

CrossHairs

Written by

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TEXT OVER BLACK:

"In 2022 to date, US mass shootings happened an average of more than once a day. Should such a trend continue, statistics suggest eventually some might meet..."

POV - BINOCULARS - DAY

Fish eye lenses scope the target. A wide sweep past a small brick building, then parking lot...

...to a lawn. Monkey bars. See-Saw. Swings. Yup. That's a playground, all right.

Papers RUSTLE. The binoculars pivot down towards BOOTS, placed firmly on pock-marked asphalt ground.

The view switches to a bundle of loose leaf papers. A MANIFESTO, cradled in a military glove.

Well worn folds obscure words, but the header's legible:

"The Great Replacement Ends Today!"

The holder of the papers shifts position. Stuffing the documents into a camo pants pocket doesn't work.

The glove gets stripped off. The papers refolded neatly, tucked into a breast pocket. Plan B: that works.

Back to binoculars, which zoom into a building window.

It's an elementary school: KIDS fidget at desks. A TEACHER scribbles on the chalkboard. Carefree pupils goof off.

But not our silent watcher. Kneeling, a RIFLE'S unslung. Quick check for ammo. Grenade clipped onto a belt.

Glove now back in place, he knocks a fist against his armored chest plate for "good luck."

EXT. ROAD NEAR SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS

KEVIN (25) sighs, stands up.

Rising from behind his beaten up old HONDA, he's clad head to toe in soldier gear. Gives off a major "lone wolf" vibe.

Shouldering his AR-15, he toggles a CELL to record:

KEVIN

D-Day has arrived. I know what I do
now is a sacrifice. But for a
glorious turning point in history -
one patriots will speak of for years!

Kevin hits END. Sprints off across the lawn.

Bee-lining for the building, he zigzags - uses playground
structures for cover.

The CHATTER of kids inside provides a chilling soundtrack.

Kevin reaches the school entrance. Stops. Listens, intent.

One hand on the knob, he leans against the door - braces to
shoot the window out.

Unexpectedly, the door swings inward. It's unlocked!!

INT. SCHOOL ENTRANCE - LOBBY

Kevin lurches forward, off balance. An elated, surprised
expression on his face. "It's that easy?"

But stumbles against SOMETHING on the floor. A muffled
SCREAM followed by a THUD.

Kevin falls forward, on his face.

CRUNCH. Temporary blackout.

MOMENTS LATER

Prone on the floor, Kevin blinks - his now scraped cheek
pressed against cold, dirty tile.

With a groan, he sits up - whirls around. Fumbles for the
rifle slung around his torso....

Finds a DIFFERENT AR-15 muzzle in his face.

The brown, hard eyes of RICKY (15) stare Kevin down.

RICKY

I wouldn't touch that if I were you.
I could blow your face right off.
But... that'd make too much noise,
clue 'em in. And I don't have time to
clean it up.

Sloooowly, Kevin eases his hand away from his rifle, lets it
dangle loose.

But double-takes at the sight of Ricky's clothes: Jeans. Pimply face. Camo Vest studded with Rock and Roll pins.

KEVIN

Uh, you're kinda young for a guard.

Ricky lays an annoyed finger to his lips.

RICKY

Shhhh! It's bad enough you screamed. Don't talk!

KEVIN

Me? Fuck you, I'm no pussy. I don't scream. Did you?

Ricky's eyes flit nervously to his left. At what?

RICKY

Oh, right. It was him.

Kevin can't help himself, turns to look. And sees:

A duct-taped SCHOOL GUARD with bulging eyes. In fetal position, bound hands and wrists.

KEVIN

Wait, that's what -

RICKY

"Who"...

KEVIN

I tripped over just now?

RICKY

(chuckles)

Yeah, man. You shoulda seen yourself. Funny Three Stooges Jackass shit. Too bad I didn't record it.

KEVIN

I did my research, funny guy. This school's on a tight budget. Only one guard per shift. So if that's him, then you are-?

Rick grins from behind his rifle, teen bravado on display.

RICKY

Someone you don't wanna mess with!

Kevin quick-scans the room. What does he have to work with? The lobby's pretty bare bones:

A METAL DETECTOR WAND on a table. A PANIC ALARM button on a far wall. A few CHILDREN'S CRAYON DRAWINGS for decoration.

And a hyperventilating school guard on the floor.

