

RAINMAKER

one-hour drama series pilot

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## RAINMAKER

### Episode 1: Seeds in the Clouds

#### TEASER

FADE IN:

We SEE the backsides of a mixed-race Ballarat farmer, SAM (spry 40; in overalls, straw hat) and his daughter, MARIA (10; jeans, blue shirt; long brown hair) with hoes on their shoulders, walking across rows of lush, tall, waving corn. With every few steps, the girl grows, the farmer ages, and crops get shorter, browner, and drier.

SUPER: "1998, 1999 ... to 2018" with the passage of a few steps by the farmer and his daughter.

Stubs of crumbling corn stalks remain by 2028. Sam (now 60, worn with age and despair) and Maria (30; gorgeous but worried) follow their long, DRY IRRIGATION DITCH past a DEAD KANGAROO with his TONGUE OUT, and past brown, DYING TREES to a DRY RIVERBED. Sam and Maria are paralyzed in SHOCK.

SUPER: "A few very dry years into the future"

We PULL BACK for a broader view with AERIAL VIEWS from A DRONE, including a DRY RESERVOIR, WITHERED CROPS for kilometers around, and HIGHWAYS CHOKED WITH FLEEING FAMILIES. As the drone's camera ZOOMS IN on Maria RIPPING down a dusty trail on a mountain bike, we HEAR a determined 14-year-old girl, the NARRATOR.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Ballarat. Grapes to raisins.  
Raisins to dust. Thousands just left. The rest had their reasons for staying, like my grandparents who were powerless. Some stayed to profit from the poor. One stayed to teach.

Maria SKIDS to a stop outside a classroom at Jesuits Community College. She pulls off her backpack and RACES into the building.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Only 8 students (18-22; various types) in a vacuous lecture hall listen to a beautiful, super-smart mixed-race, Assistant Professor, MARIA ADAMS (30), displaying her nerd glasses, athletic clothes, and superb body.

She bravely drinks UNFILTERED WATER from a tall glass, then shows a SLIDE of the MAP of the drought.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Grandpa says she had a short fuse. Grandma called her "ever-exploding fireworks." I knew her as the one voice of reason. The one voice of hope. She didn't have a cape or wear a mask like other heroes. She saw the world, not as it was, but as it should be. She was my mother.

Maria exhibits a slide of "RAINMAKING PLOYS" (a cannon, long funnels).

MARIA

Banging drums, World War One cannons, psychics, and cloud seeding won't work?

Maria projects a slide of CLOUD SEEDING FROM A PLANE.

STUDENT #1

But silver iodide spread from Hollyfield jets--

MARIA

Won't work. Never has. Never will. Even a rich company like Hollyfield can't deny the science.

STUDENT #2

But the news said--

MARIA

Sorry. The scientific studies don't support their claims. Your generation deserves real reasons for hope!

Three other students: DAX GREEN, a handsome young male (22), HUAN ZOU, an meek-looking Asian woman (21), and PARKER Guenther, a businessman-looking aboriginal (20) male are noticeably QUIET in the back of the room.

STUDENT #3

Professor Adams, how can you stop our politicians and Hollyfield from selling us false hopes?

MARIA

By changing one mind at a time with scientific evidence--

Grumpy voice of the DEAN (middle-aged woman) over the public address system in the room.

DEAN (O.S.)  
Professor Adams, I need to see you  
immediately.

MARIA  
Not again? Class dismissed!

Disgruntled students exit. Maria starts to EXIT without her laptop computer.

DEAN (O.S.)  
Please bring the college's computer  
with you.

Maria STARES at the tiny SECURITY CAMERA behind her.

She reluctantly TOSSES the laptop in her backpack, and STOMPS out.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Some people stayed for vengeance,  
others out of habit. Even our Prime  
Minister was no match for Mother  
Nature.

INT. PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE - DAY

We see the PRIME MINISTER's (58) small back and gray hair, with massive COLONEL QUINTON SHIELDS (62) of the Australian Army in a heavily decorated uniform, leaning his knuckles on the desk, and looking over his dark-rimmed glasses.

COLONEL SHIELDS  
Give me the power we need!

PRIME MINISTER  
More drones? More rifles? What?

COLONEL SHIELDS  
Only if you want your country back.

PRIME MINISTER  
It's just a drought. It'll end.

COLONEL SHIELDS  
With all due respect, Sir, you've  
been saying that for twenty years.

PRIME MINISTER

With all due respect means the opposite. Cut the crap, Shields. You've got people so poor they beg for water; rich government contractors and shysters; thieving Water Pirates; and armed water militia who make police departments look like boy scouts!

COLONEL SHIELDS

Let Devlin over at Hollyfield weed out the Water Pirates, Sir. He's got the capabilities.

PRIME MINISTER

Our largest defense contractor using spy drones and wire-tapping our own people? I won't stand for it.

COLONEL SHIELDS

They're catching water thieves and traitors, and they're leading our cloud seeding program. Think of the polls.

PRIME MINISTER

I don't like this.

INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY

The unsympathetic DEAN, a 50-year-old woman in a gray business suit IMPATIENTLY PACES behind her desk as Maria reluctantly hands over her laptop.

DEAN

Hollyfield is the college's biggest donor. I'm afraid I have to place you on administrative leave.

MARIA

For how long? I'm teaching three classes: range management, ecological forecasting, and critical thinking. Why?

DEAN

Sorry. I'm not at liberty to say.

MARIA

Seems liberty is in short supply these days.

DEAN

That mouthy attitude is your worst enemy. That's why the University of Melbourne let you go. I have to do what's best for this college.

The Dean's cell phone RINGS. She turns her back to Maria, WHISPERING.

MARIA

Somehow, I doubt that.

The Dean LOOKS back briefly to Maria.

DEAN

We'll notify you when you may return.

The Dean turns her back and WHISPERS in the phone. Maria defiantly takes her laptop, SHOVES it in her backpack and exits.

EXT. BIKE TRAIL - DAY

Maria Adams SPEEDS toward home, a small house in the bush with solar panels, a windmill, and wood stove. She LEANS her bike against her home, reaches in the door, grabs a roll of toilet paper and heads into the bush. Her BACKPACK is still on her back.

A "Hollyfield Inc." DRONE launches a ROCKET which BLOWS UP her home. Maria, SQUATTING, GRABS her phone and gets a short video clip.

MARIA

Bastards! They'll regret that!

She RACES away.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Many people are intimidated by bullies. My mom wasn't one of them.

EXT. JESUIT COMMUNITY COLLEGE - NIGHT

Maria hides behind trees as two muscular, uniformed men from Campus Security (40s) load five students from Maria's class into a van. Meanwhile, the three other attendees from her class, Dax Green, Huan Zou, and Parker Guenther, SNEAK UP behind Maria, WHISPERING.

DAX  
Shhh. Professor Adams. It's us.

MARIA  
(startled)  
Us, who?

DAX  
I'm Dax Green, this is Huan Zou and  
that's Parker Guenther.

MARIA  
What are you doing here?

HUAN  
We might ask you the same thing.

MARIA  
Lost my job today. Came to get  
some files from my office.

PARKER  
You nuts? Hollyfield has cameras  
everywhere.

DAX  
If you didn't turn off your  
computer, I can get the files.

MARIA  
Why are you helping me? You'll get  
into even more trouble.

HUAN  
We need your help, too.

MARIA  
Maybe I'm heading to Sydney?

PARKER  
Like the other environmentalists?  
Don't think so.

DAX  
They'd expect that. You'll  
disappear like the others.

MARIA  
You don't believe those rumors.

