

KILLING BAD STANLEY

Written by

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INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

MELVIN (48) appears in front of the camera on his computer.

Melvin tends to alternate between being highly animated and then more subdued.

He's an intelligent thinking man but without the fancy manners of the educated class.

He speaks to the camera.

MELVIN

(enthusiastically)

He-ey everybody! How you doo-innn?  
M-m-e-lvin R. Stemmler here, coming  
to you from, beyond the grave?  
Maybe. Could be. That's why I'm  
making this video, in case I'm not  
around to answer the question, why?  
That's what everybody's going to  
want to know, why? Why did he do  
it? So given the possibility that I  
won't be able to answer that  
question later, I'm going to try to  
answer that question as I go along  
here. So you're probably wondering  
what it is I'm planning on doing.  
Well, let me give you a hint.

Melvin reaches to his right and picks up a handgun off-camera.

He brings it up next to his face.

His face erupts in shock.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

A-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-h!

He holds out the gun to the camera showing it at several angles.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

(high voice)

That's right. I bought a gun-n-n.  
At a gun-n-n show.

(regular voice)

They asked me for some I.D. but I  
said I didn't have any. So they  
asked me if I had any money. I told  
them that I had some cash. They  
said that would be fine. And now  
I've got a gun. Pretty good huh?

Melvin admires the gun turning it around in his hand.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So what might I be planning to do with this here gun? Am I going to take up competitive shooting as a sport?

Melvin looks like he's considering his own question.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

No. That's not the plan. The plan is I'm going to use this gun to follow through on a decision I made last week. Now this decision was not an easy one. Not at all. I agonized over this question for weeks before finally coming to a resolution. It was the hardest decision I've ever had to make in my life. So what did I decide?

Melvin takes a deep breath to prepare himself to say this.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I decided to kill someone. Now before you go rushing to judgment, I want you to hear out my story so that you can understand why I chose to do this. Can you do that?

Melvin looks into the camera as though he's expecting a response.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I hope so, because this is no simple murder story. This is complicated. Very complicated.

Melvin nods his head as though agreeing with himself.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So who is this person I'm planning to kill? It's a special person to me. It's my best bud Stanley Hudson. Is this sounding crazy to you? Why would someone want to kill his best bud?

Melvin shakes his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Well, it's a long and tortured story, but the upshot of it is, Stanley's gone over the edge. He's become a menace to public safety.

Melvin pauses for a moment to let this sink in.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Now I know what you're thinking. You're thinking that these two fellows must've fallen into dispute about something. Maybe Stanley slept with my wife or some such thing. Well it's not like that. It's nothing like that. Stanley and I are on good terms personally. It's just that he's not himself anymore. He's become a puppet of some people who just want to use him to serve their own ends.

Melvin nods his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

That's right. I've known Stanley since high school and the person he is now is not the person he's been all his life. He's become a spokesperson for what the media calls radical nativism. I don't know much about that, but what I do know is that he's agitating against foreigners. He wants them out of this country.

Melvin shrugs his shoulders.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Why? Well that has to do with Trans Tool, the place that both of us used to work at. Used to be a pretty good place to work back when it was called Baxter Tool. But about ten years ago, Baxters sold the company to some conglomerate. So then we didn't get any wage increase in our contract. Next contract we got a five percent wage cut. Then next contract the company goes out of business. We all lost our jobs. Then a couple months later, the plant opens up again with new employees.

Melvin shakes his head.

Melvin looks to the side, and then back at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
Scuse me a sec. Be right back

Melvin moves off-camera for several seconds.

Melvin re-appears in front of the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
Sorry about that. Just had to take  
that call. So, where was I?

Melvin thinks for a moment.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
Oh yeah, now I remember, the plant  
re-opening with new employees. Well  
let me tell you this did not go  
over well, especially since all of  
the new employees were fureigners,  
from who knows where.

Melvin pauses for effect.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
So lots of people were grumbling  
about that, myself included, but  
Stanley happened to be the person  
interviewed on the news asking why  
fureigners are coming in here  
taking our jobs.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
Now Stanley wasn't any kind of  
official spokesperson for the ex-  
employees, but the media kind of  
treated him that way, and so he got  
to acting like he was. One thing  
led to another and some folks  
showed up from out of town offering  
to support Stanley's efforts  
against the fureigners. Yy-u-uh.  
That was the start of it.

Melvin chuckles.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
And it's just been craziness ever  
since.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Now Stanley spends all day sending out anti-fureigner tweets, and he's got a whole slew of followers. I don't know how many, but it's a bunch, and it's people from all over the country. Not just local people. Some people are calling him a working-class hero. Some people are calling him a racist dog, but those are all city folk sitting in their mansions looking down on working folks, or in our case, former working folks. It can get kind of ugly at times, all the accusations flying back and forth. But none of it seems to bother Stanley any. He gets right in there and hurls accusations with the best of them.

