

Brett clenched two wooden poles which supported a large banner. The sound of the subway hummed as he felt the eyes of everyone else on the train. They knew that today there was a large protest scheduled for 911 Truth, and that Brett was one of those "crazy conspiracy theorists." Making things even more uncomfortable: today was the ten year anniversary of the event and occupying the subway were also people holding candles and photos they were going to place at ground zero. The doors opened and two large black police officers entered the subway. Brett's hands stiffened around the wooden pole. "Are they looking at me" Brett thought to himself. "yes, yes they are definitely looking at me". Brett peered up from his seat and met eyes with one of the officers. Sergeant Reynolds, Badge number 3232.

Brett's hand could make out the outline of the pipe inside his pocket. He had been told previously by event organizers never to bring drugs to a demonstration, and he had been stupid, and done it anyway. The subway slowed, and the doors opened again, this time a squirrely looking security guard with a German Shepherd came into the car. "For fucks sake" Brett thought. The security guard reeked of cigarettes and plopped his boney ass down on the seat right next to Brett. Almost immediately the dog began growling and barking at Brett. Sergeant Reynolds cocked his head to the side and gave the Security guard a stern gaze. The dog continued to bark and growl which caused Sergeant Reynolds to finally speak up. "Hey buddy, get your dog under control" The Security guard looked up with an embarrassing smile and stated "Oh he's a good boy, real well trained. Probably just mad cause this boy's holdin onto them sticks" The Security Guard continued to flap his mouth as he forcefully pushed his dog to the floor, making it yelp. But it shut up. "come to think of it, is that legal? you know. holding big sticks like that in public? I'd figure they'd be used as a weapon". His gaze turned to Brett. "So where you headed with those sticks then?" Brett didn't really like cops all that much, but had pretty much universal disdain for all security officers. He believed that cops were like the jocks who wanted to remain cool and powerful, but security guards? Security guards were the losers who never had any power in their lives and now were playing out their fantasy of actually having some authority. They devoted their life to protecting the special interests of corporations, which is even worse than cops really, because at least cops help people from time to time. All of this flooded into Brett's head before he looked up at the Security Guard and replied. "I'm going to a demonstration. This is a banner. You know. Freedom of speech?" Brett felt kind of childish saying the last part as if now he had been completely branded in this guy's eyes as a gay communist pinko faggot fascist. The Security Guard continued as the doors opened again, the two police officers walked out. "Freedom of speech? You got your ideas I got mine! My ideas are that you shouldn't protest on a day of remembrance. You know, we should let the people vote on it. Have a preserve our holiday law or something like that. No protests on holidays. That's what I think." A few of the other passengers holding candles had begun to notice the exchange between the two.

Brett could feel the adrenaline begin to flow. Not out of any sort of fear. He knew damn well this guy was just a clown in a uniform with delusions of grandeur. But he had to say something back, Brett stated "So you'd take away people's right to protest on a holiday because it annoys you. But that's what living in a democracy is all about. We've got to put up with other people's shit". The Security Guard's eyes narrowed and the top of his lip turned up a bit. "Hell you don't know nothin bout Democracy kid. It's my democratic right to have a peaceful day. Let the people vote. That's Democracy." Brett knew he could pummel this guy intellectually

into the ground. As a Political Science major he knew he could tell him all about the founding fathers, and how the US was originally created as a Republic, and that people like Thomas Jefferson talked about the tyranny of the majority. But why bother? Brett thought. The Security Guard continued what was becoming increasingly incomprehensible to anyone with even a Middle School education in civics. "You see, everyone's got something to say. Then you say it. You know this is America and we can say whatever you want. But if what you're saying is causing other people problems then I say screw it" Brett looked up at the Metro map above the doors and replied "that's interesting" in a completely uninterested manner. His stop was up next. The babbling continued. "Same thing with all them muslims comin here. They're coming here because they want to build a monument on the ashes of their conquests. That's what they do I tell ya. There was even some mosque in Spain and they built it there after they killed all the Spainards. That's why Spanish people are so dark still you know. Muslims raped their moms couple hundred years ago." The Security Guard paused for a moment to ponder the weight of what he believed before stating "changed the face of the country. ...That it sure did." Brett nodded slowly, basically giving up on any sort of dialog with the guy. The doors opened and he walked out onto the platform.

