

“Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>: Tommy Jarvis”

by

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Prologue...

The sound of soft leaves and the occasional sticks crunch and patter. It gets louder and heavier, faster. The shape of little feet scurrying like a rabbit is forgotten as the legs moving those feet as fast as possible, jumping, running from hell, running for life.

They don't even bother to slow down. They zig-zag as best they can, losing breath in their body all the while as fast as they get it back. The sound of running gets louder and louder from behind. They can't get away as the sound eclipses the sound of their little, torrential pounding of their heart.

Their feet are swept out from under them as they are tackled to the ground. Big, thick arms keep them prisoner as they struggle to break free. They struggle even more as the sound of two more sets of footsteps come closer.

“Damn, Gary, he almost got away from us this time! Sure you got em?”

A big, bearded man with dark hair and pungent onion breath looks at the young boy who is still struggling in his dark blue jacket.

“Help!”

A thick, meaty hand clasps over their mouth as they try to scream again. The hand brings their head back, and their eyes meet.

“No one can help you now. But, you better shut up and behave, if you know what's good for you.”

A younger, muscular man with short, blond hair, and a middle-aged man with a bushy mustache, slightly-wrinkled skin, and a pot-belly, kneel down next to Gary.

Gary looks at the younger man. “What do you want, Pete? A leg or a wing?”

Pete smiles, slowly showing his teeth. “A leg. I might have room for both! Ha HA!” He cocks his head back and laughs, so loud that he howls. They all laugh, oblivious of the boy crying, until Gary feels the tears flow over his fingers. He doesn’t care.

Gary turns to the man with the mustache. “I guess you’re shit out of luck, Benny!”

“That’s bullshit, and you know it!”

Pete moves his hands over to grab the boy’s legs, but the boy kicks his legs up and out, almost making contact with Pete’s face. He backs up, studying the herky-jerky motion of the boy’s legs, looking for just the right moment to grab them. He does with both hands.

“Gotcha!” The boy’s muffled screams have no effect on them. Benny moves his hands around Gary’s thick, muscular arms, then stops. His hands slowly move away, tip-toeing through the air, hovering along the boy’s body. They stop, just above the stomach.

Benny looks up at Gary and Pete. “Just a little appetizer.”

Pain explodes from into his neck and out from his eyes as he feels burning, hot pain flowing from his neck. The other two men scream as Benny falls over, back and to the side as they stare at an arrow that has gone through his neck, spurting blood.

Gary lets go of the boy. He does not run away. Frantically reaching for the pockets of his jacket, Gary pulls out a .38 caliber pistol, pointing it in the direction of where the arrow came from.

“Who’s out there?!”

Gary manages to hold the gun steadily, seeing nothing but trees that are almost swallowed up by thick, green leaves.

A soft, scurrying sound moves around a few feet to the right. He points the gun at the area of the sound, and fires. They don’t scream, not even the kid. He covers his ears with his hands, tightly.

Another sound goes off to the left. He fires again, seeing nothing. His hand starts to shake along with his body, ever so slightly, as he breathes deeply.

A quick snap of a twig sounds off behind them. He twists his body around quickly, and fires. A bloody body of a squirrel, with its guts splayed out on the ground, makes Gary smile a little.

The sound of an object knocking against wood echoes from behind where Gary shot the squirrel. He turns around to face the sound, and fires without fully looking.

A heavy wet sound splashes a few feet in front of them. It is a wet log. He unwittingly fires in the direction it came from, expecting to see someone there. Again, there is nothing but the trees.

He screams as loud, and hard, as he can. “Where are you?!”

He turns around, left and right, desperately looking for any sign of movement.

Gary hears the faintest sound of a step onto wet leaves. He turns to it, and his heart turns cold, stopping as it skips, hearing the click of the gun.

A man stands there, dressed in a dark green t-shirt, and blue jeans. He has brown hair, and deep, unmoving eyes that are just as unmoving as his toned, muscular body.

For what seems the longest time, he stars into Gary's eyes, sizing up the situation, seeing him for what he is. Neither of them blink, or turn away. Finally, Gary does blink, involuntarily.

"It's not... It..." The words disappear from Gary's mind as the man's eyes bore into him more, burning through him. They seem to say everything, and so much more. But, these eyes know. They know what was to happen if he were not here. He can guess where they have been, and where they would go.

The younger man, Pete, snaps out of his fear, realizing what has happened to his friend, lying on the ground, with an arrow in his neck, bleeding out, drowning the ground, and his lungs.