Melvin shakes his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So, I guess at this point it doesn't make any sense that I'd want to kill him, when he's fighting for folks like me who just want to have a decent job. But there's more to the story than that.

Melvin looks solemn.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

See, the problem is, you can only badmouth fureigners for so long before people start expecting you to take it to the next level. And what is the next level? Well, that would be confrontation. And that's exactly what Stanley is up to now. He started by trying to block the entry of the fureigners into the factory. That worked for a bit, and some television cameras showed up to cover it, but then the police showed up and arrested Stanley and some of his boys. Then there was a restraining order and after that Stanley had to come up with a new tactic. So what did he do?

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Well he started going out to where the foreigners live in a big trailer camp, and firing shots into some of the un-occupied trailers.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

How crazy is that? That brought the police around again. So Stanley had to start making public appearances, to give himself an alibi, while some of his boys were out shooting up trailers. That worked for a while until someone got wounded by a stray bullet, and then they had to cut that out because public opinion turned against it.

Melvin sighs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So for a while it looked like things were going to settle down, and then there was the beating. Some locals cornered one of these foreigners and pounded on him for a while. That should've brought Stanley to his senses but instead he told everyone that these hooligans were heroes.

Melvin looks incredulous.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

That's when I got really concerned. I couldn't believe that my pal Stanley was saying this kind of thing. So I went to talk to him, and it did not go well. He accused me of siding with them. When I asked him who they were, he yelled at me, all enraged, saying it's all of them that are against us.

Melvin looks pained.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I didn't know what to say against that, so I didn't say nuthin. I mean, what was I supposed to say?

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Hey Stanley, don't you think you're showing some of the typical warning signs of impending paranoia? That would've gone over well.

Melvin shakes his head emphatically to make it clear he's being facetious.

Melvin looks off-screen and then back at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Damn, it's the phone again. I need to take this. Be right back.

Melvin moves off-camera for several seconds.

Melvin re-appears in front of the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Sorry about that. There'll be no more interruptions. I promise. So, where was I?

Melvin thinks for a moment.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Oh right, Stanley's paranoia. So at that point I knew I was dealing with a different beast. This was not normal Stanley. In all the years that I've known him, he never got all mad-dog like that. He might as well been foaming at the mouth. That's how worked up he was. Like a mad dog foaming at the mouth.

Melvin mimics some foaming sounds.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I'm not sure that's what a mad dog foaming at the mouth sounds like, because truth be told, I've never actually seen one, but that's what I figure it's like... So anyway, when I saw Stanley get all mouth foamy, I knew he wasn't his-self, and that's when I started to get down and dirty worried. Up until that point I'd been concerned, but I didn't think there was that much to worry about. I'd thought he'd fuss for a bit, and then get over it, and then everything would get back to normal.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Right then and there I knew that normal wasn't coming back any time soon. Like never. Ever. Say salong normal, won't be seeing you again.

Melvin sighs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

It was a sad day for me. I was losing a friend. That's a sad thing. It's like he died, except it's worse, because he's not dead, he's just dead to me. It hit me hard.

Melvin pauses looking sad.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So I thought that was the end of the story between Stanley and me. I thought I'd just have to get along without him, and eventually I wouldn't give him much of any thought. That's how things went for a bit, and then he got invited to go on a speaking tour. Huh?

Melvin looks around as though he's lost.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Stanley Hudson giving speeches? I can tell you Stanley's not much for speeches. In grade nine when he had to give a speech, he spoke for fifty-nine seconds on the topic of holes. I can't remember what my speech was about but I sure can remember his. I remember him saying that the Grand Canyon was the largest hole, and the nostrils of a crayfish he figured were the smallest holes. He got full marks for having an original topic, but the teacher said he was a little short on length. Does that sound like a man who's destined to go on a speaking tour?

Melvin looks into the camera as though he's expecting a response.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I dare say not. But he did it. It was organized by whoever it was who was giving him all this money. They wrote the speeches for him, and good thing that. I shudder to think what a speech would sound like if Stanley was to write it himself.

Melvin shakes his head to indicate not good.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

From what I've heard though, the speeches were pretty convincing. They didn't sound all fancy pants like they was written by some Madison Avenue advertising company. They sounded like stuff folks would say, except meaner. Inflammatory is what the media called them. That was what they were saying at first. After a while they just called them hate speeches.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

That too was a sad day. It pained me to see my friend being called a hate-monger when I knew that he was better than that. Problem is, after one of his speeches, a bunch of boys went out and caused a ruckus, and after all the dust settled, two people were dead. Bad business. So Stanley's handlers canceled the rest of his speeches, but he took a lot of flack in the media. A lot.