DAX  
They're not rumors. We used to  
work for Hollyfield. We quit.

HUAN  
 Didn't like what they were doing.

PARKER  
 And no dental plan.

DAX  
 But you have to help us in return.

MARIA  
 Help you? Do what? Save the  
 world?

Dax, Huan, and Parker literally JUMP FOR JOY.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 That's it, isn't it. You expect me  
 to save the world.

Dax opens a LAPTOP computer and breaks into Maria's computer.  
 He transfers files.

MARIA (CONT'D)  
 Didn't need my user name or twenty-  
 character password?

DAX  
 Child's play.

MARIA  
 The four of us are supposed to  
 change the mega-drought?

DAX  
 There are more of us out there.

HUAN  
 And we'll change the military, the  
 politicians, and the farmers and  
 ranchers -- everyone.

PARKER  
 It's easy.

MARIA  
 Yeah? How?

DAX  
 One mind at a time.

Maria CHUCKLES.



MARIA

You're right! It's like the drought in critical thinking skills is worse than the water drought.

PARKER

For that thinking drought, we gotta a nickname for ya.

MARIA

What's that?

DAX

We call you, the Rainmaker.

MARIA

Rainmaker? Huh! I like it! Let's go change some minds. Wait! Can I trust you?

HUAN

More than most.

Maria READS their INNOCENT-LOOKING faces.

MARIA

What the hell. Let's go save Australia!

End Teaser

## ACT ONE

EXT./INT. BALLARAT ESTATE - DAY

A massive gated estate is surrounded by vast green lawns being WATERED with large sprinklers, and green trees, and water-filled ponds. Looks like a mobster's house. Two heavily armed BODYGUARDS (40s) patrol the grounds. Inside a huge glass-walled mansion, we see the back of the head of Chief Executive Officer, RODERICK DEVLIN III (60), an overstuffed high-powered businessman in a tailored suit, answer his telephone call from his SECRETARY (female, O.S.).

DEVLIN

What is it now?

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Colonel Shields, Sir.

DEVLIN

Patch him through. Scrambled.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Right away, Sir.

Devlin waits impatiently.

NARRATOR (O.S.)

How do people get so greedy? My mom used to call greed an undiagnosed cancer of the heart.

DEVLIN

Quinton?

COLONEL SHIELDS (O.S.)

Intel says you're in your Melbourne office.

DEVLIN

(snickers; overlooking  
Ballarat)

Never leave the place. Security reasons. The cloud-seeding?

COLONEL SHIELDS

It's a 'go'.

DEVLIN

For what we're paying, it better be.

COLONEL SHIELDS

We want you to test the waters as they say. Get it?

Devlin is not amused.

COLONEL SHIELDS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

In Ballarat. The courthouse. Sell your cloud seeding program to those idiot ranchers and farmers or the deal's off.

DEVLIN

After twenty years of drought, I could sell them a wishing well.

COLONEL SHIELDS (O.S.)

Selling them on a new tax might be a little tougher. Don't underestimate those shit-kickers.

DEVLIN

I'll win that cloud seeding contact of yours. I never lose.

COLONEL SHIELDS (O.S.)

One of the places hardest hit by the mega-drought -- New South Wales!

EXT. BALLARAT - NIGHT

Maria, Dax, and Huan sit LOW in the back seat of a BLUE FORD F-150 as Parker approaches the town on a DUSTY farm road. They see two WATER GUARDS (30 and 60; black and white, heavy-set, in overalls) patrolling the river.

PARKER

Water guards. Stay low.

MARIA

Water guards?

HUAN

Wow. You have been cooped up in universities for a while.

DAX

Water Guards, authorized by the land owners to protect primary water rights.

PARKER  
Usually their own. Illegal militia,  
if you ask me.

MARIA  
What's that?

Maria POINTS to a boy (RICKY; 16, mixed-race) and girl  
(SHANNON; 16, white) (both in sunglasses, caps pulled low)  
HIDING in tall vegetation. They CARRY twelve empty plastic  
water jugs.

DAX  
Just stealing a little water.

PARKER  
They'll be shot as water pirates if  
they get caught.

MARIA  
We gotta help them.

HUAN  
We have a bigger mission here. The  
bogus cloud-seeding.

PARKER  
And the new bogus water tax.

MARIA  
But that doesn't work.

DAX  
That's why we're here.

The Water Guards turn their backs, and the teenagers BREAK  
for the river.

MARIA  
Pop the hood and let me out.

PARKER  
Too risky.

Maria FORCES her way out of the Blue Ford F-150 truck.  
Parker POPS the hood. The Water Guards MARCH over, while the  
teens STEAL water. Maria PRETENDS to work on the engine.

WATER GUARD #1  
What's your business here?

PARKER  
In town for the Water Meeting.

DAX  
Come from upriver.

MARIA  
Yes. The Mountains.

WATER GUARD #2  
The headwaters? You got primary  
water rights then?

MARIA  
One-hundred-fifty years worth.  
These are my ranch hands.

DAX  
(laughing)  
Yup! And you must be protectin'  
some of our water.

The Water Guards HEAR the teenagers and COCK their rifles.

WATER GUARD #1  
Water Pirates. Shoot 'em.

MARIA  
Wait. They're with us. My truck  
needs water.

WATER GUARD #2  
Once your water runs downstream,  
it's ours. Shoot 'em.

PARKER  
Wait. Can't we settle this at the  
Water Meeting? We mean no harm.

MARIA  
If we meant harm, we'd be blowing  
up the dam.

WATER GUARD #2  
Sorry. Rules is rules.

Maria PULLS their rifles down and SCREAMS.

MARIA  
Legally, that's my water! I didn't  
irrigate my alfalfa pasture, which  
created a water banking of one-  
acre-foot of water! Do the math!

The Water Guard gains control of his rifle and POINTS it at  
Maria.

WATER GUARD #1  
You do the math. Got a calculator?

MARIA  
Sure. It's in my backpack.

WATER GUARD #2  
Nice and slow, woman!

Maria captures their attention with a new *SAMSUNG* TABLET COMPUTER. She initiates the calculator app. Dax, Parker, and Huan SURROUND the guards, obstructing their view. Meanwhile, the teenagers ESCAPE with their stolen water.

MARIA  
One acre-foot of water equals one-foot of water in a one-acre field. That's two-hundred-six feet times two-hundred-six feet.

HUAN  
Then seven-point-four-eight gallons per cubic foot.

PARKER  
Rounding off, of course. You fellas are round. You understand.

MARIA  
That makes twelve-hundred-twenty-six-thousand liters. What could those kids carry? Eight liters?

The Water Guards turn to see the teenagers escaping. They FIRE their weapons too high. Parker starts up the truck.

PARKER  
She's cooled down, ready to go.

MARIA  
Wish we could stay. See you boys at the Water Meeting?

Parker RACES away.

WATER GUARD #1  
Environ-mentalists, I bet.

WATER GUARD #2  
Better tell the Commander.

INT. COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

COMMANDER STANLEY DALTON (55-65) is a former high school cricket player and gun enthusiast. He's all the justice the town needs. He answers an antiquated office phone.

COMMANDER DALTON

Dalton.

The Commander listens to the two Water Guards babble.

COMMANDER DALTON (CONT'D)

Uh huh.

He listens some more.

COMMANDER DALTON (CONT'D)

Should stand out like sore thumbs in my town. Thanks for the tip boys, but you shouldn't have let them pirates get away.

The Commander SLAMS down the phone. Good-looking, tall, SERGEANT WALT HANSON (35) strolls in reading the morning newspaper.

