

**The Ballad of Uncle Sam:
An Anarchist's Medley**

By
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EXT. MAIN STREET - SUNRISE

Early morning daylight glimmers through a small quaint town.

A family ambles through an otherwise empty market square. A young boy pursues his younger sister in a game of tag. The parents trail behind, watching, smiling.

They pass a TOWN BANK - the doors closed, a sign notification on it reads "CLOSED FOR HOLIDAY."

The family bypasses and tread on.

We hear a cowbell, the occasional MOO... farm land bordering the town.

RIPPER(V.O.)

The guys at the post office are
never gonna believe this.

INT. BANK - DAY

A framed vintage painting hangs on the brick wall. It's J. M. Flagg's 1917 Uncle Sam poster, "I WANT YOU FOR U.S. ARMY".

There's a noticeable splash of blood on it.

Just below the painting is a BODY, blood soaked shirt, eyes wide open. In one of his outstretched arms is a pistol. An ocean of blood circulating around it.

RIPPER

Oh wait - I killed the guys at
the post office.

A hand reaches into frame for the pistol. Picks it up. And we see the MAN matching the voice. RIPPER, a dark, intense man in his late thirties, beaming with a sinister satisfaction. His face smothered in black and white paint with a skeleton portrayal.

He meanders through the room, passing the morning group of bank workers and clients. All in shock, they're curled on the floor.

The air thick is with fear.

From across the room a YOUNG GIRL weeps, her FATHER sitting behind. He's nudging at his daughter.

FATHER

Honey, please. Just stop crying.

She doesn't. He becomes forceful.

FATHER

Please.

RIPPER

Hey!

Ripper approaches them, very close, staring at the father... A half moment before he speaks.

RIPPER (CONT'D)

You're holding her wrong.

FATHER

I think you broke my arm.

And he's in the fathers face, menacing.

RIPPER

Well you have another one. Do it right.

The man obliges. Begins to stroke his daughter, awkward, but gentle.

RIPPER (CONT'D)

Speak.

FATHER

(fearful, an
attempt at soothing)

Everything will be okay.

Ripper PATS the father, and moves on.

RIPPER

Well people, it's a morning of the norm, people wake up - people go to work and...people get robbed.

Ripper stands above another lifeless body, staring into the affluent interior.

He progresses behind the teller's station.

Ripper flings through files. Each one more trivial and more insignificant than the last. He tosses them to the floor.

RIPPER

A place like this can drive
a person mad.

He pulls some dollar bills from the open drawer.

RIPPER(CONT'D)

Because of these, these undersized
sheets of green... tempting us as the
good little boy - or quite
evidently - forcing us to live
in the rebellion.

(looks about the office)

I think I'll keep my day job.

He nears an injured security guard on the floor and settles himself next to him. Flashes the money in his face.

RIPPER(CONT'D)

But I'll say this sincerely, if
it wasn't for **this**. I wouldn't be
doing the things I'm doing.

A robber and three accomplices stand at center. A few guys inked full with tattoos.

RIPPER(CONT'D)

Ahh, Brains, how go things
in the forefront.

BRAIN

Problem.

RIPPER

(fairly annoyed)

Hmm, **great**.

(to the crowd)

Okay guys, intermission. Just bow
your heads, say a prayer, and

wish for the best. I'll be over here.

He maneuvers by the group of ACCOMPLICES.

RIPPER

What's the what here?

BRAIN

They're additional electrical feeds
bouncing off inside the vault.
It's not enough just knowing the
combination. We need to slip
through the rays.

ACCOMPLICE

Which is probably why this place
is lacking when it comes to security.

BRAIN

I'm sawing my way now. But we need
someone small enough to fit in
through the gap.

RIPPER

Well, unfortunately there aren't
any Olsen's lying around!

There's a glimpse of Ripper losing his endurance. True
rage. He does a 'cluck' sound with his tongue. An anxious
twitch. He takes a moment, considering.

RIPPER(CONT'D)

Well, give the guy his due, they put
their money where their mouth is. I like that.

ACCOMPLICE

You stripped the silent alarm right?

RIPPER

Course, what'd you think. I want to
be caught.

ACCOMPLICE

No, just sayin.

RIPPER

Well, you have time. Take advantage.
Whip something up and... do it right.

BRAIN

Right boss.

They part. Ripper grasps another accomplice.

RIPPER

You, secure the escape route. In case
things go down. I'm counting on you.

He obliges.

Ripper releases a breath. Walks about... nears a food
concession corner, he takes a sip of coffee, does a sour
face.

RIPPER

Mmm, recycled coffee...what a treat.
You ever think one of you workers
should be robbing this bank?

