

SYNOPSIS:

Joe Collins, a homeless combat veteran suffering from PTSD saves a little boy from being abducted. The grateful boy's mother helps the troubled Joe get a job as a maintenance man at a local high school. Joe is soon in a relationship with the mother but when they chaperon the high school dance together, Joe finds himself assuming the role of reluctant hero as he intervenes when a bullied nerd and his Goth girlfriend carry out a revenge attack.

"ACTIVE SHOOTER"

Written by

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ACTIVE SHOOTER

FADE IN:

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - DAY

It is a beautiful Sunday afternoon, the air is filled with happy sounds as CHILDREN play on monkey bars, merry go rounds, swings etc... DOGS run free, MOTHERS visit and chat.

JOE COLLINS, 35, sits alone on a park bench. He appears homeless. his clothes are worn and faded, his hair is long, his full beard could use some trimming. Joe is an Iraq combat veteran suffering from PTSD.

He notices a LITTLE BOY standing at the edge of the woods. The little boy appears to be talking with someone in the bushes.

Joe - concerned - rises.

The little boy reaches out with both hands and walks towards the bushes.

Joe sprints thirty yards and sees:

A JOLLY LOOKING FAT MAN with a white beard, wearing a red cap, holding out a stuffed toy monkey.

JOE

Hey!

The man looks up.

JOE (cont'd)

What are you doing?

JOLLY LOOKING FAT MAN

It's okay, he's my son.

JOE

What's his name?

The Jolly Looking Fat Man hesitates.

JOE

Stay right there.

Joe approaches the man.

EXT. PLAYGROUND BENCH - DAY

ALISON PALMER, 30, the little boy's mother, sees her son at the edge of the woods.

Alison rises.

ALISON
(screams)
Mark!

PARENTS and CHILDREN look in the direction of her concern.

The Jolly Fat Man turns and disappears into the woods.

Joe picks the little boy up and returns him to Alison.

ALISON (cont'd)
Thank you, thank you, thank you.

JOE
Call the police!

Joe runs into the woods, searching for the man.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

As Joe goes deeper, the woods become darker under the late afternoon canopy.

EXT. CLEARING - DAY

Joe comes to a clearing, he stops and listens.

BIRDS chirp, a car horn HONKS in the distance, a JET airliner flies overhead.

Joe senses movement behind him, he turns in time to see a large SHAPE rushing towards him.

Joe dodges.

CLOSE ON - A KNIFE BLADE - slices Joe's forearm.

With a sweeping kick, Joe trips the assailant, who falls into the clearing.

Joe is instantly on him, bending his knife welding arm behind his back.

JOE
Drop it! Drop it!

MAN
Ugh!

The Jolly Fat Man drops his knife.

Joe presses his knee into the man's back and holds him in an arm lock.

JOE
Get up!

Joe walks the man out of the woods to the

APPLAUSE of waiting PARENTS.

The Jolly Fat Man hangs his head down, hiding his face.

Two arriving POLICE OFFICERS stand, hands on their hips, looking impressed.

PARENTS rush to gather around Alison and her son, Mark.

Joe discretely walks away.

Alison sees Joe leave, she hands Mark off to her best friend CAROL DUNN, the principal of the local high school.

ALISON
Carol, take Mark.

CAROL
Of course honey.

She runs to Joe.

ALISON
Thank you.

Joe continues walking.

Alison notices blood on Joe's forearm.

ALISON (cont'd)
Let me see...oh, you're going to need stitches.

POLICE OFFICER #1
Hey! We're going to need a statement.

ALISON
This man needs urgent medical
attention. Can you meet us at the
hospital?
(to Joe)
Come with me, let's get you fixed up.

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

There is organized chaos as NURSES and DOCTORS rush about.

A PATIENT on a GURNEY is brought in by E.M.T.'s who hand off
to a DOCTOR who pounds on the patient's chest.

FAMILY MEMBERS sit in the waiting room.

Alison enters, Joe follows.

NURSE
Doctor Palmer, isn't this your day
off?

ALISON
Is exam bay five open?

NURSE
I think so.

Alison leads Joe to:

INT. EXAM BAY FIVE - DAY

ALISON
(Pointing to a chair)
Sit here.

JOE
You're a doctor?

ALISON
Around here I'm Doctor Palmer, you
can call me Alison.

Joe nods.

ALISON (cont'd)
This is going to sting a little.

Allison disinfects Joe's wound.

ALISON (cont'd)
Would you like a local anesthetic?

JOE
No, I'm good.

Alison begins stapling Joe's slash.

With each click of the stapler, Joe ignores the pain.

ALISON
Do you have a name?

JOE
Joe.

ALISON
That's it, just Joe?

JOE
Joe Collins.

ALISON
Well Joe Collins, you did a brave deed today.

Joe watches as Alison staple the last stitch.

ALISON (cont'd)
That should do it.

A NURSE pokes her head in.

NURSE
The police are here, they want to speak with him.

INT. ALISON'S RANGE ROVER - DAY

Alison drives.

JOE
Turn here.

Alison pulls into a large church parking lot.

EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT / TENT CITY - DAY

The parking lot is filled with tents, tarps, coolers and bicycles stored in an orderly fashion.

ERNIE ROLLINS, 60, a gray haired African American sits on an office chair at the entrance.

INT. ALISON'S RANGE ROVER - DAY

ALISON
This is where you live?

JOE
For now.

She opens her purse and removes a large cash bill.

JOE (cont'd)
I don't want your money.

ALISON
At least let me buy you a decent meal.

Alison stuffs a one hundred dollar bill into Joe's shirt pocket.

JOE
Thank you.

Joe exits her Range Rover.

He passes Ernie.

ERNIE
Hi Joe.

JOE
Hey Ernie.

INT. ALISON'S HOUSE / MARK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Alison tucks Mark in.

ALISON
Mark, please, don't ever talk to strangers again.

MARK
I'm sorry, don't be angry mommy.

ALISON

I'm not angry honey, it's just...
There are bad people in this world
and if one ever took you from me, I
would cry for the rest of my life.

MARK

I love you mommy.

ALISON

I love you more.

Alison kisses Mark on the cheek and silently tip-toes out of his room.

INT. ALISON'S HOME OFFICE / COMPUTER - NIGHT

Alison sits, a glass of red wine in her hand. Her CAT lies on the desk, watching her.

ALISON

Okay, here we go.

She opens GOOGLE and types "Joe Collins" in the search bar.

She scrolls page after page until she finds a newspaper article with a PHOTOGRAPH of a young, clean shaven, Joe Collins wearing a Marine Corps uniform, an American flag in the background.

INSERT NEWSPAPER HEADLINE - JOSEPH COLLINS THE THIRD MISSING'

Joseph Collins the 3d, son of famed Vietnam marine Corp General, Joseph Collins Jr., disappeared from an area VA hospital. Captain Collins left a successful law practice to serve the Marine Corp.

He is a decorated veteran who was awarded the Silver Star and Purple Heart for service in Iraq. He suffers from PTSD and may be confused and disorientated.

EXT. TENT CITY - DAY

Ernie sits on his office chair at the entrance. He watches Alison pull up and Park her Range Rover.

ALISON

I'm looking for Joe Collins.

ERNIE
 (hollers)
 Tell Joe he got a visitor.

Joe appears in work clothes, wearing a carpenter's tool belt, a hammer in his hand. He is accompanied by HOMELESS RESIDENTS/WORKERS.

WORKER #1 WHISTLES when he sees Alison who slightly smiles.

ALISON
 Can we talk?

JOE
 I'm working, what can I help you with.

ALISON
 I never thanked you properly for what you did. Can you get away for lunch?

WORKER #1
 Joey, we need ya.

ERNIE
 Why don't you take a break Joe.

JOE
 I'm working, sorry.

ALISON
 What about dinner tonight?

JOE
 I can't, I'm sorry.

Joe turns away, Alison thinks fast.

ALISON
 You're a handyman?

JOE
 I help out around here.

