

We have a situation here, man

(A short story where the Big Lebowski meets Night of the Living Dead)

A small white house in the country is perched on a green hillside. The house is boarded up. A few scattered zombies roam about and the sun is going down. Inside the house, 3 men and 1 woman prepare to do battle with evil forces for which we can't explain the origins.

While others sharpen their blades and inspect their guns, our spotlight character, the Dude, rests with his feet propped up on the arm of the sofa. He is drinking a White Russian and reading an issue of National Geographic. Gordon, the team leader, enters the room and is not happy with the sight.

“UH-hum, you need to get up and grab a gun.”

He sits up, and sets the drink and magazine down, trying not to lose the page he was on.

“Yeah, man far out.”

Gordon looks him over with a furrowed brow, unable to comprehend what is “far out” about the current situation. He grabs a 12 gauge shotgun and throws it to the Dude, hoping he'll catch it... he does but it knocks him in the chest.

“We have a situation, that requires immediate action... and what did you say your name was?”

“Dude, just call me Dude.”

“Okay... Dude, don't get killed tonight.”

The team had prepared for a long night. They had bottled water, plenty of food as well as weapons and ammo. Would they make it? Gordon could only hope for the best. He decided to make a round through the house to see how everyone was doing.

Dee was currently positioned at the window looking East. She was an ex-marine who could handle herself well. Her hair was short, crew cut style and she never said much. Her chest was enormous for her frame but she was far from the type to have a boob job. Asking her if she had a boob job would surely mean a fight, one in which Gordon would have to use his well honed skills in his defense.

Gordon himself was an ex-marine and would have been taken by Dee's natural beauty right away had she not been seeing the guy in the next room, Ian.

“Ya okay in here Dee?”

“Check.”

Gordon moved to the next room where Ian was stationed. He could never understand what Dee saw in Ian. He was a loaner who traveled around a lot. Ian had a short mullet and wore horn rimmed glasses.

“Ian, you okay?”

“Righto, Gordo,” he said, doing a bad impression of an English accent.

“We got a barrage of zombies about to hit us.” Gordon said.

“I see em and I’m ready man, bring it on”

They both looked out the cracks between the boards that covered the windows. They could see the horizon was filling up with zombies as the sky was filling up with night. Gordon was concerned.

For the next several minutes he discussed possible strategies with Ian. They analyzed their strengths and weaknesses and came up with several worst case scenarios. Unfortunately, Gordon knew on some level that they were all doomed.

Dee eventually came in to join them. He was glad, for she often had good ideas. Aside from that, her presence really tied the room together.

Gordon, sensing the need for the team to stay tied together, went to get the Dude. Though doubtful if he’d have much to add, he was doing his best to inspire teamwork.

The Dude however, was not at his post. His gun was sitting in the windowsill unattended. He was thumbing through old records and had on a pair of headphones. Gordon could hear the music coming from the Dude’s headphones all the way across the room. He was outraged and a little panic stricken.

“What the hell are you doing!?” Gordon yelled.

The dude hardly heard him but his voice was just loud enough to get him to turn his head around and look at Gordon.

“Oh, hey man.”

“What’s the matter with you, do you realize what’s coming our way?”

The Dude, catching the drift of Gordon’s anger, suddenly felt guilty for not manning his post.

“Sorry man.”

He put the headphones down and turned off the record player. Then he carefully pulled the record off the turntable and slid it in the jacket. Several records sat on the floor and the Dude picked them up and began sorting them out one by one. All this time Gordon stands, gun in hand, watching in confusion and disbelief.

Apparently, the Dude had misplaced an album in the wrong sleeve. He starts taking the records out and fumbles around looking for the right match. It’s enough to turn Gordon’s disbelief into rage. He rushes over and grabs the albums out of the Dude’s hands and throws them in a pile on the floor.

“Hey, careful man... that’s Billie Holiday.”

“Maybe you’re not grasping the full scope of what were up against. We’ve got zombies outside that want to eat our brains and they’ll be here any minute.”

The Dude is a bit put off by Gordon’s aggression but is understanding of his concern. He nods in agreement.

“Yeah, yeah.”

“You don’t even have your gun in your hand. We’re covered on the North, East and South but what’s going to happen when they hit the West side of the house... your side of the house?”

“They haven’t hit yet man.”

“Well, when they do all hell’s going to break loose, and you... what’d you say your name was again?”

“Dude, or The dude... Dudearino, or...”

“Nevermind... Get that gun in your hand and get over there and guard the window.”

“Okay, man”

“Pronto!”

Gordon storms out of the room. He’s frazzled but at least satisfied he’s now got everyone, including the dude, covering their bases. Before he can make it back to his post, he hears a thumping sound coming from the back of the house. The zombies have arrived.

