

Attila

By

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Cornered Tumbleweed  
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INT.HAROLD SIMMS' BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

an overambitious radio announcer buzzes on the radio in the pitch blackness and Harold Simms quietly awakens.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Welcome everyone to another great morning! This is station 101.3 public radio, great news great music great living! This morning we have an extra special speaker on our show, our fearless leader Max Crescent! He is here to clear up some of those vicious rumors you may have been hearing. We now kno-

Harold lightly taps the radio and clicks on the light, while reaching for his trousers. It is 5:00AM. Harold looks like a trained athlete, and a man the world's deadliest assassins would fear. The demeanor of the radio announcer's joyous exhilaration towards life seemed to bounce off of Harold's face, leaving him unaffected.

Harold's quick and precise movements give clear indication of a craft in which life and death rely on perfection.

Harold walks toward the adjoining room and instantly drops to the floor and begins doing push-ups: quick and strong movements. Suddenly he collapses and can't go on, not from lack of strength, but emotional distress.

He looks over and sees Cheryl Finigan, a woman most men wishing to hold on to their sense of life avoid. She has an uncanny ability to conquer any man upon her first encounter, and force him to reveal his true nature.

Harold stares for a moment

CHERYL

I thought you were strong.

Harold continues to stare in bewilderment.

CHERYL (CONT)

You know what is happening, and yet you still -

HAROLD

No! you are well aware those are just rumors, we can't let everything this country has built for the past several hundred years go to pieces. We can't give it up.

(CONTINUED)

He looked over one last time and she was fading away, and the last remnant of her invoked a feeling of pure terror in him.

Harold, a man of action, is momentarily unable to act.

Suddenly he shakes off this feeling, rolls over and begins his sit up routine. Strong swift motions.

Then he gets up turns on an adjacent light to the bare wall next to him and begins boxing an imaginary opponent. THWACK.

SMASH CUT

INT. GYM - FLASHBACK

THWACK. he hits a punching bag in a spacious gym and Cheryl is holding the bag.

CHERYL

My father had to shut down his business.

HAROLD

I know.

CHERYL

You have to stop this nonsense Harold! You are still clinging to ideals these people have been ignoring for over 100 years.

HAROLD

People have been losing their businesses since before this country was founded. It's only harder because it's happened in the family.

CHERYL

No Harold. My great grandfather started that company, his son made it larger and my father did more than both of them. It has become impossible to run a legitimate business.

Harold begins hitting the center of the bag over and over again, harder and harder, until he falls over.

INT.HAROLD SIMMS' BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Harold is on his back and is looking up at the ceiling of his apartment.

Harold shakes his head and walks over to the bathroom to take a shower.

INT. HAROLD SIMMS' BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Leaning his head against the tiles while water pours on his head, he hears his second alarm go off, BUZZING very loudly. It is 6:00AM

INT.HAROLD SIMMS' BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

In nothing but a towel he walks over to turn off the alarm. Sitting on his bed is a very distraught Cheryl.

CHERYL

He's dead.

Harold Doesn't move. Cheryl stares at him.

HAROLD

Cheryl... I'm-

CHERYL

Harold, I'm leaving you. And it isn't because my father is dead. I now understand why you won't leave, you don't have the strength, I do.

Cheryl begins to fade away and Harold is unable to move.

Eventually, he walks over to his closet and picks out a perfectly pressed suit.

INT. OUTSIDE HAROLD'S APARTMENT DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Harold is fully dressed in a slick black suit, a handgun strap barely visible on his right side, and a leather bag over his shoulder.

As he locks the door and turns around he faces Cheryl, live and in the flesh. She looks slightly disturbed at seeing him, and she is carrying a box, full of clothes, with the writing "HAROLD" on it.

Cheryl just stares at him and walks confidently up to him, handing him the box. Then turns to leave.

(CONTINUED)

HAROLD  
Cheryl, wait.

Cheryl obediently turns back to face him.

HAROLD  
Is there noth--

CHERYL  
There isn't. You've made your  
decision and I've made mine.

HAROLD  
Doesn't anything we've been through  
matter to you?

CHERYL  
Does it to you? Harold you're a  
great protector, but you never  
question who you are protecting,  
and why.

HAROLD  
My job isn't to question! I've  
dedicated my whole life to being  
able to see danger, and preventing  
it.

CHERYL  
And yet you are blind to the  
greatest danger to you.

HAROLD  
Cheryl, I -

CHERYL  
No, Harold, this is our last  
good-bye.

Harold is unable to respond, he walks up to her and hugs  
her. Cheryl hugs back. She lets go even though Harold  
doesn't seem to want to.

CHERYL (CONT)  
Next time we see each other, we  
will not be on friendly terms.

Cheryl walks briskly away without looking back, leaving  
Harold with the box.

Harold opens his door again and pushes the box inside.

He turns and leaves his apartment building.

EXT. DENVER CITY - EARLY MORNING

Harold walks down a Denver street, which long ago seemed to be active, but today is dead. Store closed signs in every building window, no cars on the streets, only the occasional shabily dressed bike rider. Homeless men and women have taken over the city, but everyone on the street gives Harold a wide berth.

Harold hears something behind him and casually looks around, seeing a Mysterious Man with a face too far away to make out, dressed all in black, dart into an alley.

Harold unclicks the fasten holding in his gun, leaving the gun holstered, and continues walking towards his destination.

He is now overly suspicious of every bum and random person walking around him.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE ALPHA - MOMENTS LATER

Harold walks up to the door of his destination, a very plain and average looking house, and begins to unlock the several locks on the door and proceeds to enter the house.

INT. SAFE HOUSE ALPHA - CONTINUOUS

When he enters he is immediately greeted by the night bodyguard who briefly and quietly gives him a report of the night's happenings.

Over to Harold's right is another bodyguard, JAMES DUGELMOORE, a sleazy man who doesn't look like a typical alert bodyguard, he looks more like a mobsters muscle man.

Next to James is GENERAL GREENE, a sinister looking man who always acts in a jovial manner, as if in an attempt to hide his sinister nature.

GENERAL GREENE

Harold! Come sit and talk with us.  
I was just telling James the  
funniest story.

HAROLD

In a minute General, I need to  
check the perimeter

(CONTINUED)

JAMES

I've been here 30 minutes, we're safe.

HAROLD

All the same, I'm going to take a look around.

JAMES

Are you saying I didn't do my job?

HAROLD

No, I'm just going to do mine.

GENERAL GREENE

Boys! Boys! we all want the same thing. James, just let the man do his job.

Harold leaves the two and walks around the house, meticulously checking everything.

INT. SAFE HOUSE ALPHA - CONTINUOUS

Satisfied he returns to the two men.

HAROLD

General Greene, my reports indicate you went out last night, where did you go?

GENERAL GREENE

To take care of some business.

HAROLD

All the same, I need to know what activities you have been involved in.

GENERAL GREENE

We went to some suburban hell hole to talk to someone.

HAROLD

Where specifically? And who was the person?

JAMES

It's not your job to know. Just do what you're told.

Harold doesn't seem phased, he puts his bag on the table and opens it, and a small letter falls out.

(CONTINUED)

The letter is empty and inside is a note that simply says "Leave."

He looks at the two men who are laughing hysterically at something the General said, which Harold doesn't catch.

HAROLD

General, get your bag, we're leaving in 2 minutes.

GENERAL GREENE

What's going on?

HAROLD

A threat.

Both men jump to their feet. James snatches the letter out of Harold's hands.

JAMES

It just says "leave." We can't leave, then they'll know exactly where to follow us.

HAROLD

I'm not sure the letter is for all of us to leave.

GENERAL GREENE

What do you mean?

HAROLD

I'm not sure yet. But I think I might have been followed earlier, I covered my tracks but I can't be sure I lost him.

JAMES

Where did you find this letter?

HAROLD

My bag.

General Greene goes to the other room and grabs his belongings.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE ALPHA - MOMENTS LATER

The three men hurriedly walk to the SUV parked outside. Harold is holding on to the General and pushes him in to the passenger seat.

Harold hops in the driver's seat and screeches off.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Harold immediately turns on the GPS and pushes a button.

GENERAL GREENE  
Where are we going?

HAROLD  
The secondary safe house, we'll be  
met by 2 other guards.

He pulls out a cell phone and pushes one button.

HAROLD  
Yes, we're taking the General to  
safe house Bravo.

As Harold is putting his phone in his pocket he notices on the side of the road the Mysterious Man, his face barely discernable, staring at the SUV speeding past.

GENERAL GREENE  
Who the hell was that?

HAROLD  
I'm not sure, but I think he might  
have followed me this morning.  
General, I need to know more about  
what you've been doing.

JAMES  
This is why you shouldn't be  
allowed to walk to a safe house!

HAROLD  
He found us 5 minutes away from the  
safe house and stood waiting on our  
path. He knows where we're going.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE BRAVO - MINUTES LATER

Harold pulls up to safe house Bravo - a quite rusty old house - and unlocks his gun holster.

HAROLD  
Wait here sir.

Harold leaves the General and James in the car, checks the perimeter.

After a moment he waves to James.

James, hurriedly pulls the General out of the car and runs to the house.

INT. SAFE HOUSE BRAVO - MOMENTS LATER

After surveying the house for a minute there is a LOUD PERSISTENT KNOCK on the door.

James notices the two other guards dressed in suits.

JAMES

Hey Harold. Manuel and Robert are here.

James lets the two men in and they go straight to Harold.

HAROLD

I'm not sure how safe we are even here, we have to get him out, now.

Manuel, the only one who seems to have the raw ability of speech, speaks up.

MANUEL

We have to wait till we receive our orders.

Harold looks disgustedly at him.

HAROLD

Sir, I need to know a little bit about what is going on. Why might someone be following us like this, what have you been doing?

GENERAL GREENE

I can't divulge that to you.

HAROLD

It's the only way I can protect you.

GENERAL GREENE

You're just going to have to do what you're told.

Just then a loud BANG is heard at the front door, and a CRASH of glass is heard in another room of the house; simultaneously.

James and Harold go to the front door and Manuel and Robert head towards the back where the glass was shattered.

(CONTINUED)

Harold and James see nothing outside, but suddenly hear shots fired and more broken glass. Harold bolts over.

HAROLD  
Stay with him!

As Harold enters a back room he sees Manuel shot 3 times in the chest and the other guard gone. There is another note: "LEAVE HIM TO US"

Harold runs to the other room, grabs the General and carefully exits the house, watching for attackers.

EXT. SAFE HOUSE BRAVO - CONTINUOUS

They all get back in the SUV and leave, the Mysterious Man watching from behind, noticed only by Harold.

INT. SUV - MOMENTS LATER

HAROLD  
Why aren't they attacking you  
General? What is going on?

JAMES  
WHAT HAPPENED!?

HAROLD  
their dead. Answer me.

GENERAL GREENE  
Alright, alright! I am heading an  
operation to quiet down dissenters  
of our present administration.

HAROLD  
What do you mean 'quiet down?'

JAMES  
What do you think he means?

HAROLD  
But why? I thought that was just  
one of those stupid rumors.

GENERAL GREENE  
Don't be so naive kid, there are  
people who wish to destroy our  
American freedoms, we have to do  
what is best in the name of  
National Security.

(CONTINUED)

While the General is talking, Harold reaches over and pushes a button on the GPS, he sees he is on the right path. As Harold looks over to the General the GPS flickers.

JAMES

Don't be a coward Harold, what do you expect us to do? Let dissenters destroy everything we've worked for?

HAROLD

You kill people.

GENERAL GREENE

Good God No! We only remove threats to our freedoms... Wouldn't you kill a threat to me, Harold?

HAROLD

Yes of course, but my job is to protect.

GENERAL GREENE

Our job is to protect this country Harold.

Harold looks at the GPS and then reaches for his cell phone. He pushes one button and puts the phone to his ear; silence.

HAROLD

Whoever you have been 'keeping quiet' is really pissed off.

JAMES

What?

HAROLD

My communications with Headquarters are cut off.

James pulls out his cell phone, pushes a button and listens; nothing. He looks over to the General.

GENERAL GREENE

Harold, you're on our side right?

HAROLD

Yes.

GENERAL GREENE

I knew it, we picked you because of your devotion to our righteous cause. You know there are people

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL GREENE (cont'd)  
who wish to bring down our  
administration? We can't let that  
happen Harold, we need to help our  
commander get through these tough  
times and not have some loud mouths  
destroying our way of life, we must  
fight them Harold, we must get rid  
of the threat! We must-

Harold looks around and slows his car down when he realizes they are nowhere near where they should be. They are in an isolated woods.

