

THE CONVENTION

Written by

Katelyn Harbert

harbertekate@gmail.com
(682)234-5609

FADE IN:

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

LOGAN (35), tall, well-built, imposing, lies on the concrete floor of what seems to be an empty fourth story office, a sniper rifle set up and ready for use.

He is almost robotic in his movements as he rests his eye against the scope, lining up the shot. His finger slowly edges towards the trigger, but he halts the movement.

Something has clearly gone wrong.

He stands from the ground quickly with the rifle in his hand, disconnecting the stand from its base and packs it into its case with sharp, precise movements.

LOGAN

(frustrated)

He'll be there, you said. He never misses a chance to show up, you said. Well fuck you, Wyatt. I just wasted three hours waiting for nothing. I should put a bullet in your skull - that'll fix everything.

*

Logan freezes as a KNOCK on the room's closed door interrupts his muttering.

The KNOCKING persists - small, rapid BEATS fueling Logan's annoyance.

He THROWS open the door, gunning for a fight, expecting someone of adult stature.

What he sees barely equates to half that. MARY (7), spunky and vocal, stands looking up at Logan.

*

Logan looks around into the hallway and then back down at the girl.

LOGAN (CONT'D)

What do you want?

Mary holds out her hand, a \$20 bill visible.

MARY

I need your help.

Logan, stone-faced, slams the door and turns to walk back over to his equipment.

The KNOCKING begins again.

Logan takes a deep breath, his fists clenching, and walks back over to his equipment. *

The KNOCKING persists. *

He shakes his head, determined to ignore the annoyance. *

The KNOCKING abruptly stops. *

Logan slowly relaxes and opens his eyes, relieved that the child has finally left and ready to gather everything to leave. *

Mary is standing right in front of him. *

MARY (CONT'D)

You didn't lock the door.

LOGAN

Usually when someone closes a door
in your face that means get lost.

Mary shrugs and begins to explore the room. She stops in front of the rifle case.

MARY

Is this your gun?

Logan walks over quickly to Mary and pushes her back.

LOGAN

(deadpan)

No. I just found it here.

Mary stares closely at Logan, trying to tell if he's joking or not.

MARY

You're not very funny.

Logan ignores her and closes the case, checking the room to make sure nothing gets left behind.

Mary watches his movements.

MARY (CONT'D)

You're a hitman.

Logan ignores her.

MARY (CONT'D)

That's what you do, right? You kill people?

Logan continues to ignore her and walks towards the door.

MARY (CONT'D)

You don't have to be mean, you know.

Logan stops at the door, the handle in his hand, and sighs.

LOGAN

Look, kid, I don't know where you heard that, and you really shouldn't be here right now.

(beat)

How did you even find out where I was gonna be?

MARY

(shrugging)

Dad told me about you.

Logan quickly turns around.

LOGAN

You're Wyatt's kid?

*

MARY

Yeah.

Logan rolls his eyes.

LOGAN

Of course you are.

(beat)

What do you need help with then?

MARY

I need you to kill someone.

LOGAN

You're joking, right? Who could you possibly want dead?

Mary crosses her arms indignantly.

MARY

Juliet.

LOGAN

Okay... what's she done? Hurt you? Hurt your family?

MARY

She made fun of my drawing in class.

Logan can't help himself - he lets out a small LAUGH.

MARY (CONT'D)

(not impressed)

It's not funny!

LOGAN

Sorry, kid, but that's pretty damn funny to me.

MARY

Momma always says that it's rude and mean to make fun of other people, and that those kinds of people are bad!

LOGAN

Do you believe your mom? *

MARY

Duh. *

LOGAN

Isn't what you're doing right now technically what she lectured you about? *

MARY

No. *

LOGAN

You're wanting me to kill this other kid. *

(beat) *

Doesn't that sound mean? Even a little bit? *

MARY

But she's even more mean! She makes fun of everyone in the class. *

Logan shakes his head slowly. Talking to children is hard.

LOGAN

Look, let's get you home, okay?

MARY

But I brought you money!

LOGAN

We can use it to grab ice-cream or something on the way. How does that sound?

MARY

If I buy you ice-cream will you help me?

*
*
*

LOGAN

Of course not.

*
*

Mary glares at Logan.

*

Logan glares back.

*

MARY

Fine. But I get three scoops.

*

Mary walks over to the door and OPENS it, slamming it behind her before Logan can follow.

*
*

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Mary and Logan are walking down the street, Logan carrying his case and Mary a couple of paces ahead, telling him a story.

MARY

And then Craig said that he didn't like my bow so I hit him. He cried like a baby.

Logan struggles to keep a straight face.

LOGAN

Kid, I think you have an anger problem.

*

MARY

My name isn't kid. It's Mary.

LOGAN

You should be careful about who you give your name to, Mary.

MARY

Why?

LOGAN

Because there are bad people out there.

MARY

Like you?

LOGAN

Yeah. Like me.

Mary studies Logan for a moment before answering.

MARY

You're not a bad guy.

LOGAN

You don't know the half of it.

MARY

Momma says that I should judge people by how they treat other people. And Dad talks about you on the phone, sometimes.

Mary spots an ice-cream van just up the road.

MARY (CONT'D)

Oh, ice-cream!!

She runs ahead, already waving her money over her head.

EXT. ICE CREAM VAN - DAY

Mary reaches the van.

Logan follows at a slower pace and catches up while Mary is mid-way through ordering.