He runs to find Dee and Ian madly fighting Zombies at the back door. Arms are coming through cracks in the boards and Ian and Dee are hacking off limbs with a machete and kitchen knife. There is a pile of limbs on the floor and the two have pretty much got their hands full.

Gordon runs to the window to fight some more zombies. He can hear them hissing and moaning outside, lumbering around the back porch. He sticks his shotgun between one of the cracks through the window and squeezes off a few rounds.

Meanwhile, the Dude is squeezing off shots as well. At first he’s not sure he likes the violent kick of the shotgun but then starts to think it’s kinda cool. The fight goes on for several minutes as the team hacks, slices and blasts away. It’s almost enough to give them the illusion that they’re winning.

A loud crash in the kitchen is enough to shatter that illusion as a horde of zombies make it through the outside kitchen door. Gordon, knowing the layout of the house quickly moves to counter the attack, shutting the kitchen doors.

“Let’s go,” he says to Dee and Ian.

Then he notices the bite on Ian’s arm.

“Did one of them bite you?” Gordon says, looking at the huge open wound on Ian’s forearm.

“Looks that way,” says Ian.

Dee quickly grabs a strip of gauze and bandages him up. They move toward another area of the house, the west side where the Dude holds down the fort. Gordon creates barriers out of furniture and Dee helps Ian walk. Gradually moving west and sealing off the way behind them so the zombies can’t follow.

During this intensity, Gordon is thinking, “either the Dude is dead or he’s happily sitting on the couch and smoking a “J”.”

They bust in his room.

“Ian’s been bit!” Says Dee.

The Dude is blasting away at zombies, and appears to be enjoying himself. He turns around and faces the group.

“Whoa... you should have seen that one!”

As he does this, a zombie from outside grabs the barrel of his unattended gun and presses down, knocking the dude in the head with the butt end. The Dude corrects and a brief tug of war ensues before he manages to get a shot off.

“Whoaaaaaaaaa!”

Meanwhile, Ian collapses on the floor and Dee bends down to help him. The Dude pulls himself away from the action to notice what’s going on. Ian, his buddy that he met as a fellow roadie for Metallica has been bitten and it’s not looking good for him.

“We got to shoot em,” says Gordon.

Gordon holds up his gun, ready to do the job. The Dude steps in, trying to call attention away from his friend Ian.

“Wait man, we have a situation that requires immediate action here man. Zombies are all over the horizon.”

“Ian’s not looking good, that’s were the action needs to be taken Dude.”

“He’ll get over it man.”

“That’s not usually what happens in these situations.” says Gordon.

Suddenly, Ian lunges for the Dude’s leg and tries to take a bite. The Dude jumps back just in time. Gordon squeezes the trigger on his shotgun and Blam! Blood and brains fly everywhere splattering across the Dude’s face. Bits and pieces get into his beard.

The Dude stands still for a moment then shakes his head without actually moving at all. (Much like the scene where Donnie’s ashes scatter across his face at the funeral). However there is no wind, the air is still. The silence is interrupted by a loud yell from upstairs.

“Wooooohooooooooo”. It’s Walter and he’s jumped from the second floor onto the landing.

“Walter, you made it”

“Hey Dude, looks like you’ve got yourself quite a situation here.”

“Walter, am I glad to see you man”

The doors burst open with zombies and Gordon and Dee make a mad rush upstairs almost knocking Walter over.

“That’s right, everybody upstairs, the chopper’s waitin... Bunch a Nihilists”

“Nihilists? Walter, they’re not Nihilists.”

“Not them Dude, the evil forces invading your little abode here”

The Dude stops on the landing to have a brief conversation with Walter. They survey the situation on the lower floor of the house, now being taken over by zombies.

“Walter, they’re not Nihilists they’re Zombies man”

“Call em what you will Dude, no time to argue, lets go”

Walter kicks one the zombies in the chest and sends him falling back on a bunch of other zombies. They make a run for the roof where a helicopter is waiting. They all make it to the makeshift launch pad, but there’s one small problem.

They’ve got 5 people and the chopper only fits 4. Jonnie,(a long lost cousin of Donnie) and an old friend of Walter and the Dude is sitting in the helicopter too.

“Hey Dude.” He says.

“Hey Jonnie, Walter why the hell did you bring Jonnie?”

“I don’t know Dude, the company I guess.”

“Can we all fit?” says Dee.

“I can sit on someone’s lap.” says Jonnie

“Jonnie, you’re out of your element, it’s too much weight for the chopper”

“1 of us will have to stay.”

To be continued...