



# MY HOME INVASION

**A first person account to the unexpected**

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### **EDC, Tactical, Offensive or Defensive “mindset”**

We all carry guns, knives and/or impact devices for one reason or another. Home defense, though many would consider all the above and protecting your family and assets two of the same, in many instances...they couldn't be furthest from each other. How many times have you



thought to yourself; “I wish someone would break into my house, so I can leave them laying in the foyer”. We have, and if you say you haven't, revisit the question and think long and hard about your answer.

Whether it be military or law enforcement training or a defense class that you have taken, we can say that, personally, virtually all scenarios have been thought about and most have been sketched out into a notebook. When all is said, and done, the fact of the matter is this...when an invasion happens it's not all gunfights and hooking and jabbing like you planned. In many instances, it's the exact opposite.

### **It Actually Happened**

Our great friend and ReadyMan co-founder Jason Ross experienced a scenario that essentially left him and his family back on their heels. Completely caught off guard, Jason, members of his immediate and extended family and a few friends were eating dinner when an unexpected (and uninvited) guest joined them. He walked into their house as if it were his own, and at the drop of a dime; Jason was standing face to face with someone who set out to invade the very sanctity of their home and privacy.

Training kicked in for Jason, but it wasn't the type that he has gained through his countless hours of being on the range with us practicing target discrimination, front site acquisition to a controlled trigger press. It was everything leading up to, that de-escalated the situation and ultimately preserved life and traumatic experience for those who are not conditioned to witness death on the short order.

### **The Target**

Every precautionary measure was taken while Jason built his home to ensure physical security. Jason's home as about as hard of a target [in everyday life] as possible. Jason resides in a very nice home on a plot of significant acreage with a gate; a gate so large that it was installed to withstand the impact of a truck with a driver determined to knock it over. Jason's house has enough set back from the beaten path that a passerby would consider it the quintessential “American dream” home. Clad with strategically placed boulders and standoff distances adequate to buy time, penetration to the home was virtually impossible.

At first glance getting past the gate and boulders by vehicle wouldn't be something that we would consider an easy feat. For one man, it was as simple as driving around a couple rocks, through mud and landscaping and up to the door.

Jason has spent a considerable amount of time speaking to, mentoring and being generally involved with the homeless, drug addicts and the mentally ill in and around the area he lives. All clichés aside, his offset, and physical deterrents of his home and family are spun from his humanitarian work. Jason generally loves to help people, but is not naive in knowing that when mental illness and severe addictions are involved with people, they do things; sometimes bad things because they essentially cannot help it.

Jason's home invasion experience didn't involve a mob of people trying to kick his door in, he was not asleep only to be woken by a crash downstairs or dogs barking like many of us imagine an invasion would be. Glass didn't shatter, and Jason and his family didn't fall back to a hard room that was clad in guns, ammo and body armor. Jason, his wife, their two children and a couple of friends were simply sitting at the dinner table. They had all just finished eating and talking about their recent trip to Hawaii.

In a Nano second, there was a man who appeared to be from pacific islander decent. No, not like the stereotypical islander who stretches the tape at 6'6" and 300+ lbs. He's about 5'7 with a decent build...mid 20's max. It just so happened that Jason was sitting at the end of the table facing the intruders point of entry. He had a table full of people again, two of which he was not related. The man standing in front of him was clearly not lost and ended up wandering into a large house, that sat off incorporated roads, an impediment that many would only imagine leading into a facility that housed vital gear or information. Something was out of place...and it was the uninvited man wearing clothing that many would consider "gangster".

7:00 P.M on a Saturday night and Jason is faced with a situation that he had trained for many hours for...The man standing in front of him [we will call him "Harold"] did not make a grand entrance by screaming demands or threatening anyone. Instead he was very calm [assumedly surprised by a house full of people] and informed those who were listening that first he may be in the wrong place and that he had a "message" to deliver. Very calmly, Jason assessed the intruder's hands, and demeanor and asked, "what is the message"? Without missing a beat, Jason's passive adversary spoke about a newborn or baby; nothing of what he said made any sense. Jason had the man pegged for someone with clear mental health issues. Possibly schizophrenic.