GENERAL GREENE (CONT)  
Why are you slowing down?

HAROLD  
I think they hacked into our GPS  
system. I don't know where we are.

Four LOUD SHOTS are heard and all of their tires are instantly deflated.

A white envelope flutters down next to the drivers seat. Harold goes to open the door.

JAMES  
NO! what are you doing? Those  
windows are the only thing  
protecting us.

HAROLD  
They could have killed us long ago,  
there is something else going on.

EXT. ISOLATED FOREST - CONTINUOUS

Harold opens the door and gets out. He reaches for the envelope on the ground.

"Last Chance Harold"

INT. HAROLD SIMM'S BEDROOM - FLASHBACK

Cheryl is sitting on the bed, she looks up to Harold.

CHERYL  
He's dead.

EXT. ISOLATED FOREST - MORNING

Harold looks over to the General urging him back to the car.

Harold runs away. And the General shuts the door immediately.

GENERAL GREENE

I thought we could trust him.

JAMES

I told you his girlfriend messed him up. I'll take over.

James climbs into the front seat.

JAMES

Damnit! He even took the keys.

GENERAL GREENE

(hysterically)

Just get us out of here!

James looks around the car, going to the back seat again, and finally finds a Walkie-Talkie, as he is pushing the button there is a loud BANG. a small explosion is heard and the Mysterious Man wearing a ski mask opens the door and holds a gun to the General's head.

GENERAL GREENE

Don't shoot!

THWACK. The Mysterious Man crumples to the ground and Harold is standing behind him.

James and the General step out of the car and look down at the Mysterious Man.

GENERAL GREENE

Good work my boy, you scared us there for a moment.

Harold just looks over at him, then apprehensively down at the Mysterious Man.

James grabs Mysterious Man roughly, punching him in the stomach to wake him up.

James rips off the ski mask to reveal Cheryl.

Harold is horrified, the two men look at each other then over to Harold.

(CONTINUED)

GENERAL GREENE  
Did you know about this?

Harold just shakes his head. Cheryl groggily looks up at him, while slowly reaching for her second gun on her ankle.

James grabs her and drags her a few feet away from the SUV, he puts her on her knees and pulls out a gun, pointing it to her head.

BANG.

James crumples to the ground.

GENERAL GREENE  
Harold! What are you doing?

HAROLD  
Our job is to protect, not to murder.

GENERAL GREENE  
We must protect society as a whole, sometimes that means sacrificing a few individuals.

Cheryl looks up at him. Instantly there is a gun in her hand, and it's aimed at the General.

Harold leaps in between the two of them.

HAROLD  
Cheryl, no, please.

CHERYL  
We can't let things go on the way they have. My father was a business person who wouldn't cooperate properly; he was killed.

HAROLD  
I understand, you're right, but we can't just kill people, we'll take him to the authorities.

CHERYL  
He is the authorities Harold!

HAROLD  
I can't let it all go! It's my life Cheryl, this is just one problem and it can be fixed. Don't let it all go.

CHERYL  
          It's too late.

Harold and Cheryl aim at each other.

                  HAROLD  
          Cheryl, please!

Harold fires once over her head. She looks shocked

                  HAROLD  
          Cheryl, don't.

Cheryl looks at him and his gun, and then puts the gun down.

Harold lowers his.

BANG. Harold is shot in the stomach by a tall man dressed in black with black hair, the Mysterious Man.

Harold collapses, looking at Cheryl, she seems to have lost all pity.

Cheryl walks up to Harold as he lies on the ground and kicks the gun away from him.

Harold, looks over as Cheryl and Mysterious Man put the crying General on his knees and execute him.

Cheryl and Mysterious Man walk off without looking back.

Harold is still looking in the same direction. Suddenly he sees Cheryl coming back towards him, but she is no longer dressed in black, she is wearing a beautiful evening dress, with a diamond necklace, as if going out to a ball, and is smiling at him. She begins dancing for him.

Harold smiles as his eyes slowly begin to close.

The End

FADE OUT