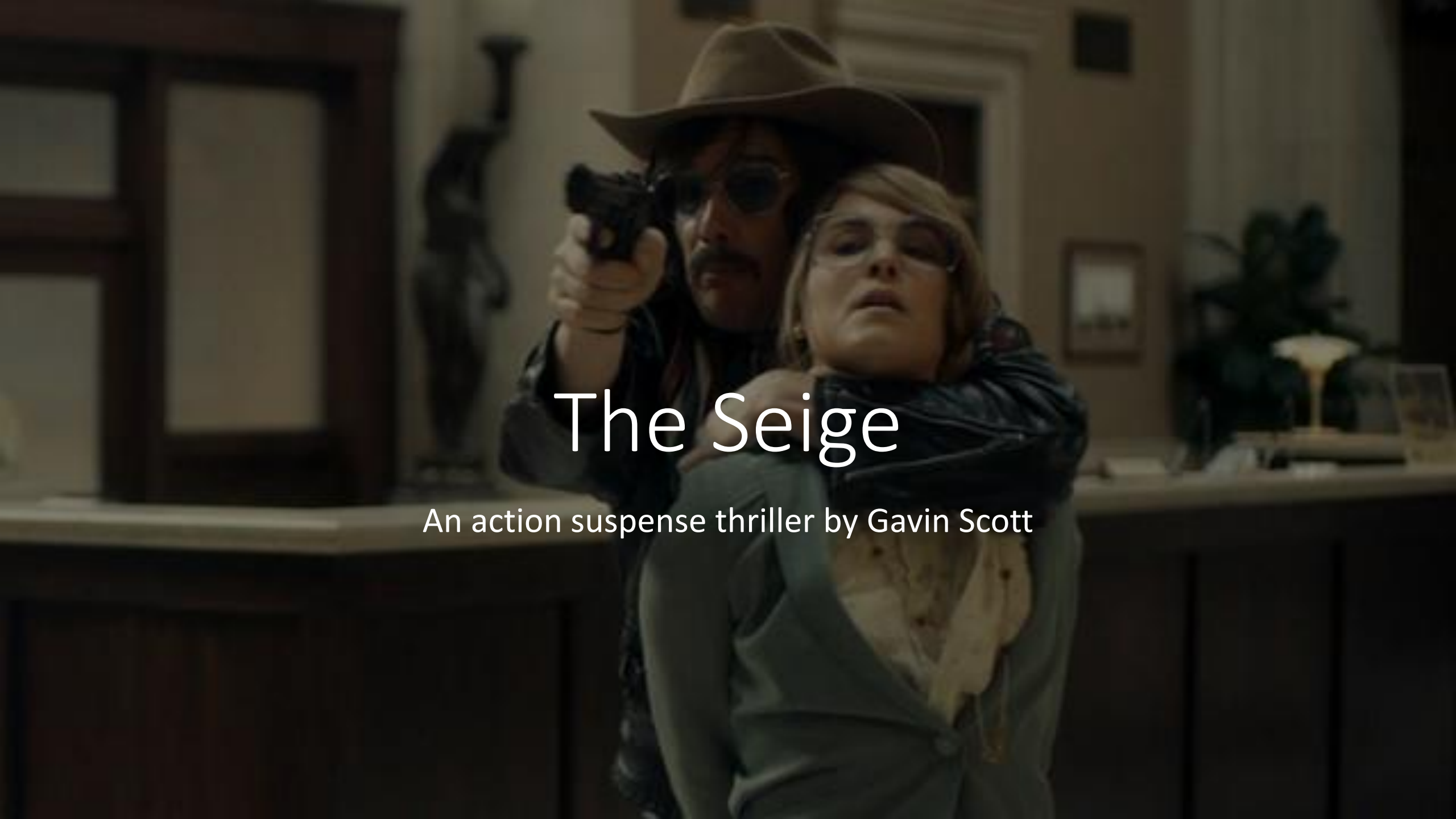




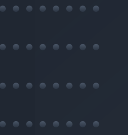
# THE SIEGE

aristosfilms

A man wearing a brown cowboy hat, sunglasses, and a dark jacket is holding a woman in a light blue jacket. He is holding a handgun in his right hand, pointing it towards the camera. The woman has a distressed expression. They are in a bar or restaurant setting with a counter and a potted plant in the background.

# The Seige

An action suspense thriller by Gavin Scott



In an isolated house in the hills ...



... a group of young people come together for peaceful weekend retreat

But when gangsters invade the property seeking a fleeing prosecution witness ...  
... they must decide whether to hand him over ... or fight to protect him!



In a battle which  
culminates on a  
crucial cellphone  
tower, all their beliefs  
are tested to the  
utmost



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# **THE SIEGE**

## Treatment

The first shot is of a cellphone tower in the hills around a big city. From here we pan down to a rambling, retreat house in the middle of extensive wooded grounds, where a church youth group are arriving for a 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend retreat.

Among them is Grace Taylor, a physicist in her 20's trying to overcome the doubts about religion her scientific training has raised, and Justin Thomas, an ambitious and sceptical young Web entrepreneur who is there because his girlfriend Charlotte has talked him into coming.

There are no computers in the house, and no Internet connection: this is a place to put the world entirely behind them for a few days.

We intercut their arrival with shots of a car, a couple of canyons away, in which two cops are taking a witness named Joaquin Escobar to a safe house so he can be protected until it's time for him to testify in the trial of Phillipe, the boss of a major drug cartel..

The safe house is only a couple of miles away from the retreat, but in the event the police and their prisoner never get there. The squad car is ambushed by members of the cartel on a lonely stretch of road and there's a firefight in which the police escort is killed along with most of the attackers.

Except for a grimly determined career criminal named Horace Gutman.



## **THE SIEGE** Treatment (con't)

In the confusion Joaquin manages to get away and plunges down a steep wooded bank.

But Gutman is hot on his trail firing as he goes so that every time Joaquin gets anywhere near a house where he might ask for help, he's forced away from it, diving down gullies and scrambling up hillsides until he has no idea where he is.

Then Gutman loses track of him and climbs the cellphone tower to see if he can spot him – just as Joaquin finally makes it to somewhere he can ask for sanctuary.

The retreat house.

The kids' immediate response, naturally, is to call the police.

*At the very moment Gutman disables a crucial component of the cellphone tower, putting it out of action.*

Which means the group are on their own, facing a life and death moral dilemma.

As they argue about what's the right thing to do Graces takes the initiative by hiding Joaquin in a storage closet - seconds before Gutman bursts into the house and demands they hand Joaquin over to him

Which they refuse to do.

But their Christian principles are stretched to breaking point as Gutman climbs the stairs, leans over the balcony and *threatens to shoot them one at a time unless they tell him where Joaquin is hiding.*

## **THE SIEGE** Treatment (con't)

And he would – if Grace didn't come out of the storage closet where she's been hiding Joaquin and - without thinking about it - *pushes Gutman over the balcony.*

She did it to avert immediate disaster, but when she rushes down to help him, *she realises he's broken his neck.*

For a gentle soul who doesn't believe in violence, it's a terrible shock.

In fact, they're all in shock, but they know there's no time to stand there thinking about it: they have to get themselves and Joaquin out of there before Gutman's confederates arrive.

They pile into one of the cars and drive hell for leather up the winding drive to the front gate.

But as it starts to swing open *another car, this one containing six armed guys led by Gutman's vicious, highly intelligent boss Philippe, barrels down straight at them.*

It doesn't look as if neither they or Joaquin are going to get out of there alive.

And they wouldn't – if Justin didn't jump out to get the gate closed again before the bad guys reach it, giving the others the chance to reverse wildly back down the drive, throw themselves back into the house – and start piling up barricades.

Meanwhile, two canyons away the cops, investigating the original ambush, erroneously conclude that one of the dead attackers is Joaquin and leave.

## **THE SIEGE** Treatment (con't)

But Philippe and his men know exactly where Joaquin is, and they are implacable. Swarming over the walls and into the grounds, they begin closing in on the retreat house from all directions.

Inside, the young retreat-goers are trying to figure out what their values have to teach them about to how to handle their situation. Some of them want to make the house an impregnable fortress. Some are prepared to use Gutman's gun to protect themselves, others don't believe in violence. Some want to make a break for it. Yet others want to hand Joaquin over to save themselves.

But the majority conclude that they must be prepared to fight for what they believe in, and not give in to the forces of evil. They will not abandon Joaquin.

Finally three of them, Grace, Justin and a young man called Edward (who really just wants to get away) volunteer to see if they can make it the half mile through the trees to the nearest neighbour's house, while the others prepare defences against the inevitable attack, improvising desperately with sharpened metal poles, trip-wires, kitchen implements, bladed weapons and ways of bringing live electric wires down on their attackers.

We follow Grace, Justin and Edward as they evade the ring of men closing in on the house and scramble away along a gully, finally and triumphantly reaching the neighbour's house.

*Only to find there's no-one home, and still no cellphone signal.*

But there are computers and they are wired, so apparently all they have to do is get online.

## **THE SIEGE** Treatment (con't)

Only thing is, the computers are password protected, and as they desperately trying to figure out what the password might be, Philippe realises what's happening and sends a bunch of his men after them.

There's a suspense-filled sequence as the cartel guys make their way silently into the neighbour's house while Grace, Justin and Edward stay on just too long trying to get online – and then just as they finally manage connect, have to abandon the computer, avoiding by seconds a hail of bullets.

Then comes a wild chase up the wooded hillsides as they try to make it to the road with the cartel guys right behind them.

Trying to save his own skin, Edward betrays Justin and Grace's whereabouts, but pays the price as he's found hiding in an empty swimming pool and shot.

Justin, by contrast, tries to give Grace a chance to escape by drawing the bad guy's attention to himself.

But his maneuver goes badly wrong and for a moment we will think that Justin and Grace have both been killed, the break-out has failed and there's no way the remaining kids can hold out against the besiegers.

As darkness descends and the 4th of July fireworks begin going off, all reports of gunfire in the area are dismissed by police dispatchers as so many pyrotechnics.

And finally of course Philippe and his thugs break through all the defences and get into the house. Now the fighting is from room to room – and this is where all the booby traps come into effect, gradually cutting down the numbers of the attackers even as they push the defenders deeper into the house.

## **THE SIEGE** Treatment (con't)

But despite all their ingenuity we know it can't last long. And wouldn't – but for the fact that Grace and Justin aren't dead.

And though they could just lie low in the scrub and wait for everything to be over, they refuse to give up.

Justin believes that they can, despite the overwhelming odds, make it to the cellphone tower and get it working again.

There is an intense suspense sequence as they worm their way through the chaparral past the cartel guys until Justin reaches the tower and begins to climb it.

And it looks as if he's going to make it until a bursting firework silhouettes him on the tower and Philippe starts blazing away. Even as the rest of their group in the house are trapped up on the roof.

But it's here, facing death, they find the courage to take the offensive to save Justin and Grace. Defying their attackers, they leap down from the roof with their improvised weapons and fight their way to the cellphone tower.

The finale takes place on the tower, as Justin sacrifices himself to get the tower working again and Grace is able to make the call which finally brings the police.

And as the cops arrive, the kids look at each other and know they've just received an extraordinary lesson about what faith and courage really means.