

WASHINGTON & ARNOLD

A Story of Patriots, Heroes, Seduction and Betrayal
screenplay adaptation

by

Paul Streitz

Based on the book published by Regnery Press

George Washington and Benedict Arnold

A Tale of Two Patriots

by

General Dave R. Palmer

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REGISTRATION WGAw

FADE IN:

SUPER: APRIL 1775

(NOTE: LEXINGTON AND CONCORD SCENES SHOULD BE SHOT FROM THE BRITISH POINT OF VIEW)

INT. BOSTON, BRITISH BARRACKS - NIGHT 9PM

British soldiers are preparing for bed. Bunks and living quarters. Some have clothes half off. Some are sitting by CANDLE LIGHT playing cards. A few have dozed off. A few are under blankets.

Enter BRITISH FIRST SERGEANT (40's).

BRITISH FIRST SERGEANT

(Yells)

Prepare to move out! Rifles,
haversacks, ammunition pouches,
canteens, muskets, bayonets, food
bags! Get a bloody move on!

Soldiers start dressing.

BRITISH FIRST SERGEANT (CONT'D)

Get a bloody move on! Quick time!
Quick time! This is no drill! Move!
Move! Move!

Soldiers move faster as they go outside.

BRITISH PRIVATE

Where the bloody hell are we going?

BRITISH CORPORAL WALLINGFORD

Probably to give the rebels a visit.

BRITISH PRIVATE

We'll see some action. Better than
sitting around here, cooped up in
this small town for months.

BRITISH CORPORAL WALLINGFORD

We'll see.

EXT. CHARLESTOWN, MASS, ON BOSTON HARBOR, - NIGHT

(POV from WALLINGFORD and the men around him.)

British soldiers are unloading from packed barges. Beginning to assemble. They must walk through the muddy stream bed with rifles and ammunition pouches carried above their heads. They get out of the water soaking wet.

The men begin to assemble into platoons and companies and then march away from landing. The soldiers pass by a sign that has an arrow pointing toward "Lexington." There are seven hundred men in the force. They march for about a mile. Ordered to halt. A wagon distributes extra ammunition, cold salt pork and hard sea biscuits. The soldiers are muddy, wet and SHIVERING.

After rations and ammunition are distributed, they fall in and begin to march again.

The soldiers hear a church bell RING. Then a rifle shot is FIRED in the distance. All the troops jerk their heads up when they hear the sound of the rifle.

BRITISH CORPORAL WALLINGFORD

(Sarcastically.)

We have the element of surprise with us.

BRITISH PRIVATE

Bloody right. The whole country side is alive. Look up there.

(points)

A bonfire.

Soldiers continue to march. (Note: the British are marching right to left, East to West) The visual impression is a large force marching on the road four abreast.

EXT. LEXINGTON, MASS, COMMONS - DAYBREAK

As the sun begins RISE. British troops are assembling into ranks on the Lexington Village Common. A crowd of about sixty people are standing on the sides of the commons watching them.

British officers are riding their horses about, yelling at the crowd to get back to disperse. Confusion.

BRITISH OFFICER ON HORSE
Lay down your arms, you damn rebels!
Lay down your arms!

A group of about thirty militia men stand in a group. They are assembled in a loose group. JOHN PARKER (30's) yells.

JOHN PARKER
Men! Don't meddle with them! Don't
meddle with them! Stand calm!

Men stand. There are nervous people in the crowd.

BRITISH CORPORAL WALLINGFORD
(standing in the ranks watching the people
on the common.)
Our welcoming party.
(to man beside him.)

A SHOT IS FIRED.

BRITISH OFFICER TWO
Level!

Soldiers raise their rifles and aim at militia.

BRITISH OFFICER TWO (CONT'D)
FIRE!

Corporal Wallingford lifts his rifle and FIRES. (POV from WALLINGFORD firing on militia)

Militia men are hit. Eight men go down mortally wounded. A few others are wounded. They immediately retreat. The crowd SCREAMS and RUNS.

Another light guard company from the side of the Commons begins to advance on the militia. One of the regulars reaches a downed militia man and RAMS his bayonet into him.

The militia runs and a few stop behind walls and FIRE at the British and then continue the retreat.

BRITISH OFFICER ON HORSE
Beat assembly! Beat assembly!

A DRUMMER on the ground begins to beat assembly the troops return to the Lexington Commons and begin to fall into ranks.

EXT. CONCORD, MASS, ROAD TO CONCORD - MORNING

The Concord militia is marching East on the road back toward Lexington. They see the larger, seven hundred, British force. They are ordered to do an about face and march back to Concord (East to West). They are about five hundred yards ahead of the British.

The Concord militia proceeds to the outskirts of town and watches the British enter Concord. Additional men and units of nearby towns begin to swell the ranks.

EXT. CONCORD, MASS, EPHRAIM JONES'S TAVERN - MORNING

BRITISH SOLDIERS
Open the door! Open the door!

Nothing happens.

BRITISH CORPORAL WALLINGFORD
Bust it down!

Soldiers BUST IT DOWN. They bring out EPHRAIM JONES (40's)

BRITISH OFFICER ON HORSE
Where are the cannons? Where are
the cannons?

British soldier POINTS a gun at his head.

BRITISH OFFICER ON HORSE (CONT'D)
Tell us where the cannons are, or I
will order him to fire. Damn rebel.

Ephraim Jones walks toward the back of the tavern. HE POINTS to a small vegetable garden.

British soldiers go into the garden. STAB their bayonets into the ground until they hit something. A few men go and get shovels. They begin digging three massive cannons out of the ground. They pull the cannons out of the ground and DESTROY their carriages with axes.

EXT. NORTH BRIDGE, CONCORD - MORNING

The bridge is on the road back from Concord to Lexington.

British troops are guarding a bridge facing West toward Concord. They see a massive group of militia coming at them from about three hundred yards away. The militia keep marching toward the bridge (West to East).

British OPEN FIRE and Americans go down. But they keep marching toward the bridge. They are about fifty yards away.

MILITIA MAJOR BUTTRICK

Open fire! Open fire! For God's
sake open fire!

The Militia halt and OPEN FIRE. British are far outnumbered by the Colonials. Their officers have gone down. They begin an unorganized retreat down the road toward Lexington. (West to East)

The militia moves from the open area around the bridge up and behind the stone wall fence with the bridge in front of them.

EXT. ARLINGTON, MASS (THEN NAMED MENOTOMY) - DAY

The long column of British soldiers is heading back to Boston, some seventeen hundred strong is marching into Arlington (West to East). Some are wounded. Some are not carrying rifles. Others are without their hats, or bags. A SHOT, a soldier falls. The militia alongside is growing stronger. Some individual homeowners away from the road FIRE from their farm houses and then retreat back.

As they enter Arlington on the way back, a rifle FIRES into them from a house.

British soldiers RUSH into a tavern. Find two drunks.

BRITISH SOLDIERS

Who fired? Who fired?

Two drunks are sitting there asleep and drunk. British soldiers turn their rifles and BLAST them out of their chairs.

The soldiers take a drink of rum and leave with the bottle.

British soldiers are going into homes along the route. Smashing the homes. A few homes are SET AFIRE.

British troops are marching out of Arlington. There are even more militia alongside the road. They are FIRING into the moving column.

The man are trapped, with more militia in front of them at every turn in the road. They are ominously close. (Note: Effective range of muskets was 50 yards. Americans did not use hunting rifles). Militia are often but one hundred to two hundred yards away. British can clearly see the FACES of the militia.

BRITISH SOLDIER

We aren't going to make it back alive.
There's more of them every mile.

BRITISH CORPORAL WALLINGFORD

Maybe we'll be lucky.

BLAM! Shot. BLOOD spurts out of Wallingford's head. He falls dead.

CUT TO BLACK, FADE UP ON:

INT. PHILADELPHIA, 2ND CONTINENTAL CONVENTION, STATE HOUSE - MORNING

Gentlemen are walking about within the room set up for speakers. There are delegates from eleven of the Thirteen Colonies. Men are chatting with each other waiting for the meeting to begin. The CAMERA MOVES about on the men dressed in the fashionable clothes of the time vociferously discussing in pairs and in groups. The camera SWIRLS about. Only one man is dressed differently than the rest wearing a buff and blue military uniform of the Virginia Militia, WASHINGTON (42). The camera does not particularly focus on him, just notes that he is dressed differently.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION (40's) moves to the speaker's rostrum. RAPPING his gavel.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION

Gentlemen. Gentlemen. Order please,
order please. Take you seats if you
will. Please take your seats.

The delegates take their seats. Talk dies down. Delegates are seated.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION (CONT'D)

Our first item of business is a full
report on the recent confrontation
at Concord, Massachusetts.
I yield the floor to John Adams of
Massachusetts.

JOHN ADAMS (39) comes to the podium.

JOHN ADAMS

Gentlemen, last month, early on the morning of April nineteenth, a regiment of British regulars marched out of Boston. Its destination was Concord and its mission was to destroy munitions stored for the protection of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Delegates from Massachusetts LEAP to their feet. YELLING.

JOHN ADAMS (CONT'D)

They were defeated and sent back to Boston. Boston is now surrounded by twenty thousand Massachusetts militia. The British cannot move out of the city.

DELEGATES

Damn Redcoats. Injustice. Tyranny. The boot of tyranny.

JOHN ADAMS

These were shots heard 'round the world.

Delegates YELL and CHEER.

JOHN ADAMS (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, we must ponder. Does this mean an irrevocable break with Great Britain. Is reconciliation with Britain possible? Or is war inevitable?

John Adams steps aside.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION

Gentlemen, we have much to discuss and consider. We will resume on the morrow at ten o'clock. The Second Continental Congress is adjourned.
(bangs his gavel)

Delegates begin to talk to each other. They arise and move slowly toward the door.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION (CONT'D)

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, WOODS ON EASTERN SIDE - NIGHT

(Music under is a slow muffled march beat)

Two hundred fifty armed men are walking in a column through the woods. It is RAINING. Forty are militia men from Massachusetts, dressed in colonial clothing. (Men are marching from East to West, with the top of the screen as the North.) There are heavy trees and brush on each side of the well beaten trail. The trail is on the side of a steep hill. There is some MOONLIGHT. The men are the GREEN MOUNTAIN BOYS, dressed as trappers in leather jackets. The militia are dressed in Colonial dress. The tall ETHAN ALLEN (36) is followed by the shorter BENEDICT ARNOLD (33).

One man stumbles and FALLS going off the side of the trail and down the slope. (The drum beat changes to reflect this break in the rhythm of the marching.) A few of the other men help him back on the trail. About two hundred men move through the woods. (The drum beat goes back to its regular rhythm.)

CUT TO:

INT. PHILADELPHIA, HOME OF JUDGE SHIPPEN - EVENING

Dinner party at the home of the wealthy JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN (50). Guests are the delegates from the Convention. Washington is there. BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (68). The delegates are mixing, talking, drinking wine. The WOMEN (20's) have on lovely ball gowns. There is a violinist and a cello player PLAYING. (Underneath the stringed instruments the SOUND of the muffled drum continues)

DELEGATE ONE

His Majesty might consider it as an unfortunate overaction by the over zealous, loyal citizens of the colony. Perhaps, an act of self-defense.

DELEGATE TWO

Do you really believe that?

DELEGATE THREE

Sir, I think you are making too strong a case for His Majesty as simple defense.

DELEGATE ONE

Perhaps, but the regulars fired first.

DELEGATE TWO

That is highly uncertain.

The men are FLIRTING with the women and the women are most encouraging of their flirtations. Washington is standing with two women and one other man.

WOMAN ONE

My dear Colonel Washington. You look very dashing in your military uniform.

WASHINGTON

You are so very kind, Madam. And I must say that you look very dashing. Although I can plainly see you are not in a military uniform.

Both women LAUGH.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, LANDING WITH TWO DOCKS - NIGHT

There are eight rowing skiffs tied to the docks. Each accommodates four oarsmen. A man is going about with a bucket and some rags. Men are boarding and taking their place at the oars.

MAN WITH BUCKET

Use this rag.

Hands rag to man sitting in boat.

MAN WITH BUCKET (CONT'D)

Grease down the oar locks.

OARSMAN takes the rag and greases down the oar locks.

MAN WITH BUCKET (CONT'D)

We don't want the Redcoats hearing us half-way across the lake.

One by one the boats shove off and begin rowing out (moving right to left, East-West, for a dozen feet to clear the shoreline and then head North). They move in a column. The boats are empty of passengers.

CUT TO:

INT. PHILADELPHIA, HOME OF JUDGE SHIPPEN - EVENING

Judge Edward Shippen makes his way across the room. He has his three daughters in tow. PEGGY SHIPPEN (14), SARAH (18), ALICIA (20). He and they jostle a few couples, saying polite hello's as they go by. They approach Washington and his party, boldly interrupting.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

Good evening, Colonel Washington.

WASHINGTON

Good evening to you, Judge Shippen. It is a lovely dinner with the most charming music.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

Colonel, I am so glad you are enjoying yourself. I trust you had an uneventful journey.

WASHINGTON

Very uneventful sir.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

Colonel, I would to introduce you to my daughters, Sarah, Alicia and Margaret, better known as Peggy.

WASHINGTON

Delighted to make your acquaintance.

The three girls give a POLITE BOW.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Ladies.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

It is such a pleasure to meet a hero of the military.

WASHINGTON

You are very young Miss Shippen.
However, you have mastered the art
of undeserved flattery, at a very
early age.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

I have not mastered the art of
undeserved flattery, sir. I have
mastered the art of *deserved*
flattery.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

Shall we go to the dining room?

They turn and head for the dining room. Peggy Shippen jostles one of her sisters aside and puts her hand inside Washington's arm.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

It is so nice to make your
acquaintance General.

WASHINGTON

That's Colonel, Miss Shippen.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Well, you will be.

(Only the muffled drum is heard.)

All exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, SHORE ON EASTERN SIDE - NIGHT

There are not enough boats so some men move back into the woods. Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold climb into one boat. Arnold has pistol and sword, but no rifle. All other men are carrying rifles. The boats DISAPPEAR across the lake and into the MISTY RAIN.

CUT TO:

INT. PHILADELPHIA, HOME OF JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN - EVENING

There are several tables in the dining room. Each table holds twelve. At one table Washington is sitting with Peggy Shippen next to him. Judge Shippen sits across from Washington. The dinner is concluding.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

Colonel, I trust that you have enjoyed your stay in Philadelphia?

WASHINGTON

Most delightful Judge Shippen. The social duties almost overwhelm our political duties.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

Colonel, do you think our honest earnest endeavors for reconciliation will bear any fruit after the incident at Lexington and Concord?

WASHINGTON

One can never tell Judge, but I do not think we should make any optimistic plans, nor be blind to the willfulness of His Majesty.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

Colonel, do you think that the British will move to occupy New York City?

WASHINGTON

One cannot tell what military strategy the British might employ. But preparing for the worst eventuality, military stores should be moved out of the City.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, WOODS ON WESTERN SHORE - NIGHT

The men have moved to the edge of Fort Ticonderoga. Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold are standing at the edge of the clearing behind some bushes with a clear view of the fort.

ETHAN ALLEN

Nothing is moving. We have total surprise.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Move immediately

ETHAN ALLEN

All our men are not here.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

There is only a small garrison. We have overwhelming numbers now. If we wait, we lose the cover of darkness.

Ethan Allen nods his head in agreement and his men move quickly toward the gate. They SMASH through the gate and quickly move inside. The garrison is asleep except for two sentries who are quickly captured. The Green Mountain Boys BURST into the officer and enlisted quarters. They order them AT BAYONET POINT to go outside. The men are wearing their long underwear.

*

Benedict Arnold approaches Ethan Allen.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

The officers and men should be secured in the fort's stockade.

ETHAN ALLEN

A good idea, captain.

(Orders a Green Mountain Boy.)

Do as the colonel says. Lock them in the stockade.

The man departs the room. The British are marched, SHIVERING in the rain to the stockade and locked up. In another room, a GREEN MOUNTAIN BOY (18) sees a bottle of rum. Goes over and takes a swig and gives the bottle to another. Soon they are all drinking. In the mess hall kitchen, men are feeding themselves from the meat on the spit and bread from the cupboards. The situation is chaos. Men are getting drunk. Benedict Arnold looks on completely displeased at the lack of discipline.

CUT TO:

INT. PHILADELPHIA, 2ND CONTINENTAL CONVENTION, STATE HOUSE -
MORNING

President Of Convention is BANGING his gavel.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION
Gentlemen. Gentlemen. Order. Order.