Melvin nods his head for emphasis.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So I thought that might learn him, and he did keep a low profile for a bit, but it didn't last. Now's he's talking about leading some protest marches and giving some more speeches.

Melvin looks to the camera as though he's pleading for an explanation.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So, this is how I arrived at the decision to kill him. I figure it's not only the right choice for society, but it's the right choice for Stanley too.

Melvin looks like he's doubting his own words.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

The right choice for Stanley, is death? What kind of discombobulated logic is that? Am I engaging in some kind of self-deception here to try to placate my troubled conscience? I do not think so. I truly believe that Stanley needs to be rescued from his own bad behavior, and the only way of doing that is by offing him. That is the decision that I arrived at, after great deliberation, and so here we are.

Melvin holds up the gun.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Melvin R. Stemmler, signing off for now.

The screen goes black for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

The camera opens on Melvin's smirking face.

MELVIN

Hey there. Me again. So I was thinking about my plan, and it occurred to me, that I'd never actually discharged a firearm. I've seen it done on television a million times, and it looks pretty easy. Point the thing and pull the trigger. Instructions not too complicated, but then I reminded myself that everything looks easier on television than it really is. So I decided that it would be a good idea to get a bit of instruction on firearm operation. Can't hurt, right?

Melvin looks to the camera for confirmation.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So there's a couple of shooting places in town, and I couldn't resist the one called Gun Nutz, spelled with a zee.

Melvin shrugs sheepishly.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Was I deliberately looking for trouble? No, I just thought it might be the most interesting one. Turns out my instincts were right on this one. Todd, the owner of the place, Mister Gun Nutz if you will, was my instructor and he had plenty to say, about everything. I won't bore you with the whole of his commentary, but I'd like to share some of his relevant remarks. Seems he's a big supporter of Stanley. Says Stanley understands. Stanley gets it. Sucker that I am, I couldn't help asking what it is that Stanley gets. Well Mister Nutz looked at me as though I had some kind of mental deficiency.

Melvin mimics Mister Nutz's look.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

After he recovered his composure, he went on to explain that Stanley knows that we're in for the fight of our lives. Now, not wanting to risk another one of Mister Nutz's withering glares, I resisted the urge to ask who it is we're fighting. As it turns out, it wasn't necessary to ask any more questions in order to get Mister Nutz to hold forth on all his beliefs.

Melvin gives a big grin.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So at length I got to hear about how we're going to have to fight to hold on.

(MORE)

## MELVIN (CONT'D)

It seems that there are un-named parties out there who want to come in here and take away everything we've got. And once they do that, they'll just turn us into slaves. When asked if that's what I want, I was able to honestly answer a hearty no. It felt good to have the two of us on the same side on that issue. At that point Mister Nutz started to warm up to me. He commended me for taking the initiative to get myself prepared for the coming fight. I assured him that I would do all that I could to fulfill my duty. He was pleased to hear that because he said there's no shortage of people in denial. Lots of people sticking their head in the sand. Lots of people calling him and Stanley and other prophets, all sorts of foul names. He advised me that it's no easy thing standing up for yourself in this country. I nodded to indicate that I understand. He told me that all sorts of powerful folks out there want us to just lay down and let them run over us. This kind of talk went on for some time before there was finally a brief break. I took advantage of that break to ask him if he'd ever killed anyone. He looked at me as though I was acting suspicious.

Melvin mimics Mister Nutz's suspicious look.

## MELVIN (CONT'D)

Why would you ask something like that he asked. I said no reason, just curious. I think that kind of killed the mood. Maybe he was suspecting that I was some kind of undercover law enforcement officer. He kind of stopped talking after that and we just did the shooting lesson. Turns out it's not much more complicated than it looks. Point the thing and pull the trigger. You just have to be ready for the kickback, that's all. So, now I'm ready to shoot.

Melvin mimics a shooting motion with his hand.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Oh yeah, one more thing about Mister Nutz. On my way out he advised me to stock up on as many guns as I can get, so that when the big showdown happens, I'll be able to return some fire. And then, even though I shouldn't have, I asked him how many guns I'd need to survive the big showdown. He said, oh it doesn't matter, no amount of guns will save you. Everyone's going to take a bullet. The important thing is that you go down with your guns blazing. It's the only honorable way out. At that point I didn't want to ask any more questions. I just nodded, thanked him for his advice, and got out of there as quickly as I could.

Melvin turns off the camera and the screen goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin appears in front of the camera.

