

WALT DISNEY/TOUCHSTONE PICTURES

TITLE: S.W.A.T.
AUTHORS: MITA, RON/MCCLAIN, JIM

Jason
Das

SUB BY: CANNAVA, A.
SUB TO: BIERMAN, MATT

GENRE: ACTION
SUB-GENRE:

FORMAT: Screenplay
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ANALYST: CRUTCHER, GARY
COVERAGE DATE: May 15, 1997

LOGLINE:

Los Angeles Special Weapons And Tactics (S.W.A.T.) team has its hands full when a powerful captured Asian drug lord offers \$100-million to anybody who will free him from the downtown L.A. Federal Detention Center.

COMMENT LOGLINE:

This high-powered action piece is based on the 1975/76 ABC-TV series S.W.A.T. with mostly the same characters and non ending excitement that went with that show, criticized at the time as the most violent show of the 1970s decade, which was bad then but is good now.

SCRIPT: CONSIDER
WRITER: CONSIDER

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Idea		▲		
Story Line		▲		
Characterization		▲		
Dialogue		▲		

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SYNOPSIS:

A highly charged, dangerous situation in a rundown, depressed area of Los Angeles wherein a group of dopers are hold up in their drug lab house with big fire power causes L.A.P.D. uniformed black woman officer LINA to radio in the need for the S.W.A.T. team. Headquartered out of Parker Center, the team's no-nonsense leader DAN (HONDO) HARRELSON, forties, rallies his group, consisting of daredevil driver and quick on the trigger JIMMY STREET, sharp Chinese American FRANCIS TENG, blonde and buff STEPHANIE LUCA, solid African American DEKE RAY and likable rookie T.J. MCCABE. They arrive on the scene in their intimidating UAV (Urban Assault Vehicle) and wipe out the bad guys with professional precision. Lina congratulates Deke, the two of them having an ongoing flirtation between them.

No sooner are they back at S.W.A.T. Command Center in Parker Center, than the group gets a call about a hostage situation at LAX aboard a Hong Kong Airlines 747. At first it appears the FBI is in charge, then DEA agent ZAGER comes out of nowhere and takes over the arrest of the world's largest drug lord HO KHIN SONG aboard the plane. Two men, supposedly trying to kidnap Song are killed in the action. Back at Parker Center, the S.W.A.T. team meet the newest addition to their group, a Russian from his country's elite special forces, ALEX KARELIN, a giant of a man with a sensitive nature about him.

After Song's arraignment, he publicly offers \$100-million on the courthouse steps to anybody who frees him. Worth billions and the head of a private army of some 40,000 men, Song's offer immediately brings chaos to L.A. A gang of Skinheads attack the Federal Detention Center where Song has been taken and S.W.A.T. goes there, putting down the Skinheads, Karelin showing a instinct for violence and fitting right in with the group. On orders from the U.S. Attorney General's office, Zager and his DEA men move Song in a federal convoy for the Burbank Airport but are caught in an ambush in Chinatown led by Song's top henchman MUANG. It's S.W.A.T. to the rescue again, taking Zager and Song aboard their UAV vehicle. With LAX their new destination, where another plane waits for Song and Zager's departure, the group tries to make its way across L.A. but, on Muang's command, the power in the city goes out as he has various electrical power outlets destroyed.

Reaching the Southwest Police Station, where Lina is stationed, the group finds it deserted, having been attacked. On the nearby freeway, eight police officers, including Lina, are being held hostage by a biker gang, wanting to exchange them for Song. Hondo pretends to negotiate, then pulls a gun and kills the biker leader and the rest of his team rescues the police officers, dropping them off at the nearest fire department station. It isn't long before the CRIPS are after them in a stolen fire

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SYNOPSIS (continued):

engine. A wild chase ensues with Karelin helping Hondo to force the fire engine off the road into a fiery crash. Reaching a Metrolink train station, they transfer onto it, leaving a small force with the UAV to follow it, and head for LAX aboard it. Zager, having faked the hostage situation to capture Song, now decides to go for the \$100-million and kills McCabe, helping Song get off the train. Muang reaches them with his men and kills Zager. They take a couple of boats down the swollen L.A. river toward Long Beach with Hondo and his group in pursuit. The boats crash into a luxury liner in L.A. Harbor and it appears all the bad guys are killed.

No so, though, as Song and Muang's deaths have been faked. In reality they are to be picked up at the 105/110 freeway interchange by a Lear jet. In a final exchange of gunfire, Deke is shot and Street chooses to save him rather than get a clear shot off at the plane with a rocket launcher. This leaves Hondo to take out the rising plane with his Desert Eagle hand gun, firing 50mm ammo. As the freeway crumbles from explosions of a gasoline truck head by gunfire, Hondo hits the place and it goes down with the freeway. Back at Parker Center, the group counts themselves lucky. Song is dead and it only cost L.A. around a trillion dollars in damages to get rid of him. Before the group can rest on their accomplishment, a call comes in about a hostage situation in North Hollywood and they roar off in their brand new UAV.

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COMMENTS:

We covered a different draft of this vehicle on 3-13-97 and the reader of the script of this project at that time liked it. I agree. It's great action fun and totally satisfactory for the crowd it's aimed at. The TV series this script is based on was originally a pilot spin off from the Spelling-Goldberg TV series ROOKIES. The S.W.A.T. series was created by Aaron Spelling and Leonard Goldberg. Most of the characters from that series remain in this screenplay. Hondo was played by Steve Forest and Jimmy Street was played by Robert Urich. Luca was a male character and is now a female character named Stephanie instead of Dominic. This draft, 5-pages shorter in length, has given us a love interest between Deke and a new character Lina. Some of the action sequences have been shorten and modified with a budget in mind. The big climax now takes place at the 105/110 freeway interchange instead of aboard a freighter in the L.A. Harbor. A lot of the TV reporter stuff, describing what is happening over TV isn't necessary as it's redundant in that we can see what's happening. Lots of scenes between the Mayor of L.A. and a police chief aren't important, either, as they merely repeat what is happening. Anytime we cut away from the main action and main thrust of the plot, which is its action, the pacing tends to slow down, which is deadly for this sort of vehicle. Dialogue, what there is of it, is good and the thinly drawn characterizations are drawn well enough to be acceptable for an audience as the action here is the real star. If we're in the market for this sort of nonstop action piece with a moderate amount of motivation and credibility, coming off totally honest fun in its comic book presentation, then we should give this project much serious consideration.

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WRITER: **CONSIDER**