

THE FATEFUL HEIST

By Jason Philipp

It was a normal Monday afternoon in New York City when I walked down Madison Avenue to go shopping. I had to make a stop at the Wells Fargo Bank at the end of the street to get some more money because I only had about 5 dollars left. So, I walked into the bank and got in line of the first ATM. Unsuspectingly, I waited and waited until I noticed a person entering the bank right behind me, who was hastily rushing passed me to the bank counter in the back of the bank. I could not believe my eyes when I saw the ski mask on his head and the pistol in his right hand, which was pointed exactly in the direction of the bank clerk's face. "This is a robbery! Now, everybody get their face on the floor and their hands where I can see them or I shoot this place up!", he shouted.

Everyone did what he said. The room was filled with fear. Faces of shock and disbelief surrounded me. A woman right next to me broke into tears followed by a panic attack. I could not think straight as I was still not believing that this was happening and it got even worse because of the desperate crying that almost caused pain in my ears. While the robber was giving instructions to the bank clerk and got his bag filled with some \$100 bills, I could hear another sound besides the miserable crying. It was the sound of police sirens.

The robber seemed to freak out as he frantically turned around to the bank entrance. He had to know that the police would be about to come sometime but I was surprised by the very early arrival of the police, as well. I had never felt a relief such intensive as in that moment. But just when I thought we were safe, I realised that this was no longer a robbery but a hostage taking, too! So now I was even more in danger than before...

Our hostage taker got next to the front entrance and screamed he would be having four hostages and would harm us if the police stormed in. He was soaked in sweat and I could almost feel his nervousness, like an aura in the whole room. I asked myself what led him to commit this robbery, because he did not seem to be a bank robber. He looked desperate.

As I eyed him nervously going up and down in front of me, he took his mask off and under his mask was not a gangster like everyone would have imagined, but a man who was probably in his early 30s. He sat down and leaned against the wall behind him with an exhausted exhalation that turned into a frustrated whining. "This can't be happening. I can't fail like this...", he mumbled to himself. I gathered up all my courage and asked him, "Why are you doing all this? You don't look like a bad person."

He slowly looked up to me, wiped through his face which was flooded with tears and told us the reason for this robbery but he never put his gun down while talking. He told us about his childhood in which he never attended a school or had any education in general, his abusive father from whom he ran away at the age of 13 and all the jobs that he got fired from after only a short time. He even had a family with two children to feed. This man had found no other way out than this robbery to somehow get money for his family. It was an act of despair.

The robber was interrupted by the ringing of a phone, that belonged to the bank.

A) The robber picks up the phone.

B) The robber ignores the ringing.

Ending A

The robber stopped talking and picked up the phone.

I could hear the voice of the caller because I was standing right next to the phone. The police was on the phone and asked him if the hostages were alright. He assured him no one got hurt and no one would get hurt, if they didn't send him to jail. The robber knew it was over. He didn't even try to flee because there was no option for that in such a small bank. The officer on the phone offered a deal to the robber. They promised him a mild punishment if he'd set us free and face the police. When he accepted the offer, his hand was shaking while hanging up. The robber then proceeded to tell us that he would face the police now and walked his way to the entrance. The gun was still in his hand as he took one step out of the door and the bullets pierced his body. The police had started a storm of gunfire which ended as fast as it had began.

We then got rescued but even today, three years later, not a single day goes by that I don't think of him. His name was Adam Baker. He was a father of two children and only wanted to allow them a liveable life. No one should be driven to the brink of despair like that.

Ending B

The robber ignored the ringing and proceeded talking.

“I won’t to talk to these police pigs”, he said, “they support this capitalist state, which brought me into this position.” I started feeling sorry for the robber and kind of understood him. You get eaten by this world if you do not conform to the standard. But I could not think of a possible escape without getting arrested.

“Hey man, I’m sorry for what has happened to you but you have to end this here. We both know there is no way to escape. Face the police and let this suffering find an end.” At this point I didn’t know what I had done. He paused, breathed in and said , “I know. This suffering really has to end”. He stood up and walked to the bathroom of the bank. He vanished behind the door of the toilets. The next thing I heard was a single loud gunshot. On this day he took his own life to escape his problems.

We then got rescued but even today, three years later, not a single day goes by that I don’t think of him. His name was Adam Baker. He was a father of two children and only wanted to allow them a liveable life. No one should be driven to the brink of despair like that.