Delegates quiet down and take their seats.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION (CONT'D)
Last night, we received a dispatch
from New York. Five days ago, a
force of Ethan Allen's Green Mountain
Boys and Massachusetts Militia
authorized by the Massachusetts
Committee of Safety captured Fort
Ticonderoga.

The commander, Captain William
Delaplace has been captured and the
defenders of the fort have been
imprisoned. Approximately, one-
hundred thirty cannon and a store of
ammunition and supplies have been
captured.

CUT TO:

AUDIENCE. TALKING. STUNNED BY THE NEWS.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION (CONT'D)
The leaders of the expedition were
Ethan Allen and Colonel Benedict
Arnold commissioned by the
Massachusetts Committee of Safety.
More troops from Massachusetts are
on their way to permanently occupy
Fort Ticonderoga.

There is stunned silence by the delegates.

DELEGATE ONE
(To other delegates around him.)
This means war. There is no turning
back. Arnold has driven us into a
war. This is not a defensive action.

Delegates around him shake their heads in agreement.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MT. VERNON, ROAD ON PLANATION - LATE AFTERNOON

RIDER ONE (22) in military uniform traveling along the road on the Mt. Vernon plantation. Corn is planted on one side. Tobacco on the other. He goes by workshops where barrels are being made. He rides past a mill where wheat is being loaded on to a wagon. There is an air of industry, orderliness and prosperity. Slaves are working in the fields.

INT. MT. VERNON, DRAWING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Washington is sitting at his desk, writing. MARTHA WASHINGTON (43) Is sitting in the room, sewing.

MARTHA WASHINGTON

George, what are you writing?

WASHINGTON

A letter to the Continental Congress. I am thanking them for making General Charles Lee a brigadier general and appointing him to be my adjutant. Joseph Reed will be my aide-de-camp and Thomas Mifflin will be my military secretary. They are both from Pennsylvania, which will give Pennsylvania good representation in the Continental Army.

MARTHA WASHINGTON

Wasn't General Charles Lee British Officer?

WASHINGTON

Yes, he was a British officers who retired to the Colonies.

EXT. MT. VERNON, ROAD ON PLANATION - LATE AFTERNOON

Rider One is riding up to the residence. He views the magnificent house with a sense of awe, approaching as servants

bustle by. He pulls up, dismounts and hands the reins to the AFRICAN SERVANT (50's). He speaks briefly to the servant who heads into the house.

INT. MT. VERNON, DRAWING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

MARTHA WASHINGTON

Do you think His Majesty's government will now offer some sort of settlement now that the Continental Army has been established?

WASHINGTON

Martha, I sincerely wish that this would be so, but I do not see it coming to pass. The British are determined to see us as inferiors although we are descended from the same stock, carry the same blood and have the same religion and history. They see us as but vassals to the British crown. Our lot would be to serve their interests but never our own.

Martha Washington listens.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

We are past the time of compromise. They must remove their troops from our colonies, but this they will never do. They would see it as surrender. So we both march blindly forward.

CUT TO:

MARTHA WASHINGTON SITS CALMLY. SHE WATCHES HER HUSBAND PACING.

WASHINGTON

Unhappy it is to reflect that a brother's sword has been sheathed in a brother's breast, and that once happy and peaceful plains of America are either to be drenched with blood
(MORE)

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
 or inhabited by enslaved Englishmen.
 Sad alternatives. But can a virtuous
 man hesitate in his choice?

There is a KNOCK on the door.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
 Enter.

An African Servant enters.

SERVANT ONE
 There is a rider from Philadelphia.

WASHINGTON
 Show him in.

Servant exits and returns with the rider. Rider One SALUTES
 and Washington RETURNS the salute.

RIDER ONE
 General, a letter from the Continental
 Congress.

Washington reads the letter and ponders for a moment.

WASHINGTON
 I will write a letter for the
 Congress. You shall bring it back
 to the Congress in the morning.

RIDER ONE
 Yes sir.

WASHINGTON
 Would you care to dine this evening
 with me and my wife.

RIDER ONE
 That would be an honor, sir.

WASHINGTON
 (To servant)
 Show the officer to the kitchen,
 where he may be properly fed. Prepare
 him a room and have his horse stabled,
 watered and fed. Dismissed.

Rider One SALUTES and Washington RETURNS the salute. Rider
 One does a smart about face and exits. African Servant exits.

Washington returns to his desk, and picks up another set of papers. He returns and faces Martha, papers in hand.

MARTHA WASHINGTON

What did the letter say George?

WASHINGTON

(Reads from the letter.)

"You are to repair with all expedition to the Colony of Massachusetts Bay and take charge of the Army of United Colonies."

Beat.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Martha, this is a high risk undertaking.

I have prepared a new will.

I should let you know that if anything happens, I shall always have you in the deepest, most sacred part of my heart.

MARTHA WASHINGTON

Oh, George!

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, DOCKSIDE - DAY

A schooner sits at the dock of a small settlement on the lake. Militia men are hauling aboard swivel guns and four small cannons to arm the schooner. Someone is repainting the name on the helm to "Liberty." There is a number of bateaux. Some armed with small cannons. (These are flat bottom boats, with both sails and oars and can be rowed with two or more oarsmen.) Militia are aboard the boats.

The boats push off. Arnold is captain of the Liberty. They begin to sail north on Lake Champlain.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, ST. JOHNS - EARLY MORNING

At daybreak, as the MIST RISES, Arnold leads his men ashore at the norther tip of Lake Champlain. They head toward a seventy-ton sloop docked at the settlement, they land and they quickly overpower the soldiers and then the sailors.

Arnold is DASHING about issuing orders as appropriate.

There are nine bateaux. The men capture these. They put captured rifles, ammunition, powder and some small brass cannon aboard the British sloop of war. Five bateaux are manned and begin to ROW south, while four others are burned on shore. Arnold SAILS AWAY as the master of Lake Champlain.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, SETTLEMENT - NOON

Arnold is walking with two other militia on a street in the settlement. The settlement is peaceful. Men TIP their hats, or PARTIALLY SALUTE Arnold as he walks past. The females EXECUTE an awkward curtsy. There are more militia in the settlement and no Green Mountain Boys. A drunken JAMES EASTON-30's approaches armed with both a pistol and a sword. He has several men alongside.

JAMES EASTON

Yo ho. T's the intrepid Captain Arnold. Has even named the captured sloop after himself. Har de har, the "Intrepid." Start of a right big navy, I say.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Watch your tongue, Easton.

JAMES EASTON

I shan't have to watch my tongue. It shall be right here in me mouth.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Your mouth should remain closed around it.

JAMES EASTON

Aye, aye, Captain.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Easton! Your insolence is insufferable. You are not fit to be in the militia much less an officer. I have made no recommendation on your behalf. I will do everything in my power to see that you never serve a day in the military.

JAMES EASTON

I have powerful friends.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Perhaps.

James Easton moves almost face-to-face with Arnold. He is too close. Arnold SLAMS his fist into the side of his head.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Get up you worthless cur! Get up!
You are armed! Choose your weapons.
Pistol or sword. Right now. Right
now. Choose your weapon. Draw like
a gentlemen!

James Easton STAGGERS to his feet.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Draw like a gentleman!
(Arnold has his hand around the butt of
his pistol.)

Easton STAGGERS backward. His men steady him. They look at the enraged Arnold and back away. Then they turn and walk away.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Out of my sight! Out of my sight!
If I encounter you again, I will
thrash you until your head is broken.

INT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, SMALL MILITARY OFFICE

They go outside and see one thousand militia men MARCHING into town. Arnold is standing with several other officers.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Good heavens. Just what the Lord
ordered. Troops to attack the British
and drive the Redcoats out of
Montreal.

The commander, COLONEL BENJAMIN HINMAN (40) dismounts and walks over to Arnold. He SALUTES Arnold and Arnold RETURNS his salute.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Welcome to Lake Champlain colonel.

COLONEL HINMAN

I bring a thousand troops as reinforcements to further our actions in the Champlain theater of operations.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

They could not be more welcome.

COLONEL HINMAN

I must also inform you that I am authorized by the Connecticut Committee of Safety to take charge of this theater of the war.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

What? You will do nothing of the sort. Massachusetts has reaffirmed my status as commander of this theater of operations.

COLONEL HINMAN

Very well, colonel. The lines of communication are long, sometimes dispatches are lost in transit and other such difficulties occur. I will set up camp with my men on the outside of the settlement. We should make plans as how best to defend the settlement.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Plans to defend? We should make plans to attack the British? Attack, Colonel. One wins wars by attacking, not defending.

COLONEL HINMAN

Very well, Colonel. We shall make plans for both.

He SALUTES and exits.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, MILITIA ENCAMPMENT - DAY

The CAMERA shows the militia encampment. Men are drilling on a parade ground. Rifles are stacked. The town is BUSTLING with activity.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, SMALL MILITARY OFFICE - DAY

Arnold is conferring with several officers and sergeants.

AMERICAN SERGEANT

I believe we can have additional guns secured to the Intrepid sir, if we strengthen the planking beneath the guns, and the gunwales as well.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Very well Sergeant. Proceed immediately.

A KNOCK on the door. A trio of three well dressed men walk in as if they own the place.

COMMITTEE MAN ONE

Colonel Arnold, we are a committee sent by the Massachusetts Committee of Safety to resolve the funding issues under your command.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

What funding issues? I have paid for many of the expenses of this expedition out of my own funds. There would be no funding issues. If the Massachusetts Committee of Safety actually funded the missions they authorized.

COMMITTEE MAN TWO

Be that as it may, sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

There is a war going on. I do not have an accountant by my side as we fire cannons, sir.

COMMITTEE MAN THREE

Be that as it may, sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Is that all, sirs?

COMMITTEE MAN ONE

Colonel Hinman has informed you that he is to be the theater commander. That is, indeed the case. He will supplant you as senior officer in the region, sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Is that all, sirs?

COMMITTEE MAN TWO

The commander of the Massachusetts troop will be Colonel James Easton. You will be in command of only the militia you brought with you from Connecticut.

The Committee Men turn to leave.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

That will not be all sirs. Your investigation be damned. I have honorably dealt with numerous small and unavoidable debts to our citizens. I have discharged them from my private purse to cover day-to-day expenses of my unit and preparation of the ships. I shall square accounts with Massachusetts later.

I shall resign my commission forthwith and you shall carry such resignation back to Boston with you. Good day gentlemen. You are excused.

The Gentlemen exit.

INT. ALBANY NY, HOME OF GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER - DAY

In the drawing room of PHILIP SCHUYLER (40's). A large house near Albany. An AMERICAN AIDE (20's).

Enter an AMERICAN AIDE (30's).

AMERICAN AIDE

Sir?

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Yes, James.

AMERICAN AIDE

We have received a message from Colonel Arnold.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

What is the message?

AMERICAN AIDE

He has resigned his commission. He has been replaced by the Massachusetts Committee of Safety.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Fools. Who is his replacement?

AMERICAN AIDE

A Colonel Hinman.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

I have never heard of him. A political appointment. They have replaced a daring and energetic leader with a military novice. If it were not for Arnold, the British would still occupy Ticonderoga.

AMERICAN AIDE

Yes sir. Our report from Silas Deane says that the Colonel is being abused and misrepresented by designing persons, some from Connecticut.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

The Green Mountain Boys. A gang of ruffians. They would have plundered New York Citizens of their private property, if Arnold had not kept a close leash on them.

AMERICAN AIDE

The message says that Colonel Arnold is planning on stopping to visit you, sir. On his return to his home in Connecticut.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

We shall give him a warm welcome.

EXT. ALBANY NY, HOME OF GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER - EVENING

Arnold RIDES UP to the home of Schuyler. He dismounts and enters the home. After being brought into Schuyler's sitting room, Schuyler goes over and warmly shakes Arnold's hand.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Welcome, Colonel. Welcome to Albany.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I thank you for your kindness General.
I am returning to my home after
resigning my commission.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

I have received a message as such.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Colonel, the political war on the
inside, is as dangerous to the
military as the war on the outside.
Sometimes, more so. The military
war can wound or kill you. But the
political war can wound, damage or
destroy your honor and reputation,
which is just as painful, perhaps
even more so.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Have a seat, Colonel. As you know,
my authority is for the Northern
Department, which includes Lake
Champlain and the route westward
along the Mohawk River.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Would you consider a position on my
staff?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

With pleasure, sir.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Then I will recommend such an
appointment for Congress's approval.
I hardly believe they can turn me
down.

Arnold is obviously very surprised and happy at this turn of
events.

PHILIP SCHUYLER (CONT'D)

Your letter to Congress contained a recommendation that we proceed directly on Montreal and Quebec was a workable plan for the invasion and had a sound rationale. We are losing the element of surprise. Nevertheless, the plan is sound.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Surprise and speed are of the essence.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Correct Colonel. But not always easily achieved in an Army ruled by a Congress.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

It is ironic that such a plan would be approved by Congress, a month after they expressly forbid any attack on Ticonderoga.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

Ironic indeed Colonel.

Schuyler RISES and Arnold then does the same. Schuyler walks toward the door and opens it for Arnold

PHILIP SCHUYLER (CONT'D)

I will see that someone prepares you a room. It is getting late. We can have dinner in about an hour.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Thank you, sir.

Benedict Arnold exits.

EXT. ALBANY NY, HOME OF GENERAL PHILIP SCHUYLER - MORNING

Arnold and Schuyler are standing in front of the home. Arnold is preparing to depart. A SERVANT (20's) is bringing Arnold's horse from a barn. The two men stand and wait. They are in very good spirits.

PHILIP SCHUYLER

I will inform you as soon as I know of Congress's decision, which as I
(MORE)

PHILIP SCHUYLER (CONT'D)
 said, I expect to be favorable to
 your appointment. Your energy and
 determination will not go unrewarded.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
 Someone is coming sir.

Arnold points in the distance. RIDER TWO (20's) comes up
 the road and stops in front of the two men and dismounts.

RIDER TWO
 Sir.
 (Salutes)

Both men RETURN the salute.

RIDER TWO (CONT'D)
 A message from Connecticut for Colonel
 Arnold. It recently arrived at Lake
 Champlain.

Arnold takes the message and looks at the outside address.
 He is surprised at the address. He opens it with curiosity.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
 It is from my sister in New Haven.
 Why would she be writing me?

Arnold is STUNNED.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)
 My wife is dead. She died of a fever.
 I have three boys.

Schuyler puts his arm around Benedict Arnold's shoulder.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE, MASS, PARADE GROUND, JULY, - MORNING

Some carry tomahawks and knives lashed to poles. Some wear
 militia uniforms while others are dressed in civilian clothes.
 There are several thousand troops assembled. The ceremony
 is completed and the men are dismissed. Accompanying
 Washington are various officers including General General
 Charles Lee. Washington is buffed and polished, high black
 boots and silver spurs, with a sword at his side.

On horseback, WASHINGTON, GENERAL General Charles Lee (40's)
 and BILLY LEE (20's), Washington's African-American servant.

(Note: Billy Lee was with Washington throughout the war. Where appropriate, when Washington is riding, Billy Lee should be riding with Washington.)

(Note: Uniform color: Washington's Buff and Blue. We need historical details on uniforms.)

When the two stop and dismount, Billy Lee takes the reins of the horses

WASHINGTON

General Lee, let us inspect the line of fortifications.

They tour the long line of fortifications. The two armies are less than a mile apart. Washington can clearly see the British sentinels marching on guard duty at Bunker Hill.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

We are almost close enough to converse.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

Quite so, sir.

Washington looks at the defenses. They were hastily thrown up and have not seen much improvement. Washington and General Charles Lee continue to survey the defenses. They ride and also dismount to see particular fortifications.

WASHINGTON

Many improvements need to be made to the defenses.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

Yes sir.

WASHINGTON

I am surprised that the British do not attack.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

They were handed a licking at Bunker Hill, general. None will forget. They would have been totally routed had we not run out of ammunition.

WASHINGTON

Quite right indeed, General.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

We are at a standoff, sir. We do not have enough cannons to attack and remove them for Boston.

WASHINGTON

And they do not have the temerity to attack.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

Quite right, sir.

They continue to ride. The men, CHEER, SALUTE or WAVE their hats at Washington. Some shout, or say "Good morning, General." "Welcome to Boston."

GENERAL CHARLES LEE (CONT'D)

General, should we now return to your new headquarters. A staff meeting has been prepared for you, sir.

WASHINGTON

Very good.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE, MASS, FRONT OF GEORGIAN MANSION, JULY, -
AFTERNOON

Washington, General Charles Lee and Billy Lee ride up to a large Georgian mansion. DARBY VASSALL (10), is a slave boy SWINGING on the front gate as they enter. Other AFRICAN SERVANTS (various ages) are watching Washington enter. Washington shows some interest in the boy.