MELVIN

Hey everyone! How you doo-innn?  
Melvin back at ya with more of my story. I have to confess that I'm feeling sort of lonely in my mission. Some times when I'm out, I feel the urge to walk up to a person and just announce that I'm planning a murder. I don't know why I want to do that. Obviously it's not a bright boy idea. But then again, I'm not sure anyone would believe me. Folks might just think that I was making some sick attempt at humor. And if I tried to explain that it's my best friend I'm planning to kill, I don't think that would help my credibility any. So obviously I'm not going to do that, but man is it a powerful urge.

Melvin shakes his head for emphasis.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Yy-u-uh. Some times I can barely hold it in. It might be my conscience trying to get me to turn myself in before it's too late, but it doesn't feel like conscience. It feels more like pride. It feels more like I want folks to know what I'm doing. I don't feel like it's a shameful thing. I want to say what I'm doing and hear folks say, good for you. And that's what they should say. I'm doing this to make the world a better place, and there's no shame in that. I'm doing this to save my friend from his worst self, and there's no shame in that either.

Melvin looks solemn.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So-o-o-o-o. I had a problem. I really did want to discuss this with someone, but I couldn't do so directly without implicating myself in this upcoming crime. So here's what I did. I sought out the one friend I have who I would consider to be in a position to provide moral guidance. In order not to implicate him, I'll refer to him as Judas Guy, for reasons that will soon become apparent. He's what I'd call a mashup of different spiritual approaches. He's kind of a Presbyterian, Buddhist, Animist mix, if that makes any sense. Probably not. So this is the question that I came up with to ask him, in the hope that it would be relevant to my situation.

Melvin pauses to take a deep breath.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

What I asked him is, would it be morally acceptable to have killed Hitler, in order to prevent all of the terrible atrocities perpetrated by the Nazis? I was a little worried that I might be giving myself away with the question.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I don't know what I would've said if he'd asked me who I'm planning to kill. I would've been super flabbergasted if he'd seen right through me, and asked if I was planning on killing Stanley, on account of him turning into a mini-Hitler.

Melvin grimaces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Fortunately, none of this happened. It was taken as an abstract question, without any direct bearing on my present situation.

Melvin gives a grateful look.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So everything was going good until I got my answer. And what was the wisdom that this well-read thoughtful man dished out to me? He told me to ask myself, what would Judas do in this situation? For a second, I thought I didn't hear him right, and then I realized that he has just mis-spoken, accidentally saying Judas instead of Jesus.

Melvin looks to the camera as though to say "obviously".

MELVIN (CONT'D)

But when I said to him, don't you mean what Jesus would do, not what Judas would do, he assured me that he fully intended to say Judas, not Jesus.

Melvin looks confused.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Fortunately he noticed my confusion and was kind enough to provide an explanation. The reason he said to ask what Judas would do, is because Judas is us. Judas was just a regular guy with problems like we all have. In fact he likely had more than his fair share of woe. Good chance he came from a broken home.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Wouldn't be surprising if his old man had a drinking problem, or that Judas had inherited the same condition. Judas understood the struggles that we all have, and he tried to do his best, even though he wasn't always up to the task. This was a whole new perspective on Judas for me. It definitely gave me something to think about.

Melvin strikes a thinking pose.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So think I did, and the more I thought about it, the less sense it made. What would Judas do? Judas would just screw up. That's who he was, a screw-up. Is that what my Judas-guy was saying to me, that I'm just a screw-up? Well if that's what he thinks, then he's out to lunch. I'm no screw-up, and this is no screw-up plan. I know what I'm doing, but I just wish I could tell someone about it.

Melvin thinks for a few moments.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I guess that's what I'm doing here.

Melvin turns off the camera.

The screen goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Melvin appears in front of the camera.

MELVIN

Howdy folks. Melvin back at ya with the latest installment of the Bad Stanley saga. Now this is going to strike you as a strange thing to do, but I went and did it anyway. What I did was go to see Stanley's Mom.

Melvin is taken aback by his own words.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So why would I do that? What was I hoping to accomplish by talking to her? I honestly don't know. I was kind of thinking maybe she might have some insight on what's making Stanley so crazy.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I mean, it's possible, right? She's his Mom, so she'd know about all the dysfunctional stuff that happened at home, you know, the kind of stuff that twists a person's psyche. Assuming there was any of that kind of thing. I don't know.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Supposedly, if you believe the experts, there's always some kind of childhood trauma lurking beneath the surface in cases like this. I don't buy it myself. Stanley always seemed completely normal to me. But you never know, sometimes there's stuff people keep hidden away.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So anyway, it was kind of a desperate mission. The only thing I knew for sure, was that I wasn't going over there to tell her that I was planning on killing her only son.