### **Actions and Words; there is a difference**

Many of us [in our heads] would like to believe that if we were faced with something like this where a person whom we've never met or seen; with no family or social connections let themselves into our homes, with our children, guests and worldly belongings, unannounced and uninvited would tie up with the intruder whether it be with guns or whatever means necessary to get the guy out. The truth of the matter [when talking about gun fighting] in defensive nature; there is a laundry list of things that need to take place before removing the

slack out of the trigger. Many of us Military types have trained relentlessly on dominating a room, or overwhelming an adversary by force and superior firepower. Doing both is acceptable in far off lands where active wars are as prevalent as the ground we walked on.

If we went through our daily lives and used force to cause “death or serious bodily harm” on anyone who we perceive as a threat without taking necessary steps to de-escalate we are no different than the savages who wreak havoc on the planet. What Jason did with the intruder was simple:

**Assess the Situation:** The intruder’s hands were clear, he didn’t appear to be hiding weapons or have any that would pose immediate danger to anyone at the table. Jason didn’t know if the man was alone, so instead of developing the situation prematurely, he simply asked the man to have a seat at his table; just as if he were an invited guest and offered a plate of food or a drink. The man declined his offer as if there was unfinished business to be had. A lot of the time we train to assess the situation in its entirety without assessing temper and intent of the subject matter. In this case, “temper” [as many would define] is nonexistent. The guy wasn’t mad or agitated, it was clear that he was just as nervous as the occupants of the house who he had just walked into. Intent, as far as Jason was concerned, there wasn’t one, because the man has yet to define it other than to “deliver a message”.

**De – Escalate:** Up to now, everyone is still extremely confused as to what is happening. One second they’re minding their business, carrying on simple conversation and all the sudden a man who nobody has ever seen is standing in front of them rambling about nonsense. Personally, we don’t carry our pistols in our own homes...simply because we don’t need to. Jason is no different, this evening he was immediately behind the curve because other than simple eating utensils, there wasn’t other means of defense at arm’s length. Although the man wasn’t wielding a visible weapon, Jason doesn’t have x-ray vision, its hard telling what is beneath the man’s clothing. “Harold” was offered some wine and promptly declined the offer, but countered with a request for a glass of water.

After one of the ladies grabbed Harold some water, Jason sparked conversation with him just as he did in years past when talking with those that needed an ear to bend. Jason requested that the man tell him about himself [again, to inject some humility to naturally bring tensions closer to level]. The more Harold talked the more Jason realized that he was acting alone, and didn’t have a plan. While de-escalating, Jason was beginning to gain the upper hand in the situation, there were still too many unknowns to sit back and “play it by ear”. As Harold talked, the more Jason was sure that he had serious mental issues and it seemed that some of them were coming to a head at his dinner table. Harold was going back and forth about being crazy, or confused, gay or straight then back to being crazy...after a few more minutes, Harold asked for some food! Things were starting to calm down.

**Mindset:** We have all learned the different conditions of combat mindset and how each are important in understanding survival. Again, no matter experience, or how we perceive

ourselves, as our busy schedules take precedence over what we made a career of, a lot of us find ourselves complacent.

**Condition White: Generally Unaware.** In combat or in a significant emotional event...the worst condition to be in. Today, we would venture to say that 90% of Americans walk around immersed in this condition as they have their faces smashed to the screens of smartphones and tablets. A good example, if you are so wrapped up in a controversy on Facebook a grenade can go off close by and you keep reading comments.

At home, we all are in condition white...why?! Because we are HOME the only place on earth where we do not expect anything to happen our sanctuary. Prior to the man walking into his home, Jason was comfortable and unexpectant of any perceived or direct threat to him or his family.

**Condition Yellow: A relaxed awareness.** This is where everyone *should* be throughout daily life and activities. The first thing to come to grips with is that there are bad people who are determined to do bad things to good people. That is humanity, that is animalistic, almost the true essence of being. Yes, we have evolved and cannot just club someone over the head because we want something of theirs like our primitive ancestors used to. Whatever the situation, the mentally ill and addicts act on instinct and many times are unable to differentiate between right and wrong...much like our ancestor cave dwellers.

We tell people that condition yellow is a mindset to be in if you're in a controlled environment where most of the people around you are acquaintances yet there are still unknowns. We accept the fact that at any point in time a time of euphoria can turn into chaos. Have a plan or the ability to turn it up! In this instance, Jason went from white and blasted right past yellow.

**Condition Orange: Focused Alertness.** Here, we identify threats, or the potential for them. Our state of mind has been triggered through yellow and lands at orange. This is typically when you get the feeling that something could go wrong, yet the hairs aren't quite on end on the back of your neck. Your points of focus have been identified.