WASHINGTON

Perhaps you would like to work in my service.

DARBY VASSALL

What would be my wages, sir?

Washington looks SURPRISED and then continues on without saying anything.

Washington and General Charles Lee enter the house. Billy Lee takes their horses.

INT. CAMBRIDGE, MASS, GEORGIAN MANSION, JULY - AFTERNOON

Officers are gathered for a staff meeting. QUARTERMASTER, General Charles Lee and others.

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, now that the state militias are formally incorporated into Continental Army, we are all are a part of the army of the United Provinces of North America. Our distinctions of colonies must be laid aside. We must use all the powers at our disposal, all kind of state distinctions and leverage to have every part and parcel of the army considered as Continental Our soldiers are wretchedly clothed and as dirty a set of mortals as ever held the name of a soldier.

CUT TO:

CUT TO VIEW OF OFFICERS WATCHING WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON

I say this not in rebuke, but rather as admonition of the severity of the task ahead of us. Some of the men are half-naked.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

Many of the men had their clothing slashed at Bunker Hill by the bayonets of the British.

WASHINGTON

Indeed, they did General. Ever more reason why they should be replaced. We are in the heat of the summer. When the fall and winter comes, few will be able to withstand the gales. Armies can suffer as many casualties through lack of material, clothing, food and sanitation as they do from enemy bullets.

Quartermaster, I want you to make a plan for improving the camp.

(MORE)

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Building adequate shelters. Improving
sanitation. Adequate rations.
Building a mess hall.

Report to me in the morning with the report. Give me the
plan to improve these conditions.

QUARTERMASTER

Yes sir.

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, let me introduce you to
the latest addition to our ranks.
Colonel Benedict Arnold.

Each of the officers turns and warmly greets Arnold.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

As you know, Colonel Arnold was
responsible for taking Ft.
Ticonderoga. He is an intrepid
officer of rare courage, initiative
and daring.

The officers respond with CHEERS to that encomium with
APPLAUSE and well wishes.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Colonel Arnold will have a special
assignment, which I am not at liberty
to divulge, but will require resources
and men from this command.

Let us now be about our business of
securing our post and removing the
British from Boston.

Officers go back to looking at map of encampment.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE, SOLDIERS' ENCAMPMENT, NOVEMBER - DAY

(Director's note: This is a considerable passage of time
from previous scene. It is SNOWING.

Some soldiers from Marblehead are standing about at the
Harvard Square. A group of soldiers from Virginia are walking
past and looking at the buildings. One of the Marblehead
soldiers THROWS a snowball. The Virginians THROW snowballs
back.

MARBLEHEAD SOLDIER

Go back south! Pick some cotton!
 We can fight this war without you!
 (Insults are yelled at the Southerners.
 Ad lib.)

Insults are yelled back at the New Englanders.

VIRGINIA SOLDIERS

A bunch of fish eaters ain't going
 to win no war. The Redcoats over
 yonder know that.

The snowball fight escalates. Some more men join the fight. Reinforcements join in each of the ranks. Soon the snowballs switches to fighting and men are wrestling, punching, kicking in the snow.

Washington and Billy Lee arrive on horseback. Washington leaps from his saddle, throws his reins to Billy Lee. He rushes into the middle of the fight. Grabs TWO SOLDIERS-(20's) by their throats and holds them apart. He is much bigger and stronger than either.

WASHINGTON

I will have you both court-martialed.

Quickly the men see that Washington is in their midst. They stop fighting and gape at Washington. All fighting stops as the men gape at Washington and the two soldiers. Soon, soldier flees, followed by another. In an eye blink the entire thousand men have disappeared and only Washington, the two soldiers, and Billy Lee on horseback are on the square. Washington lets the two men go and says nothing. The two men pick up their hats, SALUTE and then RUN like hell.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, NORTH OF ALBANY - DAY

The river is totally frozen. There is deep snow on the ground. It is SNOWING. A train of Oxen are pulling sledges. Each has a cannon from Ft. Ticonderoga. The train is about 160 sledges plus wheeled wagons carrying food. There are hay wagons carrying fodder for the oxen.

EXT. BERKSHIRE MOUNTAINS - DAY

The train is crossing a frozen, yet running stream. Men are laboring to get the sledges across to the other side. Oxen are pulling the canon across the rocky stream.

At a hill, men have lashed together two teams of oxen in tandem to pull a large cannon up the hill.

EXT. DEERFIELD, MASS, SNOWING - DAY

The caravan goes through the small town. People CHEER. Women bring out food for the men. Some of the oxen are stopped and munching on the fodder provided by the local farmers. A few men are getting drinks of whiskey from stone bottles. Wives don't care much for that.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE MASS, BRIGHT SUNNY DAY, SNOW ON THE GROUND - DAY

Washington is sitting on his horse watching the cannons come in through the light snow.

EXT. DORCHESTER HEIGHTS, NO SNOW - NIGHT

Soldiers are CLIMBING UP the steep Dorchester Heights (East Side of Boston). This is a bluff over one hundred feet high, which had remained unarmed by the British. Soldiers are DRAGGING prefabricated fortifications and cannon. They labor up the hill and then begin digging in, placing their cannons and hammering to erect the fortifications to repel infantry.

Men are going up the hill carrying cannon balls. Others have barrels of gunpowder. Others are coming back down the hill. Oxen are laboring up the hill dragging cannons.

Washington can be seen by his men, a dark, dramatic familiar figure on his white horse in the MOONLIGHT.

INT. BOSTON, BRITISH BARRACKS - NIGHT

British officers are eating and drinking. GENERAL HOWE (40's) is with them. They are eating well and some are slightly drunk.

BRITISH OFFICER THREE
Horse-traders, that's what they are.
A bunch of horse-traders. Caught us
unaware.

BRITISH OFFICER FOUR
Who in bloody hell do they think
they are? Crush them! We should
crush them.

A British officer comes in and SALUTES General Howe, who
RETURNS the salute.

BRITISH MESSENGER
Message sir. Intelligence.
(He waits.)

GENERAL HOWE
Out with it. Nothing that these
officers cannot hear.

BRITISH MESSENGER
There is movement. Noises on
Dorchester Heights.

GENERAL HOWE
Who is moving up there? What sort
of noises?

BRITISH MESSENGER
We don't know who is moving sir. We
cannot see. There is a fog over the
heights. We hear sounds of hammers
and nails.

GENERAL HOWE
Send a patrol in the morning. When
it clears.

British Messenger does an ABOUT-FACE and exits.

BRITISH MESSENGER
Does an about face and exits.

EXT. DORCHESTER HEIGHTS, NO SNOW - NIGHT

Men continue to bring materials up the hill. A regiment of
men stands at the foot of the hill. They carry rifles and
shovels. A sergeant YELLS orders. They fall in and start
the march up the hill.

Wagons start unloading barrels of gunpowder.

As the DAWN APPROACHES, the cannons are in position.
Artillery men are swabbing down and loading the cannons.

As dawn breaks, an officer brings down his sword.

AMERICAN ARTILLERY OFFICER

Fire!

In sequence, the cannons FIRE.

EXT. BOSTON, BRITISH BARRACKS - MORNING

A shell RIPS into a barracks. Men run out with their pants
and boots off, BLEEDING and SCREAMING.

The SHELLS rip into Boston and the British ships in the harbor
and into the town. Glass is BLOWN OUT of windows. Civilians
STAGGER around wounded. Shells are falling, bursting and
starting FIRES. Ships masts start to FALL. Geysers of water
ERUPT in the harbor from missed shells.

EXT. BOSTON, BRITISH ARTILLERY POSITION - MORNING

The British RUN to their artillery and turn the guns around
from facing the Charles River and the bay and AIM them South-
east toward Dorchester Heights.

BRITISH ARTILLERY OFFICER

Raise them. Raise the barrels.

The men STRUGGLE to raise the barrels. British artillery
OPENS UP. But the range is too far.

BRITISH ARTILLERY OFFICER (CONT'D)

They are too bloody high. We're
missing.

EXT. DORCHESTER HEIGHTS - MORNING

Soldiers watch the cannon balls EXPLODE fifty feet below
them.

AMERICAN ARTILLERY OFFICER
 They can't hit us. We're too high.
 Pound them. Pound them. Fire!

Continental artillery continues to FIRE.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE, EDGE OF CHARLES RIVER - DAY

Washington SURVEYS the chaos. General Charles Lee and Billy Lee are with him.

WASHINGTON
 Are the troops in place?

Cannon fire continues to BLAST from Dorchester Heights. It is ripping into the ships. Masts are FALLING. It is ripping into the barracks and the civilian houses in Boston. Windows are SHATTERED. Civilians are KILLED.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE
 We have six thousand troops. Ferries
 are ready to bring them across to
 Boston.

Along the shoreline, there are boats and groups of soldiers hidden up the small streams, behind barns sitting with their rifles.

WASHINGTON
 Howe is in an intolerable position.
 He either has to attack Dorchester
 Heights or abandoned the city.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE
 Howe will attack.

WASHINGTON
 He will fall into the trap. We will
 occupy the town. We will annihilate
 him from the rear. Destroy him and
 his army.

EXT. BOSTON, CITY STREETS - DAY

Shells continue to POUND into Boston. British soldiers are falling into formation. One company stands there and a CANNON BALL smashes into the formation leaving mangled bodies.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE, EDGE OF CHARLES RIVER - DAY

AMERICAN RIDER THREE (20's) comes toward Washington.

AMERICAN RIDER THREE

Sir, the British are falling into formation. They are marching on the Heights.

As the American Rider Three speaks, a storm starts to brew. It begins to rain, then RAINS HARDER. The skies quickly darken. A North-Easter is hitting Boston. The cannons stop firing. The men in the nearby boats, hunker down in the open as the rain DRENCHES them. Time passes. Night falls. The storm continues. It continues for two days. Scenes of men, horses and artillery being drenched should be added.

EXT. BOSTON, EDGE OF BRITISH FORTIFICATIONS - MORNING

A British Officer (30'S) emerges flying a WHITE FLAG of truce. He walks out holding the flag.

AMERICAN OFFICER ONE and AMERICAN OFFICER TWO (30'S) walk out and meet him. They chat. The British officer holds forth a sheet of paper. The Continental Officer accepts it. They both MARCH back to their lines.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE, EDGE OF CHARLES RIVER - MORNING

Washington watches from afar. AMERICAN OFFICER ONE mounts a horse RIDES toward Washington.

AMERICAN OFFICER ONE

They request a truce. Under a flag of truce, they will depart the city and leave the city intact. Not burn it to the ground.

WASHINGTON

We have no choice. We have lost the element of surprise. We must agree.

EXT. BOSTON, HARBOR - DAY

Ships have castoff with soldiers and civilians aboard. The entire scene is pandemonium.

Men, women, children, soldiers, carts with goods, trunks of clothing. This is an armada of one hundred-twenty ships stretching out miles into the Atlantic. They head north toward Nova Scotia.

EXT. CHARLESTOWN - DAY

Across the river from the harbor and docks, Washington and officers watch the last ship leave the dock.

WASHINGTON

It is not the victory we wanted. We needed to smash them. They will be back.

EXT. BOSTON, CITY STREETS - MORNING

Washington and his officers are walking the streets of Boston. Houses are SMASHED, carts OVERTURNED, DEAD HORSES lie about.

WASHINGTON

The town is not in as bad a state as I expected to find it.

They see some civilians walking about.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

(To another officer.)

The town is to be guarded. Any suspected Tories are to be guarded until they can be turned over to proper authorities. If any officer or soldier presumes to strike, imprison or injure any of the inhabitants, they shall be punished with the utmost severity. Notify my adjutant.

AMERICAN OFFICER THREE

Yes sir.

AMERICAN OFFICER THREE turns and leaves. Washington continues down the street and turns the corner. He is facing a cannon in position with artillery rounds and powder kegs alongside.

WASHINGTON

The British fortified this town in every way possible. It is almost impregnable. Every avenue is fortified.

Washington continues down the street and sees other fortifications where soldiers can fight a house to house battle.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

The British never realized how weak we really were. Nor, did we realize how strongly they were fortified. Perhaps, this freakish storm was an act of Providence for our righteous, glorious cause.

Washington and his officers continue to walk.

EXT. CITIES: PHILADELPHIA, DEERFIELD, FT. TICONDEROGA, MT. VERNON, ALBANY, FARMS, DOCKS, TAVERNS

(Note: brief vignettes of Peggy Shippen, Martha Washington, Schuyler, and others celebrating.)

Mad celebration. Drinking, cheering, and dancing. Taverns. Travelers. Farmers, etc. Don't Tread on Me flags are flying.

CROWDS

The redcoats are gone! The redcoats are gone. Liberty!

EXT. PRUSSIA, TOWN - DAY

Some beauty shots of a GERMAN TOWN. TOWN PEOPLE in German dress. Shots of the Rhine. The MUSIC is German. Perhaps a POLKA.

EXT. PRUSSIA, DRILL FIELD - DAY

Hessian drill officer is standing in front of a company of riflemen. Soldiers are standing at ease. Rifle butts on the ground at their sides. They are in a formation three rows deep.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER
Kompanie Ach - TUNG!

Men SNAP to attention

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Augen - Recht!

Men turn their heads to the right to line themselves up.
They shuffle until aligned with the man on the far right.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Augen, Gerade - aus!

Men turn their heads back to face the officer. The soldiers
are AT ATTENTION.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Das Gewehr - über!

Men bring their rifles to their shoulders.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Achtung, präsentiert das, - Gewehr

Men bring their rifles to PRESENT ARMS. Rifles held upright
in front of them

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Schulter - Gewehr!

Men bring their rifles BACK to their shoulders.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Rechts - um!

Men FACE to the right.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Im Gleichschritt - Marsch!

Men MARCH forward. After a distance.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Kompanie - Halt!

Company HALTS.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Links - Um!

Company FACES LEFT.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Erste linie, Gewehr - Auf!

Men in first line bring their rifles to THEIR SHOULDERS in firing position.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Erste Linie - Feurer!

First line FIRES their rifles. Then they put the butts of their rifles by their side. Second line then ADVANCES in front of them.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Zweite Linie, Gewehr auf - Feurer!

Second line BRINGS their rifles to shoulders. Second line fires. Then they put the butts of their rifles by their side. Third line then advances in front of them.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Dritte Linie, Gewehr auf - Feurer!

Third line BRINGS their rifles to their shoulders. Third line fires. Then they put the butts of their rifles by their side

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Bajonette - Auf!

Men FIX bayonets to their rifles.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Kompanie, Bajonette - Höhe

Men LEVEL their bayonets, holding their rifles at their hips and march forward in attack position.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Im Gleichschritt - Marsch!

Men MARCH FORWARD bayonets in front.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, JULY 2, 1776, STATE HOUSE - DAY

THOMAS JEFFERSON (33) at podium.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

When in the Course of human events,
it becomes necessary for one people
to dissolve the political bands which
have connected them with another,
and to assume among the powers of
the earth, the separate and equal
station to which the Laws of Nature
and of Nature's God entitle them, a
decent respect to the opinions of
mankind requires that they should
declare the causes which impel them
to the separation.

CUT TO:

AUDIENCE SITS THERE IN SILENCE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

That all men are created equal, that
they are endowed by their Creator
with certain unalienable Rights,
that among these are Life, Liberty
and the Pursuit of Happiness.

CUT TO:

CROWD OUTSIDE HAS GATHERED. SOME BOYS SITTING ON MEN'S
SHOULDERS TO SEE THROUGH THE WINDOWS. JEFFERSON'S VOICE IS
HEARD.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (CONT'D)

That to secure these rights,
Governments are instituted among
Men, deriving their just powers from
the consent of the governed, - That
whenever any Form of Government
becomes destructive of these ends,
it is the Right of the People to
alter or to abolish it, and to
institute new Government, laying its
foundation on such principles and
organizing its powers in such form,
as to them shall seem most likely to
effect their Safety and Happiness.

CUT TO:

AUDIENCE CHEERS.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
 Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

CUT TO:

AUDIENCE IS ENGROSSED IN THE WORDS.

THOMAS JEFFERSON (CONT'D)
 But when a long train of abuses and usurptations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.

AUDIENCE CHEERS WILDLY.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION
 Do I hear someone make a motion to adopt said declaration?

SEVERAL VOICES
 I so move.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION
 Do I hear a second to the motion?

SEVERAL VOICES
 Aye, Aye. Aye.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION
 All in favor, say "aye."

ASSEMBLY TOGETHER
 Aye.
 (In unison.)

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION
 All opposed. Nay?

Silence.

PRESIDENT OF CONVENTION (CONT'D)
The Declaration of Independence is
unanimously adopted!

CUT TO:

CHEERS, CELEBRATIONS, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE CONGRESS.

EXT. STATEN ISLAND HARBOR - DAY

Thousands of troops are pouring off the British ships at the docks. Horses, guns, cannons. WAGONLOADS of supplies. British Redcoats, Hessians, all types of uniforms. The New York City harbor is crammed with ships. Ships are backed out from the bay to the ocean three miles away. Thirty-five thousand men have arrived. They just keep coming. One ship after another disembarking.

EXT. MANHATTAN, BATTERY AT LOWER END - DAY

Citizens LINE the walls along the banks of the Hudson, looking in amazement at the number of ships. A British Man-o-War cruises by. It's three levels of guns point ominously toward New York City. It does not fire. This is the biggest ship anyone has ever seen. It is a dark menacing presence of British power.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, VALCOUR ISLAND CHANNEL - MORNING

(Director's Note: More precise descriptions of the boats will be needed than can be given here. Some are sail, others are primarily rowed craft with sails added. Such rowed craft are advantageous in lakes with little constant wind.)

It is October and the leaves along the lake are in their full RED and YELLOW Autumnal glory.

The view is from a boat moving north along the west bank of the lake. At first, only the west bank is visible on the left as the boat moves north. Then an ISLAND comes into view. There is a channel of about three thousand feet between Valcour Island and the west bank of Lake Champlain. As the boat goes further and starts up the Chanel, SHIPS can be seen moored along the west side of Valcour Island facing south.

North of the ships, there is a piece of land jutting out from the western side of the island of about one thousand feet. Arnold's boats are tucked to the south of that piece of land. Therefore, the boats cannot be observed directly from the North from the main body of the lake.

The American fleet consists of the row galleys, Trumbull, Washington and Congress. Perhaps a dozen ships. (Number to be determined.) Aboard the Congress is Arnold.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, NORTH OF VALCOUR ISLAND - MORNING

The British Armada is coming south, down the lake. (Head on shot to establish that they are heading toward the American fleet. Then a camera shot to INDICATE that they are going past Valcour Island, with the island on their right.) The British boats have the breeze to their backs.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, CHANNEL BETWEEN VALCOUR ISLAND AND THE MAINLAND - MORNING

A small rowboat heads north toward the Congress from the southern tip of the island. The men are ROWING full speed. They approach the Congress and clamber aboard.

Arnold comes over to the side of the boat. He is noticeably LIMPING from a wound received in Quebec.

SAILOR ONE

Sir, all the ships have passed the island.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Drop oars! Row!

The men quickly DROP the oars into the water and begin to move south to trail the British fleet, then are out of the Channel and into the main lake. They FORM a line blocking the lake.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, MIDDLE OF LAKE - AFTERNOON

A British sailor looks back. Surprised, he sees the American boats in a row across the lake.

BRITISH SAILOR ONE
They're behind us. They're behind
us.

The crew turns back and looks. The Americans are about two miles behind the British.

The crew is YELLING and WHISTLING to the next ship and then to the next one, as the word is passed forward to the Inflexible with GENERAL CARLTON (40's) aboard.

BRITISH SAILOR TWO
Sir, the Americans are behind us.
To the north.

GENERAL CARLTON
What? Impossible!

BRITISH SAILOR TWO
Look sir.

Carlton goes to the stern of the ship. He looks through His SPYGLASS.

GENERAL CARLTON
Come about! Come about!

The ship starts tacking to come about.

Before they can come fully about, Arnold sends three row galleys and one schooner south, while the rest of the ships remain in line. The American row galleys OPEN FIRE on the British.

The British ships head north, but not in any particular formation. The large British ship, the Inflexible (appropriately named) cannot get itself headed into the wind blowing south. It remains out of the action. But the rowed British gunboats start into action.

This is a full naval battle with each side taking heavy casualties. The boats are from one to two hundred yards apart. SMOKE is everywhere. The ships are often obscured from each other. The Americans are outnumbered and getting the worst of it.

Arnold is fully exposed yelling to his crew. Encouraging his men. He is covered in black gun powder from head to foot.

The fight goes on for hours. Eventually, darkness falls and a MIST comes over the lake.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, MIDDLE OF LAKE - NIGHT

Aboard the Inflexible.

GENERAL CARLTON

At daybreak, we head north. We will
crush the rebels.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, MIDDLE OF LAKE - NIGHT

The night is cloudy with no moon. Aboard the Congress.
Arnold leans over the rail to the gunboat along side.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Do you know the shoreline?

SAILOR TWO

Yes sir. We can head south. Stay
twenty five feet from shore. The
bank drops off sharply. Till we get
to the clump of trees at the small
point. The rocks jag out, there we
must go another twenty-five feet to
the center.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Take us. God speed. We will follow.

The gunboat starts. Arnold WAVES to other boats to follow.
They form a column and move silently along the shoreline.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, MIDDLE OF LAKE - MORNING

BRITISH SAILOR THREE

They're gone. They're gone.

GENERAL CARLTON

Head south. All ships. Head south.

EXT. LAKE CHAMPLAIN, MIDDLE OF LAKE - MORNING

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Scuttle the Valiant and Redoubtable.
Not seaworthy. Put the men on the
other boats. Get the wounded aboard.

The men come aboard. Cannons are taken off with along with gun powder and shot. The men chop holes in the hulls and the ships SINK.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Hercules and Ajax, come about and head north. Accompany me. The remainder. Head south to Ticonderoga.

FIRST MATE
The plan sir?

BENEDICT ARNOLD
We will stay out of reach. Engage them only if necessary. A delaying action.

FIRST MATE
Yes sir....
(pauses.)
Aye, aye, sir.

Arnold LAUGHS.

FIRST MATE (CONT'D)
I am in the army sir. Didn't sign up to be a bloody swabbie.

Arnold LAUGHS again.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
You might rethink that Admiral.

They LAUGH.

The Inflexible heads for two American row galleys. It brings its many cannons to bear. One row galley is sunk by the British. The commander of the other surrenders. It then turns and heads toward the Congress.

The fight is on. Three warships have circled the Congress. They are tearing it to pieces. The fight goes on for two hours.

Arnold then has his rowers turn his ship about and he heads straight between the two British ships as they glide past in the opposite direction. They head for the shore. The other American ships follow. They beach their ships and set them afire. The flags are still flying.

The men look out at the British helplessly floundering about trying to get their ships around. Some Americans are WOUNDED.

Some dead Americans are put down and a few branches laid over their corpses.

The Americans set up a gunpowder trail to barrels of gunpowder aboard the Congress. Arnold puts a FIRE to a rag and moves back. The match lights the power trail to the Congress and the ship BLOWS UP.

The British ships head out to the center of the lake then head north.

Arnold and his men LIMPING and wounded head into the woods.

EXT. LONDON, BIG BEN - DAY

The clock CHIMES.

INT. LONDON, PARLIAMENT, HOUSE OF COMMONS - DAY

The Commons Room is almost empty. A few are walking about. Two idle men stand there in front of their seats as if waiting for something to begin. One is reading the *London Times* to the other.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT ONE

I say, what are you reading? About the Arnold, chap?

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT TWO

(Reading the newspaper)

"General Arnold acquitted himself with the renown which he had acquired on land. He showed expertise with a sparkling performance on water, that of an able naval commander. As the season is late, and Lake Champlain about to freeze solid, there will be no further military action against the rebels until the spring."

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT ONE

I say, quite remarkable.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT TWO

I say, quite remarkable indeed.

EXT. BROOKLYN, GOWANUS RIVER - NIGHT

Boats are pulled up to the shore. American troops are boarding. Some boats have left the shore ROWING outward. Others are coming in to the shore. The troops are carrying their rifles. They are beaten and fatigued. Many are wounded. There is a quiet air. Not of desperation, but of defeat.

One boat takes off. Four men are ROWING. There are eight soldiers and one officer aboard. One of the men is lying down. A few others have torn and ripped clothing. One has a WHITE BANDAGE around his arm. They ride in silence. It is very DARK.

There are other boats ROWING in front and in back of them as this small fleet makes its way across the East River.

AMERICAN SOLDIER ONE

(wounded)

I been wanting to visit New York City. But not this way.

AMERICAN SOLDIER TWO

We're beat. We're beat. The militia ran when they seen them British bayonets 'a flash'n in the sun.

There is a long pause. Some of the men start to sleep. Exhausted. The wounded man GROANS in pain.

AMERICAN OFFICER FOUR

We were beaten today. We were not destroyed. We escaped. Tomorrow is another day. This is a war. It is going to be a long, bloody war.

The boats row toward Manhattan. There is one DIM LANTERN in the distance.

The boats reach the shore. The wounded soldier is helped out of the boat by several waiting men. Dozens of boats are disembarking. At the same time other empty boats are turning around and heading in toward shore. This is a mass evacuation.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, WEST BANK LOOKING AT WASHINGTON HEIGHTS -
MORNING

Washington is in camp. There is a tent. A small complement
of officers and men.

Washington reads a letter he has just written to General
Greene. COLONEL JOSEPH REED (30's) is with him.

WASHINGTON

(Reading.)

"If you cannot prevent vessels passing
up the Hudson, what valuable purpose
can it answer to attempt to hold a
post from which the expected benefit
cannot be had? I am therefore
inclined to think it will not be
prudent to hazard the men and stores
at Mount Washington, but, as you are
on the spot, I leave it to you to
give such orders as to evacuating
Mount Washington as you judge best."

COLONEL JOSEPH REED

Sir, I think you should have no
hesitation in ordering the evacuation
of Mount Washington. General Greene
believes it to be impregnable. That
is not the case.

COLONEL WASHINGTON

There are no signs of a troop build
up by General Howe.

COLONEL JOSEPH REED

Sir, there is no running water to
Mount Washington. The British can
take the defense by a siege without
firing a shot. They simply have to
starve them out. Water supplies
will be the first to go. Captured
rain water will not sustain them.

Washington dithers. PACES back and forth. He is indecisive.

WASHINGTON

I will let it stand. General Greene
shall decide if the post is to be
evacuated. Deliver the message.

COLONEL JOSEPH REED

Yes sir.

Reed salutes exits.

EXT. MANHATTAN, FT WASHINGTON - MORNING

Washington Heights is a large, very steep hill with large rock outcroppings. The Americans hold a fortified position at the top. Thousands of Redcoats are at the bottom. Hundreds of cannons. A battalion of Hessians is standing in formation at the bottom in an open area between the trees. Artillery shells are CRASHING through the trees bringing branches down. The noise is THUNDEROUS.

The same company of Hessian soldiers is lining up in formation at the bottom of the Heights.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER
Kompanie Ach - TUNG!

Men SNAP to attention and bring their rifles to their sides.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Recht - Euch!

Men turn their heads to the right to line themselves up. They shuffle until aligned with the man on the far right.

Men turn their heads back to face the officer. The soldiers are at ATTENTION.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Bajonette - Auf!

Men FIX bayonets to their rifles.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Das Gewehr - über!

Men bring their rifles to their sides, bayonets POINTED forward.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Im Gleichschritt - Marsch!

They are MARCHING in line formation. Fifty men abreast. They start out of the clearing and up the hill.

As the Hessians proceed cannon FIRE rips their ranks. Men FALL, LIMBS are blown off. They continue.

The Hessians have one captured American lying on the ground. They BAYONET the American to death.

Hundreds of Hessians and hundreds of Redcoats are swarming up the heights. They are overrunning the American position.

Suddenly, a command. The command is REPEATED from one soldier to another.

BRITISH SOLDIERS

Cease fire! Cease fire!

HESSIAN SOLDIERS

Halt feuer! Halt feurer!

The battlefield GOES SILENT. There is a long pause. The only sound is the MOANING of the wounded. The Hessians lie on the ground, looking up at the smashed fort.

The first American comes out holding a WHITE FLAG atop a stick. The Americans begin to file out. They walk down between a gauntlet of Hessian soldiers. The men are sick, uniforms torn, in contrast to the immaculate Hessians.

The Hessians JEER. One American falls and two Hessians start KICKING him, until he STRUGGLES to his feet.

EXT. NEW JERSEY, EDGE OF HUDSON - DAY

Washington and a few officers are looking across the river at the battle for Fort Washington. There is CANNON FIRE. Then the cannons go quiet. The officers look at each other.

AMERICAN OFFICER FIVE

They have taken the fort.

WASHINGTON

(Walking alone and talking to himself.)

I should have ordered an evacuation.
I should have overridden General
Greene. Hundreds of men have died
or will be prisoners for years as a
result of my failure. Never again
will I let my better judgment be
overruled by consideration for the
feelings of others. I must have the
courage of my convictions.

All are silent. MESSENGER ONE (20'S) rides up to Washington.

AMERICAN MESSENGER ONE

General, the British have crossed the river, north of Fort Lee. They are marching on Fort Lee as we speak.

WASHINGTON

My horse.

Washington dashes toward his horse. Billy Lee is sitting in a saddle with the reins of Washington's horse. Washington MOUNTS it. They both ride to Fort Lee. It is an encampment with neatly three thousand men. Washington RIDES into the middle of it to the commandant.

EXT. NEW JERSEY, FT. LEE - DAY

Washington RIDES UP to the commanding officer.

WASHINGTON

Evacuate immediately. Put a company on the road to the north. Along with cannon. They will be our delaying action. Abandon the cannon, tents and supplies. Start down the road to Hackensack. Then to Philadelphia.

The Americans abandon the camp. They are MARCHING two abreast. Cannon, tents, artillery are left behind.

EXT. DELAWARE RIVER - DAY

They are CROSSING the Delaware heading toward Philadelphia.

Washington is astride his horse. He rides to a Calvary officer.

WASHINGTON

The British must not have any means of crossing the Delaware. Colonel, dispatch one company of Calvary, head north and capture any boats along the Delaware shoreline. Have them returned here to ferry the troops.

(MORE)

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Send another company south and do the same. Go thirty miles in each direction.

If you cannot return the boats here, destroy them. Then evacuate this side of the Delaware with the last boats.

AMERICAN CAPTAIN

Yes sir.

He salutes and exits.

Washington's horse is put on the boat. Washington stands on the ferry as it is ROWED across. He watches the eastern shore of the Delaware River recede in the distance.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, MEETING ROOM DAY

There are several CONGRESSMEN meeting around a long table. The discussion is HEATED.

CONGRESSMAN ONE

Gentlemen, we have no choice. We must relieve Washington of his command. He has had a string of catastrophic disasters. Long Island, Washington Heights, Fort Lee. He has been chased through New Jersey like a rabbit running from a pack of hounds. This war is lost. We are lost with it.

CONGRESSMAN TWO

We have had a victory. White Plains was a victory. The Redcoats were thoroughly repelled with severe losses. We had a victory on Lake Champlain.

CONGRESSMAN ONE

I say again, we must relieve Washington of his command. That victory was not due to Washington.

CONGRESSMAN TWO

If we relieve him of his command, we should first surrender. Washington had a brilliant victory at Boston. He achieved complete tactical surprise. The Redcoats fled without a fight.

CONGRESSMAN FOUR

Relieving Washington will be a signal to our patriots that all is lost. First, we surrender our commander, then we surrender. It is an sign of defeat. Surrender. The fate of the nation goes with Washington.

CONGRESSMAN FIVE

Who would replace him? We have no one to replace him.

CONGRESSMAN THREE

Arnold?

CONGRESSMAN SIX

Charges are being brought against Arnold for his conduct at Lake Champlain.

CONGRESSMAN THREE

These are baseless charges. Brought about by his military enemies. Those who are less capable and daring than he.

CONGRESSMAN TWO

That may be true. But they are charges that sully his reputation.

CONGRESSMAN ONE

Gentlemen, this is December. It does not matter what we do. Washington and what remains of his army sits on this side of the Delaware River. At the end of the month, enlistments are up.

CONGRESSMAN FOUR

If Washington stays or Washington leaves, it does not matter. He will have no army. The men will not reenlist. The men will go home.

Everyone is SILENT.

CONGRESSMAN TWO
We need a miracle.

INT. TRENTON, NJ, BARRACKS OF HESSIAN OFFICERS - NIGHT

Christmas Eve. CANDLES GLOW. A few ribbons as decorations. The officers are drinking, but not drunk. They are sitting and standing by a FIRE. There is food on the table. COLONEL JOHANN GOTTLIEB RALL (40's), the commanding officer, is there.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER
Offizier. Offizier. Pas auf. Pas auf.

