

HOW SANTA CLAUS CAME TO
ZONE WHISKY-ALPHA-ROMEO (WAR)

A Play in One Act >45:00

LOG LINE

(100 words)

Christmas Eve at the Akbar Clan compound in an Afghan tribal area. Cpl. BRANDI FOSTER and Pfc. RICHARD (DICK) BULLEN are deployed on a "Peace Keeping" mission but there is no peace, only conflict and violence. FAWZIA AKBAR, a "Lipstick Revolutionary" is at war with her violent brothers, members of an Extreme Brotherhood who are attacking the U.S. Army. Foster battles with Bullen, a cowardly "Velcro PFC".

Enter ALI, a young boy who says: "I'm good! Why doesn't Santa Claus come here?" It is not for love that Bullen starts out to ride as "Santa Bullen" but love is victorious.

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II

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Cpl BRANDI FOSTER: Leader of the U.S. Army team
Age 30's, deployed to the Akbar Family
African American compound in tribal Afghanistan. She
is commander of Dick Bullen who is
assigned to teach the Akbar family
motorcycle combat techniques.
Foster is formal contact with Akbar
clan.

Pfc. RICHARD (DICK)
BULLEN: Bullen is a star extreme motocross
Age 20's rider. Following a third conviction
Anglo for motorcycle theft, he has been
sent to the Army on "moral waivers"
as a result of plea-bargaining with
a court and Army Recruiters desire
to have access to his internet fan-
base for recruiting. Bullen is a
"Velcro PFC" whose commitment to
the war, the Army or anything other
than riding his motorcycle, is as
firm as Velcro.

FAWZIA AKBAR: A "Lipstick Revolutionary" freedom
Age 20's fighter. Beautiful, passionate,
Middle-Eastern well-educated. She is fighting
against the Extreme Brotherhood
into which her brothers Uday and
Qusay have been recruited. Fawzia
is all about freedom: social,
political and sexual. She wears
the hijab but not full burka. She
is beautiful and fierce.

ALI AKBAR: Ten year old Akbar-related child.
Age 10 A bright, lively, intelligent boy
Middle-Eastern who works as a goat herd.

SETTING:

A tribal area, Afghanistan. A mud hut.
Blackout / limbo scenes depicting desert

TIME:

Contemporary.

III

SCENES:

Other than "Mud Hut" area and "Prophet Rock" from which Foster and Fawzia narrate, all scenes are limbo stage, (pools of light with silhouette movement) with non-specific areas defined by lighting or draped risers. "Prophet Rock" a large, draped riser.

Scene 1	Mud hut Limbo / cycle	Early evening
Scene 2	Limbo / desert road to Army base	Night
Scene 3	Limbo / Army base	Midnight
Scene 4	Limbo / Prophet Rock	Later
Scene 5	Desert	Later
Scene 6	Mud hut	Dawn

SCENE 1

HUT AREA - Sleeping areas are defined by two army-style canvas cots - for Foster and Bullen. A portable camp/dining table, crude benches, army-style coolers or cooking implements, an open fire and bags or wooden boxes of gear.

(AT RISE)

(Bullen angrily storms into the hut and goes straight for his rack area.)

FOSTER

How'd it go with the motorcycle combat training with the Akbars?

(Bullen begins almost ripping off his gear and methodically positioning it on his rack.)

BULLEN

Oh, just W-T-F, Whisky-Tango-Foxtrot! Started with a goat beheading! And threatening me with human body parts!

FOSTER

What?

(Bullen pulls off his PFC emblem, affixed with velcro, from his shirt and hands it to Foster.)

BULLEN

So-o-o-o, I'm just gonna hand you my "Velcro PFC" and call my Army contract *done!* Finished. I quit.

FOSTER

Done? Wait! Wait! Wait!

BULLEN

I'm blowed up - Killed In Action by Goofay and Poosay IEDs. I'm history. I'm kinetic. I'm leaving. Don't wait up.

(Bullen slowly strips to boxers and begins digging around in his duffel, taking out night gear.)

FOSTER

Bullen, absolutely not. You *can't* quit.

(Foster discreetly turning away when it is apparent Bullen is disrobing.)

FOSTER (cont'd)

This is a military operation and you are under my command.

BULLEN

Well. Not me. I'm a MO-WAVE! They sent me here on 'moral waivers', remember? I've got 'moral flexibility issues, remember? So, Corporal Foster, I appreciate your command. Your order was clear and very precise. However, this is a self-licking ice cream cone and it's FUBAR. And, I quit. These Akbars scare the living tootsie-rolls out of me. You can bust me, but I'm getting out of here while I'm still alive.

(Bullen takes out on black Armor-all long johns.)

FOSTER

Why are you putting on the Ninja Suit? What happened?

BULLEN

Y'know, Foster. I grew up with some bad ass dudes. I mean, when you hang around with bikers, you meet all types. These guys here are Islamic fundis - fundamentalists. And they got knives. Big knives. Scimitars. The only thing I haven't seen is forks. That would make 'em cannibals. I mean, when I was running with my gang at home I saw people get carved up in knife fights on a regular basis. What happened today? What happened? The Akbars are *thugs*. Except Fawzia. Daddy Akbar - he wants to cut off my hands because of Sharia Law. That's why I'm here with you to train his sons in motorcycle combat. And those guys - his sons - Goo-fay and Poo-say...

FOSTER

Uday and Qusay.

BULLEN

Yeah, whatever. They're worse. They showed me a video of their disgusting national sport, "Buzkashi" (BUZZ-KASHI): which "kicks-off" with horseback riders decapitating a goat! You get more points if your scimitar doesn't splatter blood. And then they use the goat head like a ball. To shoot into a goal! Goofay implied he would do that to me! Then it got worse. I have never seen anyone carve little souvenirs off their victims like these Akbar boys. Cree-py!

(Bullen pulling on night gear trousers.)

FOSTER

I left you at the garage. What about the motorcycle combat techniques training?

BULLEN

They had a huge shouting match with their sister, Fawzia. That clown Goo-fay - who speaks English by the way - says to me, "You're not in Kansas anymore are you, Toto?" Asshole. Ok-ay. Not Kansas Where am I? I'm in the *only* place on earth where they play Butt-suki!

(Bullen pulling on a night-gear long-sleeved shirt.)

FOSTER

Slow down! I can't make any sense of this! Did you do *any* motorcycle combat training?

BULLEN

Unteachable idiots! Can't even *wheelie*! Can you imagine. Even a 2nd grader in the U.S. can wheelie! The only one that has any skill or sense at all is Fawzia! That girl can *ride*. Did you know she rides an antique Soviet Minsk cycle?

FOSTER

Slow down! What's a Minsk?

BULLEN

What's a Minsk? *What's a Minsk?!* Soviet made, indestructible cycle! They're like Model-A motorcycles. The Viet Cong battled from the back of Minsk. Wet start. Mullah Akbar was a Minsk fighter against the Soviets. He asked me to come here - wanted me to train his boys. Fawzia can ride! She's nice, too. We were busting slobs in the cycle stable.

FOSTER

Wait a minute. Busting slobs? *You* were making out? With *Fawzia*?

BULLEN

Yeah. We were busting slobs and getting naked, which is okay because *Fawzia*'s a "Lipstick Revolutionary" - a *real* women's rights freedom fighter. Like sexual. We may be a "thing" now. I don't know. We came back from the practice area and she led me into an empty stall for some private instruction.

FOSTER

Tell me you *didn't*!

BULLEN

She's a free lady and we *did*! She went to school at Southern Cal.

(Bullen demonstrates with his hips.)

BULLEN

Till those idiots *Goofay* and *Poosay* busted in, went ballistic at *Fawzia* and showed her they cut off the bowl maker's ear and his wife's *lips*! Showed me in a handkerchief and smiled and gestured like I was next.

FOSTER

What?! You're kidding!

(Bullen putting on Kelvar vest.)

BULLEN

Pathetic idiots. Can't even wheelie.

FOSTER

Where's *Fawzia*?

BULLEN

She ran out. I left *Goo-fay* and *Poo-say* and ran back here.

