe we can make it back before game time.

THOMAS

Yes Sir.

BALDWIN

Sounds like a plan, Sir!

THOMAS

Thank you for your trust, Sir.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Of course. Don't fuck up.

He EXITS. As soon as he is gone, BALDWIN starts mock gagging.

BALDWIN

There's the Dad you didn't know you had.

THOMAS

Jealous?

BALDWIN

I do not need to prove anything to some old white dude.

THOMAS

Hah, says you!

BALDWIN

You can "handle it", huh? What if one of them jumps you?

THOMAS

(points at Aunt Bev)

One of them?

BALDWIN

They may look harmless. Doesn't mean they are. Are you really prepared to do whatever's necessary? That's your people over there.

THOMAS

That's the job.

BALDWIN

You should've gone for reassignment.

THOMAS

Right. *"Those Indians always need special treatment."*

BALDWIN

Oh, poor baby. You don't need to worry, not when he's gonna "put in a good word for you".

THOMAS

Wouldn't make a difference.

BALDWIN

Yeah it does. What are you gonna do? You have friends here...even if they are Mohawk.

She gestures toward DARRIN.

DARRIN

Hey sweetheart I see you looking at me! Tommy! Help a brother out, will ya?

THOMAS

He's not Mohawk. He's Cayuga.

BALDWIN

Whatever - he's your friend.

THOMAS

Everyone knows Darrin. That doesn't make him a friend.

BALDWIN

Wow. Real asshole today, aren't you?

THOMAS

Look, I've got a job to do. That's it.

DARRIN comes up between them.

DARRIN

Hey, tell her about the time I pulled you outta the old well. You should've seen it, gorgeous. It was the hunts for the Midwinter Feast - first one I'd ever been on. I was excited, but the kid here, he practically had ants in his pants.

THOMAS

Why are you talking, Darrin?

DARRIN

I'd never been to one before. Never seen a proper deer hunt - the right kind of hunt, the traditional one? Tommy's Dad said that since I was almost a man, I needed to learn how to do it right. With respect.

THOMAS

Respect, that's a good one.

DARRIN

Since it was my first hunt and Tommy was just six, we both had the same job. Calling the deer with the antlers.

(He mimes clicking the antlers together)

The first chance he could, Tommy ran off. No one else noticed, so I took off after him. Stupid kid ran over an old well and practically fell through. He was halfway down when I found him. I pulled him out, but he dropped the antlers. Cried like I'd killed his puppy. Well, that's me - saving babies. I'm heroic like that.

BALDWIN

(to DARRIN)

You need to get back behind the line.

DARRIN

Awww, come on, let's keep it friendly.

THOMAS

Back behind the line, Darrin!

DARRIN

Man....

DARRIN goes.

BALDWIN

So - not a friend? How does he know everybody?

THOMAS

He's got no Rez, no family, so he has nowhere to go. He just stays with people until people get sick of him.

BALDWIN

He lived with you?

THOMAS

For a while. Then we were done, too. That's how he lives - He moves to the next house and the next Rez and wears everybody out.

BALDWIN

And people just let him..

THOMAS

What else are they gonna do? Let him starve? Tempting - I know.

DARRIN whispers with AUNT BEV.
She waves THOMAS over.

BALDWIN

You're getting summoned.

He unslings his rifle and
hands it to BALDWIN.

THOMAS

Take my gun -

BALDWIN

Why?

THOMAS

Respect goes a long way, Baldwin.

THOMAS strides over to Aunt
Bev, keeping carefully on his
side of the "boundary."

THOMAS (cont'd)

Did you need assistance, Ma'am?

AUNT BEV

So you're Essie Doxdator's grandson!

THOMAS

Yes ma'am.

AUNT BEV

Let me look at you. Take after that good-looking father of
yours, don't you? She said you were gonna be a soldier -

THOMAS

Just a Guardsman, Ma'am.

DARRIN

Whatever happened to medical school?

THOMAS

What? Nothing.

AUNT BEV

You're gonna be a Doctor?

THOMAS

No ma'am. Darrin doesn't know what he's talking about.

DARRIN

You used to always say you were going to be a doctor.

THOMAS

Yeah? I used to wanna be an astronaut, too.

AUNT BEV

Astronaut Indian...that far above the Mother? Well, why not - maybe you'll run into the Sky People.

THOMAS

I was eight, Ma'am.

DARRIN

Aunt Bev - everyone just calls her Aunt Bev.

THOMAS

Aunt Bev.

AUNT BEV

Either way...You're planning for your future. Essie must be so proud.

DARRIN

I bet your parents are.

THOMAS

When did you get out?

DARRIN

A few months ago -

THOMAS

You crashing here now?

AUNT BEV

Darrin's staying with me for a bit.

THOMAS

Some things never change.

DARRIN

I'm just working some things out.

AUNT BEV

We know, Darrin.

THOMAS
Been working things out for a long time, huh?

DARRIN
I've got plans -

THOMAS
Right.

AUNT BEV
Don't be so doubtful. As long as someone's living - they've got potential.

THOMAS
Yes ma'am.

AUNT BEV
What about you? When you're done with this?

THOMAS
I'm happy in the Guard, Ma'am.

AUNT BEV
Protector of the land.

BALDWIN
Doxdater wants to transfer to regular Army.

She hands him back his rifle.

AUNT BEV
Want to save the world too, huh, Thomas?

DARRIN
I knew it man, pretty soon you'll be a General or some shit.

BALDWIN
Hah!

THOMAS
You can't see me in stars, Baldwin?

AUNT BEV
Well, why not? If he's good at this?

BALDWIN
I know Hewitt likes you - but that's not how it works.
Started a little late.

AUNT BEV
Age doesn't mean incapable, it just means it's easier to get people to move your chair for you -

Speaking of which - THOMAS

Hmmm? AUNT BEV

THOMAS
Aunt Bev, would you mind if I moved your chair just a little to the left -

AUNT BEV
Oh, but I won't be able to see as well over there - I like it here.

THOMAS leans in closer to her.

THOMAS
Ma'am, I hate to insist, but -

SANDRA HENHAWK [32] ENTERS.
She spots THOMAS and rushes over to join AUNT BEV.

SANDRA
Back off, Storm-troopers!

DARRIN
Oh here we go, now -

THOMAS
You need to relax, Ma'am.

SANDRA
RELAX! It looks like you and Murder-Drone Barbie/

BALDWIN
/Barbie? Seriously?/

SANDRA
/are trying to intimidate an old woman.

AUNT BEV
Hey! Middle-aged.

THOMAS
Okay, everybody calm down. NOW.

DARRIN
I'm completely calm.

THOMAS
We're just asking her to move her chair, that's all.

SANDRA

You condescending asshole.

DARRIN

Geez Sandra, it's still early. Eat something.

BALDWIN

(to AUNT BEV)

Ma'am - we're gonna have to make you move, anyway.

AUNT BEV

What's your name, dear?

BALDWIN

Private Baldwin...Linda Baldwin -

AUNT BEV

Linda Baldwin...it makes me so proud to see you in uniform. Women were only allowed to be nurses and secretaries in the Military when I was growing up.

BALDWIN

Thank you Ma'am -

AUNT BEV

The Haudenosaunee have a long-standing tradition of Women Warriors, did you know that?

BALDWIN

I didn't.

SANDRA

You're looking at one right now, Sister!

AUNT BEV

In our society Women are recognized for their power. The men may be Chiefs, but we choose them.

BALDWIN

Really? Does Doxdater know that? Because I think he missed that lesson.

THOMAS

Very Funny.

SANDRA

What is she talking about?

DARRIN

Relax - there will be plenty of time to fight everybody.

AUNT BEV

Of course we would send the men out for an offensive attack - but we would fight side by side when it came to defense.

BALDWIN

Really? I like that!

SANDRA

- As evidenced by the Oka crisis in 1990 - when the Quebec government came in with teargas and blocked food to the reservation. Women and children linked hands and stood against well-armed government forces -

DARRIN

You've set her off, now.

SANDRA

As evidenced by the Seaway Bridge dispute in 2009, when government officials tried to stop a funeral procession from going across the bridge - from one side of the reservation to the other - to the burial ground -

THOMAS

Or some people might say, tried to cross the American/Canadian border without going through customs.

SANDRA

I recognize no such border.

AUNT BEV

Its reservation land, dear - no border there.

THOMAS

Maybe once upon a time, but that was before we had terrorists to worry about.

SANDRA

You calling us terrorists?

DARRIN

No - Tommy's one of us.

SANDRA

What?

AUNT BEV

Thomas Lee Doxdator, banded member of the Tuscarora Nation. Eel Clan.

SANDRA

(To Thomas)

Traitor!

THOMAS
(to SANDRA)

Do I know you?

SANDRA
You should know me as one of your people.

THOMAS
I'm not Mohawk.

AUNT BEV
But you are Haudenosaunee.

DARRIN
Naw, you don't know her - Sandra is Marjorie Henhawk's daughter. She got adopted, lived in the city most of her life.

SANDRA
Shut-up, Darrin!

THOMAS
Why are you here now?

SANDRA
Excuse me?

DARRIN
You know how it is. She boomeranged. What's your name now? I forget.

SANDRA
I changed it back to Henhawk.

THOMAS
But you're still from the city.

SANDRA
So, tell me where you're from? Turning against your own people?!

THOMAS
I'm maintaining the peace.

DARRIN
That's right! We're all peaceful because Thomas is here.

SANDRA
You're in the uniform of an occupying power and you're NOT turning against your own people?

BALDWIN
Occupying! We're not occupying anything!

SANDRA

Sorry, honey, you're an Invader -

BALDWIN

My people didn't invade.

SANDRA

Well, you are now. Until last year, our Reservation extended another mile and a half to the East of this boundary. Been like that for over three hundred years, then all of a sudden a developer builds a new complex just north of here, and decides he doesn't want his fancy new folks having to drive around the Rez to get to the highway. Surprise, surprise! Somebody finds a document that claims we ceded all rights to the property in 1926.

BALDWIN

Maybe they found the document because they finally had reason to look for it.

SANDRA

What?! Wow - I thought you might understand, being a member of a fellow oppressed culture -

BALDWIN

Right. Sure.

SANDRA

But obviously you're pretty comfortable in your place in the hierarchy -

BALDWIN

What?! Do you know what Black people go through in this country?

SANDRA

Yeah.

BALDWIN

No you don't - don't even.

THOMAS

Baldwin - don't engage.

SANDRA

I know more about you than you know about us! But that's what happens when you get colonized. Genocide - literally and spiritually.

THOMAS

Nice speech. Indian 101?

BALDWIN

At least your society respects women.

DARRIN

You tell her, sweetheart!

SANDRA

Patronizing jerk. She's not gonna sleep with you.

DARRIN

Why not? You did.

SANDRA

Not relevant!

THOMAS steps between them.

THOMAS

ALRIGHT! Shut it down! We're getting off track here.

SANDRA

You don't get to tell me what to do -

BALDWIN

Or me either!

THOMAS

I'm in charge, Baldwin.

BALDWIN

Yes SIR.

THOMAS

Look, we're not saying you can't be here - I'm just trying to stop things from getting out of hand.

DARRIN lets out a war whoop.

AUNT BEV

It's a protest, Thomas - people are upset. It's gonna get out of hand.

THOMAS crouches down beside
AUNT BEV.

THOMAS

Aunt Bev, you could really, really help -

AUNT BEV

Are you hungry?

THOMAS

No, I'm fine, thank you.

AUNT BEV

I have cornsoup and scones (*pronounced *scawns*)

THOMAS
Delicious, I'm sure - Aunt Bev -

AUNT BEV
Yes, dear?

THOMAS
Could I please move your chair?

AUNT BEV pats his cheek,
fondly.

AUNT BEV
No dear.

LIGHTS DOWN

SCENE 2:

LIGHTS UP. "SPOTLIGHT" the
WRONG side of the boundary.
SANDRA angles her phone to get
good reception. BALDWIN spots
her and heads over.

SANDRA
(on Cellphone)
Come on Evie, you owe me one! This protest is important.

BALDWIN
Hey, you know you're not supposed to be over here -

SANDRA waves her off, the
proceeds to ignore her.
BALDWIN tries to draw her
attention.

SANDRA
Yeah, you'll be sorry you didn't send a reporter - Johnny
Depp supports us!

BALDWIN
(Skeptical)
Johnny Depp? Really?

SANDRA
(Waves her off again)
He may even turn up - well, no I didn't get a commitment -

She stops talking and stares
at the phone.

BALDWIN

Hung up on you, huh?

SANDRA

Doesn't matter - don't think you're off the hook! My next call is
to the New York Times!

BALDWIN

And they're gonna come here?

SANDRA

This protest means something to a lot of people!

BALDWIN

I can see that - I can see it means a lot to all three of
you. Or four? Johnny Depp is coming? Because I want an
autograph.

SANDRA

I said we have his support. His assistant said that Mr. Depp
is very supportive of Native Issues and that she would be happy
to relay the invitation to him.

BALDWIN

I'm sure he is and you might even get a check at some point but
right now - there's just the three of you and you are
trespassing.

SANDRA

This is the only place I get reception.

BALDWIN

Are you serious? I can take you in for this. If the Captain or
Thomas saw you - they would.

SANDRA

And you're not gonna?

BALDWIN

Get back behind the line. From one oppressed culture to the
other.

SANDRA steps back as BALDWIN
EXITS and SANDRA rejoins AUNT
BEV and DARRIN.

LIGHTS UP on full stage.

AUNT BEV enjoys her corn soup.
DARRIN is stretched out on the
picnic table, dozing. SANDRA
pokes him, he tries to wave
her off - she pokes him again.

All GUARDSMEN are offstage.

SANDRA

Get up!

DARRIN

Can't you sit peaceful for five minutes?

SANDRA

I don't like how quiet it is. Bet they're gathering
reinforcements.

DARRIN

Okay, wake me when the tanks come.

SANDRA

Why are you here?

DARRIN

What?

SANDRA

Is this a joke to you? You're all friendly with the Guardsmen
- you're stretched out on the picnic table instead of flipping it
over to use as a barricade - why are you here?

DARRIN

I do things my way, you do things your way -

SANDRA

When are you gonna take this seriously?

DARRIN

(Sits up.)

I am serious. They announce they're taking land again, like
it doesn't matter. Like we can't do anything about it. Well,
I am doing something about it. Just don't see the need to be
in everybody's faces yet, that's all.

SANDRA

I'm trying to get through to these people.

DARRIN

Won't happen.

SANDRA

If we can get them to understand -

DARRIN

Don't be stupid. They don't care. They never do.

SANDRA

If you think that then why even come?

AUNT BEV

We're not here to get them to change their minds about us. They've already decided. Indians are fine as a sad memory. Easy to express regret about history as long as it stays in the past.

DARRIN

"Oh those poor Indians, we did so many terrible things to them." "That was 200 years ago, don't you have casinos now?"

AUNT BEV

They've already heard what we've had to say and they're not interested.

SANDRA

That's why I organized this protest!

AUNT BEV

No, you organized it so we can prevent the outsiders from taking more land from us.

SANDRA

(Points to Darrin)

He's protecting the Rez?

DARRIN

Just don't see the need to be all bitched out about it. While they're friendly we can be friendly -

SANDRA

This isn't supposed to be friendly.

AUNT BEV

Right now, we're just talking. Save your energy for the real fight.

SANDRA

Are you sure this isn't because of the Apple?

DARRIN

Apple ennit?

(Mocking)

What do you know about Apples, you're not even Rez -

SANDRA

I know more than you.

DARRIN

From the Internet.

AUNT BEV

Shhh, Darrin!

(To SANDRA)

Sandra why does Thomas bug you so much?

SANDRA

Why are you giving him a pass? He's raising arms against us.

AUNT BEV

I'm not giving him a pass.

SANDRA

He's an Indian siding with the Invaders!

AUNT BEV

They are also our allies, dear -

SANDRA

What?

AUNT BEV

Treaties -

SANDRA

They don't respect treaties - how does that make them allies?

AUNT BEV

Yep. They're bad allies.

THOMAS ENTERS. He listens as
Aunt Bev talks.

AUNT BEV (cont'd)

We honor the treaties. We're Haudenosaunee - we are not
victims. We're here to protect the land as is our duty. We
don't need them to acknowledge the past or admit any wrongs.
That's not this fight. We just need them to move their
highway bypass.

BALDWIN ENTERS. Sees AUNT BEV
still in the same place. She
makes a face at THOMAS and he
nods. They both head for AUNT
BEV.

THOMAS

Aunt Bev - I really need you to move now.

AUNT BEV

Oh, I know. Likewise, dear.

THOMAS

I have to follow orders. Even here.

AUNT BEV

That's okay, I know you'd do the right thing, if you could.

BALDWIN

There's rules, Ma'am. Everyone has to follow them.

AUNT BEV

Well, of course. That's how it works in the military, right? You take orders and do what you're told. Input from the Troops is not needed.

THOMAS

Right.

AUNT BEV

So different from Longhouse, huh Thomas? There everybody gets to voice their opinion.

THOMAS

If the Captain decides to use force, I won't be able to stop him.

BALDWIN

We'll probably have to help him.

DARRIN hops off the table and steps up to face-off against THOMAS.

DARRIN

You know what's gonna happen if you do, right Tommy boy?

AUNT BEV

So sweet but I can take care of myself, Darrin. I'm sure Linda and Thomas both know that.

BALDWIN

But ma'am -

THOMAS

Yes ma'am.

AUNT BEV

Good.

Beat. CAPTAIN HEWITT enters. He stops when he sees AUNT BEV, who gives him a friendly wave.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
DOXDATOR! BALDWIN! Fall in!

THOMAS
Sir!

BALDWIN
Yes Sir!

THOMAS and BALDWIN fall into
formation in front of CAPTAIN
HEWITT.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Doxdator, I asked you to get that woman to move, did I not?

THOMAS
Yes Sir.

BALDWIN
She won't move, Sir.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Oh yeah?

He stalks over to AUNT BEV.
DARRIN and SANDRA hover but
she waves them off. She gives
CAPTAIN HEWITT a bright smile.
He doesn't return the gesture.
They face off for a moment in
silence.

CAPTAIN HEWITT (cont'd)
Ma'am, we need you to move your chair.

AUNT BEV
Sago! Aren't you something, with all those badges - what is
your title exactly?

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Captain.

AUNT BEV
Captain. That's impressive!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Thank you, ma'am.

AUNT BEV
Such a handsome man, and such fancy badges! You must have to
beat the girls away with a stick.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I admire your strategic abilities, but you've played that harmless little old lady card a bit too much, now.

AUNT BEV

Not so old -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

And not so harmless - Do you know where I just came from, Ma'am.

AUNT BEV

The John?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

No. The town. Folks had some interesting things to say.

AUNT BEV

Oh, I don't go to town much. The Rez has everything I need.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I bet it does. I spoke with the local police chief - you know to make sure they had what they needed. Let them know we're here -

AUNT BEV

That's very considerate of you.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Yeah. I happened to mention you.

HEWITT puts a hand on the armrest of the chair, threateningly. THOMAS reacts.

THOMAS

Sir -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

It's our side of the border, we're good.

THOMAS

Let me handle it.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

So far you haven't. I don't think you know who you're dealing with.

BALDWIN

Sir?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

This is YOUR protest, isn't it? "Aunt" Bev.

SANDRA

This is MY initiative.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

(to AUNT BEV)

You let her think it was her idea? That was kind of you.

AUNT BEV

I am kind, Captain.

THOMAS

What's going on?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater, Aunt Bev is famous.

As CAPTAIN HEWITT talks, the backdrop flashes with photos from different land disputes - photos with soldiers and police, protests, fires, and fighting from each of the uprisings mentioned by CAPTAIN HEWITT.

CAPTAIN HEWITT (CONT'D)

Caledonia/Six Nations land dispute in 2008, Akwesasne/Cornwall Bridge dispute in 2009, The Oka crisis in 1990 -

(AUNT BEV just smiles.)

But it doesn't stop there - it goes back to Wounded Knee in '73 and Alcatraz in '69...Slides of the land conflicts flicker across the backdrop.

AUNT BEV

Keep going, Captain.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

There's more? I shouldn't be surprised. It seems, Ma'am, wherever you go, MAJOR crises follow - sometimes even resulting in bloodshed -

AUNT BEV

Understandable when one is fighting off occupying forces...

CAPTAIN HEWITT

It's my country too. I've spent the better part of my life fighting to protect it. I'm not saying there isn't a lot of bad - you and I both know our history has some real spotty times - but there's a lot that's great too. One of the greatest things in this country is that the people have the right to protest, peacefully.

AUNT BEV

They do, don't they.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Yes.

AUNT BEV

You're welcome.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Pardon me, Ma'am?

AUNT BEV

Ever heard of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Great Law, Captain?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I'm speaking about the Constitution.

AUNT BEV

So am I -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

The CONSTITUTION, Ma'am. The SUPREME LAW of this land.

AUNT BEV

Oh I know, Captain. Thomas knows too -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Oh yes he does. He swore allegiance to it.

Beat. THOMAS stares forward,
ignoring AUNT BEV as she tries
to catch his eye.

AUNT BEV

Just say what you need to say.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I believe that you know exactly what you are doing. I believe you are deliberately trying to provoke an incident.

AUNT BEV

Maybe.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I have a lot of respect for you, but I don't underestimate you. You can play games with the rest of them, but I'm not afraid to be the bad guy if the situation requires it. You understand?

AUNT BEV

Yes, Captain.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater! Baldwin! You understand?

THOMAS

Yes Sir.

BALDWIN

Yes Sir, Captain Sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Move your chair, Ma'am or we'll move it for you.

AUNT BEV starts to pack up her
totebag, putting all the
snacks away - and then she
pulls out a war club, and sets
it in her lap.

CAPTAIN HEWITT (cont'd)

Right that's it! Baldwin! Doxdater! With me.

He stalks over to Stage Right.
BALDWIN and THOMAS follow.

CAPTAIN HEWITT (cont'd)

We're taking her in.

THOMAS

What? It's a peaceful protest! Sir.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

What's that thing she pulled out of her bag? Doesn't look
peaceful to me.

THOMAS

It's an old war club. It's symbolic.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

War Club? Yeah, I don't think I'm misreading the situation.
You were supposed to charm her, Doxdater.

THOMAS

Well, if you didn't come in and threaten her -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Excuse me?

BALDWIN

Captain! I agree with Doxdater - She's not dangerous. She
just wants you to know she won't be intimidated, that's all.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Oh yeah, Baldwin? You can handle her?

BALDWIN

It's her pride, Sir. She's a warrior - she told me the women of her tribe/

THOMAS

(Interrupting)

/Nation/

BALDWIN

/have always been warriors.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

So you two are friendly -

BALDWIN

I think we understand each other -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Fine, Baldwin. See if you can get through to her or at the very least, disarm her - Doxdater -

THOMAS

Yes Sir?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Not impressed.

He EXITS. BALDWIN unslings her rifle and hands it to THOMAS.

BALDWIN

Respect goes a long way, Doxdater.

She goes over to AUNT BEV.

AUNT BEV

Hello dear -

BALDWIN

I admire you so much - strong women like you are my role-models. Every time they get angry because I ask too many questions, I picture all the women in the past who've come before me - women who were annoying and pushed too hard and persevered. Meeting you in person - it's a revelation! A culture that takes it for granted that women are leaders and warriors and are capable of anything. I want to know more!

AUNT BEV

I'm happy to teach you - come visit anytime.

BALDWIN

Thank you!

AUNT BEV

I'll be right here.

DARRIN

Haudenosaunee Women...leaders, warriors and stubborn as hell.

BALDWIN

Admirable - truly, but this kind of effort deserves to be about a bigger cause.

SANDRA

Our home isn't worth the effort? Is that what you're saying?

THOMAS

Baldwin, don't start this conversation.

SANDRA

Right, Apple - run away scared -

BALDWIN

Apple?

THOMAS

Red on the outside, white on the inside.

BALDWIN

Oh. Like Oreo? Not nice.

THOMAS

Nope.

DARRIN

(to Sandra)

You're one to talk.

SANDRA

Because I'm not Rez? I'm as Indian as you are. I belong here with the rest of you. I don't know what else you want me to do.

DARRIN

Geez Sandra! Say, So what? I'm a city NDN, get over it.

THOMAS

Just be who you are.

SANDRA

(to THOMAS)

Who are you, exactly? You're here - in that uniform, trying to control us.

THOMAS

I know my language, I know my Clan. I go to Longhouse regularly. When's the last time you went?

BALDWIN

Aunt Bev, moving the chair isn't giving up anything. We can still have the conversation.

AUNT BEV

True, but we're having a conversation now, aren't we?

DARRIN

(to SANDRA)

He's the real deal, Sandra. He's traditional.

SANDRA

It's traditional to turn against your people?

THOMAS

I gave my word. When I signed up, when I put on this uniform, I made a commitment - I swore on my honor. A Warrior's honor is everything. My Dad taught me that.

DARRIN

Your Dad's the most honorable man I've ever known.

THOMAS

Yeah, well that's how he raised me. Captain Hewitt understands honor. Dad tried to teach you, too bad it didn't take.

Beat. DARRIN reacts.

SANDRA

The Way of the Warrior - very New Age of you.

AUNT BEV

It's not a joke, Sandra.

THOMAS

It's okay, Aunt Bev, I've been mocked before. "Hey Kemosabe, You want some firewater?"

BALDWIN

There's a lot of jerks in our unit.

THOMAS

First time I've heard it from another NDN.

SANDRA

Must be your first time being a traitor.

THOMAS

I'm not a traitor. I'm honoring my family. I'm following a path that was my father's and my grandfather's -

SANDRA
And you're living the Traditional Way -

THOMAS
Every day.

SANDRA
As a National Guardsman.

AUNT BEV
The two aren't incompatible, dear.

SANDRA
(to Aunt Bev)
Bullshit!

THOMAS
See that? You don't speak to Elders that way.

SANDRA
I didn't - I didn't mean -

AUNT BEV
It's fine. It's a tough situation. It's hard for our young people these days. How much do you compromise? How much do you give up to get along.

SANDRA
He is standing here holding a gun on his own people -

THOMAS
I'm not the first one here to do that.

SANDRA
What?

DARRIN
Wow man. Right under the bus - I was wondering when it was coming.

THOMAS
You talk about my Dad. How honorable he is and how much you respect him - how much respect did you feel when you pulled a gun on him and my Mom?

DARRIN
It was a shitty thing to do.

THOMAS
Yeah, you're gonna tell me? You robbed my family.

DARRIN
I was messed up. I'm clean now.

THOMAS

So that makes a difference?

DARRIN

Well, that's what happens when you got nowhere to go and no way out, all right? You do stupid shit. You screw over the people who matter. And you spend the rest of your time regretting it and trying to find a way to make it right.

THOMAS

You can't make it right.

DARRIN

I get that, okay?

THOMAS

I found a way to fit.

DARRIN

Yeah you did. It's good to see, man.

THOMAS

Oh, we're good now? Is that what you're trying to get me to say? Because we're not.

Beat. DARRIN is silent.

AUNT BEV

(to THOMAS)

People make mistakes, big ones sometimes. But that doesn't stop Darrin from caring about you - or being the same guy who saved you from that well.

DARRIN

Don't bother Aunt Bev. It's okay.

AUNT BEV

He was punished, he paid for it.

THOMAS

Yes, Ma'am.

SANDRA

You know something - you might be traditional and know everything there is to know about our culture -

THOMAS

I didn't say that.

SANDRA

But that doesn't stop you from being a complete asshole.

THOMAS

You don't know me.

SANDRA

I don't think I want to, thanks.

BALDWIN

More going on here than just a little land dispute, huh?

SANDRA

Little land dispute?!

BALDWIN

I don't see why it's such a big fuss. They're just running a road - there's still lots of land here for you all.

DARRIN

Lots, huh?

THOMAS

Does this look like a lot of land to you, Baldwin?

BALDWIN

I meant for the size of the population. You're not even using this land - it's just overgrown.

AUNT BEV

You mean it's growing - the way the Creator intended it to?

DARRIN

Why does everybody gotta cut up a piece of land when they see it?

BALDWIN

The plants could be replanted -

AUNT BEV

To other land that's already over-cultivated?

SANDRA

That's the government solution for everything, huh? Move anything that gets in the way. Plants, people...

BALDWIN

The highway expansion will help a lot of people.

AUNT BEV

Not our people.

SANDRA

This is how genocide works!

BALDWIN

Don't be so dramatic, genocide?

THOMAS

Yeah, Genocide. What do you know about it, Baldwin?

BALDWIN

You're still here - and you have your culture -

SANDRA

Because we fight for it every day -

BALDWIN

- It's not like you were slaves, you know?

SANDRA

Yes, we were - read a history book some time.

BALDWIN

I did and I remember you were slave-OWNERS -

DARRIN

We were not.

BALDWIN

On the Trail of Tears I heard you all had slaves carrying your stuff for you -

AUNT BEV

A third of the Nations that were driven onto the Trail of Tears, died during that walk.

DARRIN

Right - we didn't believe in owning land - but we believed in owning people - RIGHT.

AUNT BEV

Some Nations did own slaves. Not the best part of our history.

BALDWIN

Ha! How do you like them, Apples?

AUNT BEV

The Nations lost everything when the government tore them out of their homes and pushed them onto a new land. They adapted - not always in the best way.

BALDWIN

Ma'am, I know it's been bad for Indians. I'm not trying to say you haven't had it rough, but at least you've still got your culture and your language - we don't even have that.

AUNT BEV

It's not a competition, dear.

BALDWIN

No offense - most of you aren't even really Indians, you know/ - you're all so...mixed...

DARRIN

/Whoa, What?

THOMAS

Sorry if we're not Indian enough for YOU, Baldwin -

SANDRA

We're one percent of the population, what do you expect?

AUNT BEV

Be careful dear, they like it when we fight each other. When the poor and the oppressed start seeing each other as the competition, they win. Don't play along, Linda.

BALDWIN

I'm not! -

SANDRA

Yes, you are.

(to Thomas)

And you are too!

CAPTAIN HEWITT ENTERS.
Stops for a beat and then
and heads for AUNT BEV's
chair.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

No success, Baldwin?

BALDWIN

We're talking, Sir.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Right. Doxdater, get on the reservation side, Baldwin, get ready - on three we grab the chair.

THOMAS

Sir -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

(To THOMAS)

Strategy. A good soldier exploits every advantage he has.

SANDRA

Exploits - yeah.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Grab the chair!

BALDWIN

Come ON Thomas!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

That was a direct order, Kid.

THOMAS

I'm in uniform - I'm one of you, remember?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Are you giving me attitude? You forget your place, Private!

THOMAS

She's an Elder. You can't just drag her away when she hasn't done anything.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

We're just moving the damn chair!

AUNT BEV

Over my dead body.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Can be arranged!

THOMAS

Sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I told you Ma'am. Push me to the point where I HAVE TO take action - I will do so. Doxdater!

Beat. THOMAS doesn't move.
BALDWIN crouches down beside
AUNT BEV's chair.

BALDWIN

I'm sorry, Aunt Bev -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Move Doxdater!

SANDRA

So what are you gonna do Thomas? You feel so good about who you are now?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Doxdater - ARE YOU GONNA GRAB THAT CHAIR OR NOT?

THOMAS

No Sir - and neither are you.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Private Doxdater, you're insubordinate.

CAPTAIN HEWITT grabs AUNT BEV's chair and pulls. There is a click as THOMAS raises his rifle.

THOMAS

Sir - you need to step back. Now!

THOMAS aims his rifle at HEWITT.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Drop that weapon, Private!

CAPTAIN HEWITT steps forward, ready to disarm THOMAS.

THOMAS

Don't, Sir! You're trespassing on the Sovereign Territories of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy. I'm within my rights to shoot if I so chose -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

And I'm within my rights to beat you with that rifle, if I so choose.

AUNT BEV jumps behind her chair and holds up her hand.

AUNT BEV

Um, not really Captain - as you've so clearly pointed out, there's a border here. Thomas is on Indian land.

(Beat.)

But you can still have the chair if you want it.

DARRIN

Fuck that!

DARRIN grabs the back legs of the chair and drags it back over the border.

AUNT BEV

So, as you see Captain, you are not legally allowed to touch any of us. No chair, no custody, no knocking guns around. Nothing.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Right. Of course Ma'am, you know that your security will only last until I get the okay from Albany, right?

BALDWIN

You raised your gun against your CO. Are you crazy?

DARRIN

One craaaazy NDN!

AUNT BEV

You can put that down now, Thomas - you made your point.

THOMAS

I don't think so -

AUNT BEV

We don't like guns.

THOMAS

Grandma always says we're adaptive. Me, I like my gun -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

This means Leavenworth - you realize that?

THOMAS

Yes. If my government decides to give me up to yours.

THOMAS tears off his insignia, throws it on the ground beside HEWITT. CAPTAIN HEWITT steps forward to face THOMAS.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

You're gonna regret that.

AUNT BEV

Now, now Captain - no need to be a sore loser.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I hope you're satisfied. He just destroyed his life. He's done.

THOMAS

Or maybe I'm finally figuring things out.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

We'll be back. Be ready.

CAPTAIN HEWITT and BALDWIN
EXIT. SANDRA grabs THOMAS by
the arm and drags him off,
DARRIN follows, waving the
chair in triumph. AUNT BEV
pauses, looks around - and
then EXITS, shaking her head.

LIGHTS DOWN

END OF ACT 1

ACT II

AUNT BEV stands in front of a large projection of the Two-Row Wampum.

AUNT BEV

One of our first treaties was with the Dutch. They wanted to do business with us. Trade. They consulted with their Governor and came back with an offer. Just like on T.V., the offer started with the phrase "the Great White Father."

We had to stop them right there and then.

You say that you are our father and I am your son. We say, We will not be like Father and Son, but like Brothers. This wampum belt confirms our words. These two rows will symbolize two paths or two vessels, traveling down the same river together. One, a birch bark canoe, will be for the Indian people, their laws, their customs and their ways. The other, a ship, will be for the white people and their laws, their customs and their ways. We shall each travel the river together, side by side, but each in our own boats. Neither of us will make compulsory laws nor interfere in the internal affairs of the other. Neither of us will try to steer the other's vessel. This promise has been kept by the Haudenosaunee to this date...

SCENE 1:

AUNT BEV's house. Immediately after the ACT BREAK. There is a sofa covered in a Hudson's Bay Blanket, and quilt work pillows and a coffee table. A wooden dining chair is STAGE LEFT.

DARRIN, SANDRA and THOMAS all rush in first - AUNT BEV follows. DARRIN rushes in with the chair, he puts it in place like a trophy.

THOMAS

Shit!

SANDRA

What happened to "you don't speak that way to Elders?"

DARRIN

That was Classic, that was OUTLAW!

AUNT BEV

Shih! Everyone - sit down! Calm down and let me thing.

THOMAS

I just turned my gun on my CO. What's there to think about?

AUNT BEV

I was there, hon - I saw.

SANDRA

That was insane.

THOMAS

Oh yeah? Because I thought you wanted me to stand with you?

SANDRA

Of course I did but -

THOMAS

Because for me to do that I had to stop Captain Hewitt and Baldwin from advancing!

(To Aunt BEV)

You get that, don't you?

AUNT BEV

I don't like guns.

THOMAS

Aunt Bev?

DARRIN

No worries Tommy - Aunt Bev will handle it.

AUNT BEV

What's gonna happen next, Thomas?

THOMAS

Probably - call it in - contact the Governor.

SANDRA

Why?

THOMAS

They need to get permission to come in and get me.

SANDRA

They're gonna invade!

DARRIN

No way!

THOMAS

I'm AWOL, I broke rank and disobeyed a direct order - they're coming alright.

SANDRA

They can't just do that!

AUNT BEV

Yeah, they can.

SANDRA

What can we do?

DARRIN

What would A.I.M do!

He raises a "red power" fist.

AUNT BEV

Quiet Darrin.

(to THOMAS)

I'll go to the Council. If they're gonna come - they'll have to come through them first.

SANDRA

Right. Let them face the Council first! That will show them who they're messing with! Tribal people protect each other - it's what we do!

AUNT BEV

Sandra - why don't you head back to the protest site and report back if you see anything.

SANDRA

Got it!

SANDRA EXITS.

AUNT BEV

Darrin - Keep Thomas company. Watch his back.

DARRIN

Yes ma'am!

THOMAS

Ma'am wouldn't it be better if I went with you? They could move on me at any time.

AUNT BEV

If you hear anything, see anything, you head to Sandra's. It's only a mile and a half away. Darrin knows where it is.

DARRIN

Oh, yeah, I do.

(He winks at Thomas and nods -
Guy Code for "yeah, I nailed that.")

Not forgetting that one.

THOMAS

Great.

AUNT BEV

I'll see you soon.

AUNT BEV EXITS. It's just
THOMAS and DARRIN.

DARRIN

Have no fear, Darrin is here! It's you and me against the
world, buddy!

THOMAS

Shit.

SCENE 2:

SPOTLIGHT, The Protest Site -
SANDRA stands on the far side
of the border. There are
clicks and flashes of light
bulbs as she reads a prepared
statement. (Possibly a photo
of reporters at a press
conference flashes on the
backdrop)

SANDRA

(reading out loud to "Reporters")

*Whereas the confederation of the original Thirteen Colonies
into one Republic was influenced by the political system
developed by the Iroquois Confederacy as were many of the
democratic principles which were incorporated into the
Constitution itself.....the original framers of the Constitution,
including, most notably, George Washington and Benjamin
Franklin, are known to have greatly admired the concepts of
the Six Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy...The Congress also
hereby reaffirms the constitutionally recognized government-to-
government relationship with Indian tribes which has been the
cornerstone of this Nation's official Indian policy;*

SANDRA (CONT'D)

That excerpt is from the Concurrent Resolution 331, which was passed by the 100th Congress, second session in 1988. It confirms our existence and status as a sovereign government. Therefore eminent domain does not apply. This time some greedy developers who want our land, and we say NO MORE!

(Pauses for a "question".)

I'm not saying that is why Private Doxdater did what he did, but you have to understand - the provocation is extreme.

(Pauses for another "question".)

He won't be coming forward at this time, no. We are waiting to meet with tribal leaders.

(Pauses for another "question")

No...I don't really know - but that's his Commanding Officer, feel free to ask him.

The SPOTLIGHT switches over to
CAPTAIN HEWITT, flanked by
BALDWIN. CAMERAS flash.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

No comment.

LIGHTS GO UP completely.
SANDRA is on the Native side
of the border Hewitt is on the
other, still flanked by
BALDWIN.

CAPTAIN HEWITT (cont'd)

That was a bad move.

SANDRA

I don't know, so far, I'm pretty happy with the result.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Where is he?

SANDRA

I'm sorry - am I in uniform? I don't have to answer your questions.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Look Sweetheart, I don't think you understand the seriousness of this situation. I'm trying to help you all out, here.

SANDRA

Well, Sweetheart - I appreciate it, but I think we've got it covered.

Baldwin snorts a laugh, but covers it with a cough when HEWITT turns to glare.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Thanks to you, the whole world knows that Private Doxdater is AWOL and insubordinate!

SANDRA

You mean he finally remembered who he was and where his true loyalty lies?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

His loyalty, just like YOURS, should be to this country and it's Constitution.

SANDRA

Our loyalty is to our people.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

We all live in the United States, which makes me your people.

SANDRA

Your people break treaties like toothpicks and Thomas - He really believed you chose him for this mission on merit.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I did.

SANDRA

Right. And it was just convenient that you could "relieve him of duty" when you needed to bend the rules.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

A good officer -

SANDRA

Exploits opportunities. You were threatening and manhandling an Elder. Are you really surprised this happened? Don't be surprised if it starts happening more.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Fine words, darlin' - do you really want me to escalate this?

SANDRA

Ooooooh! The big bad military machine taking on the Indians. That's okay, we're used to it! Do your worst.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Right. Baldwin!

BALDWIN

Yes sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Take point!

BALDWIN

Yes sir!

HEWITT EXITS.

BALDWIN (cont'd)

That was really stupid.

SANDRA

Thanks G.I. Jane, but I'm good.

BALDWIN

Hewitt is trying to protect Thomas.

SANDRA

Right.

BALDWIN

He's Hewitt protégée. He practically adopted him the moment he showed up.

SANDRA

(sarcastic)

Right - the little Ndn kid?

BALDWIN

The little warrior kid. Thomas is all about honor and serving people and so is Hewitt.

SANDRA

That guy?

BALDWIN

Yeah. He did two tours in Afghanistan before he was switched to the guard. Thomas respects the hell out of him.

SANDRA

You don't?

BALDWIN

I have ovaries.

SANDRA

So, I'm not wrong, Hewitt is an asshole.

BALDWIN

I don't think you realize how serious this is. Thomas just bought himself ten years in Leavenworth/

SANDRA

/ten years?/

BALDWIN

/if he's lucky. AWOL isn't good but turning your gun against your CO, that's major. If he turns himself in, Hewitt could claim it was an emotional breakdown.

SANDRA

He wants Thomas to say he's crazy? No way.

BALDWIN

I know you don't trust me or Hewitt, but this is the only way.

SANDRA

Why do you care?

BALDWIN

He's my friend -

SANDRA

Sure he is.

BALDWIN

Yeah he is. He's a pain in my, well you know - but we are friends. I wouldn't have made it through Basic without him. - And this is major.

SANDRA

You really think it will work?

BALDWIN

It's the only option.

SCENE 3:

AUNT BEV'S house. DARRIN
is seated on the sofa,
THOMAS paces.

DARRIN

Tommy, sit down! Relax. You're stressing me out.

THOMAS

Yeah? They could be knocking down the door at any minute. Go ahead and stress out.

DARRIN

Eat something. Have some tea. Don't worry about anything until there's something to worry about.

THOMAS

Yeah, that's you isn't it. Easy not to worry when you don't feel responsible for anything.

DARRIN

Worrying is a waste. Everything always works out in the end.

THOMAS

Because someone always steps in to solve it for you. Well not me. I save me - I don't wait for other people to do it.

DARRIN

Yeah? - Aunt Bev's off saving you right now, ain't she?

THOMAS

(mutters)

What am I doing?

DARRIN

Being an asshole -

THOMAS

Hewitt believed in me.

DARRIN

The guy who brought you here to stand against us?

THOMAS

We weren't. We were here to keep the peace.

DARRIN

If that's what you say.

(Beat)

You should call your parents.

THOMAS

Get them involved? No!

AUNT BEV ENTERS.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Hey Aunt Bev, what's the news?

AUNT BEV

I saw Bertha Silversmith, one of the Clan Mothers. They're pretty upset. There's already been trouble. People are being harassed when they buy groceries, when they try to see the Doctor and three cars were set on fire.

THOMAS

But it just happened.

AUNT BEV

Moccasin Telegraph. And it's twice as fast now with Facebook. Heck, some of the Clan Mothers even do the Twitter.

THOMAS

That's it, isn't it? They're not gonna support me.

AUNT BEV

We don't know for sure.

THOMAS

Can't you speak for me, Aunt Bev? Make my case?

Awkward Silence.

THOMAS (cont'd)

I'm on my own.

DARRIN

Naw - tell him Aunt Bev.

AUNT BEV

You got yourself into this situation.

THOMAS

I was protecting you.

AUNT BEV

Thomas -

THOMAS

If someone put their hands on my Grandmother the way the Captain was gonna - I'd lose it. I started thinking of all the Grandmothers, all the Elders and the children who'd been pushed aside and dragged away and my gun was up and it felt right

AUNT BEV

You can't get so swept up in the past, Thomas. It will never stop.

THOMAS

I thought you wanted me to join your protest?

AUNT BEV

I wanted you to put down your gun and refuse to take any further action. A peaceful protest.

THOMAS

Right. Because that's worked so well before.

AUNT BEV

Peace is how our Nations came together in the first place.

THOMAS

That may have been how we came together, but that's not how it works now. You've been peacefully fighting this bypass for how long? What's it got you?

AUNT BEV

I'm trying my best to help you.

THOMAS

The Captain was trying to help me. He said I was a natural soldier.

AUNT BEV

You might've been a good soldier this morning but when you turned your gun on Hewitt, you became the redskin who can't be trusted.

THOMAS

What am I gonna do?

AUNT BEV

Well, you can stick it out here, on the Rez - and wait for official word from the Council.

THOMAS

Or?

AUNT BEV

You could go North. Our reservations run straight up through Canada

THOMAS

Like a coward.

AUNT BEV

Who cares? It doesn't matter.

THOMAS

Yes it does.

DARRIN

Everyone will understand.

AUNT BEV

What else can you do? Your Captain is probably gathering reinforcements while we speak. Darrin's still on parole. What will happen if you fight it out here?

DARRIN

Doesn't matter - I got your back kid.

AUNT BEV

And Sandra - she's in charge of this protest, will she be arrested for helping you?

THOMAS

There's gotta be other options -

AUNT BEV

Well, the Council hasn't met - Bertha is gonna try and intervene with the Clan Mothers. We can wait if you really want to -

THOMAS

I want to.

AUNT BEV

Fine, but I think we should prepare, just in case.

THOMAS

Okay Aunt Bev.

AUNT BEV

Remember Thomas - we've done it before. We can run you from Rez to Rez, like we did for A.I.M. It's not that hard.

AUNT BEV EXITS.

THOMAS

I don't want to go to Canada.

SANDRA ENTERS.

SANDRA

Hey.

DARRIN

Hey.

THOMAS

Chi'wen Sandra.

SANDRA

Is Aunt Bev here?

THOMAS

Yeah.

SANDRA

How's it looking?

THOMAS

Not good. The Clan Mothers are worried. All sorts of stuff is happening in town. Bad stuff.

DARRIN
Aunt Bev wants to A.I.M. him up into Canada.

SANDRA
Wait, they're not gonna support you?

THOMAS
We don't know but - she thinks we need to prepare.

Beat.

SANDRA
What if I said I had another possibility?

THOMAS
Great, tell me.

DARRIN
Wait -

SANDRA pulls DARRIN
aside, whispers in his
ear.

THOMAS
Do you guys need a moment alone? Because its' no problem -

SANDRA
The short answer would be NO. No way in hell.

DARRIN
See? Every day she breaks my heart.
(Sandra waves him off.)
I'm gonna head over to the protest site. You two talk.

He EXITS.

THOMAS
What were you two whispering about?

SANDRA
So...Baldwin...is she trustworthy?

THOMAS
Yeah.

SANDRA
Well, we may have a solution.

SANDRA leads THOMAS as
they EXIT.

SCENE 4:

Midnight. THE PROTES
SITE. CAPTAIN HEWITT is
waiting. DARRIN enters.

Just you, right Sarge?
DARRIN

Captain.
CAPTAIN HEWITT

Whatever, Bud.
DARRIN

Is he here?
CAPTAIN HEWITT

Ca-Caw! Ca-Caw!
DARRIN
(signaling Thomas)

THOMAS ENTERS cautiously.

Hey, Cap.
THOMAS
(He salutes. HEWITT doesn't
react.)
No, Huh?

Your idiot friend asked me to come.
CAPTAIN HEWITT

That's not cool, man -
DARRIN

THOMAS drags DARRIN over
to the side, DARRIN takes
a "lookout" position.

Thanks for coming.
THOMAS

What the hell do you want, Doxdater? Because right now, I'm
thinking that if I stand here and raise my gun and shoot -
I'm not breaking any law.
CAPTAIN HEWITT

Sir -
THOMAS

CAPTAIN HEWITT
You drew on me, you little shit!

THOMAS
I know! I'm sorry.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
After everything I've done for you! What the hell, kid?

THOMAS
Cap -

CAPTAIN HEWITT
We were on the same team -

THOMAS
I'm sorry.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
I thought we saw eye to eye. I thought you were somebody I could trust. You know - Torres asked me why I was pushing you for OCS and I told him - Doxdater's solid. He's the one guy who'd go to hell and back/

THOMAS
/I am!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Not today. I asked you if you were okay, didn't I?

THOMAS
Yes.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
You were all "I'm fine - it's fine, it's not my Rez."

THOMAS
I know.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
I trusted you! On your word. I gave you that respect. And then when you were struggling, I gave you an out.

THOMAS
I know you did.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
So why didn't you take it?

THOMAS
I didn't want to disappoint you.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Well, good job, kid.

THOMAS

I love the job. You know I do. I finally found a place where I fit or at least I thought I did. It shouldn't have gone down the way it did. I know you would've shot anyone else who did that to you. It was just today.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

What the hell did I do? I wasn't gonna take the old lady in.

THOMAS

No. But you were gonna pick her up and toss her aside like she was a sack of garbage.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

So that's it? That's all? You threw away your career - both our careers - for that?

THOMAS

Why'd you have to go and put your hands on her? After I told you? I WARNED you. You brought me here because I know Indian people, well did you forget I was one? Shit Captain - do you even know what you did? We've been pushed and grabbed and dragged away from our families and then you were gonna grab her too, like she was nothing. An ELDER. Right in front of me.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

She was trying to provoke an incident.

THOMAS

No, you provoked the incident. I was fine. They all questioned why I was following orders and I explained you were a man of your word, a man of honor.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I am.

THOMAS

You told me to go on the Rez.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

You're Native.

THOMAS

I was in uniform. You knew It wasn't right!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

It wasn't precisely illegal.

THOMAS

It wasn't honorable.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Well, I'm the asshole.

DARRIN

Yeah, you are.

THOMAS

Shut up, Darrin!

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Why am I here?

THOMAS

Baldwin said you wanted me to turn myself in.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

She did, huh?

THOMAS

She said it was your idea. That you could make a case for emotional distress or something -

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Were you distressed, Thomas?

THOMAS

Yes.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

She's right it could work. I could say that the shock of standing against your own people was too much and you couldn't take it anymore.

THOMAS

I couldn't take it anymore.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

So all you have to do is agree that you snapped and we can take you in. I think the press will lose interest once they hear it's a mental breakdown.

THOMAS

The press?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Your friend didn't tell you? She called a huge press conference right over there. Seems like I wasn't the only one "using" you today.

THOMAS

Was it Aunt Bev?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

No, the mouthy one. Are you gonna turn yourself in?

THOMAS

Would you?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

Probably not, but I wouldn't use me a role model. We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for me, after all.

(Beat.)

If you're gonna turn yourself in, you should do it now. No one's around - easier to sweep it under the carpet.

THOMAS

What?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

You just embarrassed the National Guard and the U.S. Army. Yeah, we sweep it under the rug. That way they might be inclined to give you a medical discharge. Much better than a dishonorable.

THOMAS

And everyone here thinks I just went crazy because that's what Indians do, right?

CAPTAIN HEWITT

One year or so in one of the more cushy mental health facilities, and you're good. Don't let one mistake blow up your life.

THOMAS

And everything that happened today will be for nothing.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

They got some press for their protest. It's not all lost.

THOMAS

I'm not crazy.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

I know.

THOMAS

What you did was wrong - and what you were about to do was even worse.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

You overreacted.

THOMAS
You don't get to decide that.

Beat.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
You stupid shit.

CAPTAIN HEWITT exits.

DARRIN
(Shouts after him.)
Dick!

THOMAS
Canada, here I come.

SCENE 5:

LATER. AUNT BEV'S HOUSE.
THOMAS sorts through maps, on
the coffee table. THOMAS paces
around sofa.

SANDRA
I don't understand. What happened with Baldwin's plan.

THOMAS
Done.

SANDRA
We still haven't heard from the Council -

THOMAS
Do me a favor - don't call the press until I've actually left
the Rez.

SANDRA
What?

THOMAS
The Captain told me - you had a nice turnout.

SANDRA
I'm sorry.

THOMAS
Sure.

SANDRA

I thought it would benefit you and the protest. I thought - if people could hear your side -

THOMAS

And make sure everyone knew what happened.

SANDRA

Well yeah, isn't that what you wanted?

THOMAS

I wanted them to stay away from Aunt Bev. I wasn't making a stand.

SANDRA

Yes you were. They were about to do something wrong and you said No. That is taking a stand.

THOMAS

People are saying I'm a traitor.

SANDRA

It's not treason. You were protecting your people.

THOMAS

I gave my word as a Warrior and I broke it.

SANDRA

More of the "Warrior Code."

THOMAS

It's not a joke. Bet you had a nice cushy job in the city.

SANDRA

I came back here, okay?

DARRIN ENTERS unseen.

THOMAS

Did you ever hear that an Indian man is three times more likely to go to jail than to college?

SANDRA

You can't buy into stuff like that.

THOMAS

We heard it every day. "Watch out, you don't wanna end up in jail." Because every family has one - guys like Darrin, who screw up over and over again. So they numb themselves and derail because they can't find a way to fit. Because everything in this world we live in now is set up to crush who we are. But I found my place - or I thought I did.

DARRIN EXITS, upset.

SANDRA

Hey, at least you know who you are. For the longest time, I tried to forget I was Indian.

THOMAS

Hah! Good luck.

SANDRA

I tried. I was tired of explaining myself. Tired of the stupid questions. *Do you speak Indian? What's a sweat lodge like?* - to these douche-bags, you're not Indian if you don't act like an extra from *Dances With Wolves* Well, hello - that's Western people. We were 500 different nations - NATIONS - as in different languages and traditions - and no, I don't know what happens in a Hopi Sundance because, I'm Haudenosaunee, Mohawk specifically and sorry if I like to wear high heels occasionally.

I got so tired of validating who I was to them, and tired of their presumption that their opinion mattered. Like they had the right to question us about whom we are. So I stopped being Indian. I learned Spanish, just to shut everybody up.

Then, one day the Mayor said something incredibly stupid and, I thought - racist and I couldn't get anyone to care. It felt like a punch - like a slap out of nowhere, and I didn't - even realize it, but I'd started crying. So I told "my people" in the city - my friends, my ex - and they all laughed. Like it was a joke. I guess it was my fault because I'd always made jokes and laughed along in the past, because hey, "I have a sense of humor".

THOMAS

Do you really? Noted.

SANDRA

I did then. Until I realized that nobody cared what was happening with us. I had a good job, a job that was all about selling things making people believe things and I couldn't get anyone to buy the idea that what he said was wrong. I realized then that my job was pretty useless - who I was, was pretty useless. So I came here, and dammit if I wasn't gonna find a way to be useful. That's why I came back and that's why I started this protest - because I've played the game and ignored shit and have gone along to get along and I ended up pretty screwed. At least, here - everyone knows what I'm talking about.

THOMAS

I'll be honest - I'm kinda 50/50.

SANDRA

Jerk!

THOMAS
Hey, it's the Rez. We tease because we care.

SANDRA
(Chuckles)
Well, thanks.

AUNT BEV ENTERS with DARRIN.

AUNT BEV
Sandra?

SANDRA
Yes, Aunt Bev?

AUNT BEV
Get out of my chair.

SANDRA jumps up as AUNT BEV
sits down.

AUNT BEV (cont'd)
So, Darrin, give them the rundown.

DARRIN
We've got a huge crowd down at the site! There's a long lineup,
Powlesses are there, Maracles, and the Longboats brought
643 of their closest cousins.

AUNT BEV
We're a success!

THOMAS
Congratulations!

DARRIN
People have heard about Tommy and figure if he can take that
stand, the least they can do is show up!

THOMAS
Good. I'm glad it wasn't for nothing.

DARRIN
It wasn't.

AUNT BEV'S phone rings.

AUNT BEV
(Answers the phone)
Hello. Yes? Okay...right...I'll be there...I don't know
Bertha, give me a break, okay? Okay - we'll be there soon.

THOMAS

What's happening?

AUNT BEV

I'm gonna speak at the Council.

SANDRA

Can I come? I want to explain about the -

AUNT BEV

Press Conference?

(SANDRA reacts.)

Yeah, you should come.

THOMAS

That's alright. You go ahead. I'll finish preparing for the trip.

AUNT BEV

Darrin, watch out for Thomas.

THOMAS

Thomas will watch out for Thomas.

DARRIN

Relax kid, I'm just back-up.

SANDRA

Well, okay - let's go to the Council.

AUNT BEV AND SANDRA EXIT.

DARRIN

I know you're still pissed at me.

THOMAS

I don't wanna talk about it.

DARRIN

I heard what you just said about me.

THOMAS

Lurking? Why am I surprised.

DARRIN

I didn't plan to, but then I heard your mouth.

THOMAS

I didn't lie. You derail, it's what you do.

DARRIN

It's not because I don't fit, kid. It's because I didn't trust myself. You grew up with people believing in you, trusting your instincts, relying on you. I didn't have that.

THOMAS

My Parents trusted you. I did too. And you broke that trust.

DARRIN

Yeah, but that was only two years. Two years of trust can't undo sixteen years of scrambling to survive by any means necessary.

THOMAS

Okay. You had a hard life so I accept your apology. You're forgiven. Is that what you want because I'm busy.

DARRIN

You know your Captain is right - you are a little shit.

THOMAS

Well, what do you want, Darrin?

DARRIN

Don't ever again say that this world is designed to crush us. The Creator made us. Yeah, sure dumbasses like me screw up sometimes, but that doesn't condemn all our people. We fit here.

THOMAS

I know.

DARRIN

You just forgot is that it? That's how they beat you, Tommy.

SCENE 6:

Aunt Bev's house. AUNT
BEV AND SANDRA are
OUTSIDE.

AUNT BEV

He was too impulsive.

SANDRA

He's young and emotional - he got carried away. Why can't they cut him some slack for that.

AUNT BEV

He didn't need to react like that.

SANDRA

So you're with the Council?

AUNT BEV

Thomas is one of us - ONE. The Council and the Clan Mothers have to think of everyone.

SANDRA

So we just throw him to the wolves.

AUNT BEV

And you didn't?

SANDRA

I called them for the protest -

AUNT BEV

And you didn't mention Thomas at all, huh?

SANDRA

I wanted to get us a little more publicity. These things usually fall by the wayside. I wanted us to have an impact.

AUNT BEV

You managed that, alright.

SANDRA

I was trying to help the community.

AUNT BEV

Be honest. You wanted to be the hero, didn't you? You should've asked. We could've told you that the Press is a tricky thing - it can be a friend and it can bite you on your butt.

SANDRA

I know that - I was prepared for that.

AUNT BEV

But it didn't bite you, did it? It bit Thomas.

SANDRA

I'm sorry.

AUNT BEV

Tell Thomas, don't tell me.

SANDRA

You know it's not your fault, right?

AUNT BEV

Pardon?

SANDRA

You didn't do this. Thomas has a mind of his own.

AUNT BEV

He did it to protect me.

SANDRA

He reacted the only way he could. He was raised as a Warrior, isn't he? It's part of his job.

AUNT BEV

I suppose. Well, what's done is done.

SANDRA

Canada here we come. I hope Thomas likes maple syrup.

AUNT BEV

We'll need to distract those Guardsmen.

THEY ENTER Aunt Bev's.
THOMAS and DARRIN ENTER
from the Bedroom.

AUNT BEV (cont'd)

(Claps her hands)

Okay Thomas. I think it's time you went on a trip.

THOMAS

I knew it. Okay - let's go.

DARRIN

The Charger just had a tune-up.

AUNT BEV

That's great - Bertha can be a little heavy on the pedal.

SANDRA

Bertha? The Clan Mother?

DARRIN

Whoa. I'm driving.

SANDRA

Noooo, you're not.

AUNT BEV

You're still on parole Darrin - why don't you guard the house?

DARRIN

It's my car!

SANDRA

You need to keep your nose clean. You should probably stay away from the site. Lots of press there. I can handle distraction.

She GRABS the bullhorn
and EXITS.

THOMAS

I appreciate it, buddy - I really do. But Aunt Bev's right - and I gotta go. Take care of yourself.

AUNT BEV

Wait, Thomas!

AUNT BEV helps Thomas
remove his cap, gun and
jacket.

AUNT BEV (CONT'D)

You've got to leave all this stuff behind - especially the gun. Don't argue with me - we don't wanna draw attention to ourselves.

(To Darrin)

We'll call you. As soon as Bertha and I get him across the border.

DARRIN

Come on - you've gotta let me help!

THOMAS

Get rid of that stuff, D. If they come on the Rez, I don't want anyone to get into trouble for helping me.

DARRIN

I'm a good driver - we won't get caught.

THOMAS

We're cool. Don't worry. Take care of yourself.

THOMAS and AUNT BEV EXIT,
with THOMAS waving
goodbye over his
shoulder. Beat.

DARRIN

Shit.

SCENE 7:

A GAS STATION on "THE REZ". An elaborately "tricked out" DODGE CHARGER is projected behind them.

THOMAS paces back and forth in front of it. AUNT BEV ENTERS, triumphantly brandishing the keys over her head.

AUNT BEV

Bertha's almost done paying for the gas. You ready to go?

THOMAS

She likes cars doesn't she?

AUNT BEV

Once a wheel girl, always a wheel girl!

THOMAS

I thought she as gonna do a cartwheel when she saw this one.

AUNT BEV

Her first car was a charger, I knew she wouldn't be able to resist it.

THOMAS

Is she going to be able to drive with the walker?

AUNT BEV

Her legs are a little wobbly but her feet are fine. She'll get you where you're going.

THOMAS

Aunt Bev - did you just hear yourself?

AUNT BEV

We're old Thomas, we're not dead.

THOMAS

I don't know what I was thinking. What kind of warrior puts Clan Mothers - Grandmothers at risk, just to cover his six.

AUNT BEV

Hey, we're happy to help. We've done this many times for many people.

THOMAS

How recently?

AUNT BEV

It's really not a big deal.

THOMAS

How recently?

AUNT BEV

About twenty-five years ago but -

THOMAS

Forget it. That's it. I'm going back.

AUNT BEV

You can't.

THOMAS

Yes, I can. This all started because I was protecting you.
I'm not gonna put you at risk now.

AUNT BEV

You have to let me help you.

THOMAS

No.

AUNT BEV

I wanted them to show them - having you turn was the ultimate
(flips the bird)
to them! I didn't really think -

THOMAS

Sandra is right about one thing. I took a stand because I
believed what they were doing was wrong. I still believe
that. If I run - all this is for nothing.

AUNT BEV

It's all my fault! I enjoyed pushing you - pushing your
Captain. I wanted to win. I told myself it was to protect you
but I knew you'd lose your future. I just didn't realize -

THOMAS

You're an Elder. You're supposed to speak up. I'm a warrior.
I'm supposed to be looking out for you. Right now, I do that
by turning myself in.

AUNT BEV

They're gonna arrest you.

THOMAS

Well, good - I bet there's still reporters there. Let them arrest me. I have a story to tell and now they'll listen.

AUNT BEV

Thomas, I really don't think this is a good idea.

THOMAS

Tell Bertha sorry, but I'll drive us back. I'm not gonna be driving for a while and this is one sweet ride. She can take it for a spin when I'm gone.

AUNT BEV

Thomas -

THOMAS

Give me the keys Aunt Bev.

SCENE 8:

The protest site. The BACKDROP flickers with pictures of protestors, from all over.

Cameras flash. SANDRA stand on the picnic table with her bullhorn. HEWITT is on point UPSTAGE. RIGHT, Baldwin patrols the border, weapon drawn.

SANDRA

(through the bullhorn)

Honor your treaties! Honor The Mother! Move the Highway Bypass!

(to BALDWIN)

A rifle? Seriously?

BALDWIN

(Patrolling past SANDRA)

We are on alert, Ma'am. The powers that be are concerned about trouble, since someone leaked Thomas' story.

SANDRA

We're not alone anymore.

BALDWIN

No you're not. Hope Thomas is fine with that.

CAPTAIN HEWITT

BALDWIN!

BALDWIN
Yes Sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Lock it down!

BALDWIN
Roger that, sir!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
(to Sandra)
Is there a reason you're harassing my people?

SANDRA
So much for trying to help Thomas.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
I gave him a chance. He passed. He'd rather make his point.

SANDRA
Yeah? Good for him.

HE SHRUGS. DARRIN ENTERS.
He is wearing Thomas'
uniform jacket and his
cap is pulled down low,
and the rifle is raised
over his head.

BALDWIN
WEAPON!

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Drop your weapon!

HEWITT pulls out a
pistol-aims, BALDWIN
drops into place behind
him rifle shouldered,
ready to fire.

SANDRA
Oh don't! Don't shoot!

DARRIN raises the rifle
higher over his head and
steps closer.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Stop the advance or I will shoot!

SANDRA
Darrin! Stop it!

DARRIN stops. He drops to
his knees beside the
border.

DARRIN
I'd like to offer you my unconditional surrender, Sir.

SANDRA
Are you out of your mind?

CAPTAIN HEWITT
What?!

DARRIN
I, Private First Class Thomas Lee Doxdater -

FLASHBULBS go off.

BALDWIN
You've got to be kidding -

SANDRA
Stop it, Darrin!

DARRIN
(To Sandra)
Quiet!

THOMAS and AUNT BEV
ENTER. THOMAS rushes
forward.

THOMAS
Are you out of your mind?!

SANDRA
Yes, he's insane!

DARRIN
(To the Guardsmen)
I, Thomas Lee Doxdater, Private First Class -

THOMAS walks over to
DARRIN and grabs the
rifle.

DARRIN (cont'd)
(stage whisper)
Get outta here, man, you're gonna wreck it!

THOMAS

This is my old unit, Darrin. They all know what I look like.

Beat. DARRIN lowers his
arms and nods at HEWITT.

DARRIN

I know but I figured - they're your friends, they'd go for it
and these reporters would have their story.

THOMAS

They could've shot you, you dumbass. Why would you do
something so stupid?

DARRIN

Because you don't know where you fit - I do.

THOMAS

Darrin -

DARRIN

You got a future - a real future. You can't be rotting in a
jail cell.

THOMAS

This is the only way anything means anything. I could've let
Captain Hewitt save me, but no one will know that anything
happened. Same if I run to Canada. If I turn myself in, go
to court, then I can fight back in their arena, with their
laws and their treaties and prove that I'm not a criminal -
that it's not a crime for an Indian to stand up for his
people and his culture. Especially not on his own land. I'm
gonna fight the beast from the inside out - and I can't do
that from Canada.

DARRIN

Why are can't you just live your life? That's fighting too.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Things gotta change first.

Moving with purpose he grabs
the cap from DARRIN'S head and
stretches out his hand for the
jacket. DARRIN removes it and
hands it to him. THOMAS is
back in full uniform.

THOMAS (cont'd)

Aunt Bev, it was a real honor.

AUNT BEV

Was it?

THOMAS
I made the choice. It's okay. Sandra -

SANDRA
You've got a lot of guts, Apple.

THOMAS
Thanks City NDN.

SANDRA
I'm sorry.

THOMAS
Naw, it's good. I'm famous now! I'm getting swept under
the rug.

BALDWIN
Come on, Thomas.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Give him a minute.

THOMAS nods to the
Captain - turns back to
the Indians.

THOMAS
I really appreciate what you did -

DARRIN
Did nothing.

THOMAS
It was gutsy and honorable. Thank you.

He hugs Darrin.

THOMAS(cont'd)
A warrior faces his fears.

THOMAS spins in a
military quarter turn,
arms raised, gun above
his head.

THOMAS (cont'd)
Private Thomas Lee Doxdater requesting permission to
surrender.

CAPTAIN HEWITT
Permission granted. Step forward Doxdater.

THOMAS steps forward and
the CAPTAIN steps over to
meet him. FLASH BULBS pop
as the CAPTAIN snaps the
cuffs on his wrists. THE
PROTESTORS all watch
solemnly.

LIGHTS DOWN ON THE STAGE
except for AUNT BEV and
the backdrop.

EPILOGUE:

SPOTLIGHT, Centerstage.

AUNT BEV

"In all of your deliberations...self-interest shall be cast
into oblivion. Look and listen for the welfare of the whole
people and have always in view not only the present but also
the coming generations, even those whose faces are yet
beneath the surface of the ground - the unborn of the future
Nation." The Great Law.

END OF PLAY