Jason blasted past yellow and into orange when the stranger came into his home. He judged temper and intent and has de-escalated the situation as best he could. Through experience Jason can surmise that the man sitting at his table either A) found himself there, out to steal or do harm or B) needed someone to talk to. In either case the focus was 100% on the guy after he realized that there were no other uninvited guests lurking around.

**Condition Red: Ready to Act.** You're ready to execute a plan; whether it be your body's natural reaction to conflict; to fight it out, or run [flight]. Here is where variables and "what ifs" are flooding your train of thought. Some can [and have] become confused and this is typically where the term "froze" comes into account when speaking in terms

of combat application. There is a fine line between acting and ready to act. In condition red, it is crucial to execute the plan that you have previously rehearsed.

While Jason realizes that threats are very real...regardless of time or place, he has practiced and trained extensively on the action piece of thwarting bad guys. Removing self-inflicted variables such as weaponry from *THIS* occasion, his only defense was to calm down and sit between conditions yellow and orange until the opportunity presented itself to get to a firearm.

**Take the Opportunity:** We have all heard the term weapons of opportunity. If you're in a school and cannot carry a gun, use a chair...if you find yourself in an establishment that has posted "no guns" signs...have a blade. Obviously, in any combat scenario whether it be in permissive or austere environments, stack the deck in your favor. The term "never bring a knife to a gunfight" rings true.

During Jason's unexpected visit, he didn't have a gun on him, in fact there wasn't one within arm's length. For the clear majority of the time while engaged with the mentally ill intruder, conversation was the only line of defense. Jason would not leave an already vulnerable family to chance that if he excused himself to get a gun, the intruder wouldn't see it as an opportunity to impose his will onto the house.

When the mystery man in gangster clothes requested food, he asked Jason if he could wash up before he ate. This was it...this was Jason's opportunity to escort the man to the washroom. In doing so, Jason was back at condition orange-ish...Red-ish and executed his plan in strategically placing guns around his house for specific vantage points. By the time the man was done washing up Jason had his Kimber and Bear spray on his person and escorted his guest back to his seat.

While the man across the table still posed no immediate threat to those in the house, the 1911 was pointed at the man under the table as he ate. At this point, Jason felt that further de-escalating was best for the situation. At this point the man just wanted an ear to bend and a meal to eat.

**Stick with Your plan:** When something like this so blatantly presents itself, it is virtually impossible to go back to everyday normalcy. It would almost seem necessary to completely change your way of living around one event. After your home gets violated, you feel betrayed and from that point, trust as you know it looks completely different. Do not let that change the way you live. If you have children...protect their innocence for as long as you can. We are very precautious, as is Jason, however, the first thing when raising children is to educate them, let them know that there are bad people out there, but not *everyone* wants to hurt them. We don't want to raise them up thinking that they live in a fortified castle protected by moats and hypothetical dragons, this often manifests itself into false sense of security once they leave the nest.

Part of devising a plan and sticking with it entail the long-term effects with everyone who lives under your roof. A simple fact that virtually nobody takes into consideration when sketching out a home defense plan. What happens if the worst-case scenario plays out and you must defend your home with deadly force. Days, weeks, months or years pass and will you your wife and most especially your children be able walk by the spot in your home where you Dad (Mom) took another human being's life?

*We can jump up on our hero pulpit and say that just because we have deployed around the world and fought in the GWOT, used guns to make sure we and our teammates returned home to our loved ones that we are completely callused to the idea of taking another human life here in the most sovereign country in the world. We are staying off that pulpit.*

Pertinent to this scenario these emotions flooded Jason's thought process. He has worked his entire life to build his dream home and provide his family with nice things to ensure a comfortable life for those whom he loved. Had Jason's home invasion scenario played out like we [as type A] men think, he...we would be naive to think that there would not be lasting effects. Fast forward, the events that played out have been burnt into the mind's eye and is unshakable. The only viable option; to pack these memories away and leave the dream home and virtually start back at square one with rebuilding life. This was not something Jason was willing to sacrifice unless all lesser means have failed.

Jason's home defense plan was and still is focused on an assault to his home. His subtle but abundant physical security measures are in place from this fact alone. From the iron gate, to strategically placed boulders around his property, they serve a purpose that isn't in your face. We do live in the United States, not Baghdad, Iraq.