Eyes glued to Kevin, Rick fumbles in a bag, pulls out TAPE.

RICKY

Let's get this over with. Gimme your wrists, tough guy.

Kevin bolts to his feet. Rick draws a bead on him, quick.

RICKY

Don't you fucking dare. I'll shoot!

Staring down the barrel, Kevin inexplicably smiles.

He brushes aside his jacket to give Ricky a sneak peek...
...at the grenade on his belt. Kevin's hand on the clip.

KEVIN

Not if you want to live.

The two stare at each other. Mexican standoff time.

Down the hall, a door CREAKS open. A LITTLE BOY (8) scampers to a water cooler, takes a sip.

Kevin and Rick scuttle to opposite ends of the entrance, duck behind walls for cover.

Can the kid see the guard, or does the table block his view?
Kevin and Ricky lock eyes - wait.

The kid slurps. Finishes. Shuffles back to his classroom.
Gone.

Both gunmen breathe a sigh of relief. From opposite vantage points, they exchange wary looks.

KEVIN

Guess we're gonna have to... talk.

Rick absorbs that information; eyes Kevin head to toe.

RICKY

Who are you really - a cop?

KEVIN

Look at me. You're kidding, right?

Ricky puffs out his chest; pride hurt by Kevin's tone.

RICKY
I'm lookin' RIGHT at you, that's the
point! Where'd you get that fancy
armor from...

(points at Kevin's
chest plate)
If you ain't a Fed?

Kevin rolls his eyes.

KEVIN
I've got my sources.

RICKY
Like?

KEVIN
Like none of your business, kid!

RICKY
You roll into MY school, with those
threads? That is my business!

Kevin stares at Ricky, cocks his head.

KEVIN
"Your" school? You're how old - 14?

RICKY
Fifteen, and two months.

KEVIN
But still in fourth grade?

RICKY
I *used* to go here, years ago.
(beat)
So I deserve the truth. What are
messing around here for?

Kevin shrugs, points at Ricky's gun.

KEVIN
Same as you, I suppose.

The guard SQUEAKS - a muffled, frantic sound. Kevin and
Ricky stare down at him in unison:

RICKY AND KEVIN
Shut up!

The guard tries to scoot away. Kevin scoffs.

He scoops the metal detector from the table, waves it over the guard.

KEVIN
(to the guard)
Fat lotta good this did you.

The device BEEPS. Kevin glares at Ricky next.

KEVIN
You tied him up, but didn't check him out?

He frisks the guard's pockets, pulls out: A CONDOM WRAPPER and KEY RING. Kevin eyes both.

KEVIN
You work in an elementary school. I'd hate to hear what this is for.

Tossing the condom into the guard's lap, Kevin heads to the front entrance. Finds the key that bolts the door. CLICK. Turning back to the guard, he smirks.

KEVIN
They build this place single entrance. Even if they have the balls to approach, this'll slow the cops down even more.

Ricky and Kevin eye each other. What next? Ricky breaks the awkward silence first.

RICKY AND KEVIN
I've lived here all my life. You're not local.

KEVIN
No shit, Einstein. So?

RICKY AND KEVIN
So - we're *not* the same.

Ricky droops a bit. This kid's been broken, somehow. Unexpected empathy flickers in Kevin's eyes.

KEVIN
You're here because -

RICKY
I got my reasons.
(bitter)
Bullies think they're so untouchable.
And teachers here don't give a shit.
(MORE)

RICKY (cont'd)
If they're rich, they let 'em get
away with...

KEVIN
(soft)
"Murder"?

Ricky winces at the word. His voice trails off.

KEVIN
OK. You're here for payback. I'm here
for something else.

Ricky perks up, curiosity piqued.

RICKY
Like what?

KEVIN
Something much, much bigger. This!

Kevin fumbles in his pocket and pulls out his Manifesto.
Unfolds the paper gingerly - hands it to Ricky, proud.

RICKY
(reads)
"For too long the white race has been
endangered by Jews and savages who
cross our borders to steal and r-"

Ricky's head snaps up.

RICKY
You're a white supremacist?

KEVIN
I prefer the term "Cultural Patriot".
Wake up and smell the New World
Order, Son.
(waves to Ricky)
Go on, read more. Once you understand
the cause, perhaps we could...
collaborate?

Ricky's eyes widen in horror.

RICKY
Fuck no, I won't!

KEVIN
Why not? It's for the greater good.

RICKY
I'm Latino, you stupid asshole!

He dashes the paper to the floor, stomps it. Pages RIP.

KEVIN

Don't!

Lunging forward, Kevin pushes Ricky off his precious paper - slams the teen back into a wall.

A KNIFE drops from Ricky's belt to the floor.

The teen staggers - stunned, but not disarmed. His AR-15 dangles from a strap.

Within seconds, he's got it under control.

And leveled at Kevin.

Who has more pressing concerns. Distraught, Kevin sweeps up his Manifesto, fixes the rips as best he can.

When he finally looks up, rage glows in his eyes.

KEVIN

This is my *legacy*.

RICKY

(giggles darkly)

So? If anything's missing you'll give a soundbite to the press, right?

KEVIN

Idiot. I won't be around. I worked to perfect this all night!

RICKY

You hit me, like... like...

KEVIN

Like who?

RICKY

Never mind. Who cares if it warns the school? I should fucking shoot you now!

KEVIN

But you won't. You're just a kid.

Kevin tucks his Manifesto into his vest, safe and sound.

KEVIN

I'm the one on a mission here.

He hefts his rifle, takes a step. Ricky darts forward, blocks Kevin's path.

RICKY
Shoo. Scram. Get out.

KEVIN
Excuse me?

RICKY
I mean, go find your OWN target.

KEVIN
I did. Right here.

RICKY
Nuh-uh. I called this place first.

KEVIN
(snorts)
Seriously kid: you're callin' dibs?!?

Sighing, Kevin checks his watch.

KEVIN
I'm on a schedule, Chico.

RICKY
My name is Ricky. Dick-wad!

KEVIN
That's Kevin. Whatever floats your
refuge boat. Either you're gonna die
with your school, or you'll get out
of my god-damned way... now!

Kevin swings his rifle towards Ricky's chest. Just as...

An alarm bell SHRIEKS.

The two pivot towards the guard, who now stands against a wall, duct tape sawed through by Ricky's forgotten knife.

The guard presses the alarm, again and again like an elevator button; as if that might speed response time up.

GUARD
Come on, come on!

Kevin roars, flips off Ricky. Aims at the guard instead.

KEVIN
Congratulations. Looks like the first
martyr today is you.

RICKY

No!

Ricky fires. Chickening out last second, he aims low, blasts Kevin's calf.

Kevin screams, drops his rifle. Collapses in a spray of blood, drives one knee into the floor.

Behind Ricky, classroom doors open. Kids SCREAM (OS.)

Ricky glances back over his shoulder, spots the little boy from before.

The kid stands in the corridor, frozen in a state of shock. Somewhere nearby, a teacher barks:

TEACHER (O.S.)

This is not a drill. Everyone, under your desks. Lock the doors. Get down!

Kevin grabs his fallen weapon. Spins around.

Ricky shifts to block Kevin's view of the boy.

Kevin fires. A direct hit to Ricky's unarmored chest. The teen drops. It's a mortal wound.

Kevin sneers - angry, anguished.

KEVIN

I knew you were just cos playing soldier.

He aims at the boy next. The kid's too terrified to move.

TEACHER (O.S.)

Andrew, where are you?

Behind Kevin, a hand flashes.

It's the guard - with Ricky's knife.

He slashes Kevin's throat, ear to ear.

Kevin's eyes bulge in surprise. He gurgles, collapses - pitches forward on his face.

The little boy breaks from his trance and darts back into a classroom - a scared mouse, safe at last.

Ricky watches Kevin twitch on the floor, laughs and gasps.

RICKY
For a "soldier", you sure like that
floor... a lot.

Kevin attempts to belly crawl towards his fallen rifle. The guard kicks it away.

A fast-fading Ricky points to a scuff mark on the tile.

RICKY
Wanna lick that one? You missed a
spot.

Kevin glares, spits up blood.

KEVIN
You came to kill, too. Coward. You
had just one job, and fucked it up.

Kevin spasms. Dies. Ricky flashes a blood stained grin.

RICKY
Bully. I win this one... for once.

His eyes glaze over. He's gone now, too.

The guard stands up on wobbly legs, unlocks the door.
Turning to Ricky's corpse, he cradles the knife.

GUARD
Thanks for this. We win, too.

Overhead, the alarm continues to SHRIEK.

And in the distance, sirens SCREAM.

FINAL FADE OUT: