Stand Off

by

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EXT. MARSHALL RESIDENCE - MORNING

A thin fog wafts on the cool morning air.

A line of POLICE CARS, lights flashing stand arrayed as a barricade across the end of a residential driveway.

An OFFICER is behind the opened door of each car. Each one brandishes a pistol, shotgun or rifle in the gap formed between the door's window and the windshield.

The blaring sirens wail out of time with each other and the shouted commands of the officers combine to form a deafening cacophony.

ROBERT MARSHALL strides confidently down his driveway from his house, his hands partially raised, but clearly not in fear of the force arrayed before him.

SGT EVANS
Get your hands in the air!

Robert speaks in a normal conversational tone, but the officers cannot hear his words over their blaring sirens and shouted demands.

SGT EVANS (CONT'D)
I said, get your goddamned hands in the air!

Robert points to his ear and shakes his head to indicate he cannot hear.

Evans reaches inside his vehicle and shuts off the siren. The other officers one by one also shut off their wailing noise makers.

SGT EVANS (CONT'D)
Now! Get your fucking hands in the air, I have a warrant for your arrest!

ROBERT
Sergeant Evans, I don't think it would be wise for you to try to arrest me.
SGT EVANS
I said, get your hands in the air
and turn to face away from me!

ROBERT
(slow & unruffled)
Listen, at this moment, there is a
50 caliber Barret sniper rifle
aimed at your head Sergeant Evans

Hearing that, Evans reflexively adjusts his grip on his
gun. His gaze quickly darts around the area as he shifts
his stance and searches for any indication of additional
threats.

Then quickly, he refocuses on Marshall.

SGT EVANS
Quit stalling! I'm here to arrest
you!

ROBERT
The marksman behind the trigger of
that Barret routinely pegs golf
balls at 400 yards Sergeant Evans.
Now that wouldn't leave a very
pretty corpse for your wife Janet
to bury now would it?

Again Evans nervously shifts his stance, hearing his wife's
name from this perpetrator is highly disconcerting.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
In fact, there's a sniper zeroed
in on each one of you. One signal
from me... one false move from any
of you and all of you go home in
body bags today,
...
And the same goes for the two
snipers you have stationed on the
roofs across the road.

SGT EVANS
You c... c... couldn't!

ROBERT
Oh no Evans, I could
(Nods confidently)
Do you need a demonstration to
prove it?

SGT EVANS
N... no
(Visibly disconcerted)
You can't win Marshall. I have a warrant for your arrest. We can't just leave you here after what happened last night!

ROBERT
Yes...

Robert's face grows more dire and his brow furrows in anger.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
...last night, let's talk about that, shall we. You invaded my home in the middle of the night. You shot my dog. You had to have known that that old Labrador retriever was no threat to anyone, but you shot a ten year old dog any how. Then you and your yahoos proceeded to shoot up my home!

SGT EVANS
We had a search warrant!

Evans' mind wanders back to what had transpired a few hours before...

MEMORY SEQUENCE:

EXT. MARSHALL RESIDENCE - NIGHT

All is routine.

The ASSAULT SQUAD moves on the house in the dark of the night. They prepare to execute a no-knock warrant.

They've done this hundreds of times before.

A silenced pistol shot from across the street takes out the old black dog that sleeps quietly in the yard to prevent it from alerting the home's occupants to the cops' approach.

Then the officers swarm onto the property. A group of them stack up as an entry team outside the front door. The other officers surround the house to prevent any escape.

A battering ram is used to bash open the door and the stack of men surge like a black-clad snake into the home.

That's when everything starts to go horribly awry.
The first two men through the door fall into a pit trap just inside the door's threshold. Their lower legs are skewered on long sharp rods of steel anchored to the bottom of the pit.

The rest of the men, in their haste, clumsily trip over their wounded compatriots and that's when everything REALLY disintegrates.

One of the teams' guns goes off - a wayward finger on a trigger. The shot wounds a third officer.

The sound of the gun shot startles the rest of the men who begin an undisciplined hail of fire into the room in all directions.

Glass from various picture frames and vases sprays in glittering showers as the poorly aimed rounds impact wherever they happen to hit.

Tufts of stuffing are lofted into the air like clouds from the rounds passing through the couch and chairs.

The officers outside hear the shots inside and fire volleys of their own. The hail of bullets shatters the glass out of the windows of the residence and slap into the siding. Small circular holes are seen in the siding.

Panicked shouts of "officer down" crackle over the radio.

In the end Evans does the only thing he can, he retrieves his three wounded men and quickly retreats from the property to get them medical treatment and to regroup.

BACK TO CURRENT TIME:

EXT. MARSHALL RESIDENCE - MORNING

SGT EVANS
You wounded three of my officers!

ROBERT
No sir, I did not. Your officers, to be concise, wounded themselves.

SGT EVANS
(angry, yelling)
You can't just think we're going to go away Marshall! We can surround the property. Sooner or later you and your family will need to come out!
ROBERT
(calmly)
No Evans, surrounding my home will
do you no good. You see, you too
have a family.
...
Your wife, Janet is at the Safeway
over on 17th and Alder right this
very moment. Like you, I too have
my backup and not all of it is on
this property. In fact, most of
it is not!
...
Oh one other thing, you took my
dog from me. So I took yours.

Robert waves his right hand as a signal to those inside.

In response a teenage BOY emerges from the house just far
enough to be seen with a small grey SCHNAUZER in his arms.

Evans immediately recognizes the dog as his own.

SGT EVANS
(confused)
Buster?

Robert waves again and the boy with the dog returns to the
safety of the house.

Evans is aghast. Clearly someone had found his home,
collected his dog and somehow got it through the ring of
police security that now encircles the property.

His gaze darts around him. He tries to figure out how this
impossible deed had been accomplished.

ROBERT
If I might ask, what was your
search warrant for, Sergeant
Evans?

SGT EVANS
We had a tip on illegal weapons
possession!

ROBERT
You endangered my family for that?
You shot poor old Sadie for that?
Jesus Christ, man! If you had
simply knocked on the door like a
civilized human-being, Sergeant
Evans, I would have allowed you to
satisfy your curiosity.
(MORE)
ROBERT (CONT'D)
You would have found nothing untoward, every weapon here is legal!

SGT EVANS
I had to be concerned about the safety of my officers. Guns were after-all involved.

ROBERT  
(angrily)
How did that work out for you?  
(sighs, shakes head)  
No Evans, here's the way it is. I am not 'me', I am 'we'. There are quite a few of us. You don't know who we are, but we know ALL of you. We know all of your families and all of your "habits".  
...  
Would it surprise you to know that one of your men there in your little barricade has a bad habit of frequenting cross-dressing prostitutes?

With that comment the eyes of the officers swivel reflexively to their compatriots. Each tries to figure out who he's talking about.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
That one over there...  
(pointing)  
He beats his wife and son on a fairly regular basis. Did you know that?  
...  
No Evans, you need to collect your goons and go home. You leave me and mine alone and I'll do you the same favor.

SGT EVANS  
(impertinently)  
You're bluffing!

ROBERT  
No Evans, I am not

Robert makes a small circle in the air with the pointer finger on his raised left hand and then points in Evans' general direction.
A buzzing whiz that quickly decreases in pitch is heard. It comes from somewhere behind the line of squad cars.

The buzzing is punctuated by the sound of a round impacting the window glass directly beside Evans. The window disintegrates in a shower of shards.

Then, after a brief pause, comes the echoing sound of a distant shot from somewhere far behind them.

Out of reflex, all of the officers duck, point their weapons and scan the area behind them as they futilely look for the origin of the round.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
I'm not bluffing. No not in the least.

Robert waits for the officers to somewhat regain their composure.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Get this straight, I've broken no laws. You people can't just bust into a man's home unannounced in the dark of night, destroy his property and endanger his family for nothing more than an unsubstantiated tip.

... Now understand this, if you come for me, if ANYONE, even from another agency comes for me.

... YOU personally, Sergeant Evans will pay.

... If anyone makes any sort of move on my family,

... YOUR family will pay.

... If any of you try to move your family out of the line of fire, you will pay.

... We have operatives in your police station and we will know. Do I make myself absolutely clear?

Evans visibly gulps. Uncertainty and bewilderment plays across his face. This is not how he had pictured things going.
His gaze races from face to face among his comrades. He looks for some solace but all he finds on their faces are incredulous stares and slack jaws.

His gaze then falls on Robert's face, there he finds nothing but the cast iron look of certainty, resolution and composure.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
(pausing after each word)
Now, get the fuck off my land...

Then Robert places two fingers in his mouth and whistles loudly.

ROBERT (CONT'D)
...And take your dog with you!

In response to the whistle, the grey schnauzer is released and runs around the corner of the house.

Robert turns to head back into the house, then almost as an after thought, he turns back momentarily...

ROBERT (CONT'D)
Oh and one more thing Evans, I'll send your department the repair bill, I expect it to be reimbursed promptly.

ROLL CREDITS: