

"ACTIVE SHOOTER IN A GUN FREE ZONE"

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ACTIVE SHOOTER IN A GUN FREE ZONE

FADE IN:

EXT. PARK PLAYGROUND - DAY

It is a beautiful 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 who appears to be talking with someone in the woods.

Joe - concerned - rises.

The little boy reaches out with both hands and walks into the woods.

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 in 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, pressing his knee into the man's neck and bending his knife welding arm up behind his back.

JOE
Drop it! Drop it!

MAN
Ugh!

The Jolly Fat Man drops his knife.

Joe 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, avoiding eye contact.

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. A YOUNG SKATEBOARDER with a fresh cast on his arm joins FAMILY MEMBERS 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

(Points to a chair)

Sit here.

JOE

You're a doctor?

ALISON

Around here I'm Doctor Palmer, you can call me Alison, this is going to sting a little.

Allison disinfects Joe's wound.

ALISON (cont'd)

Would you like a local anesthetic?

JOE

No

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 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 rides shotgun. He looks straight ahead,
avoiding eye contact.

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.

ALISON
I don't know how to thank you.

She reaches out and places her hand on Joe's shoulder.

Joe tenses like a feral cat.

Shocked, Alison retracts her hand.

(beat)

She opens her purse and presents a large cash bill.

JOE
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 and passes Ernie.

ERNIE
Hi Joe.

JOE
Hey Ernie.

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

Alison tucks Mark in.

ALISON
Mark, please, 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 someone ever took you from me,
I would cry for the rest of my life.

MARK

Don't cry mommy.

ALISON

I won't, as long as I have you to
protect me when I grow older.

MARK

I will Mommy.

ALISON

You are a strong, loving boy, I want
you to grow up and be a strong, kind,
loving man.

MARK

I love you mommy.

ALISON

I love you more.

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

INT. ALISON'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

Alison sits before her computer, a glass of red wine beside
it. 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 through the images until she finds a newspaper
article.

CLOSE ON PHOTOGRAPH - young, clean shaven, Joe Collins wears
a Marine Corps dress blue uniform, an American flag in the
background.

INSERT NEWSPAPER HEADLINE - JOSEPH COLLINS THE THIRD
MISSING.

Captain 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 his country. 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 WORKERS.

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

ALISON
Can we talk?

JOE
(Avoids eye contact)
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 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

DOORBELL RINGS,

Alison, wearing no make-up, dressed in hospital scrubs answers the door.

Joe, still avoiding eye contact, stands at the threshold in his work clothes, tool box in hand.

ALISON
Come in Joe.

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...

INT. ALISON'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Joe dismantles and inspects the door latch.

Alison watches, a cup of coffee in her hand.

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 down the
block, 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.

INT. HARDWARE - STORE GARDEN DEPARTMENT - DAY

Alison sees a statue of a cherub Angel.

ALISON
How pretty.

JOE
Let me buy it for you.

ALISON
But... you have no 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.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

They stroll past a construction site.

In the distance, they hear CAR HORNS HONKING, PEOPLE SHOUTING.

ALISON
What is happening?

Joe cranes his head to see, a look of anger appears on his face.

ALISON (cont'd)
What is it?

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

CONSTRUCTION WORKER
Hey! Hey!

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS watch as Joe walks forcefully to:

EXT. STREET DEMONSTRATION - DAY

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

DEMONSTRATOR #1

Is kneeling, 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/DEMONSTRATER #1 in fire retardant.

DEMONSTRATER #1
Coughs.

Joe recovers the American flag, gives it a SNAP, and shakes the flames 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 away, splitting Demonstrator #2's lip.

DEMONSTRATOR #2 (cont'd)
Ow! Fuck!

DEMONSTRATOR #3 approaches Joe from behind.

ALISON
(Mouths from a
distance)
Look out!

CLOSE ON JOE - His eyes narrow, he sees Demonstrator #3 approaching.

DEMONSTRATOR #3
You fucking-

Joe swings the fire extinguisher upwards 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.

JOE
Good men gave all, so you could stand
on this sacred ground.
(MORE)

JOE (cont'd)
If I catch you burning this flag
again, I will make it my life's
mission to have you deported.

Demonstrators see his anger and timidly part.

Joe pushes through the circle and returns the spent fire
extinguisher to the construction site.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

CONSTRUCTION WORKERS - APPLAUD and CHEER.

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

Joe turns to Alison. For the first time, she sees his angry
blue eyes, wide open, his chest heaving.

ALISON (cont'd)
It's also the bravest thing I have
ever seen.

- END PART ONE -