Brett felt relieved he had got away from the idiot as he joined the masses who were lining up for the escalator. Once outside he was catapulted into a herd of New Yorkers all hurrying wherever they needed to go. He spotted his friends immediately as they were on the corner giving out free DVDs and pamphlets. His best friend Jeremiah was holding a large sign which had a picture of a pyramid with an eye at the apex, and the eye was bleeding all over. Underneath it, it read "Death To The New World Order!" As Brett walked up he was greeted by all of his buddies in "The Movement". He walked up to Jeremiah who was obviously very excited about something. Jeremiah started speaking immediately as they shook hands "You hear about Dr Macintosh is Scotland?" Brett shook his head. "Well, he got some of the wreckage from the towers. He processed it in his lab and guess what? Fucking termite dude." Brett feigned excitement, he had heard so many different theories and constant new revelations for so long that he was fairly immune to any new information but he had to reply "wow. that's fucking nuts" he stated. Jeremiah continued "Yeah, the lid's about to blow man. There's no denying it anymore. Once this information goes public there's gonna be a major shit storm. I'm talking Dick Cheney in handcuffs style!" Brett glanced across the street and noticed a large guy who looked like he should be a cop getting something out of the back of his car. He kept his eyes on him as he responded in a monotone manner "Yeah, fuck the bastards". Jeremiah noticed Brett's attention was somewhere else. "Who are you looking at man?" Jeremiah said. "Dude looks shady over there. Look how he's checking us out." Jeremiah turned his head and noticed a big white guy with sun glasses in a skin tight white shirt and camo jeans. Jeremiah then smiled "paranoid much Brett?" Brett continued to look straight at the guy before stating "probably an undercover cop. fucking surveillance pigs". Jeremiah looked back at the guy. He was definitely either preparing or getting something out of the trunk of his car. He put his hand on the top of the trunk and as he slammed it shut "Gun!" Brett yelled. The man was carrying an AR15 and the shots began to ring out immediately. Jeremiah took a round to his left arm splattering Brett's face with blood as he ducked down behind a car.

The entire block was like an overturned termite mound. The shots kept on firing. Pop Pop Pop Pop. He was firing completely indiscriminately. Brett didn't know whether to run or stay but tried to triangulate his position by the sound of the gun fire. Then ....click. click. Brett knew that sound from when he went to visit his grandfather's farm in North Dakota to go shooting. The

gun had jammed. Peering through the windows of the car he could see the man was now directly on the other side of the car. Looking intently at his rifle and trying to dislodge the bullet. It was then that Brett realized he was still holding the banner with the large wooden poles. Without thinking Brett stood up and he swung with all his might. For a split second the gunman looked right at Brett before getting clobbered smack in the temple. It was enough to stun the gunman. Still dazed the gunman tried to regain his footing and focus. Brett came into the street and swung again. whack! This time hitting him squarely beneath his jaw line on his neck. The gunman was stumbling backwards now and again Brett came at him again. Whack! this time he connected with the back of his head and the gunman went down like a sack of potatoes. Once on the ground Brett continued to go hog wild on the man's back, trying to do as much damage as he could to his kidneys. "Fuck yeah! Kill that fucker!" a man in a business suit yelled at him. There was a mob growing around Brett now, and the gunman lay disarmed on the street.

On the corner lie a small latina girl with a bullet wound to the chest. Women were screaming hysterically all around her and an overweight latino man in a chefs outfit came bounding out of a Mexican restaurant. "Where's that motherfucker!" he screamed. At least a dozen other restaurant employees were now outside. Slicked back black hair with white aprons covered in food stains. "That fucker killed my baby!" A young woman yelled, pointing at Brett and the lumpy bloody man in the street. Brett stood above the gunman, stunned, and unable to move as he watched one of the restaurant employees pick up a newspaper box. The man walked over to the body and slammed the box onto the gunman's head. Crushing it into the pavement. Brett looked away only to see Jeremiah bleeding up against the side of a car. He ran to his side.

"You're gonna be ok man" Brett said as he applied pressure to the wound on Jeremiah's arm. The blood seeping in between his fingers. Jeremiah looked up at Brett and stated "These people are all fucking crazy". To which Brett replied "I know man, bunch of fucking lunatics"