The officers quiet down.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Meine, Damen und Herren. Das Trentonish Orchester.

One officer with a violin and the other with a flute, stand up and TAKE A BOW. They start PLAYING *Silent Night*.

HESSIAN DRILL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Eins, zwei, drei.

Officers start SINGING. (SILENT NIGHT in German.)

HESSIAN OFFICERS
Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!
Alles schläft; einsam wacht,
Nur das traute hoch heilige Paar.
Holder Knab' im lockigen Haar,
Schlafe in himmlischer Ruh!

Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!
Gottes Sohn, o wie lacht,
Lieb' aus deinem göttlichen Mund,
Da uns schlägt die rettende Stund'.
Jesus in deiner Geburt!

Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!
Die der Welt Heil gebracht,
Aus des Himmels goldenen Höhn,
Uns der Gnaden Fülle läßt sehn,
Jesum in Menschengestalt!
Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!

(MORE)

HESSIAN OFFICERS (CONT'D)

Wo sich heut alle Macht, Väterlicher
 Liebe ergoß,
 Und als Bruder huldvoll umschloß
 Jesus die Völker der Welt!

Colonel Rall Goes over to the window. On the sill is a
 Christmas nativity scene of SMALL GLASS FIGURES.

INT. TRENTON, NJ, BARRACKS OF HESSIAN OFFICERS

The scene shifts to the outside. There are LIGHTS in the
 windows. Two HESSIAN SOLDIERS (20') are SINGING. The scene
 fades up and away of peaceful Trenton. The SNOW is lightly
 falling.

HESSIAN OFFICERS

Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht! Lange
 schon uns bedacht,
 Als der Herr vom Grimme befreit
 In der Väter urgrauer Zeit
 Aller Welt Schonung verhieß!

Stille Nacht! Heil'ge Nacht!
 Hirten erst kundgemacht
 Durch der Engel Alleluja,
 Tönt es laut bei Ferne und Nah:
 "Jesus der Retter ist da!"

EXT. TRENTON, NJ, STREET SCENE - MORNING

Two Hessian soldiers are on watch. The snow is HEAVY. The
 winds are SWIRLING. The soldiers cannot see very far ahead
 of them. Out of the SWIRLING SNOW come the American soldiers.

HESSIAN SOLDIERS

Erwach! Erwach! Die Amerikaner!
 Amerikaner!

Hessian soldiers start out of their barracks RIFLES in hand.
 There is a cannon placed to cover the long street. CAPTAIN
 ALEXANDER HAMILTON (20's) is commanding the gun crew.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Fire!

The cannon ROARS. The fire rips apart the Hessians.

American riflemen POUR FIRE into the Hessians. Other cannons face down the streets and POUR FIRE into the Hessians. The Americans take hundreds of prisoners. Dozens of snow covered Hessians lie in the streets. No Americans are dead. Four or five die from exposure.

Colonel Johann Gottlieb Rall, on horseback, tries a counter attack with a small group of Hessians. As he approaches the Americans, they take AIM and riddle the Colonel with fire. He is knocked off his horse. The HESSIANS turn and run.

Hundreds of Hessian soldiers FLEE the town. They are walking unarmed on a road out of Trenton. They walk in a column but do not have their weapons.

The American soldiers discover the Hessian supply room. There is meat and bread. They are starved. There is also rum. A good number of soldiers get quite drunk in their celebration.

Americans roll out the barrels of gunpowder. Other American STRIP the dead of their boots and warm long underwear.

American soldiers ROUND UP Hessian prisoners.

EXT. TRENTON, NJ, AMERICAN POSITION - AFTERNOON

Two regiments of Americans march into town. These are additional reinforcements. An AMERICAN COLONEL (30's) walks up to Washington and SALUTES.

AMERICAN COLONEL

Sir, the Pennsylvania militia has arrived.

Washington is on horseback.

WASHINGTON

Colonel, there is a deep creek running into the Delaware. South of the town. Build a defensive position there. We can expect the British to attack to try to retake Trenton. The town is too difficult to defend. We will build defend ourselves on the other side.

(points)

The deep gorge will be an obstacle.

AMERICAN COLONEL

Yes sir.

He salutes and exits.

Americans on the edge of the gorge start to dig in. They chop trees and prepare a defense. There is a bridge across the gorge which will be the focal point of the battle.

EXT. TRENTON, NJ, AMERICAN POSITION - DAYBREAK

American soldiers are standing in formation on a field behind the gorge. Others are behind the fortifications. Washington on horseback addresses the soldiers.

WASHINGTON

My brave fellows, you have done all I asked you to do and more than could be reasonably expected. But your country is at stake, your wives, your houses, and all that you hold dear. If you will consent to stay one month longer, you will render that service to the cause of liberty and to your country which you probably can never do under any other circumstances.

We have soundly beaten the British. But they will be back. We must soundly beat them again.

Now your enlistments are over. Those who wish to leave are free to go.

Those of you who wish to continue to fight. Take one step forward.

The men look at each other. They chat. One or two take a step forward. Then others step forward. Then the entire regiments STEPS FORWARD.

A rifle shot is HEARD. THEN ANOTHER.

AMERICAN SOLDIERS

They're coming. Redcoats!

WASHINGTON

To your posts!

The men break on a RUN to their defensive positions. An American cannon BOOMS.

The defensive position is behind a deep ravine. The British ATTACK the bridge to cross the ravine. As they attempt to cross the bridge they are raked with ARTILLERY FIRE. Three cannons face the bridge.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Fire! Fire and reload.

The artillery pours murderous FIRE into the British. It is getting DARK. The British recede and end the attack.

EXT. TRENTON, NJ, BRITISH POSITION - EVENING

On the other side of the bridge, British officers meet in the field to confer. GENERAL GENERAL CORNWALLIS (50's). CAPTAIN WILLIAM ESKINE (30's).

GENERAL CORNWALLIS

We will have the old fox now. We'll go over and bag him in the morning.

BRITISH CAPTAIN WILLIAM ESKINE

Sir, if Washington is the general I take to be, he will not be there in the morning.

GENERAL CORNWALLIS

Nonsense. He is trapped. He is cooped up like a flock of chickens. He cannot retreat across the Delaware. It is full of ice floes. His boats would be destroyed by artillery. He is trapped.

BRITISH CAPTAIN WILLIAM ESKINE

Yes sir.

EXT. TRENTON, NJ, AMERICAN POSITION - NIGHT

There are campfires BURNING. But only a few men are nearby. Other men are deliberately making noise with shovels, BANGING them together as if they are digging.

Other soldier are wrapping the wheels with cloth to make them quieter.

Slowly, the Americans abandon their positions. Quietly they move out. There is a COLUMN of troops, artillery, wagons, heading down a small country road in the direction of Princeton.

EXT. TRENTON, NJ, BRITISH POSITION - MORNING

BRITISH LT. SMYTHE (20's) runs into headquarters.

BRITISH LT. SMYTHE
(Salutes.)
Sir, Lt. Smythe reports.

General Cornwallis salutes.

BRITISH LT. SMYTHE (CONT'D)
They're gone, sir.

GENERAL CORNWALLIS
Who's gone? Who are you talking
about?

BRITISH LT. SMYTHE
The Americans, sir. The Americans
have abandoned their camp.

WILLIAM ESKINE
Seems the Old Fox has slipped the
bag again, sir.

GENERAL CORNWALLIS
Bring up the cannon. We will blast
them out of the river.

BRITISH LT. SMYTHE
They did not go to the river sir.
They are headed to Princeton.

GENERAL CORNWALLIS
That's suicide. They'll be trapped
between us and our troops near
Hackensack.

BRITISH LT. SMYTHE
Yes, Sir!

GENERAL CORNWALLIS
(To other officers.)
Move! Move! After them!

EXT. PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY - MORNING

A British unit is MARCHING south along a road toward Trenton. It is marching up a long gradual slope. On the other side of the hill the Americans are MARCHING north toward them. As they both reach the crest of the hill, the troops spot each other. They are both surprised.

AMERICAN SOLDIERS

Redcoats. Redcoats.

BRITISH SOLDIERS

Americans. The Americans are coming.

BRITISH OFFICER FIVE

That's impossible. They are in Trenton.

The troops begin a fight. The British come at them with FIXED bayonets. A cannon FIRES from the British. The Americans start to FLEE.

Washington RIDES to the front. He is WAVING his hat.

WASHINGTON

There is but a handful of the enemy.
We will have at them.

Washington TURNS his horse, faces the enemy and simply sits there. Bullets CRACK about. The British have taken a position behind a low stone fence. The Americans form a battle line with Washington on his horse in front.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Do not fire until I command. Forward!

The Americans walk forward toward the British. British are FIRING and Americans are going down. Forward the Americans march. They do not fire. They are about thirty yards away from the fence.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Halt! Raise rifles! Fire!

A huge volley RIPS the Redcoats off the wall.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Attack! Attack!

The Americans RUN FORWARD in a bayonet attack. The British are overwhelmed and flee. Americans go after them SHOOTING them and HACKING the fallen.

EXT. LONDON, BIG BEN - DAY

Camera view of Big Ben.

INT. LONDON, PARLIAMENT, HOUSE OF COMMONS - DAY

One man is reading to another.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT ONE
Even, Frederick the Great, that
German, had something to say about
it.

I quote the great Frederick, "The
achievements of Washington and his
little band of compatriots between
the twenty-fifth of December and the
fourth of January, a space of ten
days, were the most brilliant of any
recorded in the annals of military
achievements."

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT TWO
I say that is quite a compliment.

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT ONE
Completely out-foxed by the fox. He
has escaped our dumb witted hounds.
He has found his burrow somewhere in
New Jersey. "Morristown," it says.

"It is at the edge of some mountains.
He can be supplied by locals. And
will be able to sally forth at will
to harass small British garrisons."

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT TWO
I say, this is not all going so well.

INT. SARATOGA, FARM HOUSE - MORNING

Benedict Arnold is PACING about. Walking inside the farm
house and then walking outside.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
(Yelling to himself.)
That fool. That cowardly fool.
(MORE)

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

We had them. We could have been destroyed Burgoyne and all his jolly redcoats. Gates sits there. Safe in the rear. He doesn't let those braver than him attack. If all is lost, it will rest on his pathetic head.

He has me cooped up here. Like a chicken without a command. That fool.

EXT. SARATOGA, BRITISH LINE - MORNING

The British troops are FORMING a line of a about a half mile. They start to MARCH forward. DRUMS rolling.

They encounter the FIRE from the Americans in their entrenchments.

EXT. SARATOGA, AMERICAN LINE - MORNING

Americans slip through the woods, seeing the British on their right. Soon an engagement begins. Being FIRE AT from their right flank, the British begin to retreat.

Other British infantry CLOSE IN on the Americans. The Americans answer with cannon and rifle FIRE. The fight is a standoff with the two armies about two hundred yards apart.

Arnold comes CHARGING up on his horse, SWORD in hand.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

We'll send them to hell before night!

The men CHEER. He leads an assault directly at the enemy. It is repulsed and the men fall back.

Arnold spots COLONEL DANIEL MORGAN (30's) to his left. He SPURS his horse down the line in full view of the British. Arnold and Morgan lead A CHARGE against the British right. The Americans advance FIRING at the retreating British.

EXT. SARATOGA, AMERICAN LINE - EVENING

Further to his left, Arnold sees a fresh patriot brigade. Arnold WHEELS his horse to the left and dashes down between the narrow space between the two armies. The British riflemen FIRE.

Arnold leads a CHARGE into a fortified position of Hessians. There is a BAYONET to bayonet fight, men using their weapons at clubs. A number Hessian Soldiers see Arnold. They raise their rifles and FIRE. A bullet smashes into Arnold's leg. His horse REARS and FALLS sideways to the ground. The horse is lying atop Arnold with Arnold's leg TWISTED OUT at a grotesque angle.

EXT. SARATOGA, AMERICAN LINE - EVENING

Darkness is falling on the battlefield. All is silent except the groaning of the wounded. Three men make a stretcher and place Arnold on it and take him away. The battlefield is littered with dead and wounded.

It keeps getting DARKER. Walking wounded STAGGER to the rear. Guards herd prisoners into tight groups.

AMERICAN SOLDIER ONE (20's) comforts AMERICAN SOLDIER TWO (20's).

AMERICAN SOLDIER ONE
You'll make it. You'll make it.

AMERICAN SOLDIER TWO
Forgive us..forgive us.. forgive us
this day...forgive us this day our
daily bread...
(Dies)

AMERICAN SOLDIER THREE (20's) comes upon a wounded BRITISH SOLDIER ONE (20's), who has crawled up against a tree. He is still moving, trying to pull himself to a sitting position. The American goes over and RUNS his bayonet through his stomach. Then walks on.

Wagons come and soldiers LOAD the dead.

Civilians STRIP the British of boots and uniforms.

EXT. ALBANY NY, ROAD TO ALBANY - DAY

A wagon is moving along the road. There are two men sitting in the wagon. Arnold passes in and out of consciousness. They come up to a hospital set up in a farmhouse. The men take Arnold out of the wagon. His leg is in a rough SPLINT wrapped in bloody rags.

DR. JAMES THATCHER

Take him. The room on the right.

The men take him in and put him in a bed.

INT. ALBANY NY, HOSPITAL - DAY

The doctor YELLS at Arnold.

DR. JAMES THATCHER

General, if you want to live. We must take that leg off!

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Damned nonsense! Same leg that was wounded in Quebec. Didn't take it off then. Not going to take it off now!

DR. JAMES THATCHER

You are going to die if we don't take it off. Infections will kill you.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I'll die a two-legged man then! I am not going to live as a one-legged man. No, a thousand times no. The musket ball should have struck my heart. Not my leg!

(screams in pain as he attempts to move.)

EXT. PARIS, STREET - DAY

Mob of happy French MARCH down the street. Bells are RINGING. They are WAVING newspapers

FRENCH MAN

Viva les Americans. Viva General Arnold. Viva les Americans.

INT. PARIS, FRENCH COURT - DAY

FRENCH MINISTER
 Ambassadeur Franklin, les français
 fédérés sont maintenant en guerre
 avec l'Angleterre. Nous accueillons
 les nouveaux alliés aux Colonies
 d'Amérique.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
 On behalf of the Continental
 Government, I welcome the French to
 fight against our common enemy.

EXT. ALBANY NY, HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

Captain Alexander Hamilton RIDES UP, DISMOUNTS and goes into
 the hospital.

INT. ALBANY NY, HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON

Arnold's room. Hamilton enters. Arnold weakly RETURNS the
 salute.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
 Captain Hamilton reports, sir.

Arnold weakly returns the salute from his bed. He is in
 great pain.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
 Yes, what is it captain?

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
 General Washington sends his sincerest
 regards. He says that your acts of
 valor have turned the tide of the
 war.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
 (Delirious.)
 Yes. Damned them. They say my leg
 is infected. No. Damn them no!

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
 Congress has approved the restoration
 of your military seniority, sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

(Delirious)

Granny Gates. Granny Gates. Fights like an old woman. No, old woman fight. He just sits there. Then takes credit for the blood of others!

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

General Burgoyne has written a gracious note endorsing that your actions were the decisive factor in our victory.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Gentleman Johnny Burgoyne. Put up a fight. Didn't stay in the rear like Granny.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

General Washington wishes your speedy recovery. He wants you for a command which will be agreeable to yourself and of great advantage to the public.

Arnold does not respond but FALLS UNCONSCIOUS. Alexander Hamilton exits.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, BRITISH OFFICERS CHRISTMAS BALL - EVENING

Interior of a large meeting hall. There is a Christmas tree. There is an orchestra of violins, etc. They are playing dance music. The whole affair is quite lavish. Plenty of food on the table. Officers resplendent in their red uniforms and medals.

Present are Peggy Shippen and her father, Judge Edward Shippen.

British officers are mingling and talking with the Philadelphia ladies. All are dressed to their finest. Other officers are drinking punch.

The MUSIC begins a new song. And the officers pair-off to dance with the ladies. Peggy Shippen dances with a handsome British CAPTAIN JOHN ANDRÉ (25).

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Welcome to Philadelphia, Captain.
The city of Brotherly Love.

JOHN ANDRÉ

Considering it is the center of a revolution, it might not be so brotherly. So, Miss Shippen, are you a fervent patriot in disguise? An elegant evening gown? Is that the latest rebel disguise? S.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, I am a patriot. On Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays I am undecided. On Sundays, I am with the Lord.

