

Operation Home Base

By

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Orginal work

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EXT. SMALL HOUSE ON A LAKE: DAY

CHILDREN (ages 3-10 year old) PLAY on a swing set. CHERYL MCMANUS (20-something woman) TENDS to her garden.

EXT. HOUSE NEXT DOOR: DAY

TWO PEOPLE (GUNNERY SERGEANT MATT (40 something 20 year veteran) AND SARAH THOMPSON (40 something women) in full diving gear SNEAK out of the backdoor of the garage. Hearing the activity next door, they stop along the treeline. One pulls out a cell phone and dials.

EXT. SMALL HOUSE ON A LAKE: DAY

The phone rings in the house. The Cheryl goes inside.

CHERYL
(answering the phone)
Hello.

The person on the other end hangs up.

EXT HOUSE NEXT DOOR: DAY

Once Cheryl is inside. The two people silently walk into the water and vanish beneath the surface.

EXT. SMALL HOUSE ON A LAKE: DAY

Cheryl walks out of her house and looks around.

EXT. HOUSE NEXT DOOR: DAY

Through the patio doors, a couch with a 20 something man laying on it bursts into flame. Smoke begins to accumulate.

EXT. OPERATION HOME BASE: DAY

"Operation Home Base" has been stenciled on the front window of an old building. From the parking lot next to it, A WOMAN PUSHING A TODDLER IN A STROLLER walks to the front door and goes inside.

INT. OPERATION HOME BASE: DAY

The small waiting area is full of people. DENISE O'DELL SITS at the desk. She is talking to AN ELDERLY MAN. The woman and toddler stand in line behind him. WALTER HUMMEL WALKS to the front door with DEACON (DEEK) WILLIAMS. Walter answers his phone. Denise hands the man forms to fill out. The woman walks to the desk. Walter and Deek talk.

WOMAN WITH TODDLER

Can you help me? I've been every where else. The water heater just stopped working. My husband could fix it if he was at home. But he's tour was extended.

Walter walks inside. Deek walks back down the sidewalk.

DENISE

I can't promise, but let me see what we can do.
(picking up the phone)
Just a sec.

Smiling, Walter walks up. He returns it to the cradle.

WALTER

Let it be a surprise.

Walter walks toward the back. Denise picks up the phone.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM: DAY

The small room has several windows looking out over a grassy area. Several children play in a make shift playground. ELAINE REYNOLDS HANGS up the phone.

ELAINE

Walter's here for our decision. I'm inclined to accept.

MARTIN FLYING CROW BANGS his fist on the table. The vibration spills MICHAEL WOODSMAN'S coffee.

MARTIN

(Angrily)
The son of a bitch can't be trusted!

MICHAEL

(trying to save his paperwork)
We got it already. You hate the guy. Chill.

(CONTINUED)

LORELEI STEWART STANDS and retrieves paper towel from the cabinet.

MARTIN
(Sarcastic)
Weren't you the one who wanted to shoot him?

MICHAEL
I got over it.

ELAINE
Oh really? When did this happen?

MICHAEL
When he offered me in writing direct access to the VA director and all their records.

LORELEI
(giving the roll to Michael)
I have to admit. It's too good to pass up.

ELAINE
I was thinking the same thing. But it has to be unanimous.

MICHAEL
Martin knows Hummel the best. I defer to his judgment.

LORELEI
Martin, what happened in Nam?

ELAINE
I was wondering that myself. If we knew what it was, we would be able-

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCE ROOM: DAY

Walter listens at the door.

ELAINE (OS)
We started Operation Home Base because we saw a need and wanted to help. Working with them we could so much more.

MARTIN (OS)
We'd be making a deal with the devil.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL (OS)
We've all done things we aren't
proud of.

MARTIN (OS)
Some more than others.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM: DAY

LORELEI
Martin, what are you saying?

MARTIN
I saying, they are worth it. I'll
barter whatever soul I have left to
make sure there isn't one more like
me.