Take these things into consideration, work the psyche of those around you into the fold before you decide that killing is the only option. Jason immediately identified that "Harold" had mental issue, he did not refute the idea of the man being armed but for his scenario, de-escalation was the best...only viable option until Jason could posture for better positioning.

### **After the Fact**

Not long after the intruder finished his dinner Jason continued the much-needed conversation with the man at the other end of the table. They spoke of everything from life and anything related to it. It went from a one sided to an open forum of questions and back and forth. Jason continued with de-escalating the situation, even after he rode the hammer forward on his Kimber 1911 under the table.

Tempers really didn't escalate and there was still not clear intent for the man to be in Jason's home. Jason stayed firm in his opinion that the man he has been entertaining for some time is a criminal, he is very mentally ill and unstable, yet he still did not need to kill him. Throughout

this entire scenario, simple conversation had won this battle. Jason had his cell phone under the table and ready to dial 911, but if the police showed up it could escalate into something much worse than a glass of water and hot meal. The end state, an unnecessary traumatic situation for those around him. Jason had all the information he needed to report to the police, even the information he needed from the stolen vehicle used to get past his gate and up to the front door of house. At this point, Jason thought that if he could help the guy in one way or the other, he would.

Now, Jason found himself at a point to remove everyone besides the intruder from the room. The pleasantries were over and it is time for this guy to get out of his house. All subtle conversation has been exhausted and with mentally ill [specifically schizophrenics] walk into a house, they immediately feel that it is theirs. How will this guy react when Jason asks him to leave? This would be the most vulnerable point of the evening. The chance for flared tempers and action was more prevalent now than at initial contact. He asked his wife to take the kids to bed and to bring him a pen in the process.

Jason continued the conversation of cause and effect. He told the man that had a gun on him and that 9 out of 10 homes he intruded, he would be shot on site without hesitation. Jason wrote his number down on a piece of paper and made the man promise to call him next time should Harold have a message to deliver to anyone. Jason assured Harold that he would help him realize if the message he was to deliver was real or another instance like this. Jason went as far to introduce the man to his brother just as if he were supposed to be there.

At the end of any event that is outside of normal activity, the woulda, shoulda, couldas come into play. Here, Jason was orienting his pistol at a guy that showed no immediate threat. The simple idea [if you think about it] would be to ventilate a guy just for walking into your house. Okay, yes there are scenarios where this would work. Words do not work with determined adversaries...period.

The argument that a conversation solves everything is mute. However, this is taking all totalities of the circumstance into account. A dude waving a knife or a gun, clearly stating to "put the money in the bag" or saying that he or she is going to kill you, offers up an entirely new set of rules.... In this case, the man was clearly there for reasons unknown but displayed no immediate threat. People like "us" are virtually conditioned to the idea that some people just need killing...and doing so, to defend yourself or those you love is completely accepted. In Jason's case, "Harold" may have come into his house with the intent to do harm, or rob...but once he entered the dining room and saw everyone at the table this plan [if he had one] dissolved into nothing.

Had Jason or anyone else in the room lead off with a tirade of screaming, cursing and yelling there is a very good chance that aggressions would have been sent through the roof, ultimately increasing the chances of someone getting hurt; that was not a gamble that Jason was willing to take given this instance. The environment was [for all intent and purpose] calm and controlled



so Jason used his vantage point to keep it that way. Unarmed, he continued to converse with “Harold” until he had an opportunity to get to his gun.

Can we prepare for ALL home invasion scenarios? We can surely try, but realistically; probably not. We can take the necessary training measures to ensure proper shot placement, and fundamentals to make sure that innocent people don’t get shot accidentally. We can spend thousands of our hard-earned dollars on home defense training courses, when ultimately, you’re learning to shoot indoors...which is vital, but in this example, wasn’t reasonable. What about everything that Jason displayed during his scenario? Do you understand physical security? Do you know and can you demonstrate the mindsets involved with combative situations? Do you have a plan for your home, vehicle or personal space that doesn’t involve shooting first and letting God sort them out? Most importantly, can you effectively evaluate demeanor, temper and intent?

We are about self-reliance, we are about defending yourself your family and those around you at all costs. Doing so requires an exorbitant amount of rational thought, and very pointed expectation management. Sometimes, less is more to ensure the safety of those around you; whether it be from physical harm or death and in most instances, protecting innocence of children or sparing the sight of death to those not conditioned to accept it.

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Stay Vigilant.

Stay Ready.

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