

BERSERKERS

by

John Staats

520.301.5089
jestaats@hotmail.com

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FADE IN:

EXT. AERIAL OF KANSAS - DAY

Flyover of seemingly endless wheat fields. The terrain is flat as a pancake.

As the fields ends, a small town approaches.

The highest visible structure in town is a white water tower. The tower has the town painted on the side:

KISMET, KANSAS - POP. 464

EXT. KISMET - ESTABLISHING

The streets are devoid of people. A few cars are strewn about with a couple collisions evident.

Other than a light breeze that blows plastic shopping bags down the street, it's dead quiet.

Spray painted in black on the wall of the bank is:

THE END IS NEAR

Someone corrected the statement in red paint by spraying a strike-through over 'NEAR' and writing 'HERE'.

Faint footfalls (O.S.) are suddenly heard and are getting louder.

DR. LASSEN (50's), dressed in a doctor's white lab coat, suddenly runs across the shot of the graffiti and back out of view.

Moments later, two men and a woman follow in chase. Their clothing is shredded and covered in blood.

They are the BERSERK.

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Lassen is no match for the berserkers. The gap gets shorter with every step. Lassen is approaching exhaustion.

The lead berserker gets closer. He reaches with an outstretched hand. The tails of the lab coat tickle his fingertips.

The lead berserker's head suddenly explodes and the back of his head sprays onto his companions in chase.

CRACK!

The sound of a high-power rifle catches up to the bullet that decimated the berserker.

Although the gun shot clearly startles Lassen, neither the sound or drenching gore has any influence on the other chasers.

CRACK!

Another bullet finds it's mark in the neck of the second male berserker. His head falls limp to one side but he does not go down.

With a geyser of blood pumping out of his neck, he merely slows his pace to a stop, goes to knees and falls forward.

The female berserker continues chase without slowing. She utters unintelligible rants of crazed excitement.

CRACK!

A bullet tears away her left arm at the shoulder with no effect to her pace.

CRACK!

Another bullet impacts her right elbow and the lower arm disappears. She continues the chase.

CRACK!

Her chest opens up and she tumbles comically forward.

Lassen turns his head and slows to a stop. He leans over with hands on his knees and projectile vomits.

BILLY (O.S.)

Dr. Lassen? Is that you?

Lassen stands upright and looks towards the voice.

LASSEN

Yeah, it's me. Where are you?

BILLY (O.S.)

Hi Doc! We're up here!

On the ladder of the water tower is BILLY (17). He wears a Kismet Varsity jacket and holds a rifle with scope attached.

LASSEN

Well, I'll be... Hi Billy!

BILLY

Come on Doc! Before others show up!

Billy slings the rifle over his shoulder and descends the ladder while Lassen runs over.

Billy lowers a short knotted rope at the bottom of the ladder for access as the ladder does not go to ground.

Lassen looks at the knotted rope.

LASSEN
You gotta be kidding me.

BILLY
You can do it!

He struggles to climb the rope but finally reaches the bottom rung of the ladder.

BILLY
See? That wasn't too bad.

Billy grins and climbs up the ladder to the platform while Lassen follows cautiously.

BILLY
Watch out for that last step...
It's a bit slippery!

Billy gives Lassen a hand on to the platform.

EXT. WATER TOWER - CONTINUOUS

The tower platform is made of grating, has a handrail, mid-rail, and encircles the tank.

Lassen is exhausted and collapses on the platform.

He looks at his hands and shakes his head. A large blister opened up on his left palm.

Billy squats nearby.

BILLY
That was a close one, eh Doc? I mean, holy cow, old Mrs. Watson damn near caught your up to your ass!

LASSEN
(startled)
That was Betsy Watson? The grade school teacher?

BILLY
Sure was! Damn, she was fast!

Lassen sits up and faces Billy.

LASSEN

Thanks for that, Billy. That was some pretty awesome shooting.

BILLY

No sweat, but you should be thanking Suzy!

Billy motions behind Lassen.

Lassen turns to see Billy's girlfriend, SUZY (16), standing behind him.

SUZY

Hi Doc.

Suzy wears daisy duke shorts, a red bandana halter top, and the butt of an AR-15 assault rifle with a red dot scope rests on her hip. A mid-western dream girl.

LASSEN

Suzy Duncan? YOU did that?

SUZY

Yup. Sorry for taking so long on Mrs. Watson. She was a lot smaller target.

LASSEN

Heh, I'll forgive you for that.

BILLY

So, Doc...um...any idea of what the hell's going on?

LASSEN

(shrugging)

Not real sure. Last news report I heard was that it might be linked to GMO wheat products.

SUZY

GMO?

LASSEN

Genetically Modified Organisms. Companies have been modifying the DNA of seeds for years now.

SUZY

Wheat did this?

BILLY

Figures. Leave it to a gluten product to turn people into man-eaters.

SUZY

Yeah, ick. Empty carbs.

BILLY

Suzy hasn't touched a carb in, like, forever, and I only eat meat and taters.

LASSEN

Interesting. I've celiacs disease and can't eat gluten at all. They might be onto something.

BILLY

Whatevers. It's done. Now what do we do?

(he looks past Lassen)

Oh, hold the phone...this one's mine!

Billy goes prone in an instant and aims into the street.

SUZY

You got it, babe.

A woman is being chased by a berserker wearing a Varsity jacket and looks about the same age as Billy.

Before Billy can take the shot, the woman is tackled and blood starts to spray in all directions.

SUZY

Is that Tucker?

BILLY

Yup, Tucker, the mother fu...

CRACK!

Billy's shot hits the mark and Tucker's head disappears.

BILLY

Never liked that dick.

Billy chambers another round and remains on target.

LASSEN

What're you doing? He's not getting back up after that?

SUZY

It's not Tucker we're watching.
It's the...

The woman begins to move.

She rolls over, gets on her hands and knees, and looks right at the tower. She jumps up and starts to run towards them.

LASSEN

Holy shit.

This time, both Billy and Suzy fire.

CRACK! CRACK!

The woman takes two rounds to the chest and goes down hard.

LASSEN

I hadn't seen that before.

SUZY

That was Chelsea, that organic
hippie chick from the produce
stand.

Billy sits up.

BILLY

Like I was saying...now what?

EXT. WATER TOWER - NIGHT

Billy and Suzy are asleep under a blanket.

Lassen sits with knees to his chest and rocks back and forth. He looks down on the darkened town with faraway eyes.

LASSEN

Think. Think. Think.

He stands and gets a drink of water from a valve on the side of the tank.

He shuts off the valve and has an epiphany.

LASSEN

That's it!

EXT. WATER TOWER - MORNING

Billy and Suzy wake with the rising sun. They sit up to find Lassen sitting at their feet with a big grin.

LASSEN

Okay, okay, I think I got it.

BILLY

Got what?

LASSEN

A plan. The way I see it, these berserkers aren't zombies or the undead. They're alive, just like us. It's just that they're... well...

SUZY

A little fucked up in the head?

LASSEN

Yes, that's one way to put it. So... what does a human need to survive?

BILLY

Food.

LASSEN

And?

SUZY

Water?

LASSEN

Exactly! We can last weeks without food but only days, a week tops, without water.

(he points up at the tank)

And we have all the water we need.

BILLY

So what's your plan?

LASSEN

We wait them out. Kismet is isolated with a small population of...

(looks up)

...462 people. Subtracting us and the assorted kills, there might be just a couple hundred left.

SUZY

So we wait for them to shrivel up and die?

LASSEN

Bingo!

EXT. WATER TOWER - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: Day Two

All three sit on the edge of the platform with arms resting on the mid-rail and legs swinging.

Berserkers have started gathering around the tower base. They mainly just mill about and gnash their teeth.

Occasionally, a berserker goes into a frenzy and tries to climb the tubular tower legs without any success.

BILLY

See Mr. Baldwin? Watch this.

Billy snorts his sinuses and works up a big gooey spit. With deft precision, he lets it fly. Direct hit.

SUZY

Bullseye!

BILLY

(yelling)

Hey, Mr. Baldwin! How'd you like that, you cheap bastard?

With the call of his name, Mr. Baldwin reacts and looks right at Billy.

LASSEN

Really? Was that necessary?

BILLY

He owed me two dollars for his newspaper from, like, eight years ago.

Lassen shakes his head.

EXT. WATER TOWER - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: Day Five

Lassen stands alone on the opposite side of the tank and pees into the ever growing crowd of berserkers.

He shakes it, zips and leans over.

LASSEN

Sorry, George! I couldn't help it!

He leans back against the tank and looks at his left palm. The blister from climbing the rope shows signs of infection.

LASSEN

Shit.

Lassen tears a piece of his lab jacket and wraps his hand.

BILLY (O.S.)

Hey Doc? You might want to see this.

Lassen walks around the platform to Billy and Suzy.

LASSEN

What's up, Billy?

BILLY

Check out Mr. Johnson there.
(pointing at an old
farmer in overalls)
He's acting kinda funny.

Mr. Johnson is slowly moving about the crowd. Every so often, he stops to smell another berserker.

LASSEN

Huh, what do you think he's doing?

SUZY

It's like he's smelling food at the market.

Mr. Johnson stops behind a younger woman and takes a big sniff.

The woman appears dazed as if she just woke up and doesn't know where she is or how she got there.

LASSEN

Look at her! It's like the berserk effect is wearing off.

Suddenly, Mr. Johnson leaps on the younger woman. He tears away pieces of flesh and begins to drink from an arterial flow.

Another male berserker watches curiously. He dives in as well and starts gnawing on her leg. Others follow.

LASSEN

Uh, oh. They've discovered both a food source and hydration.

Billy and Suzy look to Lassen and each other.

EXT. WATER TOWER - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: Day Ten

The crowd is half the size than when they discovered their new food source. The remaining berserkers look healthy and rejuvenated.

On the platform, Lassen is wrapped in the blanket. He shivers from infection and sweats profusely.

Billy and Suzy look emaciated as they stand over Lassen.

SUZY

He's not looking too good.

BILLY

Hey, Doc? What's going on with you?

Lassen holds out his left arm and pulls up his sleeve. Red streaks run almost to his elbow.

BILLY

Oh, shit...that ain't good.

SUZY

Um, Billy. Come here.

Suzy leads Billy to the other side of the tank away from Lassen.

SUZY

What do we do, Billy?

BILLY

Geez, I don't know. I...
(he stops and looks over
the edge)
What the hell?

Down below, all the berserkers have moved to their side of the tank.

SUZY

What do you see?

BILLY

They're all over here!

SUZY

And...?

BILLY

They're not watching Doc, only us!

SUZY
Do you think...

BILLY
...they can smell the infection?
Doc's bad food!

Billy and Suzy run back around to Lassen.

BILLY
Hey, Doc! Doc!

LASSEN
(in delirium)
Wha...what is it?

SUZY
Doc! Your infection! They're not
interested in eating you anymore!

BILLY
Doc, I got an idea. But I need your
help.

EXT. WATER TOWER - MORNING

SUPERIMPOSE: Day Eleven

Billy is dressed in Lassen's lab coat and has his old
bandages wrapped around his head and wrists.

SUZY
If they show any interest, you get
your ass back up here, okay?

BILLY
Don't worry about that. There are a
bunch of people down there that I
prefer not to be shit outta.

SUZY
Here. Take my AR-15. It'll be more
effective than that bolt action of
yours.

They swap rifles and Billy gives her a quick kiss. He starts
down the ladder.

As he nears the bottom of the ladder, he notices that the
crowd is still there. He looks up.

BILLY
Hey, Suzy? Move to the other side
of the tank.

SUZY

Alright.

The berserkers begin to move to the other side of the tower. Only Mr. Baldwin remains staring at Billy.

After a moment, he too moves to the other side.

Billy drops the rope and climbs down. He runs over to Main Street and into the Pharmacy.

INT. PHARMACY - CONTINUOUS

He enters and looks about. He grabs a couple of reusable shopping bags and runs to the back room.

He sorts through the drug shelf and grabs a couple boxes of Z-Pack antibiotics.

On the way out, he stops to grab a couple rolls of toilet paper, soap, and, after another look around to make sure no one is watching, a box of tampons.

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Billy runs out the Pharmacy and down the street to the General Store.

INT. GENERAL STORE - CONTINUOUS

He enters and goes for the canned goods, beef jerky, and Slim-Jims.

There's a sale on Monster energy drinks and he grabs a few cans.

He jumps one counter and breaks open a cabinet for .308 and .223 ammunition.

Back out the door.

EXT. MAIN STREET - CONTINUOUS

Billy runs back up the street and slowly peers around a corner to look at the tower.

Suzy had come back around to look for him and the berserkers are back at the bottom of the ladder.

BILLY

(to himself)

Aw, come on Suzy! For reals?

Billy comes around the corner and waves his arms to get her attention.

Suzy finally acknowledges and goes back around to the other side with her berserker paparazzi following close behind.

As Billy races to the tower, Mr. Baldwin seems to take notice and starts to walk his direction.

Billy gets to the rope and is met by Mr. Baldwin.

Unable to ready his rifle to fire, he swings it around and hits him with the butt knocking him down.

Billy starts climbing the rope. Mr. Baldwin scrambles back to his feet and lunges at his ankle.

Billy lets out a blood curdling yell and kicks him off.

EXT. WATER TOWER - CONTINUOUS

Suzy hears the scream and runs back around to the ladder.

She looks over the edge to see Billy ascending slowly but surely.

As he nears the top he hands her the bags of goods and the rifle.

She reaches down to help him up.

Billy grabs her hand, looks up, and goes berserk. He lunges at her and tears at her throat.

Billy's eyes roll back in his head like a shark as he jerks the flesh off her neck, shoulder and arms.

The sound of the feeding stirs Lassen. He slowly sits up.

LASSEN

What the fuck? Billy! No!

Billy is startled and turns on Lassen. He gets within a couple feet and stops. He sniffs and shudders as if to vomit.

He turns up his nose and goes back to feeding on Suzy.

Lassen crawls over, grabs the AR-15, and blows Billy's head into thin air.

There's not enough of Suzy to waste a round.

Lassen throws the rifle down and cries.

EXT. WATER TOWER - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: Day Forty-Eight

A healthy Lassen sits on the edge of the platform and looks down on a wasteland of berserkers.

Hundreds of corpses are strewn about in varying degrees of decay. Some skeletons are bleached while others still bloat from gasification.

There are no living berserkers in sight.

LASSEN

Well, it looks like today's the day.

He shoulders the AR-15 and starts down the ladder. As he goes over the edge, his foot slips and he begins to fall.

FADE TO BLACK