Melvin grins as though this should be obvious.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So I guess I was kind of hoping that somehow, she'd come to Stanley's rescue. Unfortunately, that was not to be. She wasn't in the rescuing mood, to put it mildly.

Melvin shakes his head woefully.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Nope. She is not pleased with Stanley. The way she tells it, he's turning into his deceased Father.

Melvin whistles.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

That is un-good. Real un-good. See, Stanley's Dad, when he got older, he got real cranky. He wasn't like that when he was younger, but the older he got, the madder he got, about everything.

Melvin chuckles.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Yuh. I mean about everything. There was nuthin that didn't make Stanley's Dad mad. You just had to steer clear of him, if you knew what was good for ya. Mostly, that's what Stanley did, but of course there were times when he couldn't avoid the old man, and it always ended up in a big kerfuffle.

Melvin shakes his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I always felt sorry for Stanley, having to deal with that and all. I know he wanted to be on good terms with his old man, like they was when he was young. It pained him that his Dad turned into such a prick. Right up to the very end, I think Stanley was secretly hoping for some kind of reconciliation with the old bastard, but it never happened.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

What can you do?

Melvin looks lost for a moment.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So why am I talking about this? Oh yeah, because Stanley's Mom said he's turning into his old man.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Yeah, I knew it wouldn't please Stanley to hear that, and I started thinking that maybe hearing that from his Mother might bring him to his senses.

Melvin looks hopefully at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So I asked her if she'd told Stanley that he's turning into his old man. She looked at me like I was an idiot.

Melvin tries to demonstrate Stanley's Mom's look.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Of course I did, she said. He needs to hear it, because it's the truth. Then she didn't say anything more. So I asked her how he took that. She looked at me like I was an idiot again.

Melvin demonstrates the idiot look again.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

And then she said, Melvin, are you trying to be stupid? How do you think he took that? Of course he rejected the idea without giving it a moment's thought. Same way his old man would've.

Melvin chuckles.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I had to chuckle. That seemed a little ironic to me. She asked me what was so funny, but I didn't want to try to explain it, so I just said, nuthin. Then I told her I was sure that Stanley would come to his senses eventually. She looked at me like I was an idiot again, and said, not likely. Then she just walked away.

Melvin sighs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I don't know if I did the right thing by lying to her or not.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I sure do not believe that Stanley's coming to his senses any time soon. Not unless someone knocks some sense into him, and I have no idea who might be the man for that job. It's sure not me.

Melvin looks frustrated.

The screen goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Melvin appears in front of the camera.

MELVIN

Hey everybody! How you doo-innn? I know I left everyone with a bit of a cliffhanger last time, wondering who might be the man to knock some sense into Stanley's thick head. Well, I got a brainstorm, and when I did, I thought my problems were over. I'd thought I'd found the one person who could turn Stanley around and spare me the awful task of having to kill him. Boy was I happy.

Melvin nods enthusiastically.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I cannot emphasize how much I want to find a way out of this predicament I'm in. I need you people to believe that. I am not a killer. I wish only the best for Stanley, and I am determined to do everything I can to avoid solving this problem with a bullet. So help me God.

Melvin looks sternly at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So anyway, I went to see Stanley's childhood hero, Dave Capson. Dave was a year older than we were, and he was real good at every sport. All the kids in our neighborhood looked up to Dave. I figured Dave was someone Stanley would listen to.

Melvin smirks at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

It was a good plan. I did not explain to Dave that I needed his help in order to avoid having to kill Stanley.

Melvin grimaces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

However, I did explain that I was worried about Stanley, and afraid that something bad might happen to him if he continues on his present course. At this point, Dave gives me this long hard look.

Melvin demonstrates Dave's look.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

This goes on for about twenty seconds before Dave finally says, now Melvin, I'm sure I can trust you to keep this between us.

Melvin looks wary.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I had no idea why I would need to be keeping anything secret, but I said sure, just between us.

Melvin moves his finger back and forth toward the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Dave still looked a little uneasy, but then I guess he decided he could trust me. So he says, Melvin, I know you and Stanley have been friends forever, so I'm sure that you have his best interests at heart. I assured him that I did.

Melvin gives two thumbs up.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

That's when he told me that what Stanley's doing isn't pretty. I agreed. Then came the shocker. He told me it isn't pretty, but it's about time someone stood up to say, enough is enough.

A look of consternation on Melvin's face.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Knock me over with a feather. I didn't know what to say, so I just said, you think so? At that point Dave admitted that Stanley goes a little overboard.

Melvin nods his head vigorously.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

But he thinks Stanley has the right idea. And furthermore, he knows a lot of other people who feel the same way. They won't say it in public, but in private, they're cheering Stanley on.