JOHN ANDRÉ

I see. A patriot for England? Or a patriot for a the rebels.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Politics, politics, politics and war. Is that all we must talk about?

JOHN ANDRÉ

Of course not. What would you like to know?

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Your family?

JOHN ANDRÉ

My family is Protestant. They are Huguenots from France.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

You speak French?

JOHN ANDRÉ

Yes. German and a little Italian.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Your father?

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

He has a business. In England and in France.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Captain, let me congratulate you and thank you. The likeliness of the drawing you did of me is most flattering.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE
 Not flattering enough. What the
 eyes behold, the pen cannot always
 capture.

John André and Peggy Shippen continue TO DANCE.

EXT. VALLEY FORGE - MORNING

The wind is blowing. Freezing cold and SNOWING. The men
 are standing by FIRES trying to keep warm in tattered clothes.

There is little to eat. They are living in huts with
 fireplaces, twelve to a hut.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. VALLEY FORGE - PARADE GROUNDS - SPRING

Spring arrives. The trees are green. Men are DRILLING on
 the parade ground. BARON Baron Von Steuben (40's) is drilling
 the troops. Steuben is MARCHING with a company of one hundred
 men, training these first. Steuben puts them through their
 drills: wheel IN FORMATION, SWITCH from line to column back
 to line, go through BAYONET drills. GENERAL MARQUIS
 de LAFAYETTE (20) and Hamilton watch on the side of the parade
 grounds.

BARON VON STEUBEN
 Kompanie, Halt! Stund at ese.

Baron Von Steuben walks over to Hamilton and Lafayette.
 Each SALUTE Baron Von Steuben.

LAFAYETTE
 Le capitaine Hamilton a un project
 de leu Book.

BARON VON STEUBEN
 Sehr gut. Je vais regarder quand je
 reviens à quarts

LAFAYETTE
 (to Hamilton.)
 The general will inspect it when he
 returns to quarters.

BARON VON STEUBEN

Ce sera un manuel d'instructions pour des exercices et des marches à être enseigné à tous les soldats américains. Nous avons ordre et la précision sur la drillfield et le champ de bataille. Ja wohl.

LAFAYETTE

(To Hamilton)

It will be an instruction manual for drills and marches to be taught to all American troops. We will have order and precision on the drill field and the battle field.

BARON VON STEUBEN

Achtung.

Waits for Hamilton and Lafayette to salute him. They SALUTE.

BARON VON STEUBEN (CONT'D)

Entlassen.

Baron Von Steuben salutes them back, does a smart about face and marches back to the company.

INT. VALLEY FORGE, WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Present are Washington, Alexander Hamilton, General Charles Lee, Lafayette, Benedict Arnold, AMERICAN OFFICER FIVE, General Anthony Wayne (40's) Arnold is sitting in a chair, with crutch.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

The British are abandoning Philadelphia. They have shipped their wounded, loyalists and heavy cannon down the Delaware and to New York. They are moving across the Delaware with their infantry and horse-drawn artillery.

The supply train will be fifteen hundred wagons long. He has a force of ten thousand. Plus, there are many loyalists escaping with him.

(MORE)

ALEXANDER HAMILTON (CONT'D)

They will have to repair roads and bridges as they move across New Jersey to New York. They cannot move quickly.

WASHINGTON

What is our troop strength?

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

We have thirteen thousand five hundred troops. Plus, we may expect patriots and militia to join us.

WASHINGTON

Your recommendation.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Attack at once.

LAFAYETTE

General, this is an opportunity to destroy the British. Drive them from the Continent.

GENERAL NATHANIAL GREENE

I concur.

GENERAL ANTHONY WAYNE

I also concur.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

General, may I offer a dissenting opinion.

WASHINGTON

Certainly.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

This is an unnecessary battle. We may win, but we will not cripple the enemy. The entry of France into the war means it is as good as won. The British will not be able to supply the garrison in New York City.

They will eventually abandon New York City as they have abandoned Boston and Philadelphia. They cannot sustain themselves with a sea route to England.

(MORE)

GENERAL CHARLES LEE (CONT'D)
France can block that sea route.

I repeat sir, this would be an unnecessary loss of life.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
(Outraged)
Is this a war council? This meeting would do honor to the most honorable society of midwives.

AMERICAN OFFICER FIVE
That is impertinent, Colonel.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
And meant to be.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE
We should construct a bridge of gold and let the British march back into New York.

Washington pauses. The officers await his decision.

WASHINGTON
We shall send a strong detachment to harass Clinton's left flank. They must cross the Delaware and we must cross the Delaware. But they will be bogged down. We will move with alacrity across New Jersey to intercept General Clinton.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE
By virtue of rank sir, it is appropriate that I should lead this detachment.

WASHINGTON
(Pauses)
We will have an advance guard of five thousand. Supported by twelve cannon. The detachment should intercept the British at Monmouth.

General Lee, you will command the detachment.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE
Yes, Sir.

WASHINGTON

As another piece of business, General Benedict Arnold.

Arnold STRUGGLES to stand. He has a CRUTCH to support him.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

General Arnold, you will be the commander of the Philadelphia region. When the British have finished departing Philadelphia, you will take a detachment and proceed to Philadelphia.

This assignment will require patience, supreme tact and political sensitivity.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir.

WASHINGTON

The occupation has been hard on Philadelphia, especially in the poorer areas. The British regiments have looted and destroyed property. The patriots in the city seek revenge on the loyalists who cooperated with the British.

Many loyalists have left, but others have not. Maintaining order will be a matter of political delicacy.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir. Understood.

WASHINGTON

That will be all.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir.

Arnold Salutes and exits.

WASHINGTON

Colonel Hamilton, please stay a minute. Others are dismissed.

Dismissed Officers SALUTE and exit. Washington returns the salute.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
Colonel Hamilton. You have the
correspondence in order.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
Yes sir. The chest full of true
copies of your correspondence has
been secured and will sent for
safekeeping.

(Points to large wooden traveling chest.)

WASHINGTON
Whatever the outcome of this dreadful
engagement, history will have a true
account. What we do is not simply
for the moment. But for history.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
Yes sir.

EXT. MONMOUTH, NJ - DAY

The British train of wagons and men stretches twelve miles.
It is brutally hot. There are packs thrown down as men
STRUGGLE in the heat.

Rider approaches General Clinton (40's).

BRITISH RIDER
Sir, the rebels are at our rear.
They are marching toward us.

GENERAL CLINTON
Marching towards us, I say. They
will regret that before the night is
over. (To the rider.) Take a message
to Brigadier Hastings. Have him
detach four regiments from the column.
Form for battle and proceed to the
rear to engage the rebels.

BRITISH RIDER
Anything else, sir?

GENERAL CLINTON
Yes, tell him to give the rebels a
good pounding. God speed.

BRITISH RIDER
Yes sir.

British Rider GALLOPS away to the rear of column

EXT. MONMOUTH, NJ - DAY

Washington ON HORSE hears the SOUND of cannon in the distance. He SPURS his horse. As he rides the cannon SOUNDS grow louder. He comes upon a young FIFER (14).

WASHINGTON
What is happening son?

FIFER
The Continental troops that had been advancing are retreating.

WASHINGTON
Son, if you mention this to a soul-- I will have you whipped. Do you understand.

FIFER
Yes, Sir!

WASHINGTON
Good job lad. We do not want to spread panic. Do you understand.

FIFER
Not a word from me sir.
(Smartly salutes.)

Washington RETURNS THE SALUTE. He rides toward the enemy and sees American troops RETREATING.

General General Charles Lee RIDES UP to Washington.

WASHINGTON
What is the meaning of this, sir? I desire to know the meaning of this disorder and confusion.

General Charles Lee sits there saying nothing.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)
What is the meaning of this, sir?!

GENERAL CHARLES LEE
The American troops would not stand the British bayonets.

WASHINGTON

You damned Poltroon. You never tried them.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

We found the British on an open plain. Our men were easy prey for British Calvary.

WASHINGTON

You are a cowardly scoundrel and a blackguard. Sir, you are relieved of your command.

Washington RIDES OFF. He rallies the troops riding on his WHITE HORSE. He is EVERYWHERE.

Monmouth is a marathon battle. There is an artillery duel. British troops stormed the Americans and are repulsed.

MOLLY PITCHER (20's) brings water to the artillery. A gunner loading a cannon FALLS mortally wounded. Molly Pitcher loads the cannon.

MOLLY PITCHER

Fire!

An artillery man LIGHTS the touch hole.

The marathon battle continues to night fall. At one point, Washington's white horse DROPS DEAD from heat exhaustion. Billy Lee brings him a CHESTNUT MARE. Washington MOUNTS the horse.

The battle ends as DARKNESS FALLS.

EXT. MONMOUTH, NJ - NIGHT

Washington, Lafayette and Billy Lee bed down and sleep under a tree. The British campfires and sounds of the British digging in can be seen and heard across the fields. A few soldiers stand guard in the distance. Billy Lee takes blankets off his horse for Washington, Lafayette and himself.

LAFAYETTE

A long day, Mon général.

WASHINGTON

Yes, a very long day. Let's get some sleep for tomorrow.

Washington is so tired he is somewhat woozy. Billy Lee helps him sit down with his back up against the tree. Billy Lee puts one of two blankets over him. Washington immediately falls immediately asleep.

Lafayette and Billy Lee look at each other and then at the sleeping Washington. Billy Lee hands one blanket to Lafayette. Lafayette takes the blanket and holding it walks over to his horse and takes a pistol out of the saddle bag.

When he arrives back at the tree, he hands the blanket to Billy Lee.

LAFAYETTE

S'asseoir là. A côté de l'arbre. All
er.

(Points for Billy Lee)

Sit there.

Billy does sits down his back against the tree and wraps the blanket around himself. Lafayette goes to the other side of the tree, sits down with his back against the tree and holds his pistol in his lap. The three of them fall asleep.

FADE OUT\FADE IN:

EXT. MONMOUTH, NJ - BEFORE DAWN

AMERICAN SOLDIER FIVE rushes to him, yelling.

AMERICAN SOLDIER FIVE

The British are gone. The British
are gone, Sir!

Washington Awakes Washington looks PERPLEXED. He knows he has been tricked as he had tricked the British.

WASHINGTON

(To Lafayette)

We should have known better. But it
might not have done any good. The
men are too exhausted to attack.
But the British are not too exhausted
to flee.

Beat.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

The possession of our towns, while we have an army in the field, will avail them little. It causes us difficulty, but it does not by any means ensure them conquest.

This is our country. They are occupiers. We do not need to win, only not lose. They will leave. This is our country.

INT. MORRISTOWN, NJ, COURTS-MARTIAL DAY

There are two long wooden tables facing with chairs on one side. There are spectators in the room both military and civilian. Major John Andre sits behind one table with COUNSEL. Behind another table sit two LEGAL OFFICERS (various ages).

Enter the PANEL OF ELEVEN OFFICERS (Mixed ages and ranks) and the PRESIDING OFFICER (40's) in the court rise. The members of the panel take their seats except the Presiding Officer. CAPTAIN John Laurens (20's) and Hamilton are spectators in the courtroom.

PRESIDING OFFICER

Be seated.

All are seated.

PRESIDING OFFICER (CONT'D)

Major John Andre, present yourself.

Major John Andre comes to the center of the court in front of the Presiding Judge. Lee SALUTES and the Presiding Officer RETURNS THE SALUTE.

PRESIDING OFFICER (CONT'D)

This court of the Continental Army finds you guilty of disobeying orders, permitting a disorderly retreat, and disrespecting the Commander-in-Chief. You are hereby suspended from the Army for a period of twelve months.

Court adjourned. He BANGS gavel.

General Charles Lee salutes. Presiding Officer returns the salute. Lee does an about face and exits.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON
 (To Captain John Laurens.)
 He should have been hanged.

CAPTAIN JOHN LAURENS
 I agree with General Washington. A
 cowardly scoundrel and a black guard.

All exit.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA, LARGE MANSION - EVENING

An elegant, roofed carriage is coming down a street of Philadelphia. It is drawn by two BLACK horses. It has a driver (20's) and a LIVERIED FOOTMAN (30's) Arnold is helped out by several men. He is using a crutch. He is wearing a resplendent uniform. The house is immense.

DRIVER
 General, this was the home of the
 British commandant.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
 He lived well.

Arnold is HELPED UP the stairs and into the home. This is the wealthiest home that Arnold has ever been in. Elegant paintings on the walls, tapestries and fine china.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, LARGE MANSION - MORNING

Arnold is sitting at a table. AMERICAN OFFICER SIX enters.

AMERICAN OFFICER SIX
 Sir, a delegation from the Sons of
 Liberty is here.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
 Show them in.

Several men enter. They DOFF their hats in respect and stand in front of Arnold.

FIRST WORKMAN
 Your excellency. We're from the
 Sons of Liberty.
 (MORE)

FIRST WORKMAN (CONT'D)

We was wondering what you intend to do about the loyalists who run about the city. They act as if nothing happened. They act as though they did not lick the boots of the British while they were here, and make a tidy profit at it.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

What specifically did they do?

FIRST WORKMAN

They sold goods to the British and helped them repair their houses.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Gentlemen, while I am sure that is distressing. It hardly commits a crime.

SECOND WORKMAN

They was collabor-ating with the enemy.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

While their behavior may be repugnant it is not a crime. The people of Philadelphia had to earn their daily bread. While it may be difficult to understand, they did not commit any offense that I can charge them with. Gentlemen, I thank you for your time in coming to see me.

(Motions for them to leave.)

Workmen gaze at the fine paintings and china as they exit.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA, LARGE MANSION, OUTSIDE DOOR - DAY

THIRD WORKMAN

He's not going to do anything.

SECOND WORKMAN

Living in the fancy house of the British to boot. Very posh.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, LARGE MANSION - MORNING

Arnold is at his desk. Servant Three enters.

SERVANT THREE

Sir, there is a gentleman to see
you, a Robert Shewell.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Thank you, show him in and make sure
we are not disturbed.

SERVANT THREE

Yes, sir!

Servant enters, shows in ROBERT SHEWELL. Servant exits.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Good day, Mr. Shewell.

ROBERT SHEWELL

Good day, sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

The arrangements have been made.

ROBERT SHEWELL

Yes sir. The goods abandoned by the
British or left behind by the
loyalists will be sold.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

If you are asked, you will say the
money is to go into the general
defense fund. Nothing more. Do you
understand?

ROBERT SHEWELL

Yes sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Fine you may show yourself out. I
have to prepare myself for tonight's
reception.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, LARGE MANSION - EVENING

Guests (mixed ages and sexes) begin entering Arnold's
residence. They pass through the receiving line. They are
the elite of Philadelphia.

They enter into a reception room where they are greeted by Benedict Arnold. He is using a CRUTCH.

There is a RECEIVING LINE. People are lining up to meet the new military commander.

CITIZEN ONE

It is so nice to make your acquaintance, General Arnold.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Nice to meet you, Mr. Furgeson. I expect that conditions will improve in our fair city.

CITIZEN TWO

No doubt they will General.

CITIZEN THREE

(accompanied by his wife)

Do you have any plans for the city that you can disclose, General?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I have none except to keep Philadelphia secure and increase our prosperity.

CITIZEN THREE

Noble goals General.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes, it is often easier to establish a goal than to obtain it.

JUDGE EDWARD SHIPPEN

General Arnold, I would like to present my youngest daughter. Margaret Shippen. Known to her friends as Peggy.

Arnold is taken aback by the lovely Miss Shippen.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Pleased to meet you. Miss Shippen.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

I am pleased to meet you as well General. I hope your stay in Philadelphia will be longer than the now departed British.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I would hope so as well, Miss Shippen.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

You may call me Peggy, if you like, General.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I would be honored, Miss Shippen,
(beat)
Peggy.

Peggy holds out her hand and Arnold gallantly KISSES it. Guests are mingling about. Sipping a rum punch. Servant Three RINGS a small silver bell.

SERVANT THREE

Ladies and gentlemen. Dinner is served.

Guests exit room to enter dining room Arnold puts Peggy Shippen's arm in his.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Shall we dine, Miss Shippen....Peggy.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Yes, General, we shall dine.

As Arnold walks past Servant Three into the dining room, he hands him his CRUTCH.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, CHURCH - EVENING

Small comfortable room in the basement of a Quaker Assembly Hall.

REV. JONATHAN ODELL

Have you heard from Captain André?

PEGGY SHIPPEN

We have received some communication from him.

JOSEPH STANSBURY

Anything of note?

PEGGY SHIPPEN

No. He wrote a general note. Nothing that needed deciphering.

MARIA STANSBURY

What shall we send to him?

REV. JONATHAN ODELL

Peggy, you should let him know that you have been introduced to General Arnold. That he is favorably disposed toward you.

MARIA STANSBURY

The gossip is that General Arnold was most attentive to you at dinner.

JOSEPH STANSBURY

General Arnold has been wounded by the Americans as much as by the British, but of a different sort.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

How so?

JOSEPH STANSBURY

The Council of Pennsylvania has laid eight charges for corruption and malfeasance with the Continental Army and Congress.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

I cannot believe such.

JOSEPH STANSBURY

General Arnold has not endeared himself to anyone. His fiery personality serves him well on the battlefield. It does not serve him well in this position. He must contend with the Pennsylvania Colony and the Continental government. His lack of diplomatic skills have made him many enemies.

REV. JONATHAN ODELL

General Arnold was a very wealthy man in New Haven. During the war, his wife ran his business but has since died. He is of reduced circumstances, but still a wealthy man.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

He is widowed?

JOSEPH STANSBURY

Indeed, he received the news right after the Battle of Saratoga. He returned to New Haven, a man broken in both body and spirit. He has three children. All boys.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

He may be a general. But he must be a very lonely man.

EXT. PHILADELPHIA, ROAD OUTSIDE CITY -DAY

Arnold and Peggy Shippen are RIDING in an elegant carriage.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Where are we going General?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

It won't be long. Another mile or so.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

We are going on a picnic? Perhaps a lunch at a country house?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Hopefully, many lunches at this country house.

They ride on. The carriage stops at a large estate.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

This is beautiful. What a beautiful house. What lovely grounds.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

It is yours.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Mine?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes. I purchased it this month. I am giving it to you. Mount Pleasant. It is called Mount Pleasant.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Mine? For me? Mine?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes, for you to live in as my wife.
For you and the future children we
will have.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Yes. Of course, I will marry you.
We will have to ask my father, of
course. A formality. Yes, of course
I will marry you.

(Kisses him passionately.)

My darling General.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, JUDGE SHIPPEN'S HOME - DAY

Wedding: A few close friends (various sexes and ages) are at
the wedding including Peggy's sisters and their father, Judge
Edward Shippen.

WOMAN THREE

(Whispering)

The general can add this to his list
of conquests.

WOMAN TWO

Perseverance and close attack have
won the day.

WOMAN THREE

Yes, sometimes a woman can win by
surrendering.

WOMAN TWO

Cupid can inflict mortal wounds on
the bravest of generals.

WOMAN THREE

He is about to bring his big cannon
to bear, on the former Miss Shippen.

The women LAUGH.

REV. JONATHAN ODELL

Do you take Peggy to be your lawful
wedded wife?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I do.

REV. JONATHAN ODELL

Do you take Benedict to be your lawful wedded husband?

PEGGY SHIPPEN

I do.

REV. JONATHAN ODELL

I now pronounce you man and wife.

They KISS.

INT. MORRISTOWN, NJ, WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Washington And Alexander Hamilton in office.

WASHINGTON

What news do you have of Benedict Arnold's court-martial?

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

(Reading)

The court exonerated General Arnold on two counts. It held him at fault on two of the others. They found no illegal intent regarding his use of army wagons for personal business, but stated that it was impudent and improper for an officer in his position to have done so.

They considered his granting a pass to the ship, Charming Nancy, to have overstepped the bounds of propriety. They have sentenced him to an official reprimand by you, sir.

WASHINGTON

Colonel, please draft such a letter for my review and signature.
(Beat) Please include that I will endeavor to furnish the general with opportunities for him to regain the esteem of his country.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Yes sir.

Beat.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON (CONT'D)

Sir?

WASHINGTON

Yes, Colonel

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

On a personal note, General Arnold's wife gave birth to a boy.

WASHINGTON

Thank you. I will write him a note of congratulations.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Yes sir.

WASHINGTON

That will be all colonel.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Yes sir.

Hamilton SALUTES and exits.

INT. PHILADELPHIA, MOUNT PLEASANT - NIGHT

Arnold and Peggy are sitting in bed. A CANDLE is on a night stand.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Joseph Stansbury is preparing to go to New York.

No response.

PEGGY SHIPPEN (CONT'D)

He will be carrying a private letter to Major John André. Do you have any message you want sent?

Beat.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Is he to be trusted?

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Yes. He has been engaged in our affairs before.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

What has he done?

PEGGY SHIPPEN

He safely delivered three hundred fifty pounds from the British.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

He can be trusted then.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

What shall I have him tell André?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Tell Arnold that Monk is ready to switch sides.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Who is Monk?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

General George Monk switched sides from Oliver Cromwell to the Royalists. He helped restore the monarchy to England.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

You will be our George Monk?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

He won honors and glory, and the eternal thanks of the King.

Here, I have neither.

Have him tell André he will receive intelligence from Philadelphia.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

I will do so.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Peggy, for the risk we are now taking, we will be little rewarded. We are only supplying information. Our reward must be greater.

(MORE)

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

For that I will need to occupy a command, other than commandant of a city. A prize so valuable the British will end the war.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

What would that be?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

West Point.

Arnold BLOWS OUT the candle.

INT. NEW YORK CITY, BRITISH HEADQUARTERS - DAY

General General Clinton at a desk. A KNOCK.

GENERAL CLINTON

Enter!

Major John André enters with Joseph Stansbury.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Sir!

Major André SALUTES. Clinton RETURNS the salute.

GENERAL CLINTON

What is it Major Andre? Who is this man?

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

He is Joseph Stansbury. A Philadelphia businessman. He brings a word from George Monk!

GENERAL CLINTON

What? You must be bloody joking Captain. I hope this is no joke.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Absolutely not sir. As with our English revolution, a general has decided to switch sides.

GENERAL CLINTON

(to Stansbury)

Is this true?

JOSEPH STANSBURY

Yes sir. I was instructed to bring you word that Monk is willing to do this. If he is handsomely compensated for this deadly risk.

GENERAL CLINTON

Monk will be liberally compensated, and indemnified, for all loss of personal property.

JOSEPH STANSBURY

Yes sir.

GENERAL CLINTON

Furthermore, if he can aid us, in the capture of this obnoxious band of men, we will be generous, beyond his most sanguine hopes.

JOSEPH STANSBURY

Yes sir.

GENERAL CLINTON

Tell Monk, we meet his overtures, with full reliance on his honorable intentions.

Major André. Prepare a code book, so that messages can be transmitted back and forth, from here to Philadelphia.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Yes sir.

GENERAL CLINTON

That will be all Major John Andre.

André and Stansbury exit.

EXT. STONY POINT, NY, EASTERN BANK OF THE HUDSON - DAY

Washington is on the east bank of the river watching troops FERRYING ACROSS below West Point. Arnold dismounts his horse and approaches. Arnold salutes. Washington returns the salute.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Good morning, sir.

WASHINGTON

Good morning sir. I trust you continue to heal.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Not as firmly as I would like. I ride with difficulty. The pain still reoccurs.

WASHINGTON

And how are your wife and child in Philadelphia?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

They are very well sir. They give a man great pleasure in his old age.

WASHINGTON

Well, that old age does not seem to refer to you General.

I have been considering appointing you to a field command. You would be reporting directly to me in our coming campaign against the British in New York.

This would be a combined operation with full participation of the French.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I am honored sir, but I must defer.

WASHINGTON

Why? I would think you would long for an active command. Where your military talents can best be put to use.

Arnold walks about exaggerating his limp.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

While I can walk tolerably well, fast exertion becomes exceedingly painful. On horseback, I can canter, but full gallop puts me into pain. I would be a hindrance to the effectiveness of the Army, not a help.

WASHINGTON

Very well, general. The New York delegation has been communicating to me that a recognized officer should be put in command of West Point. Colonel Hamilton.

Hamilton walks over.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Colonel Hamilton, please prepare a general order for signature, "General Arnold will take command of the garrison at West Point."

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Yes sir.

Salutes and exits.

WASHINGTON

Much needs to be done to improve the defenses of this redoubt.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Very well sir. I appreciate this appointment. I will move my wife and son forthwith. We will move to the Robinson house.

WASHINGTON

Excellent. When you fetch your charming wife from Washington, give my best to her. It is many years since I first met the youngest daughter of Judge Shippen. She was a charming girl and I am sure she is a captivating young woman. You are a fortunate man, sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Indeed, sir.

Arnold SALUTES.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Have a good day sir.

WASHINGTON

(Salutes)

Have a safe trip back to Philadelphia.

Arnold exits.

EXT. MORRISTOWN, NJ, DUELING FIELD - MORNING

Captain John Laurens and General Charles Lee assemble. They are preparing for a duel. Alexander Hamilton is Lauren's second. Lee also has a SECOND (30's) There is a DUELING MASTER (30's) to conduct the ceremony.

CAPTAIN JOHN LAURENS

You have publicly abused General Washington in the grossest terms. The relation in which I stand to him forbids me to pass such conduct unnoticed. Satisfaction is demanded.

GENERAL CHARLES LEE

For my honor.

DUELING MASTER

Twenty paces.

(Counts off twenty paces. Both men walk.)

Turn.

(Both men turn.)

Fire, when ready.

Lee SHAKES as he raises his pistol to shoot. Laurens keeps his pistol at this side. Lee FIRES and misses.

Laurens raises his pistol, aims at Lee's heart. Lee quakes. Laurens lowers his pistol slightly and fires. Lee falls to the ground grabbing his thigh.

CAPTAIN JOHN LAURENS

Satisfaction is rendered.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - EVENING

Arnold and Peggy are alone in the house. A messenger arrives and KNOCKS on the door.

MESSENGER

For you sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Thank you. That will be all.

The messenger departs. Arnold opens the letter and reads it.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

It gives us everything we wanted. They will pay the twenty thousand pounds for West Point. Success is seizing West Point, three thousand prisoners, equipment and artillery. There is no amount defined upon failure, but promises of fair and just compensation for our efforts.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Brilliant! Simply Brilliant!

BENEDICT ARNOLD

There is one difficulty. They ask that for a personal meeting between me and their representative. The meeting will be to coordinate their attack on West Point.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Well then, write them. We will find a way to deliver the message.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

We must arrange a way to meet André, face to face. Let me write a coded letter.

Arnold goes to a table. He is working with a book and a letter. He looks up the words in a book and then writes something in a letter. He is going back and forth between book and letter.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I must also include, Washington will be arriving in two weeks. He is to meet with the French in Hartford. I am sending this information to André.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

What is the meeting about?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Washington will try to get French support for moving on New York. But that will be impossible.

(MORE)

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

The French have half their troops bottled up in French ports by the British navy. They are of little assistance to Washington.

EXT. STONY POINT - DAY

Washington DISEMBARKS from a barge on the East Side of the Hudson. Billy Lee takes Washington's horse off the barge. Arnold is there with a party of about ten men and twenty horses for Washington's entourage. Hamilton and Lafayette are with them. Arnold SALUTES.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Good morning, sir.

WASHINGTON

Good morning, general.

Washington PACES the shoreline, looking south toward New York. He has a TELESCOPE.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

General, isn't it strange that this fourteen-gun sloop of the British is stationed off Dobb's Ferry?

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes, it is sir. We have no idea of their intentions. Our posts at Dobb's Ferry have watched the boat closely. They have made no offensive movements.

WASHINGTON

I will issue orders to strengthen West Point. The British seem to be up to something. You will receive additional reinforcements.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir.

WASHINGTON

We will return in four days. Perhaps, three. I will make an inspection of West Point then. I will first stop at your home and we will cross to West Point together.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes sir.

Washington mounts his door. Arnold RETURNS the salute and Washington RIDES AWAY.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, THE VULTURE, - NIGHT

A boat with two men ROWS OUT to the Vulture. It ties up alongside. John André clammers down a rope to a boat with two men to row him ashore.

EXT. HUDSON RIVER, BANK - NIGHT

John André goes ashore and meets Arnold in a clump of trees. André and Arnold talk. There is a LANTERN on the ground. The boat men move away. Another man stands holding the horses.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

We finally meet.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Yes. After many years.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Far too many.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

How is your exquisite wife? We met years ago in Philadelphia.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes, I have heard. The officers' regimental dances were always a favorite of hers.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Miss Shippen was always the prettiest girl at the dance. Now she is taken by the daring American general.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

It was a long siege.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

But worth the prize.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

She still has the drawing you made of her.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

A trifle.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Not at all. She treasured a gift from a British officer.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Soon her own husband will be such a British officer.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Yes, I can give her many gifts, but I don't draw.

Both LAUGH.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

To business. You have reassured me of the amount I am to receive when West Point is taken and that I will be an officer of equivalent rank in the British army.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Correct.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

But there is no agreement as to compensation if West Point is not taken.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

No. There is not. However, you are dealing with officers and gentlemen and our word that you will be justly compensated for your efforts and indemnified for property loss is our bond.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Well enough. Let us go over the maps and defenses of West Point in some detail.

Arnold pulls out the maps and other papers, POINTING to the map.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Here is where the defenses are strongest and here is where they are weakest. This is the point of vulnerability. A disguised attack here, followed by the main party here, would be the surest route to conquering the stronghold.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

I see.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Now let us go over troop strength and other considerations. Let us also talk of timing of the assault.

DISSOLVE OUT AND BACK TO INDICATE PASSAGE OF TIME:

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Major Andre, it is getting late. You must start back.

Arnold goes over to the sleeping Calhoon Brothers (30's) and Joshua Smith (40's).

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Wake up. Wake up. Time to bring our guest back to the ship.

CALHOON BROTHER ONE

No, sir. It is too late. The tide is against us. We will be rowing for hours. We will be exposed in the morning sun and then have to explain what we are doing

CALHOON BROTHER TWO

Far too risky.

CALHOON BROTHER ONE

Wait till tomorrow night. We will have the tide and darkness.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I am forced to agree. Let's move to Smith's house. We will spend the night there.

All MOUNT the horses and RIDE OFF.

INT. JOSHUA SMITH'S HOUSE - EARLY DAYBREAK

From the front lawn of the house they can see the ship FIRING and HEAR cannons from the shore.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE
What in bloody hell!

EXT. TELLER'S POINT, AMERICAN GUN BATTERY - DAYBREAK

Americans have two cannon behind earthen works. They are FIRING.

AMERICAN ARTILLERY CAPTAIN
Give them bloody hell! Goddamn
British! Think they own the Hudson,
do they?

FIRE! Continuous fire!

The British ship is becalmed. Neither tide nor current is moving the ship. Shots are tearing through the rigging and boat on deck.

EXT. VULTURE - MORNING

BRITISH CAPTAIN
Lower two boats on the starboard
side. Pull the ship back.

The sailors scramble to do this. Two boats have lines to the front of the ship and they pull the boat out of range.

EXT. TELLER'S POINT, AMERICAN GUN BATTERY - MORNING

AMERICAN ARTILLERY CAPTAIN
Give it to the Redcoats. Fire!
Fire!

Artillery keeps FIRING. British guns cannot fire as the ship is pulled away.

EXT. JOSHUA SMITH'S HOUSE, FRONT LAWN - MORNING

BENEDICT ARNOLD

It will be impossible to return via
The Vulture. I will write you a
pass to go through American lines
either by land or by the river. But
I would suggest by land. There will
be a sharp watch on the river by
everyone. It would be far too
dangerous. Let us go inside. I
will write you the necessary letter
and then I will depart for West Point.

They head for the house.

EXT. WESTCHESTER, WOODED ROAD - MORNING

André is RIDING a horse in civilian clothes. Three militia
with muskets that are aimed directly at him.

MILITIA MAN ONE

Halt. Dismount. Right now, or we'll
shoot you off the damn horse.

André HALTS and DISMOUNTS.

One man notices the bulge in André's boot. He reaches down
and takes out the papers and sees a map.

MILITIA MAN TWO

We have a right big fish here. A
right big fish.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - DAY

Arnold is sitting and eating breakfast. A KNOCK on the door.
AMERICAN LT. SOLOMAN ALLEN (20's) enters and salutes.

AMERICAN LT. ALLEN

Messages for Colonel Varick.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

I'll take them.

The messages are handed to Arnold.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)
That will be all.

His face goes red as he reads them.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)
Do not mention Anderson's capture to
anyone. Do you understand?

AMERICAN LT. ALLEN
Yes sir.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
We must save this news for Washington.

Lt. Allen salutes and exits.

Arnold RUSHES UP the stairs and enters his wife's room. She
is STARTLED.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)
All is found out. André is captured.
The plans have been discovered. I
must flee.

They will not suspect a woman.

PEGGY SHIPPEN
I will be hysterical. My husband
has been taken. Overcome with grief.
Absolutely mad.

He hurriedly KISSES his wife.

BENEDICT ARNOLD
Goodbye. My love.

Arnold rushes down stairs. Downstairs is MAJOR DAVID FRANKS
(30's). He rushes outside. Several other riders are outside
in advance of General Washington.

BENEDICT ARNOLD (CONT'D)
A horse! A horse! Saddle me a horse.

Major Franks, I am going to West
Point to prepare a reception for
General Washington.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - DAY

Arnold MOUNTS his horse and GALLOPS OFF. He RACES down to Robinson's landing and jumps into a boat. Eight STARTLED boatmen look at him.

BENEDICT ARNOLD

Down river! Down river. Be fast about it. I am to meet General Washington.

The boat men ROW down the Hudson

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - DAY

Washington and entourage arrive at the Robinson House. Alexander Hamilton. Major David Franks and LT. COLONEL RICHARD VARICK (30's) are there.

COLONEL VARICK

Morning, sir
(salutes)

WASHINGTON

Isn't General Arnold here?

COLONEL VARICK

He just left for West Point. He said that he was to prepare a reception for you there.

WASHINGTON

I see.

COLONEL VARICK

Mrs. Arnold is upstairs. But she is rather indisposed.

WASHINGTON

We will take a party of men and go to West Point. We shall meet General Arnold there.

COLONEL VARICK

Yes sir.

Washington and party depart.

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - DAY

As soon as Washington leaves the officers head into the house. A woman's SCREECH is heard upstairs. Hamilton, Varick and Franks RUSH upstairs. They find Peggy Shippen SCREAMING and holding her child. She is in an unbuttoned nightgown. Her hair flying, she is racing up and down the corridor.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

You'll kill my baby. You'll kill my baby.

She continues to SCREAM. She sees Major Franks and runs toward him, falling to her knees.

PEGGY SHIPPEN (CONT'D)

Save my baby. Please spare my baby.

She CLINGS to Franks's legs so tight he cannot pry her loose.

MAJOR FRANKS

You have me. Major Franks. General Arnold will soon be back with General Washington.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

No. No. No. General Arnold will never return. He is gone. He is gone forever. There. There. There. The spirits have carried him up there. They have put hot irons in his head.

She POINTS to the ceiling.

Franks, Varick and Hamilton PRY Peggy loose and bring her to bed. She quiets down, CLUTCHING her baby.

EXT. WEST POINT - DAY

Washington lands his boat at the foot of a cliff. A very started AMERICAN GUARD (20's) and AMERICAN SERGEANT (30's) are there to greet him. Guard goes to present arms with General Washington.

AMERICAN GUARD

Good day, sir.

WASHINGTON

(returns salute)

Why isn't General Arnold here to greet me?

AMERICAN GUARD

I have no idea sir.

WASHINGTON

(To another Sergeant.)

Fetch Colonel Lamb.

AMERICAN SERGEANT TWO

Yes sir.

Sergeant scurries off. A minute or so later, COLONEL JOHN LAMB (40'S) meets Washington

COLONEL JOHN LAMB

(salutes)

Good day, sir.

WASHINGTON

(salutes)

Good day, Colonel. Have you seen General Arnold.

COLONEL JOHN LAMB

No, Sir! He has not been here in a week.

WASHINGTON

Well, let's carry on with our inspection.

Washington INSPECTS West Point, looks at cannons. He finds them rusty. Looks in storerooms, finds them empty. Shoddy barracks, shortages of supplies. The whole fort seems run down

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

The defenses are far weaker than can ever have been imagined. What has General Arnold been doing, sir?

COLONEL JOHN LAMB

I cannot answer for the General.

WASHINGTON

I will issue orders for the strengthening of West Point.

(MORE)

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

I must now return to the Robinson House and meet General Arnold there.

COLONEL JOHN LAMB

Certainly. Yes sir.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROBINSON HOUSE - DAY

Washington is in his breeches, suspenders, undershirt and boots.

There is a KNOCK on the door. Hamilton enters.

WASHINGTON

Come in.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Sir, these papers were sent to you via another route. They have only now arrived.

Hamilton spreads Arnold's maps out on the table. Washington is SHAKEN as he looks through the papers.

WASHINGTON

Maps of West Point. Diagrams. Troop strengths. Points of vulnerability.

Washington puts his head in his hands.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

They were found on Major John André.

WASHINGTON

Where is Arnold?

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

We do not know sir.

WASHINGTON

Arnold has betrayed us.

Another knock on the door.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Enter.

AMERICAN OFFICER SIX
General. Mrs. Arnold requests to
see you. She is most distraught.

WASHINGTON
Certainly.

Washington goes upstairs and sees an hysterical Peggy.
SERVANT TWO FEMALE (40's) opens the door and lets in
Washington along with Varick.

SERVANT TWO FEMALE
General Washington, ma'am.

Washington enters the room. Peggy Shippen is completely
disheveled. Her nightgown is open. She holds her infant to
her breast.

PEGGY SHIPPEN
No! That man is not Washington.

Washington leans over to her.

WASHINGTON
I am General Washington, Mrs. Arnold.

PEGGY SHIPPEN
No. You are going to assist Colonel
Varick in killing my baby. The
spirits have carried my husband away.
He is up there. He is up there.
General Arnold is gone forever.
There is a hot iron on my head and
no one but General Washington can
take it off. The spirits have carried
him up there. They have put hot
irons in his head.

She tears at her gown to open it for full view.

Washington is aghast. Turns on his heel and walks out of
the room. He goes down stairs.

American Aide Two walks over to Washington.

AMERICAN AIDE TWO
Sir, we have received a letter from
General Arnold.

Totally stunned, Washington takes the letter and reads it
aloud.

WASHINGTON

(Reads)

"Sir;

"The heart which is conscious of its own rectitude cannot attempt to palliate a step which the world may censure as wrong. I have ever acted from a principle of love to my country, since the commencement of the present unhappy contest between Great Britain and the Colonies. The same principle of love to my country actuates my present conduct, however it may appear inconsistent to the world, who very seldom judge right of any man's actions.

"I have no favor to ask for myself. I have too often experienced the ingratitude of my country to attempt it.

Hamilton is simply SEETHING WITH RAGE as Washington reads.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

"But from the known humanity of your Excellency, I am induced to ask your protection for Mrs. Arnold from every insult and injury that a mistaken vengeance of my country may expose her to. It ought to fall only on me. She is as good and as innocent as an angel, and is incapable of doing wrong. I beg she may be permitted to return to her friends in Philadelphia, or to come to me, as she may choose. From your Excellency I have no fears on her account, but she may suffer from the mistaken fury of the country.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Preposterous. Mistaken fury? There is no mistaken fury. It is rightfully directed at this traitor.

WASHINGTON

(Continues reading.)

"I have to request that the enclosed letter may be delivered to Mrs. Arnold, and she be permitted to write to me.

"I have also to ask that my clothes and baggage, which are of little consequence, may be sent to me. If required, their value shall be paid in money. I have the honor to be with great regard and esteem, your Excellency's most obedient humble servant.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

"Signed, Benedict Arnold N.B.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

That is outrageous! This traitor wants you to send him his clothing? He treats you as if you are his servant!

Washington pauses.

WASHINGTON

"In justice to the gentlemen of my family, Colonel Varick and Major Franks, I think myself in honor bound to declare that they, as well as Joshua Smith, Esq.

(who I know is suspected)

Are totally ignorant of any transactions of mine that they had reason to believe were injurious to the public"

Washington stands there in silence.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

A firing squad. We should capture him by all means and send him directly to a firing squad.

AMERICAN AIDE TWO

(Pointing to a letter on the table.)
 Sir, there is the private sealed
 envelope from General Arnold to his
 wife.

Washington takes it and looks at it. Unopened, he hands it
 back.

WASHINGTON

Bring it to Mrs. Arnold.
 Colonel Varick Please write a letter
 of safe conduct for Mrs. Arnold to
 be returned to Philadelphia to be
 with her father. Say, "It would be
 exceedingly painful to General
 Washington if she were not treated
 with the greatest kindness.

INT. TAPPAN, NY - DAY

In a small church a Court Martial is convened. Panel of
 fourteen officers sit at two tables. Major John André stands
 before them in his RED officer jacket.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Officers of the court. It makes
 slight difference to the end
 proceedings of this court, but it
 makes more than a minor difference
 to my honor, how I shall die. My
 statements are not to assuage my
 guilt, but to render the circumstances
 so that I may die as an officer and
 gentlemen by firing squad, not by
 hanging.

CUT TO:

HAMILTON AND LAFAYETTE ARE SITTING IN THE ROOM WATCHING.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE (CONT'D)

I am an officer in the service of
 His Majesty that I be treated as
 such. I landed on the shores of the
 Hudson in full uniform in the service
 of His Majesty.
 Under such circumstances, an officer
 in contact with a Continental spy
 (MORE)

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE (CONT'D)
 would properly deserve the punishment
 of being shot, as an officer honorably
 serving, by a firing squad, as is
 appropriate for a gentleman of honor.
 This court-martial does impugn my
 reputation as a person of mean
 character for treacherous purposes
 or self-interest.
 Thus, I request that I be shot by a
 firing squad. That is all.

André does a British ABOUT-FACE and exits.

PRESIDING OFFICER TWO
 Court is adjourned.
 (bangs gavel)

INT. TAPPAN, NY - DAY

The panel of Officers returns and sit in their chairs.
 Presiding officer stands.

PRESIDING OFFICER TWO
 Be seated.

Spectators sit.

PRESIDING OFFICER TWO (CONT'D)
 Major John André, present yourself.

André walks front at center, stands AT ATTENTION.

PRESIDING OFFICER TWO (CONT'D)
 Major John André, you have been
 found guilty of spying. You are
 sentenced to death by hanging.

Court adjourned.

INT. MORRISTOWN, NJ - WASHINGTON'S HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Washington and Hamilton are in the room.

WASHINGTON
 (Livid. Holding letter.)
 He. He. He, Arnold, writes me this!
 (MORE)

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

He threatens me so, if André's sentence is carried out.

"I shall fully retaliate on persons of your army as may fall within my power. I call heaven and earth to witness that your Excellence will be justly answerable for the torrent of blood that may be spilt in consequence."

That blackguard! That blackguard!
A man of no honor. No accountability.
A traitor to his band of brothers.
He threatens me and calls himself a man of honor.

Major André would be in no such position if he had not dealt with this traitorous wretch. We will not be blackmailed by this wretch.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Yes sir.

WASHINGTON

We have offered to exchange Major Andre for Arnold. Clinton has refused. Let Arnold step forth to prevent the execution of Major André.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Sir, the death of André cannot be dispensed with, but it must be viewed as rigid justice.

WASHINGTON

Colonel, as soldiers it is our duty to kill our enemies. But they are usually nameless and faceless, only distinguished by the uniform they wear.

With Major André, it is personal. We see him as an honorable and courageous man. But we cannot show favoritism because of this. To do so, would call in question all our judgments. It would put our personal desires over our duties. We cannot do this.

(MORE)

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

The punishment stands as given by the court. There shall be no clemency.

Send such a reply.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON

Yes sir.

INT. TAPPAN, NY - PUBLIC SQUARE - DAY

Troops are assembled and a crowd from the village is present. There is a SLOW DRUM ROLL. John André walks out serenely. He does not have his hands bound. Lafayette and Hamilton are there.

There is a cart and André walks to the steps and up to the cart. The HANGMAN's face is blackened with grease.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Must I die in this way?

HANGMAN

I am afraid so, sir.

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

I am reconciled to my fate, but not to the mode.

(Quietly, to himself.) It will be but a momentary pang.

HANGMAN

Do you wish any final words, sir?

MAJOR JOHN ANDRE

Nothing, but to request that you will witness to the world that I die like a brave man.

André takes the noose from the hangman. Puts it about his neck and tightens it. Then he takes a handkerchief from his own pocket. The hangman ties it over his eyes. André stands there silently. The hangman steps down and WHIPS the horse, who JERKS the cart out from under André. A GASP goes up from the crowd. Women WEEP and soldiers LOOK AWAY.

LAFAYETTE

(To Hamilton as they walk away.)
 In the three days we imprisoned him,
 I was foolish enough to develop a
 real liking for him. I cannot help
 regret what happened to him.

André's body SWINGS at the gallows behind them as they walk away.

EXT. PARAMUS, NJ - DAY

Home of Theodosia Prevost. Peggy Shippen and her infant child arrive by coach. THEODOSIA PREVOST (30's) greets her warmly. They walk into the house. A SERVANT FOUR FEMALE (30'S) takes the child from Peggy. The servant closes the door as she leaves.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

We are alone?

THEODOSIA PREVOST

We are? Everyone is upstairs.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Finally. Finally, I can stop being the hysterical woman. Washington was such a fool. No wonder my husband could mislead him. The Americans and their disastrous revolution has brought nothing but pain and bloodshed on this country. For what? For what. For their precious liberty.

They would all be better off as loyal subjects of His Majesty. They suffer for nothing.

My husband is the patriot. To end this cursed war is what matters. The sooner the better.

THEODOSIA PREVOST

Many Americans shall be hanged.

PEGGY SHIPPEN

Hanged they should be. It was they, not His Majesty that started this. Ruined, ruined our fine country.

(MORE)

PEGGY SHIPPEN (CONT'D)
 Malcontents, vagabonds, traitors.
 What is better than to be a subject
 of our majesty. Liberty. Liberty.
 Hah.

EXT. NEW LONDON, CT - DAY

Arnold in British REDCOAT. Storming ashore. FIRE comes from the British ships. Arnold and British soldiers torch the town of New London.

EXT. FT. GRISWOLD, CT - DAY

British troops attack Ft. Griswold, New London. Eighty men surrender. British Officer enters. Arnold is not at the Fort.

BRITISH OFFICER
 Who commands this Fort?

COLONEL LEDYARD
 I did, sir, but you do now.

He offers his sword, presenting the hilt to the officer. The British officer takes the sword by the hilt, balances it a bit and STABS Ledyard through the chest.

BRITISH OFFICER
 (Yells to the men.)
 No quarter. No quarter.

Eighty captive Americans are killed.

EXT. YORKTOWN, REDOUBT #10 - NIGHT

Alexander Hamilton's troops assault on Redoubt #10. With BAYONETS FIXED, the Americans march towards Redoubt #10. Hamilton sends Colonel Captain John Laurens around to the rear of the redoubt to prevent the British from escaping. The Americans reach the Redoubt and began CHOPPING through the British wooden defenses with their axes. The troops enter and the British surrender.

EXT. YORKTOWN - DAY

British Brigadier GENERAL CHARLES O'HARA (40's) presents the sword of surrender to French GENERAL ROCHAMBEAU (40's). Rochambeau shakes his head and POINTS to Washington. O'Hara offers it to Washington, but Washington refuses to accept it, and motions to his second in command, GENERAL BENJAMIN LINCOLN (40's), who had been humiliated by the British at Charleston. He accepts it.

The British soldiers march out and lay down their arms in between the French and American armies, while many civilians watch.

EXT. NEW YORK HARBOR - DAY

The British ships are leaving. There are civilians and military men aboard. Arnold and Peggy are there with their baby child watching the city fade into the distance.

INT. NEW YORK CITY, FRAUNCES TAVERN, DEC. 4, 1783 - LATE AFTERNOON

The Tavern is crammed full of officers who served under Washington in the Continental Army.

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, you will permit me to put on my spectacles, for I have not only grown grey, but almost blind in the service of my country.

CUT TO:

Washington's Officers are moved to tears.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

With a heart full of love and gratitude I now take leave of you. I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy as your former ones have been glorious and honorable.

CUT TO:

SHOT OF WASHINGTON'S OFFICERS AND ANOTHER OF CROWD OUTSIDE.

WASHINGTON (CONT'D)

Who, that was not a witness could imagine that the most violent local prejudices would cease so soon; and that men, who came from the different parts of the continent, strongly disposed by the habits of education to despise and quarrel with each other, would instantly become but one patriotic band of brothers?

I cannot come to each of you but shall feel obliged if each of you will come and take me by the hand.

General Knox is nearest to Washington. He turns to the Commander-in-chief. Washington in tears, is incapable of making a sound but grasps Knox's hand and they embrace each other in silence. In the same affectionate manner every officer in the room marches up, embraces Washington and walks away.

After the officers have personally said goodbye, Washington walks out of the tavern and goes between rows of soldiers assembled outside. There are drums and fifes playing. Washington doffs his hat and walks down the street and on to a barge. The barge crosses the Hudson River into a red sun.

THE END