SERGEANT HANSON

I know why ya like them old phones. You can slam 'em down. Look at my antique cell phone.

Sergeant Hanson flips open cell phone quietly.

COMMANDER DALTON

A smartphone would just be wasted on you. We're looking for four strangers: a mixed-race female, male...

SERGEANT HANSON

I don't like the sound of that.

COMMANDER DALTON

Itty-bitty Asian woman, and a male Aboriginal, they think.

SERGEANT HANSON

Four diverse people together? Never heard of that...

COMMANDER DALTON

Just get your butt rolling and take a look around town, and gear up security at the Courthouse.

SERGEANT HANSON

For the Water Meeting? I was thinking of bringing my bomb-sniffing dogs.

COMMANDER DALTON

You got butt-sniffing dogs, and one's near dead.

SERGEANT HANSON

What about today's paper? A chopper flying in from the Royal Australian Air Force base. Somebody important?

COMMANDER DALTON

Some brass from Sydney. They want to use the cloud seeding as a model for the country.

SERGEANT HANSON

They bringing their own security?

COMMANDER DALTON

They're like the freakin' Air Force, Walt. They're our security.

SERGEANT HANSON

Right, Stanley. I'll be patrolling for those blackmailers.

Commander Dalton PICKS up the phone handle and SLAMS it down. He smiles. Then, he looks ANGRY.

EXT. PETROL STATION - DAY

Huan is PUMPING the petrol, while Parker WASHES the windows. Dax is in the back seat of the truck. They are all WHISPERING on their *SAMSUNG GALAXY* PHONES.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

My mom used to say, 'Secrets are magic. They can turn an ordinary rope into a hangman's noose.'

HUAN

What's taking you so long, Dax?

DAX

I got it. Four-one-seven-one, two-two-one-six, three-eight-zero-zero, two-nine-nine-two.



Huan GIGGLES as she pumps the petrol.

MARIA

What's that about?

DAX

The petrol is courtesy of the local Commander. Stanley Dalton, of East County Road Thirty-five, Ballarat.

MARIA

Isn't that against the law?

DAX

We pay our taxes.

PARKER

I wonder if he'll buy us lunch?

HUAN AND DAX

A-T-M.

Maria wonders what she's gotten herself into.

MARIA

Look, group, this isn't right.

DAX

We'll pay it all back tomorrow with a wire transfer, with interest.

He heads to the ATM and takes out 50 dollars.

HUAN

We just can't risk leaving a record, while we're in the town.

PARKER

It all works out. Trust us.

MARIA

We'd better split up for lunch. We shouldn't be seen together before the Water Meeting at two P.M.

Dax returns and HANDS each of the team 10 dollars.

DAX

That's the spirit. Here's ten dollars. We're on a tight budget.

HUAN

That's fifty dollars we owe the kind Commander.

PARKER

Good idea splitting up. I'm going  
for Indian food. Anybody?

HUAN

I'm in.

DAX

Me too.

MARIA

(defiantly)

You people are nuts. I'm going  
across the street.

Maria crosses the street to *Mary Belle's Restaurant*. The  
others take the truck further into town.

EXT. BRIDGE, BALLARAT - DAY

A short, former military, heavily tattooed Sarg (40), and a  
second Water Pirate, Michelle (28, gorgeous white female)  
STARE at the Dam from the Bridge, and WHISPER. Two ARMED  
MILITIA (30) vigilantly GUARD the dam.

MICHELLE

Why blow the dam now?

SARG

Got a tip. Everyone is pre-occupied  
with a Water Meeting in Ballarat.

MICHELLE

Only two guards.

SARG

Civilians. Ha! Easy water.

MICHELLE

Cape Town sure needs it.

SARG

The billionaire's treasured oasis  
might drop ten meters.

MICHELLE

Their private water pumps will be  
useless.

SARG

Real shame!

INT. CAFE BALLARAT - DAY

Dax, Huan, and Parker are HUDDLED in a booth WHISPERING.

DAX

Adams seems like such a smart,  
enthusiastic professor.

HUAN

Hard to believe she's so  
mistreated.

PARKER

And under-appreciated. We should  
help her a lot.

DAX

Her only crime was not being  
politically correct.

PARKER

Universities are supposed to be  
places of higher learning. Free  
from political assassination.

HUAN

Not these days.

DAX

We know she can help us. But how  
can we help her?

PARKER

We can get her job back.

HUAN

And make those jerks who bombed her  
home pay through the nose.

DAX

Time to hack Hollyfield?

Dax takes out a small *Samsung TABLET COMPUTER*.

PARKER

Send a memo from Devlin. Drop the  
search for Maria Adams.

HUAN

Have Devlin fund a new diversity  
hiring program in her name.

DAX

And let's upload that video of the  
attack on Maria's home.  
Hollyfield's name's on the drone.

They CHUCKLE as DAX types on the computer and they munch on  
the curry. They SNICKER.

DAX (CONT'D)

When do we tell her our real story?

HUAN

Later.

PARKER

Much later.

They gobble on their curry.

INT. MARY BELLE'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Maria takes a seat at the restaurant bar, packed with ten  
locals (40-80; farmers, ranchers) talking about the weather.

LOCAL #1

This summer's going to be so hot,  
I'll be selling popcorn.

LOCAL #2

And so dry, my watermelons will  
look like grapes.

LOCAL #3

You mean raisins.

LOCAL #4

Those are rat turds.

LOCAL #1

Do rats eat popcorn?

A smiling waitress, MILLIE (45, hefty), AMBLES up to Maria.

MILLIE

Don't pay 'em any attention,  
Dearie. They'd all have water on  
the brain if we had any. Coffee?

MARIA

Great. Got anything for under ten  
dollars? Plus tip?

MILLIE  
You'll want the special.

MARIA  
What's the special?

MILLIE  
(yells)  
One special, Harlan!  
(to Maria)  
I've delivered two of them to  
tables. Chicken-fried-somethin'  
and gravy. Not quite sure what.

MARIA  
And water, with ice would be nice.

MILLIE  
(snickers)  
You said you only got ten dollars?

The locals LAUGH. Millie turns to the kitchen, as Sergeant Hanson, enters, taking the open seat next to Maria.

SERGEANT HANSON  
(yells)  
Another special, Harlan!

MILLIE  
Well, if it isn't the environ-  
mentalist Sergeant Hound.

The locals SNICKER and SNEER, and then become strangely quiet. Maria sips her coffee.

SERGEANT HANSON  
(to Maria)  
You must be new in town. You  
didn't snicker and sneer.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Mom used to say, 'Never trust a man  
who wears a badge, or a man who  
doesn't.' But she was the first to  
lie. Ha!

MARIA  
I'm -- Nancy. Just going to the  
Water Meeting later, is all.

SERGEANT HANSON  
Don't look like a Nancy. Nancy  
Drew?

(MORE)

SERGEANT HANSON (CONT'D)  
Anyway, these folks here are like  
killer bees on a swarm about this  
drought.

MARIA  
You're not worried?

SERGEANT HANSON  
Worried. Not crazy. Weather  
changes. It'll rain soon enough.

MARIA  
Smart man.

SERGEANT HANSON  
Walt Hanson -- Nancy. And today's  
the hot tomato around here.

MARIA  
The heat?

SERGEANT HANSON  
No. The Water Meeting. Some big-  
shot is making a grand entrance  
from Sydney in a chopper.

MARIA  
Wow. Why?

SERGEANT HANSON  
To sell their idea for cloud  
seeding and the new water tax.

MARIA  
And you're suspicious?

SERGEANT HANSON  
We're from Sydney --

MARIA AND SERGEANT HANSON  
(in unison)  
And we're here to help you.

A BRICK FLIES through the restaurant window. The locals DIVE  
to the floor. Maria turns to look as Sergeant Hanson RACES  
to the door. He returns seconds later DISGUSTED.

SERGEANT HANSON  
They got away. Nobody saw them.  
Imagine that.

MARIA  
What's going on, Walt?

SERGEANT HANSON

Radical elements in town are a little disappointed in me for not taking a harder line on environmentalists.

MARIA

You think they should be free to push for water conservation?

SERGEANT HANSON

As long as they don't hurt anything or anyone. Free country.

Millie comes back, SNEERS at the Sergeant, and drops off two ugly plates of chicken-fried-somethin' and gravy to Maria and the Sergeant, who are speechless.

MILLIE

You're cleaning that up, Sergeant.  
(to Maria)  
And if you're with him, no water.

They GIGGLE and WHISPER while eating. There is a spark between them. Maria starts to leave her ten dollars. Sergeant Hanson magnanimously pushes it back to her.

SERGEANT HANSON

No. This is on me. Not everyone in this town is insane.

MARIA

Thanks, Walt, but you picking up my tab would be -- redundant.

Walt doesn't get the joke, but he SMILES nonetheless.

MARIA (CONT'D)

Maybe I'll see you at the Courthouse Water Meeting.

She WINKS at him, leaves the 10 dollars, and EXITS.

EXT. CAFE / BALLARAT STREET - DAY

Across the street are Dax and Huan, but no sign of Parker. The Sergeant exits the diner, TIPS his hat to Maria, and drives off. Dax and Huan RACE OVER to Maria.

DAX

The Commander busted into the Cafe, and took Parker away in cuffs.

MARIA

For what?

HUAN

Potentially disrupting the peace.  
We gotta do something.

Maria suspiciously repeats the phrase.

MARIA

Potentially disrupting the peace?

End Act One

(More)



## ACT TWO

INT. COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Parker sits across the Commander's desk IN HANDCUFFS looking vacantly out the window.

COMMANDER DALTON  
Nothing else, I can hold you on  
vagrancy.

PARKER  
When do get out? Never?

COMMANDER DALTON  
Six weeks.

PARKER  
That's never. How's the food?

COMMANDER DALTON  
I hope you like the special of the  
day.

PARKER  
What is it?

COMMANDER DALTON  
I can't tell. Chicken-fried-  
somethin' and gravy. But you'll  
spill your guts after eating it.

PARKER  
I told you. I'm an aboriginal, not  
a terrorist, alarmist, environ-  
mentalist, or any ist.

COMMANDER DALTON  
Why are you here?

PARKER  
To claim our rights to all your  
water, of course. That water's  
ours.

COMMANDER DALTON  
You're the conquered people now.  
You have no rights 'cept them the  
government gives ya.

PARKER  
We'll see about that! I have a  
solicitor named 'Bulldog'.

Sergeant Hanson strolls in WHISTLING the cool theme from "The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly."

SERGEANT HANSON

What do we have here, Commander?

COMMANDER DALTON

Get this. Parker Guenther, an aboriginal claiming our water.

SERGEANT HANSON

Huh?

COMMANDER DALTON

I think he's one of the strangers who helped the Water Pirates escape.

PARKER

We had truck trouble. Better since we got petrol.

SERGEANT HANSON

I'm not sure we have enough to hold him.

COMMANDER DALTON

I'm holding him on vagrancy.

PARKER

(to Walt)

Can I plead insanity? I'm innocent!

COMMANDER DALTON

I think your environment-terrorist partners may drop by to spring you, and I like greeting strangers in my town. Where are they?

PARKER

I'll never talk. You can cut my fingernails off with a knife, quarter me with horses, burn my feet with hot coals--

COMMANDER DALTON

Walt, call the restaurant and have 'em send over three of their chicken-fried-somethin' and gravy specials. He'll talk!

EXT. CITY PARK - DAY

Maria, Dax, and Huan sit on a park bench, WATCHING folks walk by. The park is as brown and dry as kindling. Maria sees two teenagers PLAYING Frisbee. (It's Ricky and Shannon, the Water Pirates she saw earlier). Maria walks up to them.

MARIA

Don't I know you?

SHANNON

We were wondering how long it would take you to notice us.

RICKY

Thanks for helping us at the river.

MARIA

Maybe you could help us. The Commander is holding our friend, and we need to spring him.

SHANNON

Why? What did he do?

DAX

He's just a stranger in town. Fact is, they don't get much stranger.

HUAN

Something about potentially disrupting the peace.

SHANNON

Potentially? Uh oh.

RICKY

We need the element of surprise. The Commander can spot strangers from a kilometer away.

MARIA

We don't have much time. We want to go the Water Meeting in an hour.

SHANNON

You'll need disguises. Stand out like sore thumbs in city clothes.

RICKY AND SHANNON

The Majestyk Treasures thrift store.

INT. THRIFT SHOP - DAY

Dax, Huan, and Maria TRY ON old farm clothes and hats, while Ricky and Shannon GIGGLE.

MARIA

Why were you stealing water?

RICKY

You won't believe us.

DAX

The black market?

HUAN

Making moonshine?

SHANNON

(mumbles)

Our science class experiment.

RICKY

We're geeks. We're going to flash our results at the Water Meeting.

MARIA

Good for you. I'm teach ecology. What's your science project?

SHANNON

Comparing flood irrigation to drip irrigation in four washtubs, two tubs each.

RICKY

They need a lot of water.

SHANNON

So, you're a professor. My dad's not gonna like that!

HUAN

Who's your dad?

SHANNON

The Commander! He hates environmentalists. I have to hide my science project from him.

RICKY

And sneak water for it. I'm her boyfriend. That's a secret too.

DAX

Wow. Like Romeo and Juliet.

HUAN

A little different in this case.

SHANNON

Dad will send me packing if he finds out I'm a --

MARIA

Environ-mentalist. How do we look?

RICKY

Better wear your hats low.

SHANNON

I sure hope they let you speak at the Water Meeting.

RICKY

If the corporate honcho lets you. They might not let us share our science results if the Commander runs the meeting.

MARIA

I kind of like that Sergeant Walt.

SHANNON

If Sergeant Hanson ran the meeting, that would be wonderful. He's the second nicest man in town.

Shannon SWOONS at Ricky.

MARIA

I'm sure we'll all get to speak, if I have anything to say about it. How do we spring Parker?

Dax is PAYING for the clothes when he spots Sergeant Hanson TACKING Wanted Posters on telephone poles outside the Majestyk Treasures Thrift Store. The posters depict Maria.

DAX

Uh-oh. That might not be easy.

They all look out the window to VIEW the posters: "Maria Adams, Wanted for Questioning."

SHANNON

Since my mom died, my dad never comes home from work early.

(MORE)

SHANNON (CONT'D)

You can hide at our place until the Water Meeting.

RICKY

Quick. The back door. Follow me.

They RACE out the back door and disappear.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

The Ford F150 truck parks behind a ranch house. Maria, Dax, Huan, Ricky, and Shannon exit. Shannon HUGS Maria's arm as she guides her to see her science project (four large washtubs filled with tomato plants, and a water-evaporation pan nearby. The TOMATOES in the two drip-irrigation tubs are HUGE, the others nearly dead.)

SHANNON

You have to see our science project. Killer Tomatoes!

RICKY

What do you think?

MARIA

I think it's fantastic.

DAX

Wow. I grew herbs as a teenager.

HUAN

Dax!

SHANNON

Each tub got the same amount of water, but we just poured the water on the flood-tubs.

RICKY

But for drip-irrigation the water was delivered below the surface with hoses filled with holes.

Shannon POINTS to three hoses which POKE UP from each of the drip irrigation tubs.

SHANNON

Our Killer Tomato plants were twice as big on half the water.

Ricky and Shannon POINT OUT the evaporation pan.

RICKY

We also poured the same amount of water in the pan and measured evaporation.

SHANNON

Half the water with regular flood irrigation was lost to the sun in evaporation.

MARIA

Brilliant! You're sure to get a hundred percent! You should be very proud!

RICKY

All our measurements are on Shannon's computer.

SHANNON

And I'll ask to give a slide show at the Water Meetings.

MARIA

I'm so impressed. Now, how do we spring Parker from jail.

HUAN

Dax and I better do that.

DAX

You stay out of sight, Maria. The cops want you for questioning.

MARIA

(desperate)

I've got to speak at that Water Meeting. Cloud seeding is a waste of money and resources. Won't work.

HUAN

We'll take the truck and see if we can spring Parker.

INT. COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Parker devours the third plate of the chicken-fried-somethin' and gravy, BURPING a lot, in an unlocked jail cell, while PLAYING CHECKERS with Commander Dalton.

PARKER

See Commander, the real issue is  
taxation without representation.  
BURP!

COMMANDER DALTON

How do you figure?

PARKER

Everybody will be forced to pay the  
tax for a government sponsored  
cloud seeding effort, without  
voting for the tax.

COMMANDER DALTON

But if it rains -- and rains a lot,  
everybody benefits.

PARKER

Checkmate.

COMMANDER DALTON

We're playing checkers, you idiot.

PARKER

Oh. Yeah.

COMMANDER DALTON

The problem with you environ-  
mentalists is that you believe all  
those science studies.

PARKER

That's a problem?

COMMANDER DALTON

I don't see any rain. Do you? What  
good has all that science done?

PARKER

I see your point. Science should  
cure cancer, create world peace,  
and end the drought, or it ain't no  
good for nothin'.

COMMANDER DALTON

Exactly. What? I didn't say that.

PARKER

Tell me this, Commander. What if  
the cloud seeding doesn't work?



COMMANDER DALTON  
They'll try it again and again  
until it does work.

PARKER  
So the people pay the taxes each  
time, but it might not rain?

COMMANDER DALTON  
It'll rain. You gotta have faith.

PARKER  
But if it don't rain, is it called  
taxation without representation or  
taxation without precipitation?

The Commander IS PERTURBED. He GRABS the checkers game.

COMMANDER DALTON  
You've just lost your checkers  
privileges, Mister. Checkermate!

The Commander's old phone RINGS. Professor Peyton Moore's  
ASSISTANT is on the line. Parker can hear everything.

COMMANDER DALTON (CONT'D)  
Dalton.

ASSISTANT (O.S.)  
This is Peyton Moore's assistant.  
The professor is driving, but will  
be only a few minutes late.

COMMANDER DALTON  
What kind of car should I look for?

ASSISTANT (O.S.)  
A university van, of course. Well  
marked, just a little late.

COMMANDER DALTON  
Long as the professor shows up. I  
told Colonel Shields that a  
respected scientist would have his  
back.

ASSISTANT (O.S.)  
The professor has written over one-  
hundred scientific publications. I  
assure you--

COMMANDER DALTON  
Just get the professor here.

CLICK! The Commander LOOKS CONCERNED.

PARKER

This professor, is he or she, a strong proponent of cloud seeding?

COMMANDER DALTON

He or she? The assistant didn't exactly say.

PARKER

Peyton is a man's name and a woman's name.

COMMANDER DALTON

Never met the guy -- or gal. Don't care as long as the professor goes along with the program.

PARKER

'Cause you promised a Colonel.

COMMANDER DALTON

Exactly.

Sergeant Hanson RUNS in.

SERGEANT HANSON

We got two positive ID's on that 'Wanted' Maria Adams person right from the Mary Belle's Restaurant.

COMMANDER DALTON

Who ID'd the 'wanted' gal?

SERGEANT HANSON

Your friend, Millie, the waitress. And, me. That was before she was 'wanted.' Tried to buy her lunch.

PARKER

That was redundant.

Sergeant Hanson STARES at Parker.

SERGEANT HANSON

Why do people keep saying that?

COMMANDER DALTON

You keep an eye on the prisoner. I got to race home and change my shirt for the Water Meetings.

SERGEANT HANSON  
Perspiration stains?

COMMANDER DALTON  
Gravy stains. I'll swing 'round  
Mary Belle's on my way home and  
look for that Adams girl.

SERGEANT HANSON  
Should encourage Shannon to go to  
the Water Meeting. High schoolers  
should get more involved.

COMMANDER DALTON  
Funny you mention it. She wants to  
go. Might do her right to meet a  
real Colonel.

SERGEANT HANSON  
Good for her. Hey, Shannon will be  
surprised to see you go home in the  
middle of the day.

COMMANDER DALTON  
Yep. She'll be surprised.

The Commander RACES OUT.

End Act Two

(More)

## ACT THREE

INT. MARY BELLE'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Commander Dalton, WAVING a 'Wanted Poster', ignores the broken window, and RACES into the restaurant and right to Millie.

COMMANDER DALTON  
Heard you saw this wanted woman.

Millie EXAMINES the poster.

MILLIE  
What's she done? Kill her cheatin'  
husband? That ain't wrong.

COMMANDER DALTON  
No. Somebody just wants her to  
keep her mouth shut.

MILLIE  
Nobody keeps their traps shut.  
Besides, maybe you should ask Walt.  
He's sweet on her.

COMMANDER DALTON  
What? That's crazy talk.

MILLIE  
I was right here. They ate the  
special, and they weren't gigglin'  
about the chicken-fried somethin'  
and gravy!

COMMANDER DALTON  
Walt ain't had a gal for years.

MILLIE  
It's no secret I don't care for the  
man. He don't seem to care about  
the mega-drought. He might not be  
right in the head.

COMMANDER DALTON  
About the 'Wanted Poster' and the  
lady you served today?

MILLIE  
Something else you should know, not  
that I talk out of school.

COMMANDER DALTON  
What, Millie? Spit it out.

MILLIE  
Bobby and the boys saw your  
daughter in the park today.

COMMANDER DALTON  
I know, with that Ricky fella. He  
seems harmless enough. A bookworm.

MILLIE  
It ain't that, Commander. Bobby  
said they was talking to your  
Sergeant's new girlfriend, and the  
same lady on your Wanted Poster.

COMMANDER DALTON  
My little girl?!

He STORMS OUT of the restaurant, yelling.

COMMANDER DALTON (CONT'D)  
I'll get to the bottom of this!

INT. COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Sergeant Hanson PLAYS checkers with Parker when Dax and Huan  
STUMBLE in wearing their old farmer overalls.

DAX  
Well don't that beat all. There he  
sits, playing checkers, while we do  
all his chores.

SERGEANT HANSON  
May I help you?

HUAN  
(mumbles)  
Milkin' the chickens, rustlin' the  
sheep, all that garden stuff?

PARKER  
And I thought you didn't love me no  
more. Can I go now, Sergeant?

DAX  
What's he being held for?

SERGEANT HANSON  
 He's being held until the Water  
 Meeting is over. Commander doesn't  
 want strangers messing it up.

DAX  
 Just need him back for chores.

HUAN  
 (mumbles)  
 Skinnin' the rats, white-washin'  
 the wire fences --

DAX  
 He don't have time for no meetings,  
 'cept his regular Hay-Hay meetings.

SERGEANT HANSON  
 Long as you get him far, far away.  
 Wait! Have you seen this woman?

Sergeant Hanson shows each of them the Wanted Poster of  
 Maria.

DAX  
 I've never seen anyone this thin.

HUAN  
 And, just a big head? Poor thing?

PARKER  
 And so pale?

Sergeant Hanson STARES at the Wanted Poster with LOVELORN  
 eyes.

SERGEANT HANSON  
 Just wanted to see her again.  
 Something about her.

EXT. COMMANDER'S OFFICE - DAY

Dax, Parker, and Huan RACE to the BLUE FORD F-150 TRUCK.

DAX  
 Huan? Milking the chickens? White-  
 washin' the wire fences?

HUAN  
 I was a computer science major.  
 Never been on a farm.

DAX

And you, Parker? Don't get caught again!

PARKER

I was getting the inside scoop. I know how we can help Maria.

DAX

How?

PARKER

We have to intercept Professor Peyton Moore, who's coming to the Water Meetings.

DAX

Why?

PARKER

He's going to support the Hollyfield plan for cloud seeding.

HUAN

We can't just kidnap him.

PARKER

Huan and I will delay him, while you impersonate him at the Meeting. The Commander hasn't seen him.

DAX

Suppose he's not young? Suppose somebody knows Professor Peyton Moore? I don't know anything about cloud seeding.

PARKER

(begging Dax)

Then you can ask Maria to speak on your behalf. She informs the crowd, and our work is done.

DAX

Where's he driving from? What's he driving? What's he look like?

HUAN

Maria probably knows him? They both study the same things.

DAX

She's out at Shannon's house with Ricky.

PARKER

Uh-oh! Commander Dalton was heading home to change shirts. If he finds Maria, we're dead.

They RACE AWAY in the blue truck.

EXT. SMALL AIRFIELD - DAY

At a small, dusty airfield, the same two massive BODYGUARDS (40s) scope out the area near a black SUV with tinted windows. One of the guards MOTIONS to the other one to turn off their radios. They turn them off.

BODYGUARD #1

The boss is pissed. Colonel's not coming. Wants Devlin to handle it.

BODYGUARD #2

What a dump. Why didn't Devlin send someone?

BODYGUARD #1

There's big money in it.

BODYGUARD #2

He wants the credit?

BODYGUARD #1

He wants the money.

BODYGUARD #2

What about that thing?

BODYGUARD #1

Intel doesn't know what it is.

BODYGUARD #2

So we gotta find out.

BODYGUARD #1

So we gotta destroy it, you idiot.

BODYGUARD #2

I knew that.

BODYGUARD #1

I hear the chopper. Turn on communications.

The two guards TURN ON their radios. A Hollyfield Inc. helicopter HOVERS and creates an enormous CLOUD OF DUST and LANDS thirty meters away.



The dust settles. Angry Roderick Devlin III exits the chopper, and screams at his bodyguards.

DEVLIN

Come with me. Job to do first!

The Bodyguards run to the copter.

INT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Maria, Shannon, and Ricky LAUGH around the kitchen table, drinking iced tea.

MARIA

This iced tea is great. Thanks.

SHANNON

Ricky stole the water.

RICKY

I did not.

She AFFECTIONATELY TOUCHES his arm, and he blushes.

SHANNON

Just kidding. But we couldn't do the science project without borrowing water.

RICKY

We know it was wrong. If we empty water out upstream, somebody doesn't get it downstream.

MARIA

Same with cloud seeding. If they steal the moisture here, they may not get it downstream.

SHANNON

Has it ever worked? Cloud seeding?

MARIA

Maybe a little. It may add five or ten percent, but it's so hard to measure it everywhere in a region.

RICKY

So it might be stealing, or it might not.

MARIA

No net increase! There's no real proof.

SHANNON

Did you hear something?

RICKY

No.

SHANNON

Our experiment. Let's go.

Shannon, Ricky, and Maria RACE OUT to the field to the science project. A helicopter RACES AWAY in the distance.

EXT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Commander Dalton arrives home to find it empty. He ANGRILY searches the house, and yells for his daughter.

COMMANDER DALTON

Shannon! Shannon, where are you?!

The Commander RACES OUT the back door and sees THREE FIGURES toward the back of the property. He GRABS his shotgun and RACES toward them, then POINTS his rifle at Maria.

COMMANDER DALTON (CONT'D)

Maria Adams. Hold it right there.

Shannon is WEEPING, Ricky is ANGRY, and Maria is SAD. The tubs are OVERTURNED, the plants SCATTERED, and the field notebook RIPPED UP into tiny pieces.

SHANNON

Daddy, don't you see what's going on here?

COMMANDER DALTON

This eco-terrorist, Adams, tore up something?

RICKY

Our science class project.

SHANNON

No, Professor Adams didn't do it.

MARIA

I'm Maria. What am I wanted for? Trying to save my life?

Commander Dalton INVESTIGATES the damage.

COMMANDER DALTON

(to Maria)

You're wanted for questioning for anti-Australian activities.

SHANNON

Teaching science is anti-Australian?

COMMANDER DALTON

That's all I know. I sure didn't know about this science project.

SHANNON

I knew you'd get mad.

COMMANDER DALTON

Where'd you get the water?

RICKY

I stole it from the river.

COMMANDER DALTON

(to Ricky)

You're a bad influence. I don't want you hanging around my daughter. Go on, git!

Commander Dalton WAVES his rifle to send Ricky off.

RICKY

Don't worry, Shannon, I have the photographs backed up on a memory stick for the Water Meetings.

Ricky STOMPS AWAY DEJECTEDLY.

SHANNON

See you at the meeting.

COMMANDER DALTON

(yelling)

There will be no meeting for the three of you!

MARIA

The kids put a lot of time and effort into this great project.

COMMANDER DALTON

I'll do the parenting.

SHANNON

No, you do the policing.

COMMANDER DALTON

What happened here?

SHANNON

We were in the house. Heard a helicopter. Looked outside and we saw the copter flying away.

MARIA

It was a Hollyfield chopper.

COMMANDER DALTON

Hollyfield? Their CEO is speaking today at the Water Meeting. They're a multi-billion-dollars company. Why would they hurt this kids' science project?

MARIA

How would they know to blow up my home in the woods? They intimidate people for industrial gain.

Maria SHOWS the Commander her *Samsung Galaxy smartphone* video of a missile hitting her home.

COMMANDER DALTON

Maybe it was an accident?

SHANNON

Like this was an accident?

COMMANDER DALTON

We'll sort this out later. I have a job to do.

The Commander MARCHES Maria back to the house at gunpoint.

End Act Three

(More)

## ACT FOUR

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Hollyfield, Inc. CEO, Roderick Devlin III, an overstuffed high-powered business man in a tailored suit, is sandwiched between his Two Bodyguards wearing dark sunglasses. Devlin whispers to his bodyguards, as town folks (mixed ages, people from Mary Belle's Restaurant and City Park earlier).

DEVLIN

Where the hell is that Commander?

Sergeant Hanson enters looking around for Maria.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

You Commander Dalton?

SERGEANT HANSON

No, but you must be the big shot from Sydney. The Commander was surprised you were coming.

Sergeant Hanson cordially EXTENDS his hand for a shake. Devlin RELUCTANTLY shakes.

DEVLIN

Roderick Devlin the Third.

SERGEANT HANSON

Walt. Sergeant Walt Hanson.

DEVLIN

I was supposed to be introduced by Colonel Shields or the Commander, not a Sergeant.

SERGEANT HANSON

Commander will be here soon.

DEVLIN

And what about that professor? Peyton Moore or whoever?

SERGEANT HANSON

He or she should be arriving soon.

DEVLIN

He or she?

SERGEANT HANSON

Peyton is a unisex name, like Sandy, Jordan, and Taylor.

DEVLIN

This meeting was supposed to start three minutes ago. Am I the only dignitary here?

SERGEANT HANSON

No, there's Millie from the Mary Belle's restaurant.

Millie SNEERS at Hanson, but Devlin thinks it is meant for him. Devlin reaches into his coat pocket for a thick envelope of hundred-dollar bills.

DEVLIN

Where the hell is that professor?

EXT. MARY BELLE'S RESTAURANT STREET - DAY

Dax looks down the street and describes his plan to Huan, Parker, and Ricky.

DAX

When the professor drives down the street, Huan fakes like she's hit by the car. Parker claims to be a solicitor and plans to sue.

PARKER

Then Huan and I take him into the restaurant to reach a settlement.

DAX

I'll drive his car to the Water Meeting, and I'll introduce Maria, if she shows up at all.

RICKY

If the Commander don't release her?

DAX

Then what you've told us about Shannon isn't true. She doesn't give up easily. You said so.

RICKY

But what if she --

HUAN

Never doubt a strong woman.

PARKER

Uh uh. Never do that!

A "University of Melbourne" vehicle is coming down the street. Dax's plan goes wrong. Huan SLOWLY crosses the street forcing the professor to slow. Parker RACES into the street to DISTRACT Professor Moore, who is EYEING Huan. So Parker SLAMS his hand on the car and falls down. Huan is CONFUSED. The professor, a gray-haired white female (60), SLAMS on the brakes and hops out of the car. All are ALARMED the professor is female. Ricky LAUGHS.

PROFESSOR MOORE

You all right? I didn't mean it.  
I was looking at the pretty woman.

PARKER

You hit me! She's my solicitor!  
You should've hit her.  
(points to Huan)  
Could cost you your license.

PROFESSOR MOORE

Maybe we could work something out?

Parker RISES PAINFULLY and WOBBLY from the street.

HUAN

We can talk.

PARKER

There's a restaurant right here.

PROFESSOR MOORE

But I'm supposed to be at a --

Parker SCREAMS.

PROFESSOR MOORE (CONT'D)

Okay, okay. Let's talk.

Dax looks WORRIED. He WHISPERS to Ricky.

DAX

I can't impersonate a woman.

RICKY

Especially that old woman.

DAX

Change of plans. Maria and Shannon may not make it to the Water Meeting. You have to present the science report for Shannon.

RICKY

Uh oh! I have a fear of public speaking.

DAX

Glossophobia?

RICKY

A fear of glossy photographs? No. I can't speak to large groups.

DAX

Look, Ricky, it's up to us.

INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

One Bodyguard WHISPERS to Devlin. He WHISPERS back.

DEVLIN

I don't care if the professor's a woman. Just as long as she gets here, supports our cloud seeding plan, takes her money and goes.

The other Bodyguard WHISPERS to Devlin, who grows impatient.

DEVLIN (CONT'D)

You should have gone before we left home. Where the hell is that Commander?

INT. RANCH HOUSE - DAY

Livid Commander Dalton PACES in his living room. Maria and Shannon sit on the couch like SCOLDED children.

COMMANDER DALTON

Nonsense! Nobody loses their job as a professor and gets their house blown up for no-good reason.

MARIA

The facts say differently. You called my Dean. What did she say?

COMMANDER DALTON

She suspended you for a few days for upsetting a big donor.



SHANNON

Hollyfield. The same name on the helicopter that destroyed my science project.

COMMANDER DALTON

(to Maria)

Your Dean said your home exploded from a propane gas leak.

MARIA

I used wind and solar energy. No gas. Check the propane company.

COMMANDER DALTON

I did. You're not a customer.

SHANNON

See, she's telling the truth.

COMMANDER DALTON

What gets me is them coming onto my property and ruining my daughter's science project without my permission.

MARIA

You would've given them permission?

COMMANDER DALTON

No. Never.

SHANNON

Daddy, don't let that greedy corporation push us around.

The Commander PACES. Maria CHECKS a message on her smartphone.

COMMANDER DALTON

What about the anti-Australian activities? Don't want to lose my job.

SHANNON

I don't want to lose my personal freedoms and my right to pursue a career in science.

MARIA

Commander, your daughter doesn't want to lose you.

The Commander protectively HUGS Shannon.

COMMANDER DALTON  
 Forgive me, Shannon. I've been  
 such a fool. Let's get you to that  
 Water Meeting.

EXT./INT. COURTHOUSE - DAY

The Commander SKIDS to a stop outside the Courthouse. He  
 exits with Shannon and Maria.

COMMANDER DALTON  
 You'd better get out of here quick,  
 Professor Adams. Pretend you never  
 stopped in this town.

MARIA  
 Thanks, Commander, but I'd like to  
 listen in from the back if it's all  
 the same to you.

SHANNON  
 Free country, right Daddy?

COMMANDER DALTON  
 I hear this Roderick Devlin guy  
 means business. I still don't want  
 any trouble from you two.

Dax sees Maria exit the Commander's car and WAVES her to the  
 side of the building.

DAX  
 Psst. Maria, you have to go on as  
 Professor Peyton Moore. She got --  
 delayed.

MARIA  
 She's over thirty years my senior,  
white, and we don't agree on  
 anything.

DAX  
 Perfect. I have glasses and a gray  
 wig from the thrift store.

MARIA  
 (mumbles)  
 I don't like the sound of this.

The Water Meeting is packed with CITIZENS (thirty town folk  
 we had met earlier, all ages). Roderick Devlin is presenting  
 an evangelical slide show on the virtues of cloud seeding.

DEVLIN

It sounds simple, because it is simple. The rain droplets form around our tiny silver iodide crystals, and you get rain.

RICKY

Excuse me, Sir. What happens downstream? Do they get less rain?

DEVLIN

(angrily)

What happens downstream is of no concern of yours. If they want rain, they can pay the revenues like everyone else.

SERGEANT HANSON

Revenues? Don't you mean taxes?

DEVLIN

Same difference. In summary, the Hollyfield cloud seeding program is the only viable solution to end twenty years of drought.

The citizens LOOK CONVINCED, but Sergeant Hanson and Ricky on the other side of the room look UNCONVINCED. The Commander and Shannon ENTER the back of the Courthouse.

SERGEANT HANSON

What about the tax increase to subsidize this pipe dream? Do these fine people get their money back if it doesn't work?

DEVLIN

Our engineers assure me this will work, as I'm sure Professor Peyton Moore from the university will tell you too, if she shows up.

COMMANDER DALTON

(yells from the back)

What about water conservation?! Can we hear from my daughter and her friend who did a science project for school?!

The citizens APPLAUD. Devlin steps aside from the podium and the town's laptop computer. Shannon and Ricky step up. Ricky inserts a USB-MEMORY-DRIVE into the laptop.

DEVLIN

This is no place for a school  
science project!

COMMANDER DALTON

Let the town decide that.

Shannon PROJECTS a slide of the experiment (before it was  
destroyed).

SHANNON

My boyfriend and I...

Ricky BLUSHES. The Commander CRINGES.

SHANNON (CONT'D)

Proved that drip irrigation could  
grow twice the crops with half the  
water compared to pivot and flood  
irrigation used today.

RICKY

We can stop wasting water and grow  
more food with water conservation.  
We have the data to prove it.

Shannon SHOWS a slide of the destroyed experiment.

SHANNON

But someone destroyed our  
experiment today. Someone with a  
helicopter.

Shannon and Ricky GLARE at Devlin.

Dax POKES his head in from the front-side door.

DAX

I found Professor Peyton Moore  
wandering around town.

Maria steps in, wearing a business jacket, slacks, a GRAY  
WIG, and thick glasses, and holding a briefcase. Devlin  
RACES over to her and casually SLIPS an envelope of hundred-  
dollars bills into her business jacket. Sergeant Hanson  
recognizes her from the Wanted Posters, but Commander Dalton  
HOLDS his arm and smiles.

DEVLIN

(whispering)

You look well-preserved for sixty.

MARIA

Yoga. And Tofu. Tofu-yoga.

DEVLIN

You'd better be worth the money  
you're getting.

Maria SLIPS a memory stick into the laptop computer. She has only one slide SHOWING the cover of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences report on cloud seeding with a web-link below it.

MARIA

Hollyfield Incorporated has proposed a nationwide Cloud Seeding program to give this country what it desperately needs -- more rain.

The crowd CHEERS.

DEVLIN

Listen to the professor!

MARIA

They ask for a hefty revenue increase, a tax, if you will, to support their noble cause.

DEVLIN

Pennies a day.

MARIA

In Two-thousand-three, the Unites States National Academy of Science researched dozens of published studies on cloud seeding.

DEVLIN

(mumbles)  
Uh oh!

MARIA

They found no evidence that cloud seeding works. Zero. Nada. Goose-egg. Zilch!

The crowd GASPS. Devlin is FUMING with anger.

MARIA (CONT'D)

None. No proof. Go on-line and read the report for yourself.

Devlin turns and WHISPERS to his Bodyguards.

DEVLIN

Bury that report, now. And get her off the stage.

The two Bodyguards approach Maria. Devlin's phone BUZZES. He receives an urgent text message from his headquarters: "Our computers were hacked at lunchtime. You're not going to like the memos you sent." Devlin is FURIOUS as he reads further.

MARIA

Don't be duped by every snake-oil salesman and rainmaker full of empty promises. Use your critical thinking skills. Demand solid, scientific evidence.

The Bodyguards are INTERCEPTED by Commander Dalton and Sergeant Hanson. Maria WHIPS OFF her wig, and TOSSES Devlin's envelope on the floor.

MARIA (CONT'D)

My name is Professor Maria Adams. Water conservation, like drip irrigation, controlled use of aquifers, and wise water use at home are needed.

Dax PULLS Maria out the side door.

MARIA (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Listen to Shannon and Ricky, and the wise youth of today!

Huan and Parker DRIVE UP in the BLUE FORD TRUCK. Dax gets in first. As Maria gets in, Sergeant Hanson RACES OUT the side door and RUNS up to the truck.

SERGEANT HANSON

Maria, you were wonderful. They're cheering you on like crazy in there.

MARIA

I didn't do anything.

SERGEANT HANSON

You made them think. They call Devlin the devil, and you, the Rainmaker.

Sergeant Hanson looks puzzled.

DAX

We may have primed the pump on the nicknames.

PARKER

Shannon and Ricky Tweeted the nicknames far and wide.

MARIA

I knew the town wouldn't be swayed by Mr. Devlin.

SERGEANT HANSON

And Shannon and Ricky are local heroes.

MARIA

They're great kids, and the next generation of scientists.

SERGEANT HANSON

What I mean to say is, will I see you again?

MARIA

You can bet on it.

She LEANS OUT the truck window and KISSES him. Clouds gather and it starts to RAIN lightly, but at least it's rain.

SERGEANT HANSON

Hey, it's raining! It's a miracle!

MARIA

It's an orographic coincidence.

Dax, Huan, and Parker CHEER. Citizens EXIT the Courthouse CHEERING -- "Rainmaker, Rainmaker!"

SERGEANT HANSON

I guess you're right. You'd better get out of here.

Huan steps on the gas and RACES AWAY as people WAVE happily.

End Act Four

(More)

TAG

EXT. BRIDGE, BALLARAT - NIGHT

Six Water Pirates in MASKS, including Sarg and Michelle, carry BACKPACKS along the river toward a bridge, watching the same two civilian Water Guards RESTING aside the dam. But as Sarg advances, a dozen well-armed, official, uniformed Water Militia (30s-40s) MARCH up to defend the dam.

MICHELLE

How did they know?

SARG

We have a leak.

Sarg STARES SUSPICIOUSLY at each of the masked Water Pirates, before STOMPING away down the riverside. They HEAR an automatic rifle: BAM BAM BAM BAM BAM. A Water Pirate falls dead. Is it Sarg? Is it Michelle?

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Just outside of town, there's NO RAIN in sight. Dax drives fast, with Maria, Dax, Huan, and Parker in good humor as they SWERVE down a dark, dirt farm road.

DAX

Nice work back there, Professor.

MARIA

You weren't so bad yourselves, for being a bunch of computer geeks fired from Hollyfield.

Dax, Parker, and Huan GLANCE UNCOMFORTABLY at each other.

PARKER

How do you know we were fired?

MARIA

Nobody quits a high-paying job in a recession.

HUAN

If Hollyfield wasn't after you before, they will be now. You may need a few geeks to keep you out of prison.

MARIA

I haven't done anything wrong.



PARKER

You poisoned the youth of New South  
Wales with science.

DAX

You educated the townies pretty  
quickly.

HUAN

You called Roderick Devlin the  
Third, the C-E-O of a multi-billion-  
dollars company, a liar.

MARIA

He was trying to dupe those poor,  
defenseless people in a time of  
crisis.

PARKER

You left that nice Sergeant Walt  
Hanson high and dry, so to speak.

MARIA

He was so sweet. I like him.

DAX

That reminds me, we owe Commander  
Dalton's account eighty-five  
dollars.

Dax takes Devlin's ENVELOPE out of his back pocket.

DAX (CONT'D)

Devlin couldn't pick up the  
envelope with all those people  
looking, so I did.

MARIA

Professor Peyton Moore couldn't  
report it missing.

HUAN

We'll repay the Commander's account  
at our next ATM stop.

MARIA

Our next stop? No way. I'm going  
home to straighten out this mess  
and get on with my life.

DAX

I'm afraid that's impossible.

PARKER

We need you at our next stop, and  
you can't go home yet.

MARIA

Why?

HUAN

One, it's not safe. Two, you're not  
a legend yet. Once you're a  
legend, you'll be home free.

Maria thinks about it for a moment.

MARIA

Where's our next stop?

DAX

Need to save the forest.

MARIA

From loggers?

HUAN

No, from a poison salesman.

Huan hands Maria a newspaper with a vicious-looking ASIAN  
GYPSY MOTH on the front page. The newspaper reads: "New DDT  
Needed to Stop Massive Asian Gypsy Moth Outbreak."

MARIA

DDT has been banned for decades in  
most countries!

PARKER

That's why they need the Rainmaker.

DAX

The legend grows.

Maria STARES out of the truck window.

MARIA

Rainmaker. Ha!

She shakes her head in disbelief, then SMILES TRIUMPHANTLY.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

My mom used to say, 'A few trustworthy friends can defeat an army of powerful enemies.' But her new friends had secrets that were forming a noose, her enemies were more powerful than she had imagined, and the drought was getting worse. My mom's troubles were just beginning.

FADE OUT:

END OF PILOT