From the corner of the room, is a small voice.

BANK EXECUTIVE

(a murmur)

Why?

Ripper turns to his side. A BANK EXECUTIVE is crouched
down, says again, more strident:

BANK EXECUTIVE

Why? This town is worth nothing. What
could you want?

RIPPER

Ever hear the phrase, "you can't polish
a turd?" Well I very much believe
that you can. Maybe even watch it
turn into gold. See rumor 'round
this dismal town says once a couple
months, payrolls of green make
their way in here.. and nobody
seems to know about it.

BANK EXECUTIVE

That's not true.

RIPPER

Then I guess that's what we're
about to find out now aren't we.

BANK EXECUTIVE

We have camera's, they'll know it was -

BRRDT!! Ripper fires a round of bullets at each camera.
Shatters them.

RIPPER

A wha-wha-what? It was a *what*?
It was a *who*? A masked vigilante
in make up you say.

(a moment)

Friend, a wash of water fixes
that problem.

BANK EXECUTIVE

What about them?

RIPPER

Too many questions. Like everybody
else. *Like my last girlfriend*. You
ask too many god damn questions.

Ripper gets in his face, dark and huge.

RIPPER(CONT'D)

Can I ask you something? Since we're
in a sharing mode.

(tilts in, says in undertone)

You have everything they say you
should have to be happy. But, no lie...

(a moment)

Are you happy?

The executive's too terrified to react. He lowers his head,
in recoil, crying.

INT. VAULT - DAY

With a welding hood over his eyes, Brain starts to drill
over a marked spray painted diagram on the vault.

RIPPER (V.O.)

I'm not crazy. I'm simple. I love. Just things get in my way, things like the government, enlightening us on how to live. And what a big help they are. But I can't help but ask, what about our hearts?

(a moment)

Years ago, at my job, the one that didn't pay, I had this energy. I'm aware of it. I'm skittish, and I'm always on edge. I'm just lost in this world of vigor. And I sort of wanted to be lost. Because work isn't something I want to remember, to think that "I count change for snotty people was how I spent today" ... that isn't something I want to be thinking. It's devastating.

Brain has cut three sides of a square through steel.

RIPPER (V.O.)

At work I'm at this place where families are so broken. Are beyond vulgar. I'm in a world where people are innately evil. As much as I want to think happy thoughts, I have to realize that the world is NOT a nice place. It's not a safe place. Not everybody is looking out for each other. And that makes me sad.

INT. BANK LOUNGE- DAY

Back on Ripper and the Bank executive. Ripper groans, motions himself by the Bank Executive. Has an eccentric liking for him. Says by rote:

RIPPER

I guess I'm still a child - because to me, Love is the first. Or the largest. Love can make it better. Love is the only action. Everything else is reaction. Right? Right?....ehh.

INT. VAULT

Now inside, Accomplices take the money and shove it into bulky bags.

RIPPER

I'm simple. I love.
(then)
You. You're complicated.

BANK LOUNGE

RIPPER

All this. These things I find myself doing - is for my lady.

BANK EXECUTIVE

(dismal)

A girl?

RIPPER

YES a girl. My little girl. One day I promised a girl that I'd be the best daddy I could ever be.

(forlorn)

But what does she see, she sees me... lost, sees me skittish. Sees everything that bitch mother tells her. One night of a good lay and everything goes half to hell.

BANK EXECUTIVE

(in tears)

Life isn't always fair.

RIPPER

You're preaching to the guy who killed the choir. But I'm a daddy, and daddy's need to take responsibilities for their little girls. See my daughter isn't what you call a healthy -

Something Ripper sees stops him. He's enthralled. A moment before he calls across the room:

RIPPER

You. Yes, friend. You.

He sees a MAN amidst reaching for something in his belt. He freezes.

Suddenly from behind a pistol nuzzles the rim of his cheek. One of the accomplices from behind.

Slowly, Ripper approaches, and bares a pistol of his own. A unique eagle design on it. Ripper runs the tip in the man's mouth, twists deep in his lips. His fingers browse the trigger.

RIPPER

A good thief is a master of body language. And you - you're just screaming for attention.

Scared, emotionally tattered, the man barely pulls off a nod.

RIPPER

Now fear is nothing to be ashamed of, nice hero man. But stupidity, I can't forgive that.

The man drops his gun, slides it across the floor.

RIPPER

Very good.

Ripper's hands loop around the man's neck, and HOISTS it to the side. A quick SNAP before the guy collapses.

RIPPER

Check him out.

The accomplice does. Rips open his shirt. To reveal a SWAT security badge underneath.

