

“Trailblazer Is Angel”  
A short play  
by Mr. Francis Zuccarello

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Characters

The President (of the United States Of America) – A middle-aged white male in a suit

The Chief Of Staff – A tall, middle-aged white male in a suit

The Secret Service Agent – A thirty-something male in a suit.

The Air Force Captain – A thirty-something male in a uniform.

The National Security Advisor – A forty-something African-American woman.

Computerized Woman’s Voice

Time

September 11, 2001

Locations

Various, all represented minimally with four chairs and one table.

The Presidential Limousine

Booker Elementary School

Air Force One

Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana

Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, Command Center

The White House, Washington, D. C.

N. B. The lines attributed to The Pet Goat are not quotations. They are invented by this author.

“Trailblazer Is Angel”

Scene 1

SETTING

The Presidential Limousine, back seat.

September 11, 2001

AT RISE

FOUR MEN sit in four chairs. Three men wear pressed dark suits and one man wears a crisp blue Air Force officer’s uniform and white cap.

Two men, THE PRESIDENT and THE CHIEF OF STAFF (TCOS) sit alongside each other. The other two men sit in front of, and face, them. The Secret Service AGENT is considerably younger. He wears reflective sunglasses, a cufflink microphone and an earpiece. A curly cue wire connects them. Alongside AGENT, and about the same age, sits the Air Force CAPTAIN. He holds a silver metal suitcase on his lap.

TCOS

I’m afraid –

THE PRESIDENT

Hmmm?

TCOS

(Laughs)

I’m afraid, Mister President, we’ll be late to school.

THE PRESIDENT

I was always tardy to school, Chief.

TCOS

But not truant.

THE PRESIDENT

Late ain’t no sin. Never is the sin.

AGENT bends his arm and speaks into his shirt cuff.

AGENT

This is Limo One. Trailblazer T-minus five minutes.

(Listens)

Roger that.

THE PRESIDENT

And know this Chief, you got me goin’ to school but nobody bes’ try to learn me nothin’.  
Nuh-huh.

TCOS

Never, Mister President.

COMPUTERIZED WOMAN’S VOICE

Please stand by for a National Security Network Alert Protocol.

THE PRESIDENT and TCOS lean forward as if to watch  
a computer monitor in front of them.

THE PRESIDENT

What’s that on the screen?

TCOS

It says, “Plane Crash New York City.” Looks like one of the Twin Towers is on fire.

AGENT and CAPTAIN both turn and look over with  
interest.

THE PRESIDENT

Plane crash? New York City?

TCOS

That’s one awful pilot.

THE PRESIDENT

That ain’t an awful pilot. Good grief! That’s war. Maybe worst.

TCOS

(Looks to side, as if out limousine window)

We’re at the school. I’ll find out what’s going on.

THE PRESIDENT

I know what’s goin’ on. This is it! The beginnin’ of The End is startin’. Call Jerusalem.  
Check Israel. Do I gotta paint’ cha a picture? It’s Armageddon!

(more)

THE PRESIDENT (cont'd)

(looks at the display screen)

Is it me or does that hole in the building look like Bugs Bunny?

AGENT

Mister President, please, I think you should stay here in the command car.

AGENT grabs THE PRESIDENT's arm but he shakes himself free.

THE PRESIDENT

Lord don't Rapture me away when America needs me!

(Smiles, laughs)

Heh heh! But good grief, boys! Don't hold me down! The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand. Mark, chapter nine, verse eleven.

TCOS, AGENT and CAPTAIN take their chairs away.  
TCOS crosses the stage, but AGENT and CAPTAIN exit.

## Scene 2

SETTING

Booker Elementary School

THE PRESIDENT sits alone. He smiles broadly. He fidgets and tries to get serious. He crosses his legs and cups his knees with his hands. He laughs to himself and smiles again. With mime, he opens an imaginary book.

THE PRESIDENT

Y'all read along with me. 'Cause sometimes I need help. "The Pet Goat."

TCOS' cellular phone rings and he swiftly answers.

TCOS

Hello.

(Listens)

What do you mean, an airliner?

(Listens)

I know what an airliner is! What's happening in Israel? Iraq? Iran?

(Listens)

All quiet? Just the U. S., huh? The President's in the classroom. I need to tell him immediately.

THE PRESIDENT

Whenever I travel by car, plane or boat, I always take my special pet goat.

TCOS walks over to THE PRESIDENT. TCOS leans over and speaks into THE PRESIDENT’s ear.

TCOS

America is under attack.

THE PRESIDENT frowns and droops his shoulders.  
TCOS takes two steps back.

THE PRESIDENT

(Turns an imaginary page)

Like the pilot and driver and the C. E. O., now my pet goat has a horn to blow. The end.

THE PRESIDENT closes the imaginary book and stands.  
He and TCOS walk a few feet away and confer.

THE PRESIDENT (cont’d)

You sure people ain’t liftin’ off for Heaven?

TCOS

No sir. Only crashing to the ground. A second plane hit the second of the Twin Towers.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief! It’s “The Towerin’ Inferno” times two.

(He presses his hands together, closes his  
eyes and prays.)

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evildoer.

(Then he’s back to work.)

All right, Chief. But ain’t it a sign that I’m reading a story about a goat. Right outta  
Matthew twenty five.

TCOS

That’s the problem with this age, the people all look for signs.

THE PRESIDENT

You got me there, Chief. But good grief, I still believe the time is fulfilled, and the  
Kingdom of God is at hand.

TCOS

Since we may undergo regime change, should I get in touch with the Vice President?

THE PRESIDENT

Yep, Chief, yep. Get with that line of official communicaters. Get with that.

TCOS

Also, Mister President, sir, the press and the public want a statement.

THE PRESIDENT

Prepare ye the way –

TCOS

Please, Mister President, the tragedies for now are apparent terrorist attacks.

TCOS walks away. THE PRESIDENT clasps his hands as if in prayer. He walks to center stage and looks forward. His expression is most serious but still kind of goofy.

THE PRESIDENT

“...Today we’ve had a national tragedy. Two airplanes have crashed into the World Trade Center in an apparent terrorist attack on our country.”

(He jogs to the edge of the stage.)

Boys, don’t hold me down. Let’s get in the air pronto and get back to “Warshin’ton.”

### Scene 3

SETTING

Air Force One

AGENT and CAPTAIN jog onto the stage. Each carries a chair. THE PRESIDENT jogs back to a table at center stage that has an office desk phone on it. AGENT places his chair behind THE PRESIDENT and holds it for him as he sits down.

THE PRESIDENT

Get some news on that there TV.

TCOS walks over, takes out his cell phone, and stands behind THE PRESIDENT.

TCOS

(Into phone)

Yes, The President is aboard.

CAPTAIN, who still also carries the suitcase, puts his chair down alongside THE PRESIDENT and sits. He plops the suitcase onto his lap.

THE PRESIDENT looks and points slightly off to his left, as if at a television.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief look at the TV! War at the very door of The Pentagon.

TCOS, AGENT, and CAPTAIN look left as if they also watch the television. It grips THE PRESIDENT's attention.

Engines scream as Air Force One takes off.

AGENT

(Speaks into cuff)

Trailblazer is angel.

THE PRESIDENT

Captain, y'all want me to ask about anybody ya know over there? Over there at the Pentagon?

CAPTAIN

Thank you, Mister President, no.

TCOS

(Covers the mouthpiece of his phone)

How the heck could they hit The Pentagon?

THE PRESIDENT

It's pretty dog gone obvious from the air. Good grief, got two extra sides than other buildings. Two extra sides.

CAPTAIN

(Aside)

Two extra sides?

TCOS

How the heck could they do all this? And who are they?

THE PRESIDENT

If you're askin' me, I still think the horns are gonna blow and the seals broke open.

TCOS

(Listens to his phone)

Mister President, all civilian airplane take-offs have been halted.



THE PRESIDENT

But if the Lord God Almighty shall not act today...

TCOS

And all airbourne planes ordered to land.

THE PRESIDENT

...We shall act in His Name. Thy Kingdom come.

A woman, THE NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR (TNSA), enters. She is a prim African-American in her 40s with a Betty Crocker hairdo. She stands about ten feet from THE PRESIDENT but stares past him, arms crossed, lips pursed. She holds a desk phone in one hand.

TNSA

I was deeply offended by his remark, “Do you want a million little Zapruder films out there?” As if I did. I’ll remain in my office and watch TV until that man apologizes.

TCOS

(Still on phone)

We’re now at DefCon Two.

THE PRESIDENT

Is that second from the top, Chief? Or second from the bottom?

TCOS stares at CAPTAIN and gives him a look that says, “help me out, here.”

CAPTAIN holds his hand high and wags his head “no.” He ducks his hand low and nods his head “yes.”

TCOS

Second from the bottom.

THE PRESIDENT

Good thing you got the communicaters... communicaterin’.

TNSA lifts the handset, presses a speed-dial button and puts the phone to her ear.

The desk phone on the table rings. THE PRESIDENT answers. They speak into their handsets. He calls her by the nickname, Flip.

TNSA

Mister President, are you safe?

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, Flip, are you okay?

TNSA

Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT

I was darn sure this here was The Rapture, Flip. Darn sure the time is fulfilled.

TNSA

Signs point to a very human cause.

THE PRESIDENT

The Kingdom of God could still be at hand, Flip, so get me back to “Warshin’ton” pronto.  
Back to El Casa Blanca.

TNSA

Given the possibility, however unlikely, of impending regime change, Mister President, I recommend you activate the Emergency Alert System.

THE PRESIDENT

What’s that?

TNSA

It used to be called the Emergency Broadcast System.

THE PRESIDENT

Aww, man, Flip. Is that that buzz used to come on when I was just tryin’ to watch “Match Game ’73?”

TNSA

Sir, I suppose there was more than one buzz you used to get when watching television thirty years ago.

THE PRESIDENT

How can you make jokes – ?

TNSA

On the day of the worst American tragedy since the Toronto Blue Jays won consecutive World Series championships.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, Flip!

TNSA

The Emergency Alert System is the intrusive announcement that informs Americans where to tune in, and when, for official instructions in the case of a calamity such as this.

THE PRESIDENT

Americans, real Americans, will know where to go for official instructions. Fox News. Everybody else can go to CNN.

TNSA

I'll take that as a No.

THE PRESIDENT

Yeah.

(A beat)

No.

(A beat)

Yeah, no.

TCOS

Well, I've lost my signal.

(He switches off his phone and puts it in his jacket pocket. He steps over to the table.)

Mister President, are you speaking to our National Security Advisor?

THE PRESIDENT

Yep, Chief, it's Flip.

TCOS

Can you put her on speakerphone, I'd like to ask her if we know who's done this.

THE PRESIDENT

Flip, I'm gonna put you on the speakerphone 'cause my Chief has some questions.

THE PRESIDENT looks at the many buttons on the phone. He moves his index finger in a circle around them.

AGENT steps over and presses a button.

TCOS calls TNSA, Doctor.

TCOS

Doctor, do we know who's behind this... mass murder?

TNSA

We have some leads, some evidence and two hypotheses, with one dissenting opinion.

THE PRESIDENT

(Perturbed)

Yeah, but good grief, you got any ideas who these evildoers are?

TCOS goes through a rapid-fire rollcall of agencies.

TCOS

C. I. A. ?

TNSA

Al Qaeda.

TCOS

F. B. I. ?

TNSA

Al Qaeda.

TCOS

N. S. A. ?

TNSA

Al Qaeda.

TCOS

Defense?

TNSA

Iraq.

TCOS

And you?

TNSA

U. B. L., a. k. a., Osama bin Laden.

THE PRESIDENT

They all look alike...

THE PRESIDENT stares off again at the television.

TNSA

There’s something else to report. The wife of our Solicitor General was on the plane that hit The Pentagon. He claims they spoke over the phone before she was murdered. She described the hijackers as Islamic terrorists.

THE PRESIDENT

They all look alike. They all love evil.  
(Points to the television)  
Good grief, the horror!

TCOS

God bless America, one of the Towers...

TNSA

It’s collapsing.

THE PRESIDENT

(Throws the handset onto the table)  
No! Lord Jesus, no!

TNSA jumps back at the noise. She slowly hangs up.

TNSA

Krakatoa... East of Broadway.

THE PRESIDENT

“In the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall.” Isaiah, chapter nine, verse eleven.  
D’ja know that, Chief?

TCOS

No sir.

THE PRESIDENT

That’s it! I’m gonna rain re-vengeance. Re-vengeance! Rain it!

TCOS

But on whom?

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief! Do I gotta paint’cha a picture? On every East-facin’ raghead we can reach.  
(He stands and paces to the side of the stage,  
away from TNSA. TCOS follows him.)  
The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand.  
(more)

THE PRESIDENT (cont'd)

(He looks downward, as if through a window.)

Thinkin', Chief, when we was kids. Jebbie, he'd knock over my building blocks all the time.

TCOS

Sir, we can't pick our families.

CAPTAIN

(Aside)

Which was unfortunate for Jeb.

THE PRESIDENT

Chief, what town is that down there?

TCOS

Don't know...

THE PRESIDENT

(Waves over AGENT)

Hey, pardner, what there town is that?

AGENT

(Walks over)

The Gulf. The river bends. The lake. Looks like New Orleans, Mister President.

THE PRESIDENT

(To AGENT)

Ain't been there since the eighty-eight convention. Need to pay me a visit.

(To TCOS)

After the rain... of re-vengeance. After Kingdom come.

TCOS

Yes sir.

THE PRESIDENT

We ain't gettin' no closer to "Warshin'ton," are we? Who's flyin' this crate? The stewardess?

Scene 4

SETTING

Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana

THE PRESIDENT walks to the other side of the table.  
AGENT follows him with the chair. TCOS grabs a chair  
and sits alongside THE PRESIDENT. AGENT and  
CAPTAIN, with the suitcase, stand nearby.

AGENT

(Speaks into cuff)

Trailblazer, in the pelican’s nest. How long do we stay here at Barksdale?

(Listens, then with surprise)

Indefinitely... ?

COMPUTERIZED WOMAN’S VOICE

Please stand by for a National Security Network Alert Protocol.

TNSA takes a chair and sits across from THE  
PRESIDENT. They all stare directly ahead as if they  
watch teleconference screens.

TNSA

Gentlemen, can you see me?

TCOS

Yes, Doctor.

THE PRESIDENT

You alone?

TNSA

As per your request.

THE PRESIDENT

I gotta get back to “Warshin’ton,” Flip. Get back at them evil doers. Good grief! Why the  
heck am I in Louisiana?

TNSA

Perhaps for lunch? I recommend you try the Crawfish Etouffee.

THE PRESIDENT

C’mon, Flip!

TNSA

I’m aware that the Vice-President has urged you to stay away from Washington.

THE PRESIDENT

I know The Vice said I’m in the cross hairs. But I don’t give a rattlesnake’s shake about what he says.

TNSA

And the Evangelist said, “smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.”

THE PRESIDENT

Yep, Mark, chapter nine, verse eleven.

CAPTAIN

(Aside)

Didn’t he quote that already?

TCOS

The skies seem clear.

THE PRESIDENT

My pilot’s got the “No Smotin” light on.

TNSA

I have no information to provide you. I am, in your family tradition, out of the loop, and not by choice.

THE PRESIDENT

Heck, insert yourself back in, Flip ol’ gal. Get me the nine-one-one. Good grief! We done lost two towers of New Yorkers and now four planeloads of Americans. Four planeloads! That’s one for each Horseman Of The Apocalypse. This here is Coca Cola.

CAPTAIN

Coca Cola?

TCOS

The Real Thing.

TNSA

Yes, Mister President.

THE PRESIDENT

No more swattin’ flies. It’s Kingdom come. We hit the raghead varmints in Baghdad first, then Mecca, then Iran. Smote ‘em nucular style.



TCOS

(Leaps from chair)

Nuclear... ahem, nuclear— ?