"You sick fuck!" He reaches into the front pockets on his jeans and opens up one of the blades of a red, Swiss army knife. Pushing himself up, he stands, holding the knife at his side.

The man stops looking at Gary, and looks at this other man, holding a knife. He doesn't look at the knife. He only notices the intensity of his eyes. Looking past that, he can still see the fear in the man.

Still unmoving, he watches as Pete runs at him. His mouth moves a little,

spreading ever so slightly. If anyone were to freeze time and see it, they would notice the faintest hint of a smile. If they were to know him intimately, and his past, they would know he is smiling so much more on the inside.

He does not move as the move builds up speed, running at speed. At the last second, he brings up his hand to thrust the knife into him, in the hopes of gutting him, the way he knows so well.

In half that time, the man grabs Pete by the wrist. He brings up the arm, and with his other arm, in one fluid motion, the man uses his other hand to break Pete's arm, snapping it like a tree branch.

He screams, and his scream echoes so loudly birds and leaves flow and move. But, there's not enough time to know it, or even remember it. In the same second, as the knife falls from Pete's useless hand, the man swings and twists the arm, thrusting the arm almost blindly to Pete's face with an audible squish sound. As he falls, they all see blood spurting from his face, and two of Pete's fingers rammed into one of his eyes, up to the hilt, stuck there like a grotesque statue.

The man looks at Gary, and he takes off running, leaving the boy, who is curled up in a ball, looking down. The man watches Gary run, and after a few seconds, the man heads back the way he came, not worried about the possibility that his prey could get. In his mind, he can't.

As fast as he is running, he knows the size of his body is slowing him down. He gains his breath as fast as he loses it. He almost feels he can go on forever as he runs faster, skipping and hopping over logs, brushing branches. He feels he is back in school,

decades ago, but never far away in mind and heart. He was quite an athlete back then, but years of alcohol, smoking, junk food, and not enough exercise has taken their toll on his once youthful and healthy body.

His lungs wheeze. He feels his spit build up thickly until it can be chewed upon. In between breaths, he spits out chunks of phlegm, hearing it make contact with a tree, leaves, or moss-covered ground. He hopes that in the straight line he moves, he sharply turns, thinking that will throw the man off. This man can be right behind all this time, and there would be no way for him to know unless he turns around.

He doesn't want to. He doesn't want to stop. But, he has to. His body starts to ache, spreading like a fire that has all the fuel it needs. In no time at all, he feels it more and more. Chugging along with a pattern that keeps getting more disjointed, he collapses.

Crawling along, he wheezes in high-pitched squeals, not stopping even as he finds a thick oak tree for cover. He rests for a few seconds, waiting for enough of his breath to come back. It does, barely.

Slowly turning around, he peeks from behind the tree, and sees endless miles of woods, unmoving, soundless. His eyes dart in every direction, desperate for something to tell him he's not alone. That man can't be gone.

The soft sound of a car engine traveling makes him turn his head back around. At a guess he thinks it's about a mile away. If he hurries, maybe, he can get help, and get out of this alive. The thought of that makes him smile. He can't remember the last time he was this happy.

A few short breaths, then slowly taking a big breath, he pushes himself up, using the tree for leverage. Looking back again, and seeing nothing, he takes off running again, in the direction of the sound of the traveling car.

The pain is almost gone, and it doesn't surprise him at all. He feels he is back in his youth, running in gym class, hoping for that finish line to be only his. Not only that, it's not that he feels no pain, but his muscles are soaked with adrenaline. His brain is drunk on the power.

The ground starts to slope. From the far right, a few miles away, another car can be heard, just like the one before. It is getting closer. If he could cry out, he would. He doesn't know that he's too tired to do so, and that his lungs are shot.

The ground slopes a little more. Thick trees, and thicker leaves and bushes block his way, hiding him. He slows down a bit, afraid that he will fall. Careful steps down, he brushes away branches, almost barreling past bushes, doing his best to ignore the pain as they scrape and scratch him.

Through it all, he sees the shape of a blue, compact car, and the road, far below and ahead. With each step, he stumbles, threatening to fall. He pushes his breath up and out, and each time he does, his wheezing gets louder, not quite able to yell.

Thirty feet more, and he can collapse. He can feel his voice miraculously come back, bubbling back to the surface, from nothing. Pushing through all the past, he feels he's made it, as he is about to leap down, tumble down, go for broke.

An arrow pierces his head from behind, into his brain, with the tip pushing out from between his eyes in a bloody splash, stealing his voice and surprise forever.