Lorelei hugs Martin. Although he reluctantly allows her, he
doesn't reciprocate.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE THE CONFERENCE ROOM: DAY

Walter continues to listen.

ELAINE (OS)
Shall we vote?

MARTIN (OS)
No need. Hummel, you can come in.
You have a deal.

Walter covers his annoyance before opening the door.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM: DAY

Walter walks in with a flourish.

WALTER
You always did have the most
amazing hearing.
(Seeing the spilled coffee)
Problems?

MARTIN
Not until you showed up.

Walter grabs Martin's hand and shakes it.

(CONTINUED)

WALTER

Have you signed the contract yet?

Walter releases Martin's hand and walks to Elaine. Martin counts his fingers.

WALTER

(to Martin)

Don't worry they're all there.

MARTIN

There's one I'd love to give you.

WALTER

(offering Elaine a pen)

I'm sure there is.

ELAINE

Not yet.

WALTER

We're going to do great things together! It's also no secret that the system is broken.

MICHAEL

Wow! A politician admitting a mistake without a Congressional hearing. There is a God.

ELAINE

What is the Advocate position?

WALTER

It's not what you think. You will have total control over your departments. The Advocate will control the rest.

ELAINE

The rest of what?

WALTER

The other departments. Legal aid. The Casualty team. Red Cross Liaison. He will run the office.

MICHAEL

A glorified office manager?

WALTER

You make this work here and every state in the union will have its own Operation Home Base.

(CONTINUED)

LORELEI

We have complete control?

WALTER

That's what the contract says.

MARTIN

Why does the military suddenly want to help us?

WALTER

Relax, Martin. The military has nothing to do with this. I'm a civilian and so is Valhalla.

MARTIN

You will always bleed green.

WALTER

Your organization has little more than nothing, yet you are still making a difference.

MARTIN

You mean making waves.

WALTER

That too.

ELAINE

You never answered the question. Why us?

WALTER

Fine. Valhalla is a group influential individuals who come from business, politics and yes, retired military who just want to help.

MICHAEL

What's the hurry?

WALTER

Hurry? Don't you think this is past due?

Michael nods and signs.

ELAINE

I'm in.

(CONTINUED)

LORELEI
(signs)
Me too.

Walter takes the contract to Martin.

MARTIN
I don't trust you.

WALTER
(holds out the contract)
Are you going to make the wounded
warriors suffer because you can't
let go of the past?

MARTIN
(Slowly turning around)
If this is another trick-

WALTER
No trick. It's straight up.

Reluctantly, Martin signs.

MICHAEL
If it doesn't work, we can always
start over.

WALTER
(Taking the contract)
Not a ringing endorsement, but I'll
take it.

MARTIN
If I regret this, I promise that
you will regret it more.

Walter signs the contract and tucks it into the inner pocket
of his suit jacket.

MARTIN
I'll make the announcement.

Martin leaves.

WALTER
Now that the formalities are out of
the way. I need you to start now.
There was a house fire with a death
at Gunnery Sergeant Matt Thompson
and his wife's home. His son was
killed. It's listed as suspicious.
The NCIS team is already on scene.

(CONTINUED)

LORELEI

I arranged safe haven for his
daughter-in-law and grandson this
morning.

ELAINE

What Deputy Sheriff caught the
call?

WALTER

Donald McCloud. Heard of him?

MICHAEL

Everyone in the country knows the
jackass.

WALTER

(Confused)

What's his deal?

ELAINE

He has a grudge against the
Marines.

MICHAEL

(sarcastically)

Uncle Sheriff hired him to keep the
streets safe when the Marines
turned him down.

LORELEI

Ever since he has gone out of his
way to make life miserable for
everyone connected to the military.

WALTER

Good thing I sent the Advocate
ahead.

MICHAEL

Advocate?

WALTER

(Walking toward the door)

He arrived this morning. Did I
forget to mention it? Silly me. If
one of you will navigate, I'll
drive.

Walter exits.

(CONTINUED)

MICHAEL
What the hell did we just do?