FOSTER

Did you see the lips and ear?

BULLEN

Yeah. Disgusting. Only the ear looked like an ear. The lips looked like dried apples.

FOSTER

You knew you weren't to have any sexual relations... Just teach motorcycle combat.

BULLEN

No sex!? I'm a MO-WAVE - moral waivers! MO-WAVES can't help ourselves. You never told me that! That's against international law! Afghani women are *HOT!*

FOSTER

I saw you trying to hit on the teenage girls.

BULLEN

Those girls are *motocross fans*. Just fans! That's why they're there! I'm a *motocross superstar!* Hitting on fans don't mean anything. It's my job.

(Bullen putting on utility belt w/holster.)

BULLEN (cont'd)

Anyway, I'm done with this. I did my duty. I tried to teach those snake eaters and they did *nothing* but threaten me. And, I gave you my Velcro PFC merit badge. Amazing how well that Velcro comes apart.

(He checks the load on his pistol clip and snaps it back in place.)

I'm outta here!

FOSTER

Reality check, Bullen. You are *not* outta here! You are *not* getting dressed to go. At this post you are under MY command. I order you *not to leave your post!*

(Bullen picking up helmet.)

BULLEN

You can't tell me what to do!

FOSTER

Oh, yeah? You're a PFC, Velcro no Velcro, badge on or badge off - even if you ride a way, the Army owns your ass. No motocross anymore, ever. Maybe firing squad. Or a Taliban will shoot you. Or, cut your head off and play Butt-suki with you.

(Bullen stretching black cover on helmet.)

BULLEN

Yeah, well. I can't take this.

(Bullen takes "Hot Wire Jump Kit" from under pillow, checks it and puts into pants outside pocket.)

FOSTER

Tough tittie. This *IS* a military operation and *I AM* in command. Yes, you are here on MO-WAVES. I have absolutely no doubt that if you left this post you would not just have a nice ride in the desert - you would never come back. It's that little character flaw you have, Bullen, called "moral flexibility" - MO-WAVE.

BULLEN

It's a gift.

FOSTER

Tonight the desert is not a safe place.

(He grabs some protein bars and puts into another pocket. He sits, resignedly on his rack.)

BULLEN

Oh yeah, what's tonight?

FOSTER

Christmas Eve and the Taliban Fans give presents to the bases all across the region! Boom! I can't allow you to be out there on the desert because you may foul things up.

(Bullen takes water bottle and checks it. Adds to belt.)

BULLEN

Foul things up?

FOSTER

A free-lancing rogue goof like you riding around? Might get captured and held hostage. Or beheaded publically. Or signal to the enemy we're active and make any drone strikes less accurate. RHIP - Rank Hath Its Privileges - meaning *me!* You stay.

BULLEN

I can't stay here - it's not safe here. I know you're not a Buddy Bagger - you don't intend to put me in a body-bag - but those guys, they're the *enemy*! They're *killers*.

FOSTER

Duhhh, Pfc. Simpson! This is a war zone, Bullen! Whisky-Alpha- Romeo! W-A-R. *Everybody* is a killer.

BULLEN

Yeah, well, I didn't sign up to be disassembled bit-by-bit by goat kissers. I was supposed to be the motorcycle combat instructor. That recruiter lied to me. C'mon Foster. I'm not cut out for any of this. If I stay here, I'm gonna *die*!. I *am* getting out of here! Bye! Give the Captain my best regards.

(Bullen turns to leave.) 9:50

(ENTER Fawzia with Ali in tow. Ali is carrying a role bedding.)

BULLEN

Fawzia!

ALI

Hello, Dick. Corporal Foster.

FOSTER

Miss Akbar. Hi Ali!

BULLEN

Hi Ali. Hey, buddy, what's up?

(Bullen and Ali fist bump. Fawzia gestures "shhh" don't say anything to Ali.)

ALI

Can I spend the night here? I want to be a soldier - just like you, Pfc. Bullen!

FAWZIA

What little Akbar is asking is, would it be all right if Ali spends the night in the back room? Be polite, Ali. Say "please."