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Kill Hats!

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Kill Hats!

People say that the anticipation before a knowingly tragic event is worse than the actual event. In this certain situation, they were wrong. I was in a long squad bay lined with twenty bunk beds on each side of the bay. There were sixty nine other men with me, all shaved heads, lined up at the end of their beds. Just standing there with their arms along their sides looking forward. Not making any sudden moves. All just waiting in anticipation for what was bound to happen. Today we meet our drill instructors. We have all heard those stories from our recruiters, of huge, tall instructors with raging muscles and veins screaming out their necks, always waiting for someone to make a move so they could kick the living shit out of you. This seems like what some would describe as purgatory, yet we all know we are going to hell with no chance of a heaven on the other side. I can tell that every recruit in there is regretting the sequence of decisions that may have led them to this point in time. Some with tears in their eyes, others with an angry look as though they want to get this over with, some with just a confused look of what are they doing or waiting for. Myself? I was just waiting, no real regret, no anger as I am never really an angry guy, not confused because I knew why I was here. Just standing here, waiting for that fateful moment when these men barge in and for our hell to finally begin. It was only a matter of time, then we will all be just victims of the murdering drill instructors.

SLAM! In barges a mid-sized Latino man. He can't be any taller than 5'8". He has broad shoulders and the physique of a man who works out regularly. He is wearing green long pants and a pressed tan shirt with a stack of ribbons on the right side from my view, easily could mean he has killed over a thousand men. He has a brown hat on his head that looks like what a state trooper would wear but more pressed with an emblem in the middle that has an eagle, globe, and anchor on it. The look on his face is of a serious manner as he walks down the bay glancing back and forth at the line of recruits on either side of him. He has yet to make a sound. It seems as if he is just watching us, and learning our faces. My guess is he is mentally deciding who he wants as his bitch. I can see all the faces of the recruits on the other side of the bay from me, all getting overly serious as the man gets near them when passing by. They are scared, should I be scared?

The man yells, "Everyone sit in the front of the squad bay now!" Immediately, everyone runs as quickly as possible to the front of the squad bay and sits down in a jagged and unorganized manner. The man gives us a long speech of what he expects of us, what we will all probably do, that we are nothing in his eyes, that we are recruits and that recruits are lower than the shoes he is wearing. All the things we expect he would say. He calls himself Senior Drill Instructor Staff Sergeant Sanchez, a long title I make a mental note to remember. He then states, "In a minute, all you nasty recruits will meet my men, they are the creators of Marines, the most hard charging, killing machines of this age. The present day Spartans of this time. You will listen to them, you will respect them, and you will fear them." Senior Drill Instructor Staff Sergeant Sanchez then, with a gleam in his eye and a half smirk, yells, "Line." Everyone looks at each other sort of confused. I have the intuition that he means us to line up the way we were but would not dare be the only one to move. He then screams, "Line the fuck up, recruits!" Everyone gets up as quickly as humanly possible and runs to their spots, some confused where they once were and try to take each other's spots while the Senior Drill Instructor is making angry grunts and screams. Finally, we are lined up, not exactly like we were before, but we are lined up nonetheless.

At this point, you can see the fear in most of the recruits' eyes and faces. All trying to hold as much bearing as possible. The Senior Drill Instructor is still pacing the hall, then he stops at the end where his hut is located. He knocks on the hut's door and says softly, "Get them!" All of a sudden, three men run out screaming, it is all out hell. All three in the same uniform as the Senior Drill Instructor. One is about 6 feet 5 inches and has the body of a Greek sculptured god. I'd describe him as the scariest looking mother fucker I have ever seen. The second guy is around 6 foot even and a muscular build, not as big as the first but still intimidating. The third is a short black man. He is probably around 5 feet 5 inches. Almost midget looking, but built for his size. All three men were running around causing complete and utter pandemonium. Slingshotting footlockers, knocking recruits over, spitting on their faces, I swear I just saw the big one throwing a recruit over one of the top bunks for grinning. What I can't figure out is why this one recruit in front of me keeps making weird funny faces at me. Is he trying to screw my bearing up so I get noticed? Is he trying to make me laugh? But he is noticed by a midsize drill instructor or what the big one calls them, a kill hat. The midsize drill instructor runs over to the kid making faces and screams in a weird voice, "What the fuck are you doing with your fucking face, recruit? What the fuck, are you doing, with your face, recruit?" The recruit stutters some words explaining himself, but the kill hat stops him half way with a chop to the throat. "You better hope you

never get my attention again recruit, or I'll fucking kill you. AHHHHHHH-HHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!" I look over to the front of the room with my eyes, not my head, though, to seem less suspicious, and I see the short kill hat stacking two foot lockers together in front of the two tall twin recruits. These kids have to be like 6 feet 7 or 8 inches. He stacks these two foot tall foot lockers on top of each other and stands on them just to yell at these kids in the face. In my mind, this is hilarious. This whole event seems funny as hell to me. I don't know if it is just because I haven't been targeted yet, but all this mayhem that may be scarring some of these kids for life just seems like a big joke to me.

The midsize kill hat looks over to me and notices my eyes glaring around. He creeps up on my left as if I don't see him coming. I ready myself for the crazy shit that is about to come upon me. He comes over, puts his face next to mine and whispers in my ear, "You want to see something truly funny?" I'm speechless and don't answer the question as I figure it is just a trap. He nods his head and goes to the weird looking recruit next to me. This kid looks like he just hit puberty, he is skinny and tall, pimples everywhere, even on his head where he was just shaved yesterday. All in all I feel bad for him, but I truly want to see something funny so I watch as the kill hat makes his way to him after promising me something funny to happen. He stares down the kid and tells him without any break in his bearing, "Piss your pants." I snicker but catch myself immediately as the kill hat snaps his head at me as if to tell me to shut the fuck up. The kid replies, "Sir, what?" The kill hat yells, "Piss your fucking pants and never fucking say what to me again or I'll throw you out that fucking window." The kid replies, "SIR, YES, SIR!" and liquid begins to drip down his pant leg. The kill hat quickly snaps to me and states, "Fucking funny, right?" Then he walks to his next victims down the hall.