ALISON
 Can you fix a broken door latch?

JOE
 I'd have to see it.

Alison reaches into her purse, produces an ink pen, and scribbles her address on her business card.

ALISON
It's not far, can you come tomorrow?

WORKER #1
Joe, just kiss her.

ERNIE
Don't pay him no mind.

JOE
I have to go.

Joe places the business card in his shirt pocket, then turns to leave.

INT. ALISON'S HOUSE - NEXT DAY

The doorbell RINGS, Alison, wearing her hospital scrubs, answers the door, Joe stands at the threshold in his work clothes, tool box in his hand.

ALISON
Come in.

Joe steps over the threshold. Alison's cat approaches and brushes Joe's legs. Joe kneels down and gently strokes it's fur.

ALISON (cont'd)
Would you like a cup of coffee?

JOE
No thank you.

ALISON
Okay, well...

Alison leads Joe to:

INT. ALISON'S HOUSE / BACK DOOR - DAY

Joe inspects the door latch.

JOE
Your bolt is broken.

ALISON
Can you fix it?

JOE

It needs to be replaced, I'll have to come back tomorrow.

ALISON

There's a hardware store close by, why don't we walk, we can pick Mark up from daycare on the way back.

INT. HARDWARE STORE - DAY

Joe scans the different door latches, he picks one and inspects it.

JOE

This should work.

The pass through:

INT. HARDWARE / STORE GARDEN DEPARTMENT - DAY

Alison sees a statue of a praying Angel Cherub.

ALISON

How pretty.

JOE

Let me buy it for you.

ALISON

But you don't have money.

JOE

I have one hundred dollars.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Joe and Alison exit the hardware store.

Alison holds the garden angel close to her breast.

They pass:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

They hear PEOPLE SHOUTING.

ALISON
What is happening?

Joe cranes his head to see.

A look of anger appears on his face.

He spots a fire extinguisher at the construction site and takes it.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Hey! Hey!

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS watch as Joe walks swiftly to:

EXT. STREET DEMONSTRATION - DAY

BLACK CLAD DEMONSTRATORS stand in a circle, carrying SIGNS, blocking the intersection.

DEMONSTRATOR #1 is in the center of the circle, attempting to light an AMERICAN FLAG on fire.

DEMONSTRATOR #2
(into bullhorn)
No more Nazis, KKK, no more
capitalist USA!

Demonstrator #1 ignites the American flag.

Demonstrators CHEER.

Joe pushes his way into the circle and immediately opens the fire extinguisher, blasting the burning American flag and Demonstrator #1 with white fire retardant powder.

DEMONSTRATOR #1
What the fuck dude?

Joe continues to blast, covering him in fire retardant.

Joe snatches the flag and shakes it out.

Demonstrator #2 Approaches and gets in Joe's face.

DEMONSTRATOR #2
(shouting into
bullhorn)
No more Nazis, KKK, no more-

Joe pushes the bullhorn into Demonstrator #2's angry mouth, splitting his lip.

DEMONSTRATOR #2 (cont'd)

Ow! Fuck!

A LARGE DEMONSTRATOR #3 approaches Joe from behind.

ALISON

Look out!

CLOSE ON - JOE - sees the threat from the corner of his eye.

DEMONSTRATOR #3

You fucking-

In an upward movement, Joe swings the fire extinguisher behind him, striking Demonstrator #3 in his testicles.

LARGE DEMONSTRATOR

Oooooohhhh!

Demonstrator #3 doubles over, grabs his testicles, turns and "penguin walks" away.

Joe raises the American flag high above his head and glares at the Demonstrators blocking his exit.

The Demonstrators CHANT fizzles out.

(A beat)

Joe steps towards them.

Demonstrators see his anger and timidly part.

Joe pushes through the circle and returns the spent fire extinguisher to:

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS APPLAUD and CHEER.

ALISON

That was the most foolish thing I've ever seen.

Joe turns to Alison with an angry look on his face, eyes wide open, chest heaving.

ALISON (cont'd)

It's also the bravest thing I've ever seen.

- END PART ONE -

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