RIPPER

(damn it)

Brains! Where you at? Brain!?

Brains appears.

BRAINS

Yeah.

RIPPER

How we doing.

BRAINS

A few more steps and I see one sunny day coming.

RIPPER

Good, how much longer.

BRAINS

Five min give or take.

RIPPER

Hmm. You have seven minutes.

BRAINS

(okay?)

Umm, sure boss.

He's off. Ripper's attention goes back on the bank executive.

RIPPER

See my life, that's such a mess.
But being a parent, there's the clarity.

An accomplice peers out the window. Suddenly sees multiple headlights approaching from a distance, glimmers of sunlight reflecting. He hears SIRENS. Cops incoming.

ACCOMPLICE

We have company.

RIPPER

It's never any fun until you hear those words.

He makes his way over, looks out. Behind Brains enters with large duffel bags in hand.

Ripper stares at the bags, then looks down out the window,

RIPPER

I guess we have to make our own fun.

MOMENTS LATER -

They're gazing out the window. An armored truck planted out there. They're waiting.

ACCOMPLICE

They're not moving.

Ripper scans the area.

BRAINS

They're making a plan, trying to go over our heads.

Suddenly there's a NOISE from above. The ceiling.

RIPPER

...Looks like.

The accomplices move.

ACCOMPLICE

What's going to happen?

BRAINS

It already *is* happening.

Ripper nods, barely listening.

They slowly stare at the ceiling. Silent. Waiting. What is it?

Until Ripper hears...a small creak from behind. He spins to see a SWAT AGENT. Ripper FIRES, and the agent dead in less than two seconds. Hostages shriek. He aims his gun at them.

RIPPER

Let's over react shall we!

And SILENCE... until there's another noise. A small thump above.

All eyes follow another noise across the ceiling. Down the wall, to an air vent. Where...a tiny grenade drops out. All eyes go wide as it bounces across the floor.

BOOM! The grenade explodes. A blinding flash of light. Everyone scatters...AND THE CHAOS COMMENCES.

A back exit is ripped off as agents LUNGE in with weapons.

Ripper's intensity amplifies as he suddenly starts firing. BANG! BANG! BANG! Several SWAT officers, in big vests and helmets, penetrate through. Stealthily moving ahead.

Brains makes a straightaway for a duffel bag. But is taken down by a SWAT.

The artwork inside explodes in an avalanche of bullets. Three accomplices are quickly shot at, being taken down.

Ripper moves with quick precision. Tackles one officer down with ferocious force. Then gets close enough to penetrate another guard's chest with a miniature dagger. His fist slams fast into guard's face. Taking him down.

Fleeting the officers, he's able to take cover the far side of the bank. Behind a desk.

He sees Accomplice #2 hiding by the wall. The two trade looks. Ripper makes a "Shhh" sign. Understood.

OTHER SIDE OF BANK

An accomplice is spun backward onto a desk, lands HARD.

ACCOMPLICE

Help! Somebody!

Cops are able to take hostages through the door successfully.

BEHIND THE DESK

Ripper is squatted under. His face scarcely visible. Lost in endless smoke, flickering fluorescent lights. He draws a necklace from beneath his shirt.

RIPPER
(whispers)
For my gal. Melanie C.

Sensing the disturbance has quieted down, he moves. SHOOTS his way out! He fires A THREE SHOT BURST at three guards. Takes them down. But he is speedily shot at himself. And is blown back.

His face, in shock, looks about and sees four officers advancing.

He staggers back, leaning against a desk. His hands held tight against his shoulder, blood all over him. He breathes deep.

He falls.

Feds are shouting. Accomplices are being cuffed.

RIPPER (V.O.)
They slip in. Like cancer. Killing me... slowly. Or killing me softly.

OFFICER
You're under arrest. Anything you say can and will be used in a court of law.

RIPPER (V.O.)
Until it's finished eating its way out from the inside. And when that happens, you realize how sinister the human spirit can become. And the things you'd do to save your soul -

Defeated, Ripper is cuffed, shoved to his feet and carried out.

EXT. TOWN - DAY

Hostages watch as Ripper is being into the van.

RIPPER
All the things you'd do just to survive in this world. What thoughts can you have before you realize you've

gone too far? When does that line
of reason fade away and you're left
with an infinite space of rebellion?

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The sun is full up, though early still. An armored truck
rides through the huge northern plains.

RIPPER(V.O.)

It's when you near the end when you
realize...there are no lines. There
are no rules.

The truck roars on..

RIPPER(V.O.)

All that exists are the ones you love.

FADE OUT.