THE FREE REPUBLIC OF BOBISTAN

by

Arthur M. Jolly

2006 Fellowship recipient
Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences
Academy Nicholl Fellowships in Screenwriting
20th Annual Competition

www.oscars.org/nicholl
FADE IN:

EXT. GULF OF MEXICO – DAY

A wide, wide sea, and a cloudless sky.

The year is 1998, although the ocean doesn’t know or care.

A wave crashes against a steel pylon – a rusted, pitted monstrosity that rises a hundred feet in the air, and who knows how far down into these depths.

This is –

OIL RIG 214 – CONTINUOUS

A fixed drilling platform; ugly, industrial. An obsolescent holdout from the 70’s, the last of the tension leg platforms.

On the deck, men and machines move in a complex ritual.

A drill shaft spins, splattering everything around it; including BOB LEWIS – the man operating the control unit.

Bob’s in his 50’s, still good looking – behind the dripping mud – a physique that comes from lifting pipes, not gym weights. His tan line probably stops sharply at his neck.

    BOB
    Drake! DRAKE!

DRAKE – a tough-ass roughneck with a jagged scar across his jaw – looks up.

    BOB
    Hey! Get Kyle – I think we got a pocket!

Drake looks alarmed, and runs to a telephone intercom system on the nearest wall.

Bob frantically dials down the rpm’s.

KYLE the wiry foreman – you can tell, he has slightly less mud on him – comes running over.

    KYLE
    Whatcha got?

    BOB
    Pocket!
KYLE
What’s the downhole pressure?

BOB
280, but I felt a definite spike.

KYLE
Sure it’s a pocket?

BOB
Who are you talking to?

KYLE
Holy -

He’s cut off by a blast of pressure coming from the well head, mud splatters everywhere.

KYLE
Dial it back!

BOB
Way ahead of you, boss!

KYLE
This is bad.

BOB
These controls - I can’t slow her down quick enough -

KYLE
It’s gonna -

BOB
I know it!

The spinning drill shaft breaks free - instantly overspeeding, a whine that rises to a shriek.

KYLE
She’s gone!

BOB
Tell me something I don’t -

KYLE
Clear! Get clear!

Kyle slams an alarm button, and runs for cover as a KLAXON STARTS WAILING.

BOB
I can still shut it down!
Bob starts frantically pulling switches.

    BOB
    Antique piece of crap!
    KYLE
    Get away from there!
    BOB
    I can get it! I can... No, I can’t.

Bob DIVES CLEAR as the broken end of the DRILL STRING whips clear of the pipe, and starts thrashing around like a ten foot steel weed wacker.

Sparks fly, metal fragments ricochet across the deck.

    KYLE
    Go, go, go!

From one side of the deck to the other, projectiles are pinging off equipment.

Various ROUGHNECKS and DRILLMEN scatter.

Bob looks up at the control panel as a chunk of shrapnel the size of a canned ham embeds itself through a pressure gauge.

    KYLE
    Get out of there, man!
    BOB
    I’m working on it.

The end of the pipe string whips over Bob’s head like the scythe of death.

    BOB
    (to himself)
    It wasn’t that close.

Bob leaps up, slams three separate switches down as fast as he can, and hits the deck again.

The motor slows, the noise diminishes...

Pieces of metal fall back to the deck.

Drake gingerly stands up and checks himself for missing body parts.

The drill string grinds to a halt with a final rattle, then the retaining bolt gives way, and the entire piece tips onto the deck with a resounding CLANG.
A moment of silence.

BOB
Hit a gas pocket.

DRAKE
D’ya think?

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - LATER

The crew are assembled in the one room on the rig large enough to hold all twenty five of them - a stark, utilitarian combined kitchen/cafeteria.

KYLE
So that is the situation. Total shutdown, shift’s over. They’re gonna hold off on bringing the second shift out here, gives management two weeks to crunch the numbers.

SANDY - who looks like he could eat bench press a jeep - stands up.

SANDY
We’ll be back for our next shift, right?

KYLE
Yeah. Well... maybe. We’re gonna be looking at - okay, worse case scenario, they wanna close the rig, we’ll be back to strip it down. Pack up anything worth -

SANDY
There’s nothing worth anything, this thing’s an antique. They shoulda dumped it twenty years ago.

KYLE
That’s why they’re crunching the numbers.

Grumbling from the crew.

KYLE
This wasn’t my call! This rig’s twenty years beyond projected life as it is - this is all on borrowed time. Helicopter’s on its way, grab your gear.

(MORE)
KYLE (CONT'D)
Grab any food you want, it’s not gonna keep. If we don’t - Any personal items you have here, you might wanna take them now, just in case. We can bring it all back. I’ll call on the fourteenth with pick-up times.

Everyone starts getting up.

DRAKE
Nice going. You killed the rig.

BOB
The thing’s manual, what d’ya want me to do?

DRAKE
I want you... to give me a big sloppy kiss.

BOB
No wonder no one wants to work with you.

DRAKE
And me so charming.

EXT. CURZON OIL COMPANY PAD - DAY
The crew helicopter winds down - rotors slowing.
Bob and the others carry their bags over to a bunch of company pick-ups.

INT. BOB’S PICK-UP - DAY
Bob drives, next to him is Sandy.

Sandy pulls out a pack of cigarettes, and offers one to Bob.

BOB
No thanks, man. I’m quitting.

Bob takes a cigarette anyway, pops it into his mouth with subconscious ease, and smacks the cigarette lighter in - oblivious to his own actions.

BOB
Julia’s been on at me for a while, thinks I’m in a rut.

(MORE)
BOB (CONT'D)
So I thought, I’ll quit. you know, and this time...

The lighter pops out.

Bob takes it and lights his cigarette.

Sandy watches this with amusement.

BOB
This time, I’m gonna do it. Quit for real... What?

SANDY
Nothing, man... Bob?

BOB
What?

SANDY
What did Drake say to you in the briefing room?

BOB
What?

SANDY
The briefing... something about a kiss.

BOB
He was just screwing around.

SANDY
You haven’t told anyone?

BOB
About you?

SANDY
Yeah.

BOB
I told you I wouldn’t.

SANDY
I just don’t... the guys would feel uncomfortable.

BOB
Only a couple of’em.
SANDY
Couple’s all it takes. How are things with Julia?

BOB
She’s... we’re... fine.

SANDY
That bad, huh?

BOB
Sometimes I look forward to going back to the rig.

Bob takes a puff - and realizes he’s smoking.

BOB
Son of a bitch!
(He ditches it)
She can tell... Women. You got it lucky.

SANDY
Oh yeah - let me tell you, Ralph’s no picnic either. He keeps talking about adoption.

BOB
You’re going to adopt a kid?

SANDY
He wants to. I’m like - “Hello? We have dogs.”

BOB
Our house had a nursery when we bought it. I mean, painted walls and a choo-choo train border. Julia turned it into her office.

Something in his tone gets to Sandy.

SANDY
I’m sorry, man... Low sperm count?

EXT. SANDY’S PLACE - DAY

Bob idles the pick-up as Sandy gets his bag out of the back.

SANDY
Bob? It’s gonna be okay. Julia’s got a good man in you.
BOB
Ralph says that about you.
A beat. Sandy gets the double entendre.

SANDY
Oh, very funny!

Bob laughs.

BOB
I’ll see you next shift, man.

SANDY
If there is one.

BOB
Think so?

SANDY
Are you kidding yourself? You better spend the next two weeks updating your resume. The job’s over.

Sandy heads up to his house.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY
A beautifully manicured lawn, and a picture perfect house.

The image is marred by the dented pick-up, emblazoned with the CURZON OIL logo, swinging off the road and jolting into the driveway.

Bob gets out.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The door opens and Bob enters, dropping his overstuffed duffle bag.

BOB
Honey, I’m home!

A GROWL.

BOB
No - Not you...

The growl becomes HIGH PITCHED YAPS as an annoying little yapping dog comes scurrying down the stairs
BOB
Not you, you - get away!

The dog latches onto Bob’s pant leg.

BOB
Get off me, you little freak.
You’re an overgrown rat! You hear me? You’re a rat, you’re a... you know what you are? You’re a punting dog - built at boot height... get off me! I will!

Bob struggles into the
KITCHEN
still dragging the dog.

BOB
Honey! Get your damn rat dog thing off me! Honey, you home?

He wrenches open a kitchen cabinet, grabs a can of dog food, pops the top and upends it into the dog bowl on the floor.

The dog instantly drops his pant cuff, and silently trots over to the bowl.

BOB
I hate you. One of these days, I swear... right over the fence!

Bob starts to leave, but as he does... a GROWL.

The rat dog is looking up at him, baring its teeth.

Bob reaches for the door.

The dog takes a hesitant step forward.

Stand-off.

Bob practically dives out the kitchen door as the rat-dog, yapping insanely, bounds across the kitchen floor, claws scrabbling on the linoleum.

Bob slams the door shut in the nick of time.

There is a sharp THUNK on the other side - two pounds of canine neuroses smacking into it at 30 mph.

Bob can barely suppress his delight.
INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Bob drops his duffle bag on the unmade bed.

The sound of a SHOWER - he goes and raps on the adjoining door.

    BOB
    Honey? I’m home.

The shower cuts off.

    JULIA (O.S.)
    Bob?

    BOB
    Hey sweetie - I’m home.

    JULIA (O.S.)
    You’re not coming home for two more days!

    BOB
    Yeah - change of plans. Home early.

    JULIA (O.S.)
    Okay.

Bob takes off his shirt - smells his pits.

    JULIA (O.S.)
    Look... Bob?

Bob strips down.

    BOB
    We had a bit of trouble at the rig... so they cut the shift short.

Bob flings his socks across the room, vaguely in the direction of the hamper.

His underwear follows.

A CRASH off screen.

    BOB
    Honey?

He opens the bathroom door.

    JULIA
    Don’t come in yet -
Too late. JULIA - redhead, 30’s, and looking great wrapped in a towel, is awkwardly trying to conceal... the window.

    BOB
    Julie...

    JULIA
    Bob... we need to talk.

    BOB
    Guess so.

A NAKED MAN - only visible as a large butt - is trying unsuccessfully to squeeze out the small window.

He’s stuck tight.

The Naked Man’s voice is muffled, but you’ve got to give him credit for style, considering his position.

    NAKED MAN
    This isn’t what it looks like.

    BOB
    Oh my God.

    JULIA
    Bob... uh...

    BOB
    Yuh.

Bob collapses on the toilet - slumps down in complete shock.

    JULIA
    Well...

    NAKED MAN
    Let me assure you, sir... your wife is completely... this is a little difficult - uh - situation.

    BOB
    Really.

    NAKED MAN
    Julia, maybe you could... uh...

    JULIA
    Should I pull you back in?

    NAKED MAN
    I think that would be best.
JULIA
Bob, maybe you should go downstairs...

BOB
What?

JULIA
Well, put some clothes on...

BOB
(dazed)
What... why...

Julia pulls on one leg of the Naked Man. Nothing doing.
She tries again - heaves.

JULIA
I can’t -

NAKED MAN
That’s not going -

JULIA
You’re stuck.

NAKED MAN
I’m well aware.

BOB
Julia?

JULIA
I’m so sorry Bob...

BOB
He’s... you’re...

JULIA
I didn’t want you to find out like this.

BOB
Well, there’s that.

JULIA
I never meant - it just happened.

BOB
I can’t believe this.

JULIA
Honey, I’m so, so sorry.
BOB
Wha... how long has this been going on?

NAKED MAN
I hate to be a burden... it’s kind of... it’s getting painful.

BOB
Shut up!

NAKED MAN
Well, of course. It’s just...

JULIA
Help me.

BOB
What?

JULIA
Pull on his leg.

BOB
Are you insane?

JULIA
We can talk about this - but we’ve got to get him out first!

BOB
I’ve got nothing to say to him!

JULIA
Jesus, honey!

BOB
This is - Have you gone mad?

NAKED MAN
It’s a bit difficult to breathe...

BOB
SHUT UP! SHUT UP AND GET OUT OF MY GODDAMNED WINDOW! ... AND MY HOUSE!

JULIA
We’re trying!

BOB
AAGH!

Furious, Bob draws back his fist and runs at the naked man, ready to punch him into... he’s confronted by butt.
Bob can punch a naked guy on the ass, or not.
He drops his fist.

    BOB
    You’re having an affair.
    JULIA
    Yes.
    BOB
    Do you... do you love him?
    NAKED MAN
    Don’t answer that, Julie!
    JULIA
    Help me pull him in.
    NAKED MAN
    I’d be very grateful.
    JULIA
    You can’t leave him here.

Pause.

    BOB
    I’m gonna go get changed. I’ll be downstairs when you want to talk.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE – DAY

Bob, now dressed, sits down on the porch, and cradles his head in his hands, trying to come to terms with this.
A FIRE ENGINE pulls up.
Several FIREMEN leap off, and efficiently start getting a ladder up to the bathroom window.
Various NEIGHBORS have come out to watch.
Bob stares at the ground.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE – EVENING

Bob still slumps, deep in thought.
A FIREMAN passes by with rescue blankets.
Then ANOTHER FIREMAN goes past, this one carrying a hydraulic “jaws of life”.

A white haired neighbor, the ancient and tiny MRS. McCARDLE, totters up with a cup of tea.

MRS. McCARDLE
I brought the poor man some tea, dear. Oh, it’s just like the war all over again. ... I was in the blitz, you know.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - NIGHT

Bob still sits there. Julia comes out, and sits down next to him.

JULIA
I’m sorry.

BOB
So you said. How long has this been going on?

JULIA
Almost... a year.

BOB
A year?

JULIA
I’m... I’m leaving, Bob.

BOB
Leaving?

JULIA
I’m going to stay at a friends house. I’ll call you in a few days.

BOB
This friend wouldn’t happen to be stuck in our window?

No reply.

BOB
Was it something I did?

JULIA
Something you didn’t do.
BOB

What?

JULIA

Anything. You could’ve done anything, but instead...

BOB

I’m the same guy you married.

JULIA

Ten years ago. Some people grow.

A FIREMAN passing by FIRES UP A GAS POWERED, CIRCULAR RESCUE SAW – the noise makes conversation impossible.

Julia gets up in alarm, and follows.

Bob sits there as the WHINE of saw teeth biting into wood echoes around him.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - MORNING

The doorbell buzzes.

Bob pokes his head up from his nest of blankets.

He looks like he hasn’t gotten out of bed in two weeks – unshaven, bloodshot eyes blinking in the harsh sunlight.

The doorbell buzzes again.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Bob opens the door on a YOUNG MAN in a business suit.

BOB

Is this about the paper?

YOUNG MAN

Mr. Robert Lewis? Yes sir. Here they are.

He hands Bob a legal brief – a blue backed set of divorce papers.

BOB

What’s this?
YOUNG MAN
Papers. I’m serving you.

BOB
I thought you were the delivery boy.

YOUNG MAN
No, sir. Those are divorce papers. You have been served. Have a nice... feel better.

BOB
Didn’t you used to deliver our newspaper?

Bob stomps back inside.

The PHONE RINGS.

He pushes an ashtray overflowing with butts aside to grab the phone.

BOB
Julia?

KYLE
(on Phone)
Hey Bob, it’s Kyle.

BOB
What?

INTERCUT with KYLE IN THE CURZON OIL OFFICE:

KYLE
Listen, man - I hate to say it, but there’s no pick-up. We ain’t going back.

BOB
What?

KYLE
They’re pulling the plug on the whole thing.

BOB
What about stripping it? I thought -
KYLE
It’s dead in the water. I’m taking a couple guys to pick up the computers and files. That’s it. It’s a walkaway.

BOB
I need to go back.

KYLE
Bob, I’m serious. It’s not gonna happen.

BOB
I can carry a computer.

KYLE
Listen, I already told that new guy what’s-his-face – the kid that does the internet thing – he’s coming, and Sandy.

BOB
Kyle, I gotta get out of here.

KYLE
It’s one day, man. You’re getting severance –

BOB
No, Kyle... I have to get out of here. Julia left.

KYLE
Oh shoot... sorry to hear that.

BOB
I’ve worked on that rig eighteen years, Kyle. I don’t know what I have left.

KYLE
Ah hell... what’s a computer kid know about carrying the damn things that you don’t?

BOB
Thanks, Kyle.

KYLE
Pick-up’s five a.m.

BOB
Sweet. Get to sleep in.
KYLE
Short day. We need to stay ahead of
the weather.

BOB
What weather?

INT. HELICOPTER - STORM

Rain obscures the view from the front of the chopper.

Rough seas below and rough clouds above - lightning,
thunder... God in a shitty mood.

The helicopter LURCHES VIOLENTLY, jolting the three
passengers - Sandy, Kyle and Bob - against their restraints.

They have to SCREAM over the noise of the rotors and the
storm.

SANDY
This was a good idea.

KYLE
Yeah - crappy way to end the job.

BOB
I’m gonna miss these rides... maybe
you could’ve picked a bigger storm
to try and fly through.

KYLE
What?

BOB
I said: maybe you could’ve picked a
bigger storm to fly through... like
a hurricane.

KYLE
It’s not a hurricane... yet. It’s
meant to get worse.

SANDY
It’s gonna get worse?

KYLE
Yeah. That’s why we had to come
today.

SANDY
I’m gonna miss these rides!
The PILOT looks back over his shoulder.

    PILOT
    This might be a bit bumpy!

    BOB
    Oh, good. We were getting sleepy
    back here.

Ahead, barely visible through the driving rain, is the deck
of Rig 214.

    KYLE
    We gonna be okay?

    PILOT
    Sure! I’ve flown in worse.

    KYLE
    Really?

    PILOT
    Yeah... but I crashed.

He LAUGHS.

    KYLE
    You’re very funny.

    PILOT
    I gotta concentrate on this bit.

Kyle and the others tighten their seat restraints.

The helicopter hovers unsteadily over the landing pad.

The pilot constantly adjusts the controls to try and keep it
steady in the gusting winds.

The helicopter settles - HARD - onto the deck, jolting all
aboard.

    SANDY
    Did we land or did you crash again?

    PILOT
    Hey, boss! We got 40 knots of wind
    out there - that’s over limit. I
    can’t shut her down.

    KYLE
    What?
PILOT
I have to keep the rotors turning.
When they get slow, the wind can
make them flex - they can strike
the tailboom.

KYLE
Really?

PILOT
Yeah, really. I went to pilot
school and everything.

KYLE
How long can you give us?

PILOT
At idle? Hold on...

He punches the digital Fuel Flow Indicator to countdown mode.

PILOT
Okay, return trip plus legal
minimum reserve... I can give you
38 minutes on the rig, but you
better be back, cause then it’s go
time - I can’t wait for you.

KYLE
Okay, got it. Let’s go, kids... go!

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - STORM

The three of them exit the helicopter, ducking low and
running for the shelter of the crew quarters.

Bob notices CRUDE OIL dribbling from the damaged drill pipe
as he runs past.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CREW QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

Sandy slams the steel door behind them, cutting off the noise
of the storm and the idling helicopter.

KYLE
We’ve got 38 minutes to grab this
stuff, load it and go.

SANDY
Oh, good. I though we were gonna be
rushed.
BOB
Kyle, you see the drill pipe?

KYLE
What?

BOB
Oil seepage.

KYLE
Too late now.

He turns and starts up the metal grated stairway.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

This room, like the traffic control tower at an airport, allows a clear view of the entire deck area.

The three of them start grabbing equipment, working fast but efficiently.

Sandy folds up two laptops, and stacks them.

Kyle grabs the radio com unit - and, unable to disconnect the wiring harness, yanks it out.

SANDY
So what’s gonna happen to the rig?

KYLE
Nothing, she’s done.

SANDY
Seems a shame to just leave it all here.

BOB
What about the well cap? If it’s leaking oil... she’ll just keep going.

KYLE
Those wells are dry. We were getting, what, a couple hundred barrels out of’em? That doesn’t pay for the ride out here.

BOB
Enough to mess up a bunch of ocean.

KYLE
It’d take years.
BOB
It’s a slow leak. It could last for years.

KYLE
It’s not our problem. That’s Curzon’s call.

BOB
Yeah, but eventually...

KYLE
They’re abandoning her. We’re outside the twelve mile limit, Bob. International waters. They file it as derelict, and it ain’t their problem.

SANDY
They can do that?

KYLE
They already did.

SANDY
So what’s to stop me taking this computer and declaring it mine?

KYLE
Nothing... except that your only way back is a company helicopter, and they’d probably notice it sticking out of your pocket.

SANDY
Cool.

KYLE
Laws of the high seas, Sandy. Everything changes out here.

(He checks his watch)
Fourteen minutes. Grab it and go.

---

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - STORM

The three of them run out to the helicopter, laden with equipment and file boxes.

PILOT
Flying back in this crap - a little extra reserve wouldn’t hurt, ya know!
KYLE
Two more boxes!

BOB
Kyle – we gotta cap that well.

KYLE
Are you nuts? There’s no time!

BOB
I can’t leave it like this!

KYLE
You haven’t got a choice.

BOB
It’s not right.

KYLE
Oh, okay. How does that change the amount of fuel in the helicopter? ... Get the goddamn boxes!

BOB
Okay!

He and Sandy run back to the quarters.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM – MOMENTS LATER

They grab the last two boxes of files.

BOB
We gotta do something.

SANDY
Hey, it comes out of the ocean, it goes back in – it’s all part of the cycle of life.

BOB
You’re an idiot.

SANDY
C’mon, I don’t want to miss the last bus.

INT. HELICOPTER – STORM

Bob and Sandy run up with the last two boxes and throw them in.
Sandy climbs in.

    BOB
    I’m not going!

    SANDY
    What!

    BOB
    I’m gonna stay! Pick me up in a couple days.

    KYLE
    Are you kidding! If I left you here, I’d get canned!

    BOB
    How’re you gonna stop me?

    PILOT
    Guys – we gotta go!

    KYLE
    Get in the damn helicopter!

    PILOT
    I’m serious!

    BOB
    Pick me up in a couple days!

    KYLE
    This is a big storm! You could be here a week!

    BOB
    There’s enough food for a week – I’ll be fine!

    KYLE
    You’re nuts!

    BOB
    You got no choice! See ya, boss!

Bob turns and runs away.

    KYLE
    (to Sandy)
    What the hell’s up with him?!

    SANDY
    You want me to go get him?
PILOT
Guys, we gotta -

SANDY
Okay, fine! Go, go! Get going!

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - STORM
The helicopter thunders off into the storm.
From the doorway of the crew quarters, Bob watches it leave.
He looks at the storm washed deck.

BOB
I changed my mind.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 PYLON - CONTINUOUS
A HUGE WAVE crashes against the pylons, sending a shudder through the entire structure.
The derricks sway, metal grinds.
The bright orange rescue lifeboat breaks free from its davits and tumbles down from the platform, crashing into the ocean.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - CONTINUOUS
Metal pipes roll across the deck, a piece of equipment tips over with a resounding CLANG.
The Drill Pipe shifts, and suddenly the slow leak becomes a steady, belching gurgle of oil.
Bob, clutching the door frame to steady himself, looks at the oil, spreading across the deck, dripping down into the ocean.

BOB
Shit.

SEQUENCE:
Bob, dressed in foul weather gear, staggers across the deck, fighting the high winds, carrying a three foot wrench.
Waves crash against the pylons.
Bob works furiously to cap the well, hampered by the slick oil, the rising storm.
Every action is a struggle - he’s working alone, trying to use equipment that should take a crew.

He retrieves a chain hoist from a derrick, perilously overhanging a straight drop to the ocean.

Using the chain hoist, he lifts the five hundred pound cap clear of the deck.

Lightning strikes the rod at the tallest derrick, showering sparks down to the deck below.

The wind is strong enough to push Bob across the slick deck, but he labors on.

Finally, the cap is on, the bolts tight, the leak stopped.

Bob looks up at the raging sky, and roars in triumph.

INT. OIL RIG 214 BUNK ROOM - NIGHT

Bob tosses and turns on his narrow bunk.

The storm still raging outside makes the whole place creak and shudder.

The CRASH of nearby lightning jolts him awake.

He grabs his sodden jeans off the floor, and rummages through the pockets.

He pulls out a pack of cigarettes. They are soaked, useless.

He tries to lay them out to dry, but they disintegrate as he touches them.

Bob

Okay.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CREW QUARTERS - LATER

Bob searches through lockers, looking for cigarettes.

No luck.

He finds a MAN TO MAN XCHANGE Magazine - a cheap, pulp mag leftover from the 80’s with a naked guy on the cover.

Bob

Nice, Sandy, real subtle.

Closing the locker, he notices the name “Drake” on it.
BOB
Well Goddamn.

Next locker. No luck.

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - LATER

Bob pulls a cigarette apart, and sprinkles the tobacco onto a baking sheet.

Bob carefully places the cookie sheet into the industrial oven.

He sets the dial to “warm”.

INT. OIL RIG 214 - CONTROL ROOM

Bob carefully rips a sheet out of the X-change pulp mag, tears it into four pieces.

He picks up some of the tobacco from the cookie sheet, and carefully rolls himself a newspaper cigarette.

He leans back in the control officers chair, looking out the window at the rain swept deck, and puffs contentedly.

BOB
Thank you, Drake - you poor closeted bastard.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - NIGHT

Bob lounges behind the control room window, safe and warm, puffing his homemade cigarette while the world rages outside.

EXT. CURZON OIL COMPANY PAD - NIGHT

Rain sheets across the empty helipad.

INT. CURZON OIL COMPANY OFFICE - NIGHT

A DISPATCHER is on the phone.

DISPATCHER
Sir? They’re still not back... no, they called two miles out, they wouldn’t have had enough fuel to return to the rig. ...

(MORE)
DISPATCHER (CONT'D)
Maybe - maybe they set down on the
shoreline somewhere... Yes sir.
Right away.

He hangs up, and immediately dials another number.

DISPATCHER
Coast Guard? This is Curzon oil, we
may have a helicopter down.

The Dispatcher looks out at the stormy weather, at the
helipad waiting for a helicopter that he knows in his heart
will never come.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY
Bob opens the doorway to the deck.
The sun is bright, the sky blue. A perfect day.

    BOB
    Sweet!

He starts singing quietly.

    BOB
    Brazil, where hearts were
    entertained in June...

He goes back inside.

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - DAY
Still singing, Bob opens the Fridge.
Inside is a sixpack of Soda.
Bob grabs one, and then a lemon from the crisper drawer.

    BOB
    We stood beneath that amber moon...

Bob slices the lemon.
He pours some sugar on a plate.
BOB
And softly murmured: Someday soon.

He sugars the rim of a glass,
Pours the soda.

BOB
Someday, I will return, I will return – Brazil.

He garnishes his drink with a slice of lemon.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – DAY

Bob leans back on a deck chair, basking in the sun, sipping his fancy soda, the king of all he surveys.

EXT. GULF OF MEXICO – SUNSET

The sun sets behind the oil rig.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM – NIGHT

Bob checks the radio... where the radio used to be before Kyle yanked it.

BOB
Son of a bitch.

He finds a cardboard box at the back of the control desk, dusty, filled with old electronics.

Rummaging through, he pulls out:

An old style VHF radio, a pair of binoculars, and a thick book – MARITIME LAW.

Bob plugs in the radio.

Nothing. Dead as a doornail.

He looks out at the wide, wide ocean.

BOB
Storm’s over, guys.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – DAY

Bob sits in his deck chair, restless.
He’s reading the Man2Man X-Change mag.

BOB
Seeks CBT? What the hell is CBT. I don’t get it, Sub WM. You gotta be clearer if you wanna get the ladies. The guys.

He drops the paper in exasperation.

BOB
I need a cigarette!

INT. OIL RIG 214 CREW QUARTERS – DAY
Bob walks down a hallway to the Foreman’s Quarters.
The door is locked, but he shoulders it open.

INT. OIL RIG 214 FOREMAN’S CABIN – CONTINUOUS
The cabin is utilitarian, but more spacious than Bob’s bunk room. Only two cots, with a decent size wardrobe locker at the foot of each one.
Bob looks through the two lockers.
Kyle’s is empty.
The other - marked Reginald - has some spare clothes in it - including a suit and tie.
No cigarettes.

BOB
Goddamnit!
He looks around the cabin.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM – SUNSET
Bob scans the horizon with a pair of binoculars.
The sun sets.

DISSOLVE TO:
INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Bob props the Maritime Law book on the upturned cardboard box.

He rests his elbows on it - now he can hold the weight of the binoculars for longer.

He scans the horizon unceasingly.

The ocean is empty.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - SUNSET

Bob looks at the setting sun. He stands on the rail and yells:

    BOB
    If you didn’t want to pay for a heli, I’d take a boat... What, you forget about me?

He steps back... and we can see in his eyes he has come to a realization.

INT. OIL RIG 214 FOREMAN’S CABIN - DAY

Bob opens Reginald’s locker, and carefully dresses in the suit.

He puts the tie on, awkwardly - he’s not used to it, but he does the best he can.

He examines himself in the mirror - acceptable.

He slides Kyle’s name tag from his locker.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CREW QUARTERS - DAY

Bob goes to Sandy’s locker, and peels off the tape with Sandy’s name on it.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY

Bob goes to the railing, and stares down at the ocean far below.

He holds the two nametags over the edge.

Bob closes his eyes for a moment, standing like a statue.
He releases the nametags, and watches them drift away, tumbling down to the open sea.

He tries to speak, but has no words.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM – LATER

Bob checks various systems.

BOB
Diesel gennies - check. On-rig
Refiner - check. Got electrical
power, and I can refill the
generator fuel tanks. Desalinator –
check. Bob, you got hot water
forever. Sweet.

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN – LATER

Bob checks the industrial pantry.

BOB
Staples: flour, sugar – check.
Canned food: Crap. Six cans of
soup. Don’t like soup.

He opens a huge freezer.

BOB
Frozen goods... aren’t.

He shuts the door, as foul smelling water drips from it.

BOB
What the hell?

He checks the plug at the back. Pushes a switch-local circuit
breaker in. It pops out again.

BOB
Okay, no frozen food.

He opens the fridge.

BOB
Expendables: out of milk, a few
veggies, out of meat, out of every
damn thing except lemons. Soda:
Five cans... Bob, you got
everything you need to live here,
except for food! Goddamn it!
EXT. GULF OF MEXICO - SUNSET

The sun sets on the rig. Darkness.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY

Bob works on the desalinator - greasing fittings, cleaning off rust and salt deposits.

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - DAY

Bob scrubs the stove.
He cleans the inside of the fridge.
He lines up the few cans of food in the pantry.

INT. OIL RIG 214 FOREMAN’S CABIN - DAY

Bob drags the two beds together.
He looks around the bare room, not happy with what he sees.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - EVENING

Bob cleans the windows, as the sun sets over the ocean.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. OIL RIG 214 FOREMAN’S CABIN - TWO WEEKS LATER

Bob sits in his double-sized bed, reading the Maritime Law book.

He scratches his new beard, and looks around the room with contemplative pride.

The room has been decorated, the furniture rearranged - this is no longer a bunk room shared by two people, this is a cosy bedroom.

BOB
Bob, I believe it’s breakfast time.
(Answering himself)
Damn good idea, Bob. Let’s make waffles.
INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - DAY

The fridge is almost bare. A couple of potatoes, already sprouting. Nothing else.

Bob has reached that stage of isolation where he’s talking to himself as two distinct personalities. OTHERBOB may not be in the same frame in any shot, but he might be seated, watching calmly as Bob paces anxiously, or vice versa.

    BOB
    Oooh, too bad, Bob. Looks like we’re out of milk.

    OTHERBOB
    No waffles?

    BOB
    Sorry Bob. We have some flour left.

    OTHERBOB
    That’s no good without milk.

    BOB
    You could make them with water.

    OTHERBOB
    Ooh, good try, Bob - but that’s glue, not waffles.

    BOB
    Almost got you there, Bob.

    OTHERBOB
    You’ll have to get up pretty early in the morning to catch me out.

    BOB
    How about sprouty potato?

    OTHERBOB
    You always want sprouty potato.

    BOB
    They’re yummalicious, Bob.

    OTHERBOB
    So you say.

    BOB
    And good for you.
OTHERBOB
We could make sprouty fries.
Haven’t had sprouty fries yet.

BOB
Chips, as they call them in
England.

OTHERBOB
Yeah, fish and... chips. Goddamn
it!

INT. OIL RIG 214 CREW BATHROOM – MOMENTS LATER
Bob scrabbles through a medicine cabinet.
He finds a pack of dental floss.

INT. OIL RIG 214 BUNK ROOM – LATER
Bob carefully braids the dental floss to the loop of a safety
pin.

BOB
I do believe you’re a genius, Bob.

OTHERBOB
Thank you, Bob.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – LATER
Bob opens the EMERGENCY ACCESS HATCHWAY in the deck.
Below it, the dizzying view looking directly down one of the
pylons.
Steel rungs are set into the pylon - an exposed ladder.
Terrifying.

OTHERBOB
Bob, I believe I’m about ready to
piss my pants.

BOB
Way ahead of you, Bob.

OTHERBOB
Tell you what, you get in the air
tugger, and I’ll lower you down.
BOB
You’ll stay up here, and work the controls, while I go down in the basket?

OTHERBOB
Yup.

It actually takes him a moment to realize the fatal flaw in this argument with himself.

BOB
Jesus - I gotta eat.

He starts down the rungs.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 PYLON - DAY

Bob stands on the lowest dry rung, one elbow hooked through another, trying to fish with a piece of potato on a safety pin.

BOB
C’mon, you bastards. It’s sprouty potato! It’s yummalicious!

Fish are tantalizingly close, flocking around the pylon... not interested in his potato.

He leans further out, trying to get the hook closer to a big silver wrasse.

Bob’s foot slips off the rung - leaving him caught by his elbow.

He’s scrabbling for purchase, desperate.

As his foot scrapes against the pylon, it knocks down several limpets.

Bob manages to regain his footing - and looks in amazement as the fish below start churning the water, fighting over the limpets as they tumble down.

BOB
All right!

He kicks open a limpet shell, and scoops the fleshy mollusc onto his safety pin.
INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - DAY

Bob fries up a big, beautiful wrasse. With flour.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY

Bob lounges on his deck chair, munching on a fish fillet. Next to him sits a bowl of steamed mussels, and a seaweed salad.

He reads the maritime law book, musing.

Something catches his eye.

He rereads the paragraph, then flips back to an earlier section, and checks it.

BOB
I claim this land in the name of Bob. From hereon, this shall be Bobistan - a free nation! And I shall be your king!

He acknowledges the imaginary populace with a royal wave.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CREW QUARTERS - DAY

Bob looks through the lockers. He finds a tie-dyed T-shirt.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - EVENING

Bob proudly raises the T-shirt up the flagpole.

BOB
This shall be the flag of Bobistan - long may she wave.
(He sings, softly)
Oh, say can you see, by the dawn’s early light...

He stops, just looking at this scrap of fabric, fluttering in the ocean breeze.

BOB
Any day now.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Bob scans the ocean with a pair of binoculars.
Something catches his eye - something vital.
The binoculars clatter onto the desk.
Bob races out.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY
Bob stands on the railing, yelling, waving his shirt.

    BOB
    Over here! Hey, boat! Hey! HEY! ...
    They’ve seen me.

INT. CURZON OIL COMPANY OFFICE - DAY
The Dispatcher slams down the phone.

    DISPATCHER
    Holy shit.

INT. CURZON’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS
The office of MR. CURZON - the elderly owner and CEO of Curzon Oil. He looks more like a kindly grandfather than an oil baron.

    DISPATCHER
    Sir! They have a survivor! A boat just pulled into Biscayne harbor - they picked up a survivor!

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY
Mr. Curzon jogs along the hospital corridor, straining to keep up with the excited Dispatcher.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS
They burst into the ward room.

On the bed, disheveled and sunburnt is Sandy.

    CURZON
    Goddamn, son - how’re you doing?
SANDY
I’m just grateful... Fishing trawler saw the life raft... miracle.

CURZON
The others?

SANDY
Never... made it into the raft.

Sandy collapses back, exhausted.

CURZON
You just rest now, son. You’re safe. You’re home.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 PYLON - DAY
Bob clambers down the slippery rungs.

The waves are much rougher today - a ten foot swell that plunges the lower rungs underwater.

Bob gets to the last rung that’s clear, and waves to the boat.

He glimpses it as it crests a wave.

BOB
Help! Hey...

His face falls.

This is no rescue boat - it’s a half inflated raft, barely afloat itself.

As it drifts closer, he can see a WOMAN on board, desperately trying to paddle it.

WOMAN
¡Auxilio!

BOB
What the hell?

Her boat gets closer.

BOB
Careful!

The swells are making this treacherous - threatening to throw her boat against the pylon...
She’s trying to get to safety -
A large wave shoves the boat closer -
Bob grabs her hand, clasping it as the wave drops the boat out from under her, leaving her dangling.

**WOMAN**
Don’t drop me!

**BOB**
I got you!

As the boat drops, it snags on the rungs, ripping open, collapsing with a despairing hiss.

A bigger wave crashes in, drenching them, lifting her up for a brief moment.

She grabs him, and they cling there together, fighting the water.

The wave drops away.

The remains of the boat swirl down into the depths.

**BOB**
Okay, climb, climb!

They start up the ladder.

**EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY**

They crawl out of the access hatch.

The woman stands up - she is Cuban, 30-ish. Her beauty shines through her ragged clothing and bedraggled appearance.

**WOMAN**
Is this America?

**BOB**
It’s damn close.

**INT. OIL RIG 214 CREW BATHROOM - EVENING**

The Cuban woman showers.

Bob puts some clothing on the bench by the door.

**BOB**
I found what I could.
WOMAN
Thank you.

He’s trying not to look... but he cannot resist a quick peek as the door swings shut.

OTHERBOB
Wow. That is a perfect ass.

BOB
Shut up, Bob.

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bob, in his shirt and tie, serves a beautifully grilled piece of fish.

With her hair washed and combed out, this woman is stunning — in spite of the Megadeath T-shirt and dungarees.

BOB
I don’t even know your name.

LUPE
Lupe.

BOB
And you escaped from Cuba.

LUPE
Refugee. But we ran into a patrol boat... they shot at us. I hid under the raft... when I came out, they were gone. The men who were taking me, gone.

BOB
I’m sorry.

LUPE
They were pigs. Take your money, and then want more.

BOB
You must’ve really wanted —

LUPE
Yes. When do we go to America?

BOB
There’s a bit of a problem there.
LUPE
What problem?

BOB
Well, it’s like this...

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - NIGHT

The sound of a furious, shrieking Lupe can be heard through the thick steel walls.

LUPE (O.S.)
¡Usted es un idiota! Un inutil. ¡Habría sido mejor de permanecer en el barco! ¡No puedo creer que aquí me atrapan con un hombre estúpido, pegado en un aparejo de aceite con un moron!

INT. OIL RIG 214 FOREMAN’S CABIN - LATER

Bob backs into the cabin, still being harangued by an irate Lupe.

BOB
This is nothing - I’ve lived with worse. Goodnight, Julia.

LUPE
¿Julia? ¿Quién es Julia? Soy Lupe - y usted no va salir de esto tan facilmente -

He shuts the door on her, muffling her tirade.

Bob sits down on the bed.

BOB
I think she likes you, Bob.

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - MORNING

Bob walks in, pulling on his T-shirt.

BOB
Lupe? Lupe?

The room is empty.
INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - MORNING

Bob walks in.

Lupe is taking apart the VHF radio.

BOB
That doesn’t work.

LUPE
Yet. Buenos dias.

BOB
Good morning. You’re not mad at me anymore?

LUPE
You saved my life.

BOB
Well -

LUPE
You did. Thank you.

BOB
You’re welcome. Sorry you’re stuck here.

LUPE
Not for long.

She holds up a circuit board.

LUPE (CONT’D)
When was this made?

BOB
Best guess - seventies. Probably original equipment.

LUPE
Do you have any parts?

BOB
Just what’s in the box.

LUPE
Okay. This may take a while.

BOB
You think you can fix it?
LUPE
Oh yes.

BOB
Okay.

INT. CURZON OIL COMPANY OFFICE - DAY
The Dispatcher leans back in his chair, asleep.
The crackle of the radio startles him.

BOB
(on Radio)
Hello? Curzon dispatch? Is anyone on frequency? This is Bob.

The dispatcher jolts to instant full alertness, and grabs the mic.

dispatcher
Okay, man, whoever you are, you’re kind of freaking me out right now.

BOB
(On Radio)
It’s me! Howie, is that you? I’m on 214! I got left here!

dispatcher
Jesus Christ!

INT. CURZON’S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER
Howie the Dispatcher tears in.

dispatcher
You’re not gonna believe this!

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY
A Curzon Oil helicopter sets down on the pad. Mr. Curzon gets out.

Bob and Lupe are waiting.

CURZON
Bob! Damn good to see ya! Thought we’d lost you there, buddy. Who’s this?
BOB
This is Lupe – she’s a Cuban refugee. Rescued her.

CURZON
Are you kidding?

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN – LATER

Mr. Curzon fiddles with a quarter, spinning it on the table.

Bob and Lupe are seated across from him.

CURZON
This puts us in a bit of bind here, Bob. I don’t know that we can take her back with us.

BOB
Well you can’t leave her here.

CURZON
I’m aware of that... but we... we may need to wait here for the Coast Guard.

BOB
I don’t get it.

CURZON
Bob, she’s going to have to go home. You realize that, right?

LUPE
No! I cannot go back.

BOB
I thought that Cubans – I mean, if they get to America, they’re free. Aren’t they?

CURZON
The Wet foot/Dry foot doctrine. If they set foot on dry land, then they can apply for asylum... If they’re found at sea, they go back.

BOB
But this rig...

CURZON
Is a derelict structure outside of the US. (MORE)
CURZON (CONT'D)
Last year, a judge ruled that a fishing pier didn’t count as dry land, and that was in the Keys.

BOB
If she goes back, they’ll put her in jail.

CURZON
Bob, I empathize... but this is not up to you. This is government policy. The Coast Guard will be here in a few hours. We’ll wait for them.

Lupe runs from the room, weeping.

BOB
Lupe!

Bob runs after her.

CURZON
Jeez, Bob...

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - DAY
Lupe cries, Bob comforts her.

BOB
It’s okay, Lupe. I won’t let them take you.

LUPE
You will go back to America. And I will not make it to Cuba. I will die before I see the land.

BOB
Die? Why would you die?

LUPE
Because I will throw myself from the boat and drown myself before I let them take me back.

BOB
I can see a whole lot wrong with your logic right there.

LUPE
Bob, if I go back, it will be worse than prison.
BOB
Maybe we can get you asylum anyway -

LUPE
Not for me.

BOB
I’m missing something here.

LUPE
It doesn’t matter. But if you send me back...

BOB
What did you do?

LUPE
Nothing.

BOB
Yeah. That’s what everyone -

LUPE
I did nothing. The man that wanted me to do something... he forced me. And when I still refused... he turned out to be political. A government official. They do what they want. I will not go back to him. I will die first.

BOB
You... It’s okay, don’t... I’m not going to let that happen. We’re going to America.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY
Bob strides across the deck towards the Helicopter.

The YOUNG PILOT naps in the shade of the heli.

BOB
Hey! Wake up!

The Young Pilot looks up in alarm - Bob is swinging a large, heavy wrench.

BOB
Fire it up.

YOUNG PILOT
Are you serious?
Bob smacks the wrench down on the deck, right between the pilot’s legs.

    YOUNG PILOT
    You could’ve hit me!

    BOB
    Fire it up. You’re taking us back.

    YOUNG PILOT
    Not if you’re gonna be swinging a wrench at me!

    BOB
    I’m... listen, I... you’re taking us back, right now!

    YOUNG PILOT
    Yeah. That’s my job. We’re just waiting -

    BOB
    No! We’re not waiting, they’re not gonna take Lupe - I’m... I’m hijacking your helicopter.

    YOUNG PILOT
    How can - what? We’re not even in the - how can you hijack a - when it’s... what?

    BOB
    Fly me back to Florida or I’ll hit you with this wrench.

    YOUNG PILOT
    Oh! Are you serious?

Bob brandishes the wrench.

    YOUNG PILOT
    I’ll start it up.

Bob turns and runs for the Control Room.

In the background, the whine of the helicopter turbine ratchets up.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Bob bursts in.
BOB
Lupe, let’s go.

LUPE
Where?

BOB
We’re going to America. Right now. Run!

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – MOMENTS LATER
Bob and Lupe burst out of the door.
Over at the helicopter, Mr. Curzon and the Pilot turn and
look at Bob in alarm.
Mr. Curzon scrambles into the helicopter.

BOB
Run!
Lupe and Bob tear across the deck.
The helicopter rotors spin faster.
The helicopter starts to lift up as Bob reaches it.

INT. HELICOPTER – CONTINUOUS
Mr. Curzon screams at the Pilot.
The heli pulls away from the deck.
Bob waves his wrench, angry but futile.

YOUNG PILOT
He’s insane, see?!

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – CONTINUOUS
Lupe takes the wrench from Bob.

BOB
I’m sorry.

LUPE
You’re crazy.

BOB
They could’ve taken us.
LUPE
It doesn’t work like that.

BOB
... I wouldn’t have really hit him.

LUPE
That’s why it didn’t work.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – LATER

The two of them sit at the railing, watching the ocean together.

BOB
This is nice.

LUPE
Yes. It’s very pretty.

MEGAPHONE VOICE (O.S.)
Ahoy! Rig 214!

LUPE
It was good while it lasted.

Bob leans over and looks down.

Below them, a COAST GUARD CUTTER idles. On the deck, a smartly uniformed COASTIE looks up, a megaphone in his hand.

COASTIE
Send down the air tugger!

BOB
No.

COASTIE
What?

BOB
You can’t come on board. Go away.

COASTIE
Sir, we were told there’s a Cuban national –

BOB
This structure is in international waters. We don’t need any assistance, we’re fine.
COASTIE
Well, we’re coming on board whether you like it or not.

BOB
This is a foreign structure!

COASTIE
What?!

BOB
This is a foreign structure. This is not US Registry!

The Coastie confers with his LIEUTENANT.

COASTIE
Whose flag are you flying?

Bob looks at the tattered, tie-dyed T-shirt, still fluttering from the flagpole.

BOB
Uh... Bobistan.

COASTIE
What?

BOB
Bobistan. Independent nation.

More conferral.

Bob watches.

COASTIE
Uh... Okay.

BOB
Okay?

COASTIE
Okay... sir. Thank you.

The boat backs away, and starts heading off.

Bob looks at Lupe in wonder.

BOB
That was the last thing I expected.

LUPE
What is Bobistan?
EXT. STATE DEPT BUILDING, WASHINGTON D.C. - DAY

Various business suited bureaucrats hurry up the wide marble steps.

INT. STATE DEPT - COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - DAY

A fax machine whines, spitting out paper curls.

A CLERK grabs the latest page and adds it to a passing file cart, pushed by an INTERN.

INT. STATE DEPT - PAPERWORK ROOM - DAY

The Intern pushes the cart past a row of cubicles.

In one of them sits FELIX JONES, early fifties - old to still be in a cubicle in the bowels of a government office.

He’s daydreaming at his desk; on his IBM computer is a screen saver of a tropical island paradise.

Felix tilts back in his chair - almost overbalances.

His legs kick out, smacking his desk, and jolting over a cup of coffee - just as he thumps back upright.

Perfectly timed to catch a lapful of dripping coffee.

His next-cubicle-over neighbor - GRIFF - pops his head up, appearing suddenly like a startled gopher with tousled hair.

GRIFF
Hey, Felix! You hear about Togo?

FELIX
No?

GRIFF
Mr. Jenkins was telling Rachel in Consular Affairs about it - they’re applying for recognition.

FELIX
The provisional government?

GRIFF
Yeah. And the word is, they might get it.
FELIX
They have a coup every six weeks. Some yahoos with an Uzi and a cause starts waving his own flag, and expects us to leap on his bandwagon.

GRIFF
Could happen.

FELIX
No way.

GRIFF
I heard it came from R.J. Standall himself.

FELIX
Think they’ll send someone out?

GRIFF
They’ll have to. Set up an embassy, meet the new... King, President, whatever he is.

FELIX
I hear Togo’s beautiful. Sandy beaches... tropical.

GRIFF
Felix... Felix?

Felix smiling, eyes unfocused, thoughts miles away...

GRIFF
Earth to Felix?

Felix smiles even wider, and leans out to look down the hallway.

MR. JENKINS, gruff, red-face and straining the buttons on a three piece suit, strides down the hallway with a stack of paperwork.

A contemplative moment - and then Felix looks out again - alert, awake - did he really see...?

Yes, Mr. Jenkins is actually there, carrying an armload of paperwork and approaching fast

Felix desperately straightens up his desk, his tie - looks down at his coffee stained lap - and scoots his chair in tight to his desk, just as Mr. Jenkins appears at his cubicle.
JENKINS
Ah, Felix - got something for you.

FELIX
Really? For me?

JENKINS
I need you to sort this out right away.

FELIX
Yes, sir. I mean - you can count on me.

JENKINS
Some oil rig worker has declared his rig a separate country.

FELIX
What?

JENKINS
I know - but we don’t have the luxury of ignoring the crackpots.

FELIX
No sir. An oil rig.

JENKINS
Just do the damn paperwork, Felix. There’s a situation in Togo, and I am far too busy to spend time on this crap.

He drops the stack of paperwork on Felix's desk with a THUD.

As Jenkins strides off, Griff pops his head over the cubicle wall again.

GRiff
Did he say a guy on an oil rig?

FELIX
Yeah.

GRiff
Does he have a flag?

INT. OIL RIG 214 FOREMAN’S CABIN - MORNING

Lupe knocks on the door.
LUPE
Bob?
Bob looks up from the bed, groggy.

BOB
Wha..?

LUPE
You have a call.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER
The VHF Radio crackles as Bob comes scrambling up the stairs
to the control room.

SANDY
(On Radio)
This is Sandy calling Oil Rig 214 -
you there, Bob?

Bob grabs the radio mic.

BOB
Sandy! Curzon told me you were
alive... I couldn’t believe it.

INTERCUT WITH SANDY IN THE CURZON OIL OFFICE, the young pilot
and Mr. Curzon are both with him.

SANDY
I almost wasn’t.

BOB
I... I thought you were gone.

SANDY
What about you, man... you doing
okay?

BOB
I’m fine.

SANDY
You got us a little worried here.

BOB
It’s okay... I just... I couldn’t
let them take her, Sandy.

YOUNG PILOT
He tried to hit me with a wrench!
CURZON
Shh!

SANDY
Listen, man... Phil here says you tried to hit him?

YOUNG PILOT
With a wrench!

CURZON
(whispering)
Quiet!

BOB
I didn’t want to hurt... I wouldn’t have... I just needed to get home.

SANDY
We’d like to get you home, Bob. You can’t stay there forever.

BOB
Why not?

SANDY
Well... what about food, supplies?

BOB
I can get those.

SANDY
So you’re gonna live on oil rig 214?

BOB
It’s called Bobistan now, Sandy. It was derelict, so... I’ve claimed it.

Sandy shoots a look at the other two. Bob’s tone doesn’t sound as crazy as his words.

SANDY
We can come pick you up.

YOUNG PILOT
I’m not going -

Mr. Curzon cuffs him on the back of the head.

SANDY
...by boat.
BOB
I’m not leaving without Lupe.

SANDY
We’ll see what we can do.

BOB
I’m glad you made it, Sandy. I missed you.

SANDY
You too, man.

INT. FISHING BOAT - DAY

A SKIPPER and his MATE listen to all this on their marine radio.

SKIPPER
Are you getting this?

INT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

There’s a big marlin with a lacy bra hanging from its spike mounted over the bar, and a projection screen TV in the corner.

The Skipper talks to the BARKEEP - a gruff, ex-sailor.

SKIPPER
Rig 214. Declared it his own country.

BARKEEP
Can he do that?

A NOSY PATRON hangs on their every word.

INT. BOWLING ALLEY - EVENING

The Nosy Patron bowls a frame with a heavy set GUY wearing an atrocious Hawaiian shirt.

NOSY PATRON
... made it up. He’s now king of this oil rig. Doesn’t have to pay taxes - he could have six wives out there if he wants.

HAWAIIAN SHIRT GUY
He can do that?
INT. LOCAL NEWSDESK - EVENING

The news anchor desk at a very local TV station.

The Guy in the Hawaiian Shirt, a headset around his neck, flirts with the ANCHORWOMAN.

    HAWAIIAN SHIRT GUY
    ... This thing’s in international waters, so it’s a real country.

    ANCHORWOMAN
    Can he actually do that?

    HAWAIIAN SHIRT GUY
    This is a real scoop, right?

    TECH PRODUCER
    Okay, places, people!

Mr. Hawaiian Shirt gets back behind his camera - zooming in tight on the Anchorwoman’s eyes to adjust focus.

In the monitor, we can see the pensive look in her eyes.

INT. STATE DEPT BUILDING, WASHINGTON D.C.

Felix walks along the hallway.

He stops outside an office door - neatly labelled “Mr. Jenkins”.

Felix takes a deep breath before he enters.

INT. JENKIN’S OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Jenkins sits behind an oversized desk, reading a Washington Post newspaper.

Felix nervously waits for him to finish.

    JENKINS
    This is not a good situation, Felix. Look at this.

A headline reads: MAN DECLARES INDEPENDENT NATION.

    FELIX
    It’s a tricky case, sir.
JENKINS
We don’t want this to go to court.
We want to deal with it quickly and quietly.

FELIX
Yes, sir. The problem is... the law’s on his side.

JENKINS
That’s for us to say.

FELIX
Yes sir, but... International waters, a derelict structure - he claimed it.

JENKINS
He has a Cuban National on this oil rig?

FELIX
Yes.

JENKINS
Well, easy enough then. All sorted out.

FELIX
Really?

JENKINS
Not our department. Send it up the chain, let someone else take care of it. Good report.

FELIX
Thank you, sir.

INT. STATE DEPT - PAPERWORK ROOM - DAY
Felix stares at his IBM - the tropical island screensaver.
Griff looks over the cubicle wall.

GRiff
You ask him about Togo?

FELIX
Didn’t come up.
GRIFF
I saw that Bobistan thing on the news last night. It’s like a tourist attraction.

FELIX
It’s dealt with.

GRIFF
That’s good – publicity like that can burn a career.

A smartly dressed woman – RACHEL – in a severe business suit approaches.

RACHEL
Mr. Jones?

FELIX
Yes?

RACHEL
You have a briefing at the White House tomorrow with the Secretary of State. The Rig 214 issue. Ten a.m. sharp.

FELIX
Oh.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – SUNSET

The oil rig in stark silhouette; black against the crimson sun.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM – CONTINUOUS

A match flares.

Lupe lights a handmade oil lamp candelabra, pieced together from industrial equipment.

Another flame an inch away from the first ignites, then another – a series of tiny candle flames flicker to life, running along the length of a gracefully curving copper pipe.

BOB
That’s beautiful.

Lupe turns. She is illuminated by the candlelight and the setting sun. Unbelievably romantic.
LUPE
I thought we could eat up here tonight.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT
Felix pours over the Bobistan files. Outside, sirens wail, the sound of traffic.
The doorbell rings.
He opens the door on a CHINESE FOOD DELIVERY GUY, who holds out a plastic bag.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT
Lupe lifts the cover on a dish of lobsters on a bed of asparagus.

LUPE
One of the tourist boats brought fresh vegetables.

BOB
You never said - I could've helped.

LUPE
I wanted it to be a surprise.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT
Felix empties a carton of lo mein onto a paper plate.
He picks up the plate, which folds, depositing the food on the floor.
He salvages what he can.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT
Bob and Lupe clink glasses together.

BOB
Cheers.

LUPE
In Cuba, we say “Salud, dinero y amor, y la suerte para gozarlos.”
BOB
Pretty. But what do they say in Bobistan?

LUPE
Whatever you want. It’s your country.

Bob hesitates... then hesitates some more. He’s tongue tied - speechless.

She realizes why... and smiles.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Felix tries a forkful of the lo mein... and has to fish out a hair.

He gives up on the food.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

The meal is finished.

LUPE
I saved the best for last.

BOB
Nothing could top that.

LUPE
Really? They didn’t just bring vegetables. They also brought -

BOB
Cigarettes?

LUPE
Cheesecake.

BOB
Okay.

LUPE
And strawberries.

BOB
Be still my beating heart.
INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Felix pushes the food aside, grabs a remote and flicks on the TV.

LATE NIGHT HOST
(On TV)
You’ve been following this - uh -
situation in the news? The guy with
his own country? Yeah, apparently
France has already called him and
surrendered -

Felix turns the TV off and opens up the Bobistan file again.

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM - NIGHT

Bob and Lupe stand. She picks up the dishes - but he’s right there.

BOB
You didn’t have to do this.

LUPE
You could’ve left. You stayed...
You don’t even know me.

BOB
I got nowhere to go, I guess. Might
as well be here.

A moment of closeness. Hesitancy. Neither of them knows
whether this will be their first kiss...

LUPE
I’m leaving, Bob.

BOB
What?

LUPE
Tomorrow. One of the boats - they
will take me to Miami.

BOB
But the INS... with everything
that’s happened, they’ll be looking
for you.

LUPE
Why would I let a government decide
where I live? What do they know
about me?
A beat.

BOB
I’ll do the dishes.

He takes them from her and turns away.
Lupe lets out a breath she didn’t know she was holding.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – NIGHT
The moon rises behind the Oil Rig, shimmering and magical.
FADE TO BLACK:
FADE IN:

INT. WHITE HOUSE WEST WING – MORNING
A very nervous Felix is being escorted down a hallway by an AIDE.

Everywhere Felix looks, he sees portraits of presidents, marine guards – the trappings of power.

INT. WHITE HOUSE OVAL OFFICE – 10:00 AM SHARP.
Felix is ushered in.

On the sofa, PRESIDENT RAMSDEN – a Texas good ol’ boy – quietly confers with SECRETARY OF STATE R.J. STANDALL, a white haired vulture of a man.

AIDE
Mr. Jones, sir.

FELIX
Mr. President.

PRESIDENT
Take a seat there, Felix. You know Secretary Standall? Seems like we have a problem brewing down there in Florida.

FELIX
Yes sir.
PRESIDENT
I can’t have it. Not this year, just can’t do it.

FELIX
No, sir.

R.J. STANDALL
What we need, Felix, is a way to fix this quickly and quietly.

FELIX
Maybe we should just let him be.

PRESIDENT
What?

FELIX
He’s... it’s an abandoned oil rig in the middle of nowhere. We didn’t care when there was a crew on it, or when it was abandoned... we could just let it go.

PRESIDENT
(to Standall)
Is he one of yours?

R.J. STANDALL
Mr. Jones – that man is making a mockery of this country! I don’t think you appreciate the seriousness of the situation. Now what are our options?

FELIX
Limited. It’s outside the U.S. The laws of the high seas...

PRESIDENT
R.J., what are your boys doin’ down at State? This is a situation.

R.J. STANDALL
(To Felix)
Let me say that again. How do we solve this.

FELIX
Wait til he comes ashore and arrest him.

R.J. STANDALL
For what?
FELIX
He threatened a pilot. Attempted hijacking.

PRESIDENT
Now that’s what I like to hear.

R.J. STANDALL
That’s a federal crime - we could give him twenty to life.

PRESIDENT
I don’t want this dragging on - another Waco or Ruby Ridge.

R.J. STANDALL
I think... a hearing might be in order.

FELIX
Sir?

R.J. STANDALL
Schedule a preliminary hearing to determine the status of this rig, in court. He’ll either attend - in which case we arrest him when he lands, or he won’t - in which case, the state will win by default.

PRESIDENT
How do we get him off the rig then?

R.J. STANDALL
Until the court settles the status of the rig, I think it would be imprudent to allow fishing vessels and the like to cross the border freely. If he wants to be his own country, he can do it without our help. We’ll starve him out.

EXT. GULF OF MEXICO - DAY
A charter tourist boat is being turned back by a Coast Guard Cutter.

On the charter boat, a LARGE WOMAN is not happy about it.

LARGE WOMAN
Hey, I paid two hundred dollars to come out here and see Bobistan!

(MORE)
LARGE WOMAN (CONT'D)
You can’t tell me what to do - I wanna see the guy’s country!

COASTIE
Ma’am, you need to return to port.

LARGE WOMAN
Hey, I don’t have to do squat! This is America, buddy!

INT. OIL RIG 214 KITCHEN - DAY
Lupe tips a juice carton - empty.
She opens the fridge - it is almost bare.
Bob looks over her shoulder.

BOB
We should’ve saved some cheesecake.

Lupe’s not laughing.

INT. LOCAL NEWSDESK - DAY
The morning news.

ANCHORWOMAN
It’s day twenty four of the Bobistan stand-off. The trial is still a month away, but the question everyone’s asking is: Can Bobistan hold out that long? The world’s smallest country may also turn out to be the shortest lived.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY
Bob watches the boats through the binoculars.

BOB
How much do you think they’re spending each day, just to keep those patrol boats circling?

LUPE
I’m hungry.

BOB
I’m sorry Lupe.
LUPE
Maybe we can catch a fish.

BOB
And tomorrow?

LUPE
Tomorrow we catch another.

BOB
We need food. Can’t eat fish forever. I gotta call them. Surrender.

LUPE
If I go back, I will -

BOB
If we stay here, we’ll starve.

A faint cry is heard.

LUPE
What was that?

BOB
What?

Another.

LUPE
That.

Bob leans over the railing.

A hundred feet below is a small fishing boat.

SANDY
Ahoy! Permission to come aboard!

BOB
Sandy?!

SANDY
Hey, pal! Send down the air tugger!

Bob lowers the Air Tugger - a steel passenger cage on a hoist.

Sandy and an eight year old Asian girl - FEI DZONG - emerge.

BOB
Sandy, what are you doing here?
SANDY
I was out fishing, thought maybe I
could purchase some diesel from
you.

BOB
What?

SANDY
You still got the refiner running,
or you wouldn’t have power. Figured
I could buy a few gallons of diesel
for the trip home, maybe trade
you... oh, say the twelve cartons
of food I got in my boat.

BOB
Jesus, Sandy... How did you get
trough?

SANDY
Paperwork. This, my friend, is an
import/export permit. Ralph’s dad
was in the olive oil business. If
you start seriously treating this
as another country, it gets easier.

BOB
I don’t know what to say.

SANDY
Say hi to Fei Dzong.

BOB
Hi there.

FEI DZONG
(shy)
Hi.

BOB
And this is Lupe.

LUPE
Hola. Welcome.

Fei Dzong is too shy to speak to Lupe, and hides her face,
giggling.

SANDY
That goes for me too.
BOB
(to Sandy)
Is she yours?

SANDY
We’re fostering her – for now.
Adoption is... It’s a long process, even for... you know.

BOB
What changed your mind?

SANDY
You wouldn’t believe what a helicopter crash and two weeks in a life raft can do.

BOB
If it helps, the Republic of Bobistan has very easy adoption terms.

SANDY
Think I’ll stick with the US of A, no offense. But I’d like to get this permit stamped. You know what Bobistan stuff goes for on eBay?

BOB
Bobistan stuff?

SANDY
Bob, you’re famous. There’s people selling Bobistan T-shirts and flags... all kinds of crap. Oh, hey! Reminds me – here.

He pulls out a sheet of stamps.

SANDY
Genuine Bobistan stamps.

BOB
I never even thought of that.

SANDY
Next trip, I’ll bring you a laptop, you can print your own. Let’s get that food up here.
LATER

Cans of food, crates of fresh fruit and a case of beer is neatly stacked.

Bob and Sandy roll a barrel of diesel across the deck to the hoist.

BOB
Have you heard from Julia?

SANDY
She thought you were dead, Bob. You and me both – everyone did.

BOB
But Ralph’s still with you.

SANDY
I’m sorry, man. You can’t go home again.

BOB
Yeah.

SANDY
No, I mean it – there’s a warrant out on you. It was on the news.

BOB
So I’m stuck here?

SANDY
You wanted to stay here anyway.

BOB
What the hell am I gonna do?

SANDY
There’s a bunch of charter fishing boats on my dock – they’d probably appreciate tax free diesel. This place could become a real tourist spot.

BOB
As long as they bring their passports.

SANDY
Right. How’s that stamp coming?

Fei sits, carving a half potato. She hands it to Lupe.
LUPE
That’s great, Fei.

She stamps Sandy’s export permit with the potato — a crude picture of the oil rig and the initials F.R.B. above it.

BOB
Welcome to Bobistan, Sandy.

SANDY
Thanks, your highness. C’mon, Fei — before they make you an ambassador.

FEI DZONG
Okay.

They start for the tugger.

BOB
What – what did you say?

SANDY
What?

INT. STATE DEPT - FELIX’S CUBICLE - DAY
Felix opens a letter.

FELIX
Oh no.

INT. RJ STANDALL’S OFFICE - DAY
R.J. Standall reads the letter.

FELIX
He’s appointed an ambassador to attend the hearing on behalf of the Free Republic of Bobistan.

R.J. STANDALL
An ambassador.

FELIX
Yeah.

R.J. STANDALL
Who’s he sending?

FELIX
Himself.
R.J. STANDALL
But then -

FELIX
As acting ambassador.

R.J. STANDALL
So we can’t arrest him.

FELIX
Not until after the trial. Once he loses, all this nonsense goes away. Until then... we have to play along.

R.J. STANDALL
But we don’t recognize his country!

FELIX
There’s another problem. Cuba is sending people.

R.J. STANDALL
We don’t recognize Cuba, either.

FELIX
Not here. They’re sending a boat to Bobistan.

R.J. STANDALL
Cuba is sending an armed vessel to a base thirteen miles off the coast of Florida?

FELIX
I don’t know about arms... yeah.

R.J. STANDALL
We have to destroy it.

FELIX
What?

R.J. STANDALL
Blow it up, take it out...

FELIX
There’s people on it.

R.J. STANDALL
When you get to this level, Felix, you find out politics isn’t always pretty.
FELIX
You want the US Government to blow up an oil rig with an American citizen on it?

R.J. STANDALL
I don’t think he’s a citizen, Felix. He says he isn’t.

FELIX
The President will never agree to that.

R.J. STANDALL
It isn’t an option. If Cuba wants it - we have to take pre-emptive action. We’re going to war with Bobistan.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY
Lupe hangs up washing on a clothesline.
Something catches her eye... she squints.
Trolling towards the rig is a PT GUNBOAT.

LUPE
Bob! Bob, quick!

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - CONTINUOUS
The Situation room, deep in the bowels of the White House - a dimly lit conference table, surrounded by the electronic visual aids that can beam the world into the nerve center of the government.
The President sits there, talking earnestly to an imposing man in an Admiral’s uniform, with a tight crewcut.

PRESIDENT
Ah, R.J., you know Admiral Carlton.

R.J. STANDALL
Good morning Mr. President. Yes, sir - we’ve met a few times. Admiral.

ADimirAL CARLTON
Hi, R.J.
PRESIDENT
I gotta tell ya, Carlton - I mean,
I’m not happy with this whole
situation.

R.J. STANDALL
What is the current -

ADIMRAL CARLTON
The Cubans are on the scene. We
have them on satellite.

R.J. Standall goes up to a video screen showing an overhead
view of the oil rig.

R.J. STANDALL
Wow. You can see everything.

ADIMRAL CARLTON
We’re zoomed out to see a wider
area - that vids from a Condor
Three. Zoom in, and you can read a
license plate with it.

PRESIDENT
Carlton - I - I can’t order a
strike on an American target. Not
in an election year.

ADIMRAL CARLTON
It’s in international waters.

PRESIDENT
I appreciate that... but this guy
is an American.

R.J. STANDALL
That’s debatable.

PRESIDENT
I don’t see...

ADIMRAL CARLTON
I believe what Secretary Standall
means is... if we take him out, it
would be better if he’s no longer a
citizen.

PRESIDENT
I don’t want it to come to that.
ADIMIRAL CARLTON
No one does. But the moment a Cuban soldier sets foot on that rig, we’re taking it down. We cannot have Cuba setting up a stronghold thirteen miles off our coast.

R.J. STANDALL
It’s a little close for comfort, Sir.

PRESIDENT
Can’t we land troops? I mean, it’s an oil rig, for chrissakes. How much damage can a handful of Cubans do?

ADIMIRAL CARLTON
Sir... They’d be on a platform a hundred feet in the air. Our boys would have to approach the rig and scale it, under fire the whole way. We would take casualties, sir.

PRESIDENT
Either way, someone gets hurt.

R.J. STANDALL
No one said politics was pretty.

ADIMIRAL CARLTON
R.J.’s right - it’s one guy whose citizenship is debatable, or we lose some of our boys.

PRESIDENT
Can we stop the Cubans from landing?

ADIMIRAL CARLTON
In international waters? No. That’s a Cuban vessel. The first one that sets foot on that rig - that’s our go.

PRESIDENT
And then?

ADIMIRAL CARLTON
Two F-15’s out of Patrick Air Force Base will take it out with sidewinders. Flight time of four minutes, they’re in a holding pattern over Biscayne as we speak.
PRESIDENT
Admiral? Can we zoom in on that boat?

EXT. CUBAN PT BOAT – DAY

The grey gunboat cuts through the water.

Up ahead, the imposing pylons of Oil Rig 214 rise out of the ocean.

Standing in the prow, almost posing, is the dashing figure of the CAPTAIN. He is well aware of how he looks – not a hair out of place, the buttons on his uniform gleam.

CAPTAIN
Preparan sus armas, soldados.

The Soldiers sitting on the foredeck check their guns – lock and load time.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Bob looks out the window with the binoculars.

BOB
There’s... six of them. Armed.

LUPE
They have come to take me back.

BOB
They can’t do that.

LUPE
They will.

BOB
We’ll stop them.

LUPE
They have guns!

BOB
I’m not going to let them.

LUPE
They don’t want you. If I go, they will leave you alone.

BOB
That’s not acceptable.
LUPE
Where are you going?

BOB
I’m going to defend my country. If they want a war, they’ll get one.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 PYLON – CONTINUOUS
The PT Boat approaches the pylon.

CAPTAIN
¡Listos, soldados!

A pineapple sails down from the rig and explodes against the Captain’s head, knocking him to the deck and splattering the alarmed men with pineapple chunks.

CAPTAIN
Ayee! ¿Que fue eso?

FIRST SOLDIER
Fue una piña, capitán.

CAPTAIN
Puedo ver eso, idiota. Ay, mi cabeza.

Another pineapple lands on the deck – then another.

The soldiers are taken aback. Nothing’s trained them for attack by produce.

CAPTAIN
¿Qué están esperando? Dispren!

The soldiers start FIRING.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 – CONTINUOUS
Lupe and Bob duck as bullets ring off the steel structure around them.

BOB
Guess they don’t like pineapples.

LUPE
Bob!

BOB
It’s gonna be okay, Lupe. Here... when I say – turn this wheel.
He indicates a bright red handle wheel.

    LUPE
    Okay.

Bob risks a look over the side.

    BOB
    Here they come.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - DAY

The three watch the video screen. Admiral Carlton has a secure phone in his hand.

    ADMIRAL CARLTON
    Here they come.

    PRESIDENT
    Was that pineapples he was dropping on them?

    ADMIRAL CARLTON
    I believe so, sir.

    PRESIDENT
    Zoom in, I want to check that.

    ADMIRAL CARLTON
    Well, Sir, it would be good to keep the wider -

    PRESIDENT
    Zoom in, Admiral.

    ADMIRAL CARLTON
    Yes, sir.
    (into phone)
    Magnify by ten. Track right point two.

    PRESIDENT
    Goddamn. That’s some technology.

The other two shoot a look at him.

    PRESIDENT
    The Condor - satellite imaging. Not the pineapples.
EXT. OIL RIG 214 - CONTINUOUS

Bob has the access hatch open. He drags a length of fire hose over to it.

BOB
Once they’re on that ladder, there’s no way they can climb and shoot at the same time. I don’t think they can make it.

EXT. GULF OF MEXICO - CONTINUOUS

The boat nudges the pylon.

CAPTAIN
Vamanos!

The soldiers leap from the prow onto the pylon ladder, and start climbing up it.

CAPTAIN
Sosténgalo fijamente!

He follows his men onto the ladder.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ADMARAL CARLTON
That’s it, sir. They’re on it.

PRESIDENT
I hate to do it.

R.J. STANDALL
He made his choice. If he doesn’t like our country - screw him.

ADMARAL CARLTON
He’s not going to hold them off with pineapples, sir.

PRESIDENT
Give the order.

ADMARAL CARLTON
( into phone)
We have hostiles on the rig. Launch Flyswatter. That is a go...
Confirmed.
(To the President)
Three minutes, sir.
EXT. BLUE SKIES - DAY

Two F-15 Fighter planes break off from their high level pattern, and turn, diving down towards the ocean below.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 PYLON - DAY

The Soldiers climb up the rungs, the boat waiting below them. They are halfway up - and climbing quickly.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - CONTINUOUS

Bob watches them through the hatchway, the fire hose in his hand.

BOB
Almost... wait for it.

INT. FIGHTER PLANE - DAY

The F-15’s are low over the water, racing at high speed.

FIGHTER PILOT
We have target on radar, waiting on visual.

CONTROL
(On Radio)
Radar confirmed. Arm missiles.

The Fighter Pilot flicks various safety switches.

FIGHTER PILOT
Missiles are hot.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - DAY

The soldiers are close enough that Bob can see the sweat from their exertions - not to mention pineapple juice.

BOB
Okay, Lupe... Now! Now! Now! ... Lupe?

He looks up... Lupe is nowhere in sight.

The red handle wheel has been abandoned.

Bob looks down in alarm.
The soldiers are seconds away from reaching the top.

   BOB
   LUPE!

He slams the hatch down, and goes running for the wheel.

INT. FIGHTER PLANE - DAY

The F-15’s race closer.

On the horizon, Oil Rig 214 appears.

   FIGHTER PILOT
   I have visual. Target confirmed.
   One minute to target.

   CONTROL
   (On Radio)
   Copy that.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

   ADMIRAL CARLTON
   One minute, Mr. President.

   R.J. STANDALL
   Say good night, Bob.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - CONTINUOUS

Bob furiously turns the red wheel.

Water starts filling the fire hose.

Bob RACES THE WATER to the end of the hose, desperate to grab it before it becomes uncontrollable.

The kinks straighten out, the snapping sound of the canvas hose goading Bob on faster.

He DIVES for the end, grabbing it, throwing his weight on it just as -

The HATCH OPENS - A SOLDIER POSES HIS HEAD UP TO SEE:

Bob - aiming the fire hose point blank.

   BOB
   May I see your passport and entry visa?
The Soldier tries to swing his rifle up, as Bob slams open
the gate valve of the fire nozzle, sending a JET OF WATER
CRASHING into the soldier.

Water cascades down the pylon.
The CAPTAIN, in the rear, looks up in alarm.

    CAPTAIN
    ¡Regresen al barco!

The Soldiers are already backpedaling as fast as they can.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 PYLON - CONTINUOUS
The PT Boat DRIVER looks up at the chaos.
A Soldier plummets down, splashing into the water.

    DRIVER
    ¡Dios mio!

The Soldier surfaces, spluttering.

    SPLUTTERING SOLDIER
    ¡Auxilio! ¡Ven por mí!

Another Soldier comes splashing down.
The Driver looks up... and sees something alarming:

High above, a derrick is swinging out over the water,
directly over him.

Hanging from its cable hook is a huge, square diesel
generator - a two ton block of steel.

The derrick jolts to a halt, making the payload swing wildly.

    DRIVER
    Eso no es bueno.

INT. DERRICK - CONTINUOUS
Lupe desperately moves the levers, trial and error to target
the boat below.

She flips open a safety guard on a large mushroom button -
EMERGENCY CARGO RELEASE.
EXT. RIG 214 PYLON - CONTINUOUS

The last of the soldiers has been knocked into the water.

Only the CAPTAIN remains, desperately climbing down the last few rungs, drenched by the water spraying down.

CAPTAIN
¡Ven aquí!

DRIVER
¡No! Es demasiado peligroso.

The driver starts backing the boat away, transfixed by the sight of the swaying weight dangling far above him.

CAPTAIN
¡Haslo!

DRIVER
¡No!

The soldiers are swimming desperately after the retreating boat.

With a deep breath, the Captain throws away his hat and jumps in.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

ADMIRAL CARLTON
Sir, they’re off the rig.

PRESIDENT
I can see that! Call it off!

R.J. STANDALL
But Mr. President!

ADMIRAL CARLTON
(Into phone)
Abort! Abort! Abort!

R.J. STANDALL
This is an opportunity!

EXT. FIGHTER PLANE - CONTINUOUS

The Fighter pilot’s finger TIGHTENS on the trigger.
CONTROL
(On Radio)
Abort! Abort mission!

The pilot’s finger relaxes.
The planes BANK HARD.

EXT. OIL RIG 214 - CONTINUOUS
Bob shuts down the hose.
He rolls over, exhausted as the TWO PLANES ROAR OVERHEAD.

BOB
Jesus!
Bob looks up to see Lupe at the controls of the derrick.

BOB
Lupe, no!

INT. DERRICK - MOMENTS LATER
Bob grabs open the door.

BOB
Lupe! Don’t!

LUPE
I could sink them.

BOB
I know... but you can’t.

LUPE
¿Por que no?

BOB
You’d kill them.

LUPE
They were shooting at us.

BOB
I know, but... they can’t get us here. They failed. We’re safe...
but if we kill someone, it would never end. They’d destroy us.
LUPE
I thought you would fight for this place. For your country.

BOB
Not like that.

Lupe grabs him - holds him tight.

He turns to watch the PT boat speeding way.

BOB
They’re gone. And you’re still here.

She kisses him tentatively.

And he returns her kiss – deeply, passionately.

Adrenalin fueled passion.

They kiss again – this one’s a scorcher.

Her hands run up his back.

He pulls her shirt up.

INT. WHITE HOUSE SIT ROOM – CONTINUOUS

The most powerful man in the world and his two advisors, sit and stare at the video screen.

PRESIDENT
Goddamn. Can we zoom in on that?

Admiral Carlton pushes a button – the screen goes black.

ADMIRAL CARLTON
I think the attack’s over, sir.

PRESIDENT
I thought she was gonna drop that thing - woulda creamed them fellers. Like droppin’ a soup can on a cockroach. We’re not sending our boys into that, Admiral.

ADMIRAL CARLTON
Don’t think so, sir.

R.J. STANDALL
Sir, we can’t just let him get away with this.
PRESIDENT
Settle it in court, R.J.

R.J. STANDALL
It’ll be tough. It’s an international -

PRESIDENT
R.J., I don’t want to hear about it, I want you to take care of it. Now are you on my team or what?

R.J. STANDALL
Yes, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT
Thank you.

INT. RJ STANDALL’S OFFICE - DAY
RJ can barely stand still.

R.J. STANDALL
I want him dead, Felix. I want that man’s head on a goddamn platter.

FELIX
Yes, sir.

R.J. STANDALL
We won’t lose this court case, will we.

FELIX
I don’t believe so.

R.J. STANDALL
That’s not good enough. I need to be sure.

FELIX
It’s... Bob Lewis is an American, but that rig is in international waters. We just don’t control that.

R.J. STANDALL
Huh.

INT. OIL RIG 214 FOREMAN’S CABIN - EVENING
Lupe nestles her head in the crook of Bob’s arm, comfortably resting in bed together.
BOB
If I don’t win this… you know that they’ll arrest me.

LUPE
I don’t want to lose you.

BOB
This… this started as a joke. I mean – Bobistan? It’s like you’re playing touch in the backyard with some buddies, and all of a sudden, you look up, and you’re in the Superbowl. Everyone’s watching, and it’s for real.

LUPE
I have no idea what you just said.

BOB
I’m sorry if I’ve ruined things for you.

LUPE
Bob – you saved me. I was on the ocean in a sinking boat.

She kisses him.

BOB
Me too.

He kisses her and they embrace, passion rising again…

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. OIL RIG 214 CONTROL ROOM – MORNING

Bob is on the radio.

Lupe enters.

BOB
Good morning, beautiful. Sleep well?

LUPE
What is this?

She’s holding a home-made passport.
BOB
I made it. The first Bobistan passport.

LUPE
I come with you to Washington.

BOB
That’s the plan.

LUPE
Ambassador will have entourage.

BOB
When I lose this court case, they’ll arrest you too. But they’ll have to find you first. When we get to Washington, the first chance you get... you run. This is Sandy’s number. I’ll get some money to him for you.

LUPE
I don’t want your money.

BOB
You’ll need it. I won’t.

The radio crackles to life.

SANDY
(On Radio)
Bob, it’s Sandy. I’m just pulling up now, meet you at the tugger.

Bob picks up the mic.

BOB
Meet us at the pylon, Sandy. We’re both coming down.

EXT. GOLF COURSE – DAY

The PRESIDENT tees up – surrounded by an ominous ring of dark suited SECRET SERVICE MEN.

PRESIDENT
Uh... Stanley?

One of the Secret Service men – STANLEY – looks back at the President.
PRESIDENT
You’re kind of in my lie there,
Stan. Hate to move ya.

STAN makes a quick glance at his SUPERIOR for confirmation,
before opening up the ring, and moving clear of the shot.

PRESIDENT
Thanks. Kinda hard to see the flag there.

R.J. STANDALL approaches, tentatively. Just as the President
is about to swing —

R.J. STANDALL
Mr. President?

The President SWIPES and CLEANLY MISSES the ball.

PRESIDENT
Ah, hellfire! ... Delete that.

SECRET SERVICE SUPERIOR
Never happened, sir.

R.J. STANDALL
Sorry, sir.

PRESIDENT
Don’t tell me that Bob thing ain’t
cleared up yet. I am not going
through that again.

R.J. STANDALL
I have an idea.

R.J. hands over some paperwork.

R.J. STANDALL
Executive order 13878.

The President reads it over.

PRESIDENT
You really want me to do this?

R.J. STANDALL
You can rescind it next week. We
won’t even need to change the
charts.

PRESIDENT
I don’t know...
R.J. STANDALL
You don’t have a choice, sir. Not
unless you want every yahoos from
here to Pomona declaring they’re
not going to pay taxes.

PRESIDENT
Give me a pen.

The President signs the paper and hands it back.

PRESIDENT
Now watch me hit this one.

The ball slices, and RICOCHETS off STANLEY’S HEAD.

The other Secret Servicemen stand impassive as Stonehenge
while Stanley slowly keels over.

PRESIDENT
I did not mean to do that, Stan.
Stan? Stanley?

EXT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - DAY

A yellow taxi pulls up. Flying on its hood is a little flag -
a miniature tie-dyed Bobistan Flag on a suction cup standard.
Official ambassadorial transport... with a meter.

Bob and Lupe get out, and start up the Courthouse steps.

TAXI DRIVER
Hey, buddy! You want your flag
back?

BOB
That’s okay - I don’t think it’ll
matter.

LUPE
Take it. You leave as ambassador.
You will win this.

BOB
Lupe... you need to face facts.
There’s no way I’m walking out of
here except in handcuffs.

LUPE
No. You will do it.

She runs back, and grabs the Bobistan flag.
Bob looks up the steps. A pair of COURT OFFICERS are walking towards them

**BOB**
Okay, Lupe. You gotta go.

**LUPE**
No.

**BOB**
Lupe, I promised I would get you to the States. It’s what you wanted, but you have to go **now**. They’re coming.

Lupe grabs him and kisses him — and turns away.
The Officers escort Bob up the steps.

**EXT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY — DAY**

R.J. Standall and Felix are walking along, deep in conversation.

**R.J. STANDALL**
There is no way a federal judge is going to rule in his favor.

**FELIX**
But a jury...

**R.J. STANDALL**
It’s not going to be a jury trial. Think I’d let that happen? The last thing we want is for this to become a three ring circus in the court of public opinion.

He opens the door to the Courtroom.

**INT. COURTROOM — CONTINUOUS**

It’s a three ring circus.

Reporters jostle viewers in the seats, standing room only at the back.

Felix and RJ walk down the aisle, dumbfounded.

Felix sits down at the Prosecutions table — shaking hands with a middle aged PROSECUTOR — comb-over and horn rimmed glasses.
R.J. sits down at a reserved seat, front row, directly behind the prosecution table.

He leans forward.

R.J. STANDALL
(whispered)
What the hell is all this?

Felix shakes his head – no idea.

INT. SPORTS BAR – DAY

The Florida Sports Bar. The marlin over the bar still has the lacy bra hanging from its spike.

Sandy enters.

SANDY
(Indicating the projection TV)
Hey, you get Court TV on that?

BARKEEP
Can do.

SANDY
They’re televising the hearing on Bobistan.

BARKEEP
That wacko’s goin’ to court?

He flips the channel on the TV.

BAR PATRON
I got five bucks says they lock him up for treason.

INT. COURTROOM – DAY

A CLERK enters.

CLERK
All rise – Justice Abigail T. Scanlon presiding.

The JUDGE enters – she’s in her seventies, and has a look that yearns for the days of public hangings.

JUDGE
Be seated.
She holds up a stack of files and ledgers a foot thick.

JUDGE
I’ve read the people’s brief...

She brings out a single sheet of yellow notepad paper.

JUDGE
... And the defense’s. I’ll hear arguments.

PROSECUTOR
Your honor, this is, at its heart, a tax evasion scam. That man is a criminal. If I may cite people versus Rosa, your honor -

JUDGE
I noted that one in your brief. You cite seventy two cases.

PROSECUTOR
I limited myself to the most similar ones, your honor. Many people have tried this before. There are two separate individuals that have claimed all the international waters in the world to be theirs. There’s one outfit that declared they owned the moon, and sold plots of land on it. Last week, a high school sophomore in Texas declared his bedroom was a separate country. ... This man is wasting the court’s time on a crackpot idea that is, at best, a tax evasion scheme, and at worst, poses an actual threat. A Cuban gunboat has already approached Oil Rig 214. The United States has never recognized these claims - and never will. There is no precedent for that, your honor.

INT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

There are more patrons now - everyone’s watching the trial.

BAR PATRON
He’s so screwed. Nine to one he’s going to jail. Any takers?
BAR MAID
Pity. Nice dream while it lasted...
Hey, Mack - I’m declaring this bar
is my country. The Queen’s taking
the day off.

BARKEEP
Yeah, that makes me the King - go
get the empties.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY
Bob makes his argument. Trying to.

BOB
Your honor... I didn’t mean for all
this to happen... it wasn’t... it
just sort of happened.

JUDGE
Very eloquent, Mr. Lewis.

BOB
Wait... maritime law states...

JUDGE
I am well aware of the Maritime
Regulations. The area in question
may well be on the high seas, but
that doesn’t mean you can simply
come up with the idea of claiming
it a new country.

BOB
Why not? A country is an idea.
...Where does America end, and
Canada begin? Or Mexico? You draw a
line in the sand, and you say: This
is us; that is the other. Bobistan
is outside that line. It is in
international waters. The US
doesn’t own it. There’s...

Bob can see on the Judge’s face that his argument is falling
on deaf ears.

He looks away... and sees Lupe walking into the courtroom.

She holds up the Bobistan flag and gives it a little wave.

Bob turns back.
In the corner of the room, as in all federal courtrooms, is a standard bearing the flag of the United States.

Bob stares at it, his mind spinning.

    JUDGE
    Mr. Lewis?

    BOB
    Your honor... This country was founded by a handful of people standing up to the most powerful empire the world had ever seen - and saying: No. This is ours. A nation built on freedom, on the liberty of the individual. You can laugh at an oil platform being a country - but Bobistan has its own economy. It’s an oil producing nation, with a burgeoning tourist industry. It has passports, its own currency, its own stamps... its own flag. Bobistan has been attacked by a hostile country, and has defended its honor, fought for its freedom. How is that not a country? How is it any different than thirteen colonies declaring their independence in 1776? There is a precedent, your honor. You’re sitting in it.

Bob sits down to the WILD APPLAUSE of the onlookers.

    JUDGE
    Order! Order in the court!

INT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

The crowd watching the TV high five - they love this.

    SANDY
    I got a ten spot says he’s gonna make it.

    BARKEEP
    I’ll cover that.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The judge examines Bob’s single sheet brief.
JUDGE
Mr. Lewis... The State Department does not recognize your country, and this court does not have the authority to recognize a foreign nation - that is not the purview of the Judicial Branch... But as to the question of whether you have broken any laws... This court - and the United States of America - does not have jurisdiction on a vessel - including your rig - flying a foreign flag in international waters. Whether or not we recognize that flag, the fact that it is not ours is enough. Bobistan has a right to exist. Mr. Lewis, you are free to go.

BOB
King, your honor.

For the first time, the Judge smiles.

JUDGE
King Bob the First, you are free to reign in peace.

Lupe runs down to hug Bob as the Judge raises her gavel...

R.J. STANDALL
Your honor!

JUDGE
Mr. Secretary... we don’t rule everything.

R.J. STANDALL
I have here executive order number 13878. It is signed by the President of the United States of America.

JUDGE
Approach the bench.

R.J. STANDALL
(As he walks up)
Your honor, in the interest of national security, this order expands our territorial waters from twelve miles to fourteen miles.
BOB
What?

JUDGE
Let me see that!

R.J. Standall hands the Judge the order and smiles smugly at Bob.

JUDGE
Are you serious?

R.J. STANDALL
Yes, your honor.

JUDGE
Every international treaty will have to be amended, every nautical chart redrawn – the twelve mile limit is an international standard.

R.J. STANDALL
It’s signed by the President. (He turns to Bob) Mr. Lewis? Your rig is now in United States waters, and your ass is mine.

LUPE
Bob? What does this mean? Bob?

JUDGE
Mr. Lewis, this appears to be genuine.

BOB
(to Lupe) I’m sorry.

R.J. STANDALL
It’s over, Lewis.

LUPE
You tried.

BOB
We’ve lost.

LUPE
You can’t fight a government. They do whatever they want.

The Prosecutor and R.J. Standall congratulate each other.
Felix looks wistful - part of him wanted Bob to get away with it.

Reporters furiously scribble away.

INT. SPORTS BAR - DAY

The crowd has fallen silent.

Sandy looks stunned.

INT. COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bob looks at Lupe - and grabs his legal pad, scrawls something on it.

JUDGE
Mr. Lewis?

BOB
One second, your honor.

R.J. STANDALL
What are you...?

Bob grabs the piece of paper and runs up to the Judge with it.

BOB
Here.

JUDGE
(reading)
I, King Bob the First, hereby assert my sovereignty to all territorial waters within the twelve mile limit of Bobistan.

BOB
It’s the international standard.

R.J. STANDALL
That doesn’t mean anything!

FELIX
Actually, I rather think it does.

BOB
Your honor?

JUDGE
It’s a signed decree...
R.J. STANDALL
Yes, but he can’t just...

BOB
I don’t see why not.

R.J. STANDALL
Because we own it already.

FELIX
In cases where territorial waters overlap, international law usually arbitrates directly down the middle.

R.J. STANDALL
What?!

FELIX
I think you just lost us five miles.

R.J. STANDALL
He can’t just declare that’s his water!

FELIX
You did.

R.J. is speechless.

JUDGE
I believe I have already ruled - Bobistan is not subject to the laws of this court. Not my problem, Mr. Secretary. You can try taking it up with the U.N. - but I don’t think any country wants territorial waters to become a point of dispute. Court is adjourned!

The Judge SLAMS her Gavel.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Bob and Lupe sweep triumphantly out the door.

Several REPORTERS are waiting.

REPORTER ONE
King Bob! King Bob, what’s your first decree?
REPORTER TWO
Are you planning to live in
Bobistan permanently?

SERIOUS REPORTER
His Royal Highness, King Robert the
First...

BOB
(in passing)
‘s King Bob, actually.

SERIOUS REPORTER
A sovereign nation, only 13 miles
from our coastline...

ENTERTAINMENT REPORTER
King Bob - Are you looking for a
Queen yet? When’s the Royal
Succession?

Bob and Lupe scramble into the cab, still mobbed by
reporters.

INT. TAXI - CONTINUOUS

DRIVER
Where to, Mac?

Bob hands Lupe a Bobistan document.

BOB
Where to?

LUPE
Where?

BOB
Anywhere. This is your official
appointment as the Bobistan
ambassador to the United States.
You can live anywhere you want.

LUPE
There’s only one place I want to
be.

DISSOLVE TO:
EXT. BOBISTAN - DAY

Oil Rig 214 has transformed - the entire platform is covered in grass.

There is a little cottage, smoke curling from the chimney, a swing-set and climbing frame; and a four-hole golf course with sand traps.

Three children play on the climbing frame in front of the cottage as LUPE watches them from her deck chair.

Bob tees off.

BOB
Watch me hit this.

The ball sails straight and true.

EXT. AERIAL VIEW OF BOBISTAN - CONTINUOUS

An idyllic slice of paradise, perched on steel legs, far above the bright blue waters of a tranquil sea.

FADE OUT

CREDITS ROLL OVER STILLS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF:

Emperor Randy I, Empire of Randania;
Leicester Hemingway, President of Republic of New Atlantis;
King Ed Schafer of the Biffeche People of Senegal;
Col. Jefferson Jones, Kingdom of Callaway;
Prince Leonard of the Hutt River Province;
King Harman, Island of Lundy;
Michael Kennedy, Premier of the People’s Democratic Republic of Quay;
Jacques I, Empire of the Sahara;
King James I, Principality of Trinidad;
Giorgio Rosa, King of the Isle of Roses;
and
Prince Roy and Princess Joan of Sealand.
(formerly Rough’s Tower in the North Sea, to date the most successful micro-country.)