Melvin grimaces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Obviously I was mistaken in thinking Dave was going to be the guy to set Stanley straight.

Melvin shakes his head woefully.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

And that's when I had to face up to the facts - ain't nobody gonna help me with this problem.

Melvin frowns.

The screen goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin appears in front of the camera.

MELVIN

Hey there faithful viewers. I've got a surprise for ya today. So the one person I was not planning on consulting about Stanley, was his ex, Judy. She and Stanley have not been on good terms for some time now. But, as it happens, I ran into her down at the store. Oh oh.

Melvin looks sideways at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So for sure I was not going to bring up the topic of Stanley when I spoke to her. She however did, and right away. She demanded to know if I was in on all this stupid shit that Stanley was up to.

Melvin grimaces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Now I can't say I was surprised by her dim view of Stanley's behavior, but I was a little surprised about her being so aggressive about it. So first off, I assured her that I was in no way involved with anything Stanley was doing. She commended me for that.

Melvin grins.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Now I should've left it at that, and been on my way, but my curiosity got the better of me, so I had to ask her why she thought Stanley was doing all this. At that point she looked at me like I was an idiot.

Melvin demonstrates the idiot look.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Same look as Stanley's Mom gave me. Then she says, isn't it obvious? He's trying to get back at me.

Melvin grimaces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I didn't know what to say. My mind was racing trying to figure out what she meant, but it wasn't making any sense. At that point I should've just nodded, and been on my way, but my damn curiosity raised its ugly head again, and so I asked her, how's he trying to get back at you? I don't think I have to tell you what happened next. That's right, the idiot look. You know it by now.

Melvin smiles and nods at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So once she got that look out of her system, she went on to explain that Stanley's trying to make her sorry that she dumped him, by showing her what a big shot he is now.

Melvin looks pensive.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I have to admit, this was a new perspective for me. Now not wanting to be on the receiving end of another idiot look, I decided to venture my own guess as to the answer to my next question. So I said, but you don't think he's a big shot, do you? Of course not, she said. He's just an asshole.

Melvin winces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

At that point I figured I had a pretty good handle on how Judy felt about Stanley, so I didn't see the need to ask any more questions. Then just as I was about to break off our conversation, she looked me straight in the eye, and said, someone should just shoot his crazy ass.

Melvin's eyes go wide.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

At first I just froze. I thought she was on to me, but then I realized there was no way she could be. So I said to her, now Judy, that's no way to talk. That's the kind of thing Stanley would say. She didn't like hearing that, but she agreed that it was not an appropriate thing to say. She should've stopped talking at that point, but she just couldn't help herself. She just had to get one more comment in.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So she says, shooting him would be a crime, but still, it'd be doing him a favor, by sparing him from his own miserable self.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I did not know what to say, so I didn't say anything, and eventually, she just walked away without saying another word.

Melvin gives a big sigh.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So after that, I got to thinking that maybe Stanley's motives for all this carrying on, are not in fact admirable. Maybe he's not the well-intentioned person who just got carried away. Maybe he's pushing the limits on purpose, for no other reason than to make himself look and feel like a bigshot. If that's the case, then I'd feel a lot more justified about what I'm considering.

Melvin looks thoughtfully into the camera.

The screen goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin appears in front of the camera wide-eyed.

MELVIN

Howdy folks. Anyone out there an expert in dream analysis? I could use some help with one I had last night. I've been thinking about it all day trying to figure out what the message is in it.

Melvin holds up his hands to indicate pushing people back.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Now don't get the wrong idea here. I'm not one of those people who goes around making decisions based on what happens in a dream. Uh uh.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

But, at the same time, I do believe that they are an indication of our subconscious concerns.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So, in the dream, Stanley was giving one of his speeches. His message was, 'I am not a racist'. He kept saying this. There was a crowd of people there, and they were all booing him, and shaking their fists at him.

Melvin makes a fist-shaking gesture.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Stanley kept protesting that he wasn't a racist. He blamed the media. He claimed the media was trying to smear him. But the crowd kept booing and shaking their fists.

Melvin makes another fist-shaking gesture.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Then he accused the media of making up fake news. He tried to get the crowd going on a fake news chant, but it didn't work.

Melvin shakes his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Then all of a sudden, Stanley had a shotgun, and he was threatening to blow his own head off. The crowd started cheering for him to do it.

Melvin grimaces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Then his ex Judy was in the crowd, and she was cheering the loudest. It was grim.

Melvin winces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

The next thing was the weirdest part of it all, because I started chanting for Stanley not to do it.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Don't do it! Don't do it Stanley, I kept saying. And then I woke up.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So what do you figure that all means? Pretty strange huh?

Melvin thinks for a moment.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

At first I thought that maybe Stanley wants me to kill him. Maybe that's why he was threatening to kill himself. But then it occurred to me that that would only make sense if it was Stanley's dream, not mine.

Melvin shrugs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

As you can see, I'm no expert in dream analysis.

Melvin smirks.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So after thinking about it a little more, I came to ask the obvious question, why was I urging Stanley not to do it, kill himself that is.

Melvin looks perplexed.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

At first I thought it was because I didn't want Stanley to die. So at that point I was thinking that my subconscious was sending me a clear message, not to do it, kill him that is.

Melvin looks uneasy.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

But, the more I thought about it, the more I started to wonder if there isn't another explanation. A darker one.

Melvin winces.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
I started to wonder if I wanted  
Stanley not to kill himself,  
because I wanted to do it instead,  
kill him that is.

Melvin shakes his head woefully.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
That is not good. That suggests  
that maybe my motive here isn't  
right. Maybe I have some hostility  
toward him that I'm not admitting  
to.

Melvin looks beseechingly into the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
Maybe I'm not really doing this to  
save Stanley from his worst self.  
Maybe I'm lying when I say I'm  
doing this for the right reasons.

Melvin looks troubled.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
The last thing I want to do is  
justify this thing with a lie.

Melvin sighs.

MELVIN (CONT'D)  
Looks like I've got some soul-  
searching to do.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin's somber-looking visage appears on screen.

MELVIN  
Hey folks. Melvin again, with some  
disappointing news. Looks like I  
can't do it. I can't kill Stanley.  
I thought about what Judas would do  
in this situation, and I came to  
the conclusion that Judas would do  
it. He would kill Stanley, and I  
don't want to be a Judas. I think  
that's what my Judas friend was  
trying to get me to see. Ask what  
Judas would do, and then don't do  
that. Remember, Judas was not the  
hero of that story.

Melvin nods his head confirming his own words.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I can't tell you how disappointed I am with myself over this. I fought against it, and I fought hard. I called myself a coward, and that didn't feel good. Cowardice is a poor reason for not killing someone. I'll admit I'm afraid, but I don't think I'm a coward. That's not it.

Melvin shakes his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

And it's not an issue with my motives. I've given that some thought, and decided my heart is pure on this one. I'm doing this for the reason I say I'm doing it, dreams be damned.

Melvin cocks his head at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

No, it's more about arrogance than about cowardice. It just started to feel arrogant to be taking it upon myself to pass judgment on another person's life. I mean, sure we all pass judgment on each other, but those judgments don't come with a death sentence. That's the problem. We're talking about killing someone I've known and liked for decades. I think I'd have to have a real rot in my soul to be able to do something like that. The more I thought about it, the more images of Stanley would flash through my mind. I still think he needs to be stopped, but surely I'm not the person to do it.

Melvin looks to the camera for confirmation.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I should be the last person to be doing this. The job should fall to some professional assassin who has no personal connection to the victim. That's how you kill someone.

Melvin looks down and shakes his head.

He looks back at the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So this whole thing has just been  
... I don't know what. Stupid I  
guess. Yeah, that's probably the  
only way to describe it. Just plain  
stupid.

Melvin stares silently at the camera for a few seconds.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Well, I guess we're done here then.

The screen goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin leans his head in sideways in front of the camera and close to it.

MELVIN

I'm ba-a-a-a-a-a-a-ck!

Melvin sits down in the chair in front of the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Good news everyone! I've resolved  
my dilemma. Of course I can't kill  
Stanley. It was foolish to ever  
think that I could. And I don't  
want to kill Stanley. Why would I  
want to kill Stanley? Stanley's not  
the problem. The problem is a  
completely different person, and  
that person is ... it's Bad  
Stanley! Think about it. I don't  
want to get rid of all of Stanley,  
just the bad parts. So that's what  
I'm going to do. I'm going to kill  
Bad Stanley. Now I'm not delusional  
here. I understand that regular  
Stanley and Bad Stanley share the  
same body. So what does that mean?  
Unfortunately that means there's  
going to be some collateral damage.  
It's regrettable, but unavoidable,  
so there's no point getting worked  
up about it. And I'm not. I'm not  
even thinking about it.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

All I'm thinking about is getting rid of Bad Stanley. Yesterday this mission seemed hopeless, and today I'm good to go. How great is that?

Melvin looks to the camera as though expecting a response.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I'll tell you how great it is. It's greatly great. Finally I have a way through and there's no turning back now.

Melvin looks exultant.

The screen goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin's somber visage appears on the screen.

MELVIN

I'm not sure what I was thinking yesterday. I mean seriously, Bad Stanley? Who am I kidding? There's only one Stanley. Some of him is bad and some of him is good, and there's no way of separating the good from the bad. And there is good in there. I remember about ten years ago Stanley helped raise money for a family from South America whose house had burned down. Obviously he wouldn't do that kind of thing now, but the Stanley who did that, is still in there with Bad Stanley.

Melvin looks sad.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I just wish there was some other way. I'm mean, when I read one of Stanley's tweets where he said that we'd all be better off dead than letting foreigners take over, I thought, I have to do something, but what can I do other than killing him? I know I can't reason with him.

(MORE)

## MELVIN (CONT'D)

He gets more unreasonable every day, and with his follow-monkeys cheering him on, there's nothing I can say to get through to him. If I can't kill him, I'm going to have to come up with some way of tricking him into giving this up. Any suggestions?

Melvin looks at the camera as though there might be a response.

The camera goes blank for several seconds.

## INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin leans in sideways in front of the camera and close to it.

## MELVIN

I'm ba-a-a-a-a-a-ck! Again!

Melvin sits down in front of the camera.

## MELVIN (CONT'D)

This time it's for real. Just wait till you hear this. So, I'd come to the realization that I can't kill any Stanleys, bad or otherwise, but I figured out who can. This should've been obvious to me as soon as I had the Bad Stanley revelation, but it took a while to come to me. The person who can kill Bad Stanley is obviously ... of course, who else? Ba-ad Melvin! He can do it.

Melvin nods into the camera excitedly.

## MELVIN (CONT'D)

Now don't get the idea that I'm going crazy here. This isn't some crazy person thing. This is the peak of rational thinking. What I'm doing is separating some of my undesirable behavior, and assigning it to an alternate personality that will exist for that purpose. That is, for the purpose of containing any aspects of myself that I don't like.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

The part of me that is a killer can go into Bad Melvin, and that way it won't contaminate Good Melvin. Makes sense, right?

Melvin looks into the camera doubtfully.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Well I think it does, and I'm sticking with it, because it works for me.

Melvin ponders for a few moments.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So this is it. No more wavering. No more backing out. Bad Melvin is going to do this, and it's going to be a bad day for Bad Stanley. Count on it! It's my duty as Stanley's best friend to do this, and I intend to do my duty.

Melvin looks resolute.

The camera goes blank for several seconds.

INT. MELVIN'S ROOM - DAY

Melvin's wide-eyed face appears close to the camera.

MELVIN

We done it! Me and the little lady.

Melvin shows the gun to the camera.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

The most terrifying experience of my life. I couldn't stop my heart from racing. I thought for sure Stanley would sense my panic, but he didn't. I had to do it fast, or I knew I wouldn't do it at all. He turned around for a moment, and I pulled out my gun, and I said this is for your own good. As he was turning back toward me, I fired into the side of his head. I didn't want to wait until he had a chance to look at me, because then I thought I wouldn't be able to do it. He dropped to the floor immediately.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I didn't know if I should shoot him a second time to make sure he was dead, and then I heard his goon running down the stairs toward me with his gun out. I didn't really have any choice. I shot him in the chest, and then one in the head. Then I ran out of the house. When I got outside I walked casually away. Once it was over, it seemed way too easy. It shouldn't be that easy, really it shouldn't.

Melvin looks lost for a few moments.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

So, Bad Stanley's gone now. I've done what I said I would do.

Melvin thinks for a moment.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Now what?

Melvin thinks some more.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Am I supposed to go back to living a regular life now? I don't see how's that possible, assuming I don't end up in prison.

Melvin thinks.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Even if I don't end up in prison, I'll just be in my own prison anyway.

More thoughts.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Maybe I should just kill myself. That'd be justice.

Melvin puts the gun in his mouth.

Then he takes it out of his mouth.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

No, I don't want to seem like a crazy person. Because I'm not. I'm completely sane. You people know that.

(MORE)

MELVIN (CONT'D)

You've seen me debate this issue.  
You know I didn't take this  
decision lightly. It was done for  
good reason. I still believe that.

Melvin looks as though he's questioning his last statement.

He nods his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

Yeah, I do. I still believe it. It  
was done for good reason. I'm a  
murderer now. I've done a terrible  
thing, but it was still the right  
thing to do. If I go to the chair,  
that's fine, I won't change my  
mind. It was the right thing to do.

Melvin thinks.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

I guess they don't use the chair  
anymore. It's just a needle now.  
How degrading is that? Death by a  
needle. You die like a junkie.

Melvin looks chagrined.

He shakes his head.

MELVIN (CONT'D)

(woefully)  
Like a junkie.

Melvin stares morosely into the camera.

After several seconds the screen goes blank.

FADE OUT.