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## DAY AT THE OFFICE

*Lucas Marshall*

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L YING MOTIONLESS on the ground, the shadows pass over Sean's body, embracing him the same way they do the ground. He was one with the earth, if not for the breathing, smoothly and slowly, he'd be decomposing. Laying near the woods edge, top of a small embankment, behind a downed tree and in enough poison ivy to educate all the boy scouts of America on what it looks like. He laid there, belly down, gazing out of the shadows and trees across a well maintained yard and terraced gardens fit for heaven. The pool, then further, was as smooth as the glass on the Hubble. Beautiful.

The day was only waking up but for Specialist Sean Griffon, it had been a long night, on the ground, still as dirt. He would be impossible to see from 20 feet away, he practically had a raccoon give him a hand job late last night when he the little guy caught the scent of a wrapper in the drag pack tucked between

Sean's legs. A little kick sent that ringed bandit looking for cheap thrills elsewhere. "Ug, I feel so used." Sean whispers.

If it were not for the training, the endless training, Sean would have had the spooks from the woods and a sponsorship with Ivory soap from all the dirt and grit he had put himself through getting to his current position. From the drop zone and burying his shoot, six clicks of humping light gear through the heavy wooded area of southwest Germany was a vacation through Victoria's Secret compared to the last thousand yards he spent on his belly, moving and inching his body through god knows what. But that shit is behind him now, literally.

For now he is left with his thoughts and he thinks about how wrong it is to kill a man before breakfast, damn the man and his orders. He remembers reading the mark's dossier. A drug dealer and political

terrorist. A thug in an Italian suit. His known offences sound like something out of a made for TV, B-Rate action movie. Never the less, He has it coming. No trial, no jury. His death will be covered up by his own people. Only time will tell what their next move without him will be.

There was light penetrating the trees, Sean became even more motionless. It was early summer and the weather was beautiful, and the air was calm. Birds traversed the over the garden in random motions, plucking insects out of space. Flowers watch the overhead battle, wishing they could take flight themselves. Being grounded in the dirt, that is what Sean and the flowers have in common, but they were used to it.

Sean felt modestly secure beneath his ghilli suit, where he wore a full skintight jumpsuit that was supposed to seal his body, keeping insects from eating dining on him through his woodland camos. He could see the bugs around him, some big enough to shoot at with his big bore rifle, and others small enough that he didn't even want to think about them. Mother nature sure didn't keep this part of her house tidy. His suit was full of sticks and branches and his weapon wrapped in pieces of cloth with moss tied in. He was just a bump on the ground. Covered with dirt, and the filth of nature.

**E**ARLIER THAT night, the sniper lurked through the perimeter of the woods nearer to the back of the mansion than he was now. He placed small remote charges that could be detonated as diversions and make locating his position nearly impossible. The explosives, small amounts of C4 with a wireless receiver had a range of 3000 yards and received signals from a flat antenna that was mounted to the back of the shoulder harness Sean was wearing. The device was as much of a waste, as it was ingenious. All of the components were contained within the C4 Semtex charge so that, upon detonation, it destroyed itself. Along with the receiver there was a small phosphorous disc that would provide a flash more noticeable than a muzzle flash and small amount of white smoke.

With all of the confusion and immediate hysteria, no one takes the time to really think if what they are seeing is really from a weapon or a magical fairy.

The little devices save lives. Griffon spent over 3 hours slowly stalking through the woods, pointing his side arm at trees and shadows and anything else that might look like something to his imagination, planning every step, dodging downed branches and piles of dry leaves like a fat guy tiptoeing through a minefield. With that part of the night complete, he lay down on his gun mat and viewed the large house until catching some sleep so light that an ant's fart would bring him to total attention.

With his rifle beside him, and his spotting scope to the eye, he gazed upon the mansion across the gardens and grass. With the scope, he spent time checking windage and memorizing the distances to certain objects. Green rot iron patio chair, 1100 yards, diving board, 1040 yards, glass sliding door 1125 yards. He watched maids and servants go about their chores through windows of the house and wondered if they slept in the mansion as well, or drove there daily. It didn't really matter, and Sean was only fooling himself trying to clear his mind.

**A** MAID comes into view at the white Victorian style doors carrying a silver tray with what looks to be a dead man's breakfast consisting of coffee, a bowl of fruit, some toast, and a small glass of milk. A very well balanced meal. She goes to the table and sits the tray down in front of a chair then hurries back inside, brushing past a face Sean recognized as the mark's closest in command. He carries a newspaper and a manila folder and wears a brown suit with a key lime tie over a red shirt. Griffon briefly thought about putting a bullet through this guy just because of his fashion sense, but decided to leave that job for the fashion police. The man stood near the pulled out chair patiently waiting the arrival of the mark. The second hand on the Luminox watch finished two laps on its face when through the door came four armed guards. They casually fanned out around the edges of the patio near the table and stood there astutely, watching for maybe a rabbit with a grenade to stand up so they could make use of their shiny bullets. They were not dress as poorly as the first douche bag, but they still looked good with a cross hair centered on their chest.

The British L115A1 rifle resting peacefully against the shoulder of the sniper he does a second check on



the distances he found through the spotting scope. He never thought he'd have a use for trigonometry until he started his scout sniper training. His weapon is ready and he begins his systematic breathing, pulling him into a Zen like state, completely focused. Time slows down as he peers through the scope. Behind the double action trigger of the Super Magnum [L115A1] there is a small button on the trigger guard and a protrusion on the back of the trigger itself. When compressed, it sends an electrical signal to a receiver that fires a signal off. This is the detonator to the diversion explosives. It too waits.

TIME CONTINUES to melt by and the sniper sees the silhouette of the mark through the glass windows inside the house, he exits the house and proceeds down to the table where his last meal awaits him. Every movement recorded on Sean's retina, the mark walks down the steps and stops beside his chair. The fashionable man hands the mark the paper and the folder and offers the man a cigarette.

The mark accepts and puts it to his lips and a gold zippo is produced from the pocket of the brown suit, then fumbled and dropped to the ground. The mark's parts a small smile and shakes his head. The klutz reaches down, embarrassed, and picks up the lighter. He stands up, and straightens his suit. He extends his arm toward the mark and spins the wheel, sparking the flint, igniting the fuel soaked wick and the flame appears on the lighter. For a moment, the man is content with himself as he stares down at the etched gold finish of the lighter and the flame.

A spectral rush of energy snuffs out the flame and a hollow thump enters the man's ear canal. He is still staring at the lighter when a pink mist sprays his hand and face. He looks up catching the last glimpse of life disappearing from the mark's eyes.

The crack of the shockwave pierces the air, finally catching up to the bullet. It plays a farewell cadence inside the ears of those on the patio. The mark was beginning to crumple, dead before he even hits the ground. A hole the size of a peanut M&M in his chest, the exit wound would not be as pretty. These are the last features on his body as its angle becomes smaller while encroaching on the ground.

SOMBERLY THE sniper watches panicked and confused guards aim at nothing and being shooting at the small clouds of white smoke they notice at the edges of the woods. The man in the suit, still stands there with his arm out holding the lighter, he turns, without putting his arm down and watches the guards blind firing into the woods.

Sean pockets the empty .300 Mag round. And watches safety that thousands of feet grant him. He starts making slow movements backwards on his belly then turns away. He continues at snails speed for the next 30 yards as he slowly moves. He then rises for the first time in hours, picks up his drag pack and lightly runs, leaving the bad suit, the bullets, the lifeless mark and another day at the office behind him. As he runs past trees, in and out of the sunlight creating more distance from that morning's work. He thinks to himself, *I just saved that ill-fashioned man from the possibility of dying from the effects of second hand smoke.* When it comes to the morality of killing, good deeds do not go unnoticed.

