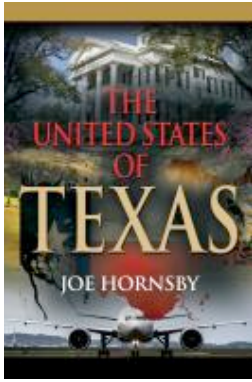


THE  
UNITED STATES  
OF  
TEXAS

JOE HORNSBY



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# The United States of Texas

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# The United States of Texas

Joe Hornsby

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First Edition

## Chapter 1

She had sat there staring out the window for what seemed like never-ending days and weeks. Today, she had just sat in the chair staring out the window, not attempting whatsoever to encourage Joe to respond. What was the point? For several weeks, she had spent all day, every day, endlessly talking to him. For what purpose did she keep trying? Nothing had changed. He was still unable to move or respond. He was a paralyzed mute, apparently completely unaware of his surroundings. The Hospital appeared to be doing absolutely nothing to try to improve his condition. Had they just given up? She knew without a doubt she was on the verge of doing so. Perhaps it was time to go ahead and do what she felt deep in her heart should happen; charter a plane and take him home. If he were dying, she would prefer it be in his own bed back home in Houston, rather than in some secret NSA hospital in Costa Rica.

Startled from her thoughts, Linda suddenly realized someone had, without her being aware of their presence, entered the room. Turning, she found Dr. Ramirez standing quietly at the foot of Joe's bed.

"Good morning Mrs. Davis. How are you this morning?"

"Good morning, Dr. Ramirez. How am I? I suppose about the same as I have been for the last six weeks. Sitting here for hours day after day hoping Joe will respond in some manner. There have been no visible reactions whatsoever that would indicate he is aware of his surroundings, much less my never ending talking.

"Mrs. Davis, please remember his arrival here, followed by our numerous conversations concerning his condition. He came close to losing his life, following the attempted assassination in Florida. When he arrived here in Costa Rica, there were serious concerns about his chance of survival, much less his return to a normal state. You must remember his condition was greatly exacerbated, and

*Joe Hornsby*

almost proven fatal, due to the time between his injury and his arrival here in Costa Rica.

If he had received, in Florida, the experimental treatment we provided here, chances are his recovery would be advanced beyond his current state.”

“Conventional treatment was all that was available in Florida. That is why Director Johnson made the prompt decision to send him here. He was quickly, made aware of the extent of Mr. Davis’ injuries, and the diminished possibility of his survival, had he not been brought here. Mrs. Davis, I remain convinced Joe will, at some point during his confinement, overcome his lack of speech and total paralysis, as he begins the recovery process. The question is simply how complete his recovery will be and how long it will take. We do not know, but remain hopeful it will be a complete recovery, sooner, rather than later.”

“In the meantime, taking her hand in his, the nurses are worried about you, as I am. They tell me you are not eating properly and seldom leave Mr. Davis’s side. That, to speak bluntly is entirely unacceptable. It is extremely important to his recovery, that you remain strong. You will not be able to do that if you do not eat properly, along with proper rest and exercise. To enable you to do what is required, I have arranged for a private nurse to sit with Mr. Davis each morning. This will be in addition to the nurse who is here at night.” “Now before you say anything, I clearly remember your rather harsh reaction, when I previously suggested this. Unfortunately, you have allowed your body and mind, due entirely to a poor diet, lack of exercise and rest, to reach and maintain a dangerously high level of stress. Tomorrow morning a nurse will take you to our health club. Following that, you will be expected to show up every day on the schedule that will be established for you.”

“You will be guided through an exercise program designed specifically for you by a personal trainer. After your time at the

*The United States of Texas*

Health Club, you are to go to our cafeteria. There the head of Dietary Services will meet you. She will join you for lunch and instruct you about a proper diet.”

“When the night nurse arrives I insist you return to your quarters, here in the hospital, and rest. To ensure you receive proper rest, I will prescribe a sleeping aid. The duty nurse will come by your quarters and dispense the medication at nine each evening.”

“You must understand the major role you are playing in the recovery of your husband. I will not allow you to destroy your health, and his in the process. We have done everything we can, up to this point, for your husband. You, Mrs. Davis, must understand and accept the fact the rest is totally up to you and his will to survive and recover. Medical history is filled with hopeless cases that were reversed, due entirely to the love of family and the patient’s desire to live and recover.”

Linda angrily responded, “Doctor Ramirez, you have just taken away every option I have. I strongly resent you telling me that I must leave my husband’s bedside. The most important thing in my life is his recovery. I will try it your way. However, be aware, that if he does not improve, I will do it my way, even if that means taking him home.”

*Good God almighty, it is I, Joe Davis. Will you two knock it off? I am stuck in this damn bed unable to move or talk. I hear every word you say, but for some reason cannot respond. Will someone please tell me what in the hell happened? Why am I in Costa Rica? How did I get here? What happened to me? I do not have a clue. The last thing I remember is putting Colonel Black, in a paddy wagon, followed by a monstrous pain in my head, followed by nothing. Do you have any idea how frustrated I am? How long have I been here? When will I be able to move and speak? For God’s sake, someone help me.”*

*Joe Hornsby*

Doctor Ramirez continued, “Mrs. Davis, we are going to try something new, to see if it will assist your husband. Two of our technicians will be by shortly. One of them is an expert in acupuncture and the second is an expert in electrical stimulation of flaccid muscles and nerves. We are going to use them in combination. Obviously, acupuncture is not a new technology. Acupuncture is very popular, and frequently used, in China with amazing results. Utilizing electrical stimulation involves a recent enhancement to the old Tens machines. For a very long time each treatment was administered independent of the other, often with astounding results. To the best of our knowledge, there has not been any effort made to use them in tandem. We, frankly, do not know what to expect. It may result in no improvement, or it could result in a major improvement. We just do not know. We do not even know how long or how many treatments will be required, to possibly see any results.”

“When the technicians arrive, they will explain, in detail, all aspects of their therapy. In the meantime, I insist you do exactly what we have asked of you. It is very important.”

“Mrs. Davis, before I leave, are you sure you have observed nothing that would indicate your husband is hearing our conversations?”

“No, Doctor Ramirez, I have not.”

Doctor Ramirez continued, “Somehow I suspect he is hearing everything we say. Obviously, at this point, there is not a definitive way, at this hospital, to ascertain if he is or not. If there were, we would have tried it. Yet my instincts are telling me he is. I suppose we will find out later if my instincts are correct. In the meantime, you must closely watch him. We do not want to miss any signs of improvement. I will see you when I return later this afternoon.”



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*Frustrated and angry, Joe Davis lays in bed thinking, "Of course I can hear you. I lay in this damn bed listening to and understanding every word. Why on God's little green earth can you not realize I can hear? Does my brain react when I hear a noise? Now after all this time, I learn you do not even have the ability to monitor my brain waves reaction to sound. Just what kind of a cheap ass hospital is this? Surely, one of you medical genius doctors could buy one. Will this hell never end? Well, I'll be damned! Now they are going to stick old Joe with a bunch of needles and hook him up to some kind of machine and shock his ass. If that is not a crock, I do not know what is. Oh my God, Linda is crying. Why in the hell can I not put my arms around her? She has never cried unless I was there to comfort her. This is almost like the time Aiko's plane was blown out of the sky by a terrorist bomb, while en-route to Japan. At least that time I was there for her. This time I am here but unable to do anything. Dear God, please help me."*

Shortly after Dr. Ramirez left, the room door opened and a young man came in. "Mrs. Davis, good morning. I am Mike Angeles, the acupuncture technician. I am here to treat Mr. Davis. Before today, I along with Jerry Bates met with Dr. Ramirez several times to discuss the treatment for your husband.

I will be placing a number of needles in Mr. Davis at various locations on his body. The needles are very fine and he will feel little to no discomfort. As soon as I have finished the placement of the needles, Jerry Bates will be here to hook up the electrical stimulation. The acupuncture will last approximately one hour. The electrical stimulation will remain around the clock. Each day I will be back at this same time to administer another acupuncture treatment. This treatment will continue until Mr. Davis either improves, or Doctor Ramirez instructs us to stop. In the meantime, there is a Nurse waiting outside to take you to the health club."

Angry at the suggestion she leave, Linda responded, "Mr. Angeles, let's get something straight right now. I will do as Dr.

Ramirez ordered. He has effectively taken away all of my other options. However, you can bet your butt I am going nowhere, until you and Jerry Bates have finished hooking up my husband. Just remember at any time, day or night, you administer any sort of new treatment to my husband, I will without fail, be present. Until I am personally convinced, my husband is comfortable and tolerating this new treatment, the nurse can just sit out there and cool her heels. Mr. Angeles, is that clear?"

"Yes Mrs. Davis, it is very clear," said Mike Angeles in a sheepish tone of voice.

"Mrs. Davis, our intention was to demonstrate and explain in some detail what we will be doing during our next visit. Since you will be staying today, to watch our procedure, we will explain it all this morning.

"Let's get started. To begin, I am going to insert several needles in and around the back of his neck. The bullet entered the right side of his skull, where we will concentrate the therapy. Now I will place a number of additional needles across his right shoulder. Oh, here is Jerry Bates. Jerry, this is Mrs. Davis. She is going to observe what we are doing."

"Hello, Mrs. Davis, it is nice to meet you."

"You too, Mr. Bates"

Mike immediately addressed Jerry Bates, "Jerry, we need to roll Mr. Davis to his left side so I can place needles on his lower back and spine. We will need to brace him to enable him to stay on his left side until the needles are removed."

"Okay Mike, let me go around to the other side of the bed. Now gently roll him to his left side. Be careful. We do not want to injure him further."

*Just what do these jerks think they are doing to me? Already they have apparently stuck numerous needles in me. Now they are going to roll me over. Are they nuts? I can feel nothing, have absolutely no control over my body and they think I will stay on my side. Just how in the hell do they plan to keep me on my side? This might get interesting*

“Okay, I have all of the needles in place. Jerry, there are four needles in his lower back and two in his neck that require stimulation. They are the needles with the green electrical conductivity cap on the end.”

After a couple of minutes, Jerry responds, “Mike, the connections are all made. I am activating the controls to administer the first stage stimulation.”

“Jerry, one last step is yet to be accomplished. We must provide a means to secure Mr. Davis on his side; otherwise, he somehow might roll back onto his back. Even though that is extremely unlikely, we must be certain there is not an opportunity for him to do so. Do you have a suggestion on how to do that?

“Mike, in anticipation of this problem I brought a foam wedge to place behind his back. The wedge is long enough to reach from his shoulders to his knees. Reach across the raised side of the bed and roll him as far as possible towards you. Then I will place the wedge behind his back. When you release him, the wedge should then be securely supporting him, preventing him from somehow rolling back. Mike, go ahead and roll Mr. Davis as far as possible towards you. Okay, the wedge is now in place. Release him and watch to see if this works as well as I hope it has. Mike, it looks okay to me. What do you think?”

“Okay Jerry, the wedge seems to be working as hoped for.” As Mike stepped back, he reminded Jerry of the need for both of them to watch closely for any reactions or problems.

“Mrs. Davis, we are finished until it is time to return and remove the needles.”

“Okay Mr. Angeles, thank you.”

Mike Angeles continued, “Mrs. Davis, in about an hour Jerry and I will return. I will remove the needles and Jerry will place the conductivity patches where the needles were. He will re-adjust the intensity of the stimulation to compensate for the needles that are no longer present. Following that, we will both stay here with Mr. Davis and observe him for any reaction. Once we are satisfied he is comfortable, we will leave him in the care of the nursing staff.

“Mrs. Davis, now you must go to the health club. The nurse is waiting outside to escort you there. Otherwise, we are going to be in big trouble with Dr. Ramirez. Upon your return, the nursing staff will notify us and we will meet you back here. In the meantime your husband is in absolutely no danger or discomfort.”

“Okay, thank you both.”

Just outside the room door was a nurse, oblivious to her surroundings and engrossed in a magazine.

“I am Mrs. Davis and assume you are the nurse who will take me to the health club. Is that correct?”

“Yes, Mrs. Davis, my name is Shirley Bitner and I will be taking you to the health club. After today, you are to report on your own. We must get going. We are late and I am concerned Dr. Ramirez will find out we are not adhering to the schedule he set out. Trust me, when I say, we do not want that to happen!”

“Mrs. Davis, this is Elizabeth Carter. She will be your personal trainer.”

*The United States of Texas*

“Hello, Mrs. Davis, welcome to our oasis of good health. Please call me Lizzie, like everyone else does.”

“Lizzie thanks.” I must say this is more than I expected.”

“Yes, Mrs. Davis, it is very nice and far above average for a gym. Like everything else, you can thank Dr. Ramirez for this first rate facility. He is a strong believer in good health and the three main components of good health, diet, exercise and rest.”

“Lizzie please, my name is Linda. I do get a little weary of the formality exhibited around here. Since we are going to be sweating and groaning together would you be receptive to a less formal environment.”

“Thanks Linda. Under these circumstances, I much prefer to be on a first name basis. It will make it much easier for you to shout at me when I hurt you. Laughing, Lizzie said, ‘I hope you understand that I am just kidding. We will not hurt you. Not on purpose anyway.’”

“First let me show you the locker room. It is just through the door over here.

Linda, here is your assigned locker. Each day you will find inside a fresh set of workout clothes. On the inside of the collar, you will see a tag with your name. When the workout is complete, you will find private showers at the end of the hall. Beside the shower room, you will find a Jacuzzi and a Sauna. That area is open around the clock. You are welcome to use the Jacuzzi and Sauna anytime you choose. Over there is a dirty clothes receptacle. Please leave your workout clothes inside. They will be washed and placed back in your locker each night.”

“We should step back into the workout area and look around some more. Linda, there is a lot of equipment here. Please do not be

intimidated by it. Initially you will be using only a few machines. Your workouts will start slowly and increase in intensity as you progress. It makes no sense to start working you so hard that you become extremely sore and unable to continue. That only defeats the purpose.”

Laughing, Linda commented, “That is comforting to know, Lizzie. I had visions of being stretched on a rack.”

“I promise Linda that is not going to happen. Do you have any questions or concerns I can address?”

“No Lizzie, not at this time. So far everything is very clear.”

“Linda, I do have some rather extensive documentation, that all new members must complete, before they begin workouts.

Here is your document package. Please read it and fill it out carefully. We have to be sure we know your complete history. Otherwise, we might ask you to do something that could put you in danger. Be sure to bring the completed documents with you tomorrow.”

“Your daily appointment has been set for ten each morning. Day one will be a light cardio workout, with day two starting your strength training. We will go slowly and not push you too hard to begin with. Once you start to progress, the intensity will be increased. You are to report here daily, Monday to Friday. On Saturday and Sunday, you will not be here. One other thing, the exercise area is open from six a.m. until six p.m. Outside of those hours no one is allowed to work out.”

“In the meantime Linda, the head of dietary services is waiting for you in the Cafeteria. Unless you have further questions I will see you tomorrow at ten.”

“Thanks Lizzie, see you tomorrow morning.”

*As she departed the gym, Linda's mind was churning. She was trying her best to assimilate all that had happened. The same thought kept running through her mind. All of my life I have eaten carefully, ensuring my body was properly nourished. I neither need nor require some professional eating machine to tell me how to maintain a proper diet. Oh well, this was part of the deal.*

My goodness this cafeteria is almost full. It is packed. How in the world can I possibly find this person, considering I don't even know their name?"

"Mrs. Davis?" Startled, Linda turned to find a young woman, she did not know, standing right behind her.

"Yes, I am Mrs. Davis."

"Hello, my name is Christine Mendoza. I am the head of dietary services here in the hospital. Dr. Ramirez asked that I personally work with you. That is his preference, rather than one of our dietitians."

"Everyone calls me Chris. I hope you will do the same."

"Chris, of course, and please call me Linda."

"Let's sit down over here and talk a little bit. Dr. Ramirez told me about the awful experience of your husband. I just want you to know how concerned we all are. We are praying for his full recovery."

"Thanks Chris. He is lucky to be alive. I am confident he would not be, were it not for the skills of Dr. Ramirez and his staff."

Chris continued, "I suspect Linda that you are not looking forward to what you likely perceive as lectures about eating properly."

*Joe Hornsby*

“Well Chris, I suppose that is a pretty accurate statement.”

“Let me assure you our intent is not to get up on a soap box and lecture about nutrition. What I have done, is prepare menus for the next thirty days. Yesterday I personally provided copies of the menu to the cafeteria manager and key staff. For the next thirty days, you are to eat nothing that is not on the menu. You are to take three meals a day here.”

“At the conclusion,’ Chris continued, ‘we will give you a thorough physical examination. The purpose of the exam will be to determine how your body reacted to what you have eaten. Following your examination, we will consider adjusting your caloric, vitamin and mineral intake. I assure you, there will be plenty of good food. I have brought you a copy of the menu. Please look it over as soon as you can. Please feel free to come by my office at any time, should you have any concerns or questions.

In the meantime, please go through the line and select your food. If you don’t mind I will join you.”

“Chris, I am very relieved. To tell the truth, I had envisioned some mean old person walking behind me telling me to spit out anything I put in my mouth that tastes good. I am hungry and in need of some nourishment. Once lunch is finished, I must return to my husband’s room.



## Chapter 2

*Joe lay in bed entwined in his thoughts. Some time back someone had finally placed a blindfold over my eyes. One of the genius nurses finally figured out that the light probably irritated my eyes. A good call there nurse, considering I could not close my eyes. From time to time, someone came into the room, apparently to check on me. Usually they said nothing. Sometimes they would speak and tell me who was there. Those that spoke always referred to me as Mr. Davis. Obviously, I could not see with a blindfold over my eyes. Moreover, they could not tell if I was awake or not. Made absolutely no difference, considering I could not speak.*

*Most of the time, I lay here, trying to remember what had happened. Sometime, Linda would ask me if I remembered a specific incident. Seldom did I recall anything about what she asked. There were times when there was a brief flash of memory. It was almost like a bolt of lightning, as if my brain was trying to wake up. Unfortunately, the flash produced no discernible memories. What I do not understand is why my brain is obviously not functioning properly.*

*I had heard enough to realize surgery was previously performed, at some time, and for some reason, both unknown to me. If someone would just tell me, what is going on and why, perhaps I could begin to reconstruct a chain of events.*

*This perpetual intellectual blank spot is a major irritant. If only I could communicate. This never-ending silence and total paralysis had become more than anyone should be expected to withstand or tolerate, much less overcome. The obvious conclusion being a quiet death was preferable to continuing to exist in this condition.*

*Hell, in my present condition, it was impossible to assist with my own demise. Without a doubt, you are damaged goods Joe Davis."*

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*I heard the door open and someone came in. It turned out to be Linda. She immediately came to my bed and told me the acupuncture needles were no longer present and the electric stimulation device was now hooked up to the EKG looking pads.*

*Almost immediately, the door opened again. Mike Angeles and Jerry Bates came back into the room. I just wish I could ask them how they removed the needles and reattached the pads, without me being aware of their presence. Mike told Linda he would be back in the morning performing acupuncture.*

*I get extremely frustrated listening to people discussing me, without the opportunity to participate.”*

Jerry Bates spoke up, “Mrs. Davis, once the needles are in place I will attach the electrical leads. Once the acupuncture treatment is finished and the needles removed, I will reattach the electrical leads back on the pads. At that point, the device will be acting almost like a deep tissue massage. Every time an electrical impulse goes into Mr. Davis’s body, it will be as if the affected tissue and muscle is grasped and massaged. The purpose is to stimulate the nerves traveling to the brain and to strengthen the muscle. Favorable results, once obtained, could indicate the beginning of recovery, perhaps as soon as a few days, or it could take a couple of months. There is not a definitive way to predict what might happen, or when it might happen.”

“The purpose of the acupuncture is to relax the muscles and nerves in the neck and lower back. This will, I hope, enhance the resumption of electrical signals from the neck and lower back to the injured area of the brain. In addition the two in combination are expected to remove scar tissue in the area where surgical access to the brain and neck was gained.”

“Mrs. Davis, this information coupled with what you observed earlier today, covers in some detail what we will be doing, along with

the hoped for results. Do you have any questions or concerns for either Mike or me at this time?"

"Not at this time, Mr. Bates. I understand what the two of you hope to accomplish and sincerely appreciate your expertise, time and effort."

"Mrs. Davis, for the time being Jerry and I will wait and watch Mr. Davis closely for any change. We remain optimistic that at some point his body will begin to react favorably to this therapy. During our absence, please watch him carefully for any sign of improvement. If you see anything at all, please call us immediately. The night nurse will do the same."

We both must be aware of any improvement, no matter how minor it might seem. If you think, you see even some minor movement call us, even if you are not sure. It is extremely important we receive notification as quickly as possible. Remember, this therapy is experimental. We, for example, do not know if the electrical stimulation as currently provided is adequate. It is adjustable and over time, the voltage will increase. We fully expect when the optimum delivery point is reached the opportunity for improvement will be substantially improved."

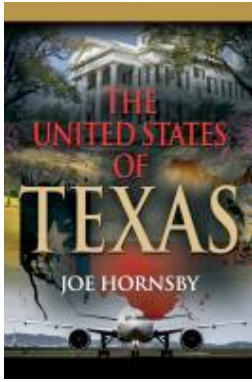
"Mrs. Davis, if there is anything you want or need to do, now would be a good time. Jerry and I will be here with Mr. Davis for at least thirty minutes. We promise to watch him carefully and take good care of him."

"Thanks Mr. Angeles. Yes, I do need to go to my quarters and call our family in Houston. We have not spoken in several days. Without a doubt, they are becoming anxious to hear from me. I will return as soon as the call is concluded."

*Linda headed for her quarters wondering how many people working here knew this was a secret NSA Hospital. Perhaps other*

Joe Hornsby

*than Dr. Ramirez she might be the only one. Linda was, as usual, of mixed emotions over this phone call to the kids. It always upset her to find herself in a position of having to lie to her two kids, Eric and Lesley. She thought, at least being a NSA connection the call would be clear. She was glad for the NSA Black Budget that made some of these extra benefits possible. Once the call was connected, it became immediately obvious there was a major problem.*



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