THE PRESIDENT

Shoot yeah! Wipe 'em all out in one swell boot.

TNSA

Mister President, as your National Security Advisor I must advise you that at the very least, this strategic nuclear broadside against the Arab World will be perceived as neither proportional, nor targeted, nor justified.

THE PRESIDENT

The time is fulfilled!

TNSA

Mister President, please, let's take one day at a time.

THE PRESIDENT

No day like today, Flip. No day like today. What the heck's the capital of Khadafy?

(To CAPTAIN)

Let's get that suitcase open pronto, Cappy boy. We'll see who's smotin' who.

TNSA

Easy does it, Mister President, easy does it.

CAPTAIN slams the suitcase on the table.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, Cap, easy does it.

CAPTAIN

Nothing in this will blow up.

He produces his dog tag chain from under his dress shirt.  
Between the tags there is a key, which he is about to insert  
into the lock when...

THE PRESIDENT

Hold on there, Cappy. Wait for my mark.

CAPTAIN

Sir?

THE PRESIDENT

The unlocking key. On my mark.

CAPTAIN

Yes, sir.

TNSA

Mister President, let go. Let God.

THE PRESIDENT

I let God. Now God'll let me. God'll let me.

(To CAPTAIN)

Mark.

CAPTAIN turns the key and opens the case. He removes a briefing binder with a red label, “If You Need This...”, which he passes to TCOS.

CAPTAIN

Handle with care.

THE PRESIDENT

I'll call it, “Operation Crusade.”

CAPTAIN removes a bottle of whiskey, which also has a red label, “Then You'll Need This.” He holds the bottle out to THE PRESIDENT.

CAPTAIN

Mister President?

THE PRESIDENT

Get thee behind me Satan!

(To TCOS)

Chief, gimme that code book. Yeah, Operation Crusade.

(Grabs the binder from TCOS)

Good grief! Don't hold me down!

(Thumbs frantically through the pages)

Operation Crusade is gonna start and finish where my daddy left off. Nobody gonna know what a Muslim is when I'm done raining re-vengeance.

(Arrives at the last page and waves it around)

Flip, this page is intentionally left blank. Why's this page intentionally left blank?

TNSA

Face everything and recover. F. E. A. R. Face everything and recover.

THE PRESIDENT

Faith chases away fear. I was in The Program. I can play the proverb game too. And win.

TNSA

Mister President, first things first.

THE PRESIDENT

My first thing is, shock the Caspar.

TNSA

(Aside)

But let Melchior and Baltazar alone.

THE PRESIDENT

Flip, you take Operation Crusade back to the boys at El Casa Blanca. Get in that there loop. Get everybody saddled up!

TNSA

(Stands)

How can I do this with a straight face?

(Exits)

THE PRESIDENT

(Stands and looks forward solemnly)

“Our military at home and around the world is on high alert status. ... We have been in touch with leaders of Congress and with world leaders to assure them that we will do what is... whatever is necessary to protect America and Americans.”

(Relaxes his hands and rubs them together)

There’s gonna be smotin’!

### Scene 5

SETTING

Air Force One

The four men form a line and walk halfway around the table. TNSA approaches and stands across from THE PRESIDENT. He sits first and then she sits.

Again, jet engines scream at take off.

AGENT

(Speaks into cuff)

Trailblazer is angel.

CAPTAIN

Bet you wish you were getting frequent flyer miles today.

AGENT

Forget that, I wish I could write the book about today.

CAPTAIN

Or the Broadway play.

COMPUTERIZED WOMAN’S VOICE

Please stand by for a National Security Network Alert Protocol.

TNSA

Mister President, a fourth plane has gone down in rural Pennsylvania.

THE PRESIDENT

I know that.

TNSA removes her jacket and rips off her blouse to reveal her tight yellow NSA t-shirt.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, Flip!

TNSA

Now, Georgie Porgie! Do I have your attention?

Her nickname for him takes everyone by surprise. THE PRESIDENT giggles and looks around at the other men.

TNSA (cont’d)

My Georgie Porgie needs to listen to his National Security Advisor, and listen carefully.

(A beat)

A fourth plane has gone down.

TCOS whispers into THE PRESIDENT’s ear and punches his fingers into the table top.

THE PRESIDENT

(To TCOS)

I heard her. I ain’t a fence post. Dummies don’t get elected President of these United States, you know.

CAPTAIN

(Aside)

Not by the popular vote.

TNSA

You gave me the task of being your eyes, mouth and ears.

THE PRESIDENT

Folks, I’m like “Jerobiah” watchin’ them Grecians destroy Solomon’s Temple at Jerusalem. With my hands hogtied. Hogtied! Do I gotta paint’cha a picture?

TNSA shakes her head. She doesn’t know where to start.

TNSA

Oh, Porgie, it’s the Romans or the Babylonians, but not the Grecians... er, Greeks.

THE PRESIDENT

Flip, them Babylonians need some retroactive re-vengeance. Add them to the smotin’ list.

TCOS

Doctor, can you please tell us, why must The President now fly to Nebraska?

THE PRESIDENT

Yeah, Miss Eyes and Ears.

TNSA

They’ve confirmed that there is a threat against Air Force One. The President needs to head west, until the skies are clear.

TCOS

The skies are clear.

TNSA

That’s inaccurate. There is still a credible threat against Air Force One. Just do it.

AGENT

That makes sense. All the targets were in the East.

(To TCOS)

But sir, I wish we stayed at Barksdale.

TCOS

Then why did we leave Barksdale?

TNSA

You’re headed to The Strategic Command Center.

THE PRESIDENT

Hot dog! Does that mean everybody's on board with Operation Crusade?

TNSA

Nothing is impossible, Georgie Porgie, until it goes to committee.

THE PRESIDENT

So much for eyes and ears. Seems I just got mouth. Good grief! Get me back to “Warshin'ton,” pronto.

CAPTAIN

Mister President, didn't you always want a photo with a B-2 Stealth bomber?

TNSA stands and exits. THE PRESIDENT stands. He takes the binder and walks away from the table. TCOS and AGENT follow.

TCOS

Mister President, I urge you to take seriously this assessment that you're a target.

THE PRESIDENT

Horse apples.

TCOS

Then let me remind you that if someone takes you out...

(Gestures around with his outstretched arm)

...there will be a lot of collateral damage.

CAPTAIN takes out his cell phone and scrolls through the numbers in his contact list.

CAPTAIN

Why can't they assign me a satellite phone? We all know cell phones are useless up here.

(He picks up the handset of the desk phone  
and dials a number from his cell phone  
contacts list. He speaks into the handset.)

Hello, Colonel?

(Salutes, then listens)

Yes, sir, I'm certain you're busy there at Cheyenne Mountain. I'm not sitting around thinking about my pension. I need to know the situation from where you see it.

(Listens)

DefCon Five, mm-hmm.

(Listens)

They closed the blast door?! Holy cow! What of air traffic?

(Listens)

Copy, nothing but blue skies? And around Angel?

(Listens)

Copy, only the fighter escorts? Otherwise, blue skies?

(more)

CAPTAIN (cont'd)

(Listens)

Colonel, sir, thank you. And confidentially, Colonel, you may want to keep that blast door closed.

(He hangs up the phone. He looks at THE PRESIDENT for a beat or two, and then walks over to him.)

Mister President, we are now at DefCon Five.

(Holds hand at his forehead)

All the way up to DefCon Five.

THE PRESIDENT

Praise The Lord and pass the ammunition. Operation Crusade is all comin' together.

TNSA returns to the table.

COMPUTERIZED WOMAN'S VOICE

Please stand by for a National Security Network Alert Protocol.

THE PRESIDENT runs back to the table and everyone follows. They stand and face TNSA.

TNSA

You have once again been rebuffed.

THE PRESIDENT

(Bangs fist on the table)

Doggone it! I'm the decider-in-chief.

TNSA

Some here in Washington now perceive not a terrorist threat against Air Force One, but a terrorist threat by Air Force One against America.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, I wish you wouldn't use that smarty pants sentence structure.

TNSA

Look out the port holes. Do you see your fighter escorts alongside?

TCOS and THE PRESIDENT look to the side as if out windows.

THE PRESIDENT

Yeah, Flip. The beautiful sight of American might.

They turn back to her.

TNSA

Those pilots are authorized to shoot down all enemies. Foreign and domestic.

TCOS

Terrorism brings out the worst in people.

THE PRESIDENT

Chief, when my daddy went down in that there Avenger, that torpedo bomber, he swore nobody'd ever shoot down a Bush again. We shoot 'em down. Don't get shot down.

CAPTAIN

(Aside)

Yet they kept him grounded during Nam.

THE PRESIDENT

Looks like we got ourselves a Mexican stand-off.

### Scene 6

SETTING

Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska, Command Center

The men form a line with THE PRESIDENT at the back.  
They walk around the table and stop when opposite  
TNSA.

AGENT

If this is Tuesday, it must be Offutt Air Force Base.

CAPTAIN

We call it Awful Air Force Base.



THE PRESIDENT

Home of SAC, the old Strategic Air Command. Their motto was, “Peace is our profession.”

CAPTAIN

I heard about a fellow in the Texas Air National Guard whose motto was, “Getting a piece is my profession.”

THE PRESIDENT

And then I accepted Jesus Christ as my Personal Saviour.

CAPTAIN

Don’t bogart The Lord, Mister President.

COMPUTERIZED WOMAN’S VOICE

Please stand by for a National Security Network Alert Protocol.

TNSA

Oh my word, I’ve been broadcast more than Diahann Carroll.

THE PRESIDENT

Flip, I’m only doing my Father’s business.

TNSA

Your one term father?

THE PRESIDENT

No, my Heavenly Father’s... “Hath not the potter power over the clay?” Romans, chapter nine, verse eleven. I am the clay. All clay. And the divine potter wants me to keep America as the brocade coverlet coverin’ His footstool, the Earth.

TCOS

(Points, as if to a television)

There on the TV! Bethlehem! You wanted to know about The Holy Land, Mister President. The Palestinians are celebrating.

THE PRESIDENT

(Turns, as if to watch the television)

Oh lowliest of cities. Look at ‘em. Look at them jovial camelback devils. Beggin’ for smoteful re-vengeance.

TCOS

Doctor, our commander-in-chief should direct this... this war from The White House, not some bunker in Nebraska.

THE PRESIDENT

Chief, I can fight my own hurdles. Please Flip darlin', tell me... the boys'll let me come back to El Casa Blanca, right. And smote them raghead demons. Smote 'em all.

TNSA

Our enemy has many faces, and they're not all covered by a kufiya.

THE PRESIDENT

A what?

TNSA

The rag that makes them ragheads.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief!

TNSA

Remember one thing, Porgie, it was the liberals and how they weakened Our Nation, militarily and morally, that today lead to the deaths of thousands of good Americans.

(Stands and stares THE PRESIDENT in the  
eye)

Now, about your Texas-sized retaliatory plan, Operation Crusade. It has been weighed and found lacking. The team prefers that you not... not think so big... not think nuclear.

THE PRESIDENT

Don't hold me down! The time is fulfilled!

TNSA

The Vice-President wondered how you could consider such a devastating plan.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, I didn't read it in no Pet doggone Goat book. I'm going for a blessed grand slam and they... y'all want me to bunt.

TNSA

May I remind you that America cannot rule the World if there's no World to rule.

THE PRESIDENT

Flip, that's just a high school debating trick. Anyway, is it preferred to gain the World and lose your Soul? Luke, chapter nine, verse eleven.

TNSA

With all the souls we've lost today, Porgie, will yours matter?

THE PRESIDENT

Hang it, you too Flip? You gonna pull the football away, just as I’m about to kick it?

TNSA

If you have your way –

THE PRESIDENT

It ain’t my way. It’s the American way.

TCOS

Sir, I’m afraid you’ll be a casualty of war.

THE PRESIDENT

A casualty of war? Not me.

TNSA

Do I have to paint you a picture? Our enemy today is our ally in twenty, ten, maybe only five years hence. We must not annihilate but defeat each adversary, one at a time.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, Flip, you never get far from that chalk board.

TNSA

It’s like the end of that Adam and the Ants video when eventually everyone starts to dance to Antmusic. We are Adam and the Ants.

THE PRESIDENT

Raining re-vengeance is what God Almighty wants. And it’s what His Chosen People, the American people want. And now.

TNSA

Porgie, sweetheart. Let me put this plainly.

THE PRESIDENT sits.

TNSA (cont’d)

They made you president. They shall unmake you and find another to take your office.

THE PRESIDENT

Psalm one hundred and forty, verse nine to eleven.

TNSA

But this day can make you invulnerable.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, that’s what I am! Totally invulnerable. In the cross-hairs.

TNSA

My little Georgie Porgie. “Invulnerable” means no one can defeat you.

THE PRESIDENT

(Sheepishly)

Oh. Flip, you’re such a school marm.

TNSA

You seem to have a thing for school marms.

THE PRESIDENT

(Thumbs through the binder)

Chief, you remember my daddy mistakin’ September seventh for Pearl Harbor Day?

TCOS

Yes, Mister President. During his nineteen eighty eight campaign.

THE PRESIDENT

Now there really is a Pearl Harbor in September. How about that?

(Throws the binder back into the suitcase)

Lock her up, Cappy.

CAPTAIN shuts the suitcase.

THE PRESIDENT (cont’d)

Good grief, Flip, I’ll do whatever they want for now. I wanna be president. I wanna be invulnerable. President Invulnerable.

TNSA

No nukes?

THE PRESIDENT

Whatever.

TNSA puts her blouse back on over the yellow t-shirt.

TNSA

(Whines)

Porgie, no nukes?

THE PRESIDENT

No! Just get me back to that swamp “Warshin’ton.” Alive.

CAPTAIN holds up the bottle of whiskey for THE PRESIDENT to see.

THE PRESIDENT (cont'd)

It's your liver, Cappy, and your discretion.

Scene 7

SETTING

The White House, Washington, D. C.

THE PRESIDENT and TNSA stand. TNSA takes a few steps away. The men walk over and surround her.

THE PRESIDENT

Finally, El Casa Blanca.

TNSA

Mister President, Gentlemen. Welcome home.

She shakes hands with all the men.

TCOS, CAPTAIN and AGENT exit. TNSA looks around, then hugs THE PRESIDENT. He takes her in his arms. They kiss, even as they speak to each other.

TNSA

I knew you'd be your usual stubborn, evangelical self.

THE PRESIDENT

I oughta know by now. Don't drink. Don't think. Go to meetings.

TNSA

For co-operating, they've given you a consolation prize.

THE PRESIDENT

A consolation prize?

TNSA

Yes, a parting gift.

THE PRESIDENT

Oh, yeah! A parting gift. What is it?

TNSA

Iraq. You can smote Iraq. But no nukes.

THE PRESIDENT

Shoot yeah! Gonna start and finish where my daddy left off! Operation Crusade –

TNSA

Yes, and you're never to use the word Crusade again.

THE PRESIDENT

Heck, all I know is for Saddam, the time is fulfilled.

(hugs her)

Thanks for being my eyes and ears and mouth. Ya done good.

TNSA

(steps back and takes his hands in hers)

When they make the movie about this day, do you think Alfre Woodard should play me?

THE PRESIDENT

Heck, if they black out her teeth.

TNSA

Pooooooooorgieeee!

THE PRESIDENT

Is James Brolin too old to play me?

TNSA

Mister Barbra Streisand? Can't we find an actor who's a real American. Now let's go. You're The President Of The United States. President Invulnerable. And you need to speak to a very vulnerable United States.

THE PRESIDENT

Good grief, Flip. How in heck can I comfort and reassure my fellow Americans after a day like today?

TNSA

C'mon, darlin'. I'll paint'cha a picture.

THE PRESIDENT and TNSA walk off, arm in arm.

AGENT returns and speaks into his cuff.

AGENT

Trailblazer, second floor of residence.

Lights out.

THE END