MARY

...and then can I please have one scoop? He doesn't get three because he's not being fair.

*

The ICE-CREAM MAN (60) in the van hands over the two ice-creams.

*

Mary shoves Logan's cone in his direction, and when he takes it she leads him to a bench.

EXT. BENCH - DAY

They both sit eating their ice-creams, watching the world going by.

Logan's scoop falls to the ground next to his case, breaking the calm. He stares at it sadly.

*

LOGAN

Well, fuck.

MARY

Dad says that 'fuck' is a bad word.

LOGAN

Then why are you sayin' it?

MARY

(shrugging)

'Cause he's not here.

LOGAN

Fair enough.

Mary glances over at Logan and smirks, thinking she now has the upper-hand. *

MARY *

If you help me then you can have the rest of my ice-cream. *

LOGAN *

Still not offing a kid. *

MARY *

I shouldn't have bought you one. *

LOGAN *

Well too late. *

Logan fiddles with his now-empty cone. Mary HUMS a tune to herself as she works on finishing hers. *

LOGAN (CONT'D)

Hey, kid... can I ask you something?

Mary nods, not quite focusing fully on Logan.

LOGAN (CONT'D)

Why do you think that I'm not a bad guy?

Mary stopped eating and looked over at Logan.

MARY

I know I'm just a kid, but I'm not stupid.

LOGAN

You might be many things, kid, but stupid is definitely not one of them.

MARY

See? That's how I know. A lot of grown-ups think I'm stupid. They think I don't know things, but I do! I know that you're the only friend that Dad has. At least, I think you're his friend, and I know that you don't scare me.

(beat)

I know that bullies lie.

*
*
*

Logan stands and crouches in front of Mary, looking her in the eyes.

LOGAN

Do you wanna know a little secret?

Mary nods.

LOGAN (CONT'D)

You just might be the smartest short person that I've ever met.

*

MARY

(indignant)

Hey! I'm not short! You're just big.

*

LOGAN

(chuckling)

My bad, you're right.

(beat)

But what I said is still true. And those bullies? Fuck 'em. They're just a bunch of idiots.

Logan pats her awkwardly on the shoulder and then sits back down on the bench, his foot jostling the case on the ground between them.

Mary looks down at the case.

MARY

Do you ever get in trouble for having that with you?

LOGAN

It's America, kid, so no.

Mary, already bored with that train of thought, changes the subject, going back to her ice-cream.

MARY

Mr. Hitman, do you have a family?

LOGAN

My name is Logan.

(beat)

And no. I don't have a family anymore.

Mary looks at Logan sadly.

MARY

What happened?

Logan clenches his hands in his lap.

LOGAN

My job killed them. *

MARY

That's too bad, 'cause I bet you were a good dad. *

Logan looks at Mary, surprised, a smile gradually taking over his face. He bumps her gently with his elbow. *

LOGAN

Thanks, kid.

MARY

You're welcome. *

(beat) *

So will you help me now? *

Logan stares at her in disbelief. *

LOGAN

Are you still going on about that? *

I'm not going to help you get rid of the class' Sauron. *

MARY

What's a Sauron? *

LOGAN

That doesn't matter. What does matter is that you need to realize that you can't let your hate dictate your actions. *

Mary looks at Logan blankly. *

LOGAN (CONT'D)

(sighs)

You can't be mean to somebody just because they're being mean to you. That's not how you win in that situation. I promise you that.

Mary nods solemnly, Logan's point finally reaching her as well as it can for a child.

Logan quickly stands, tossing his empty cone in the trash.

LOGAN (CONT'D)

You ready? Your dad's probably looking for you.

Mary stands and takes Logan's hand, shoving the last small bit of her cone into her mouth.

LOGAN (CONT'D)

Wait... how did you even get over here?

MARY

Dad dropped me off.

Logan stares at her for a moment.

LOGAN

Are you telling me that Wyatt dumped you at that warehouse for me to babysit you?

MARY

(scoffs)

I'm seven, not five. I don't need a babysitter. Besides, he's supposed to be back soon.

LOGAN

(sighs)

Alright.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Logan and Mary stand outside of the building side-by-side. A car pulls up. WYATT (40), tall and almost gangly, steps out of the car.

Logan crouches to face Mary.

LOGAN

You be careful getting home, okay?

MARY
(nodding)
Dad's not that bad of a driver.

LOGAN
(smiling)
You'd be surprised.

Mary suddenly wraps her small arms around Logan's shoulders, and he cautiously returns it. She lets go and runs over to the car where Wyatt is waiting with the backseat door open. Mary turns to wave good-bye to Logan. *

LOGAN (CONT'D)
Bye, kid. And remember what I said about those bullies. *

MARY
(cheerfully)
Fuck 'em!

Logan laughs - the look on Wyatt's face is priceless. *

LOGAN
That's right, Mary. Fuck 'em.

She smiles and waves one last time as the door closes.

Logan stands on the sidewalk and glares at Wyatt. *

LOGAN (CONT'D)
Fuck you, Wyatt. Next time get someone without a gun to watch your kid. *

Wyatt just rolls his eyes and salutes Logan with his middle finger while getting into the driver's seat of the car. *

Logan rolls his shoulders and takes a deep breath, shaking his head as he attempts to process just what his day became as he watches the car leave.

He turns to walk back home, a small smile on his face.

FADE OUT.

The END