

All-American Hero

by Tanaqui

TRANSCRIPT: All-American Heroes

Broadcast date: 16 May 2017

Running Time: 3 minutes

Segment ident: rippling American flag with superimposed text: "All-American Heroes".

Cut to: ext. Jericho. Montage of shots along the length of Main Street to City Hall, the Med Center, the Library, and the Main Street Church, ending with a push in along Main Street to City Hall.

VOICEOVER

On today's edition of All-American Heroes....

This is Jericho. A small town in Kansas.

Like a thousand other towns across America,
it survived the September '06 attacks.

But this town was like no other.

This was the hiding place
of the last bomb used in the September attacks.

Jake grimaced as he slowed the Camaro for the turn to the ranch and saw yet another truck with a satellite dish on top parked in the yard. By the time he pulled the Camaro up outside the house—making quite sure he wasn't blocking in the van, because they'd damn well better be leaving *soon*—a horrendous vision in a pink suit, with too much make up and too much hair, had leaped out of the van and was making her way towards him.

"Mr Green? Mr Green? If we could just—" Behind the TV reporter, her cameraman loomed, the lensed black box on his shoulder a cyclops aiming to devour Jake.

"This is private property." Jake kept his head down and his voice as level as he could as he hurried from the car to the house. "Please leave." He'd seen a blur of movement in the window and knew that, by the time he reached the door, Heather would have unlocked it for him.

This had become an annoyingly slick routine, unlike the first time a week ago, when he'd had to fumble for his keys, and dropped them, all the while trying to ignore the importunings of the reporter, who didn't seem to understand the word, "No!"

Once he made it inside, he discovered Heather almost in tears—he hadn't seen her that upset in a long time—and Lily and the boys huddled upstairs in one of the bedrooms, where Heather had been trying to keep them occupied. Turned out the reporter had been banging on the door and peering through the windows for the past hour and a half.

Heather had tried calling the airfield, but Jake had still been half an hour from wheels down. So she'd made light of what was happening to Jenna, who ran the office, because she didn't want Jake to worry. Or, he thought wryly, work himself into a towering rage on the journey home, and do something stupid when he arrived. After that, she'd tried the Sheriff's office; they'd promised to send a deputy out as soon as they could, but Jake had arrived first.

He'd still been holding her close, soothing her and trying to decide whether going out and waving a shotgun at the news crew would do more harm than good, when Jimmy turned up and ran the reporter off. The deputy apologized profusely for taking so long. Seemed it wasn't the only news crew that had rolled into town and had been making a nuisance of themselves anywhere they thought there might be a story.

Since then, Jake and Heather had been ambushed pretty much everywhere: out at the airfield, dropping JJ and Mikey off at school, buying groceries. And repeatedly at the house; every new news network in town found its way out to the ranch within a day. The two of them talked about decamping out to Grandpa's hunting cabin, but Jake reckoned it wouldn't help much. They'd still be chased around town; someone would probably track them back there; and it would be harder to keep out of sight inside.

This evening, after Heather re-locked the door behind him, he put his arm around her and murmured, "Just one more day, right?" as he dropped a kiss in her hair. Tomorrow was the tenth anniversary of the day he'd flown the bomb to Texas; the tenth time Jericho had celebrated its independence from ASA control. And the day after, the story would be over, and the news hounds would move on to something else.

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cont.

Cut to (captioned with "Mayor of Jericho since 2006"):

GRAY ANDERSON

We were just trying to survive, you know.

Cut to a photograph of Robert Hawkins.

VOICEOVER

The bomb was brought to Jericho by
federal agent, Robert Hawkins
who enlisted the help of....

Cut to a photograph of Jake Green.

...Jake Green, the son of the former mayor.

Cut to :

GRAY ANDERSON

Jake was a bit of a wild one
when he was younger but
I don't know how the town would
have managed without him.

Jake parked the station wagon at his mom's house and they walked the rest of the way into town with her. Gail held JJ's hand, Heather kept a tight rein on Mikey, and Jake carried Lily. Lincoln Park was hung with flags, and by the time they arrived, barbecues were already starting to smoke, and families had pitched up with picnic rugs and folding chairs.

Near the park entrance, the Governor—come from Topeka for the day—was holding court in front

of a gaggle of camera crews and reporters. Jake tried to hurry his family past, to where he could see Stanley, Mimi and their children already settled on the grass. But from somewhere at the back of the group around the Governor came a cry of "There he is!" and suddenly the pack were closing in on them.

Instinctively, Jake stepped forward, putting himself between the rest of his family and the reporters. Glancing over his shoulder, he saw Heather and his mom draw the boys closer, and his mom put a hand on Heather's arm. Then he turned round and faced the forest of camera lenses and tape recorders being thrust in his direction, a dozen voices calling his name, trying to attract his attention.

"Please." He put up a hand to fend them off. "Please. I'm just here with my family. We'd just like to be left alone."

Behind him, he could hear a frightened, "Mom?" from Mikey, and Heather trying to reassure him. Then one of the tape recorders being waved at him over someone's shoulder caught Lily on the temple, and she began to wail. Jake cupped his hand protectively over the crown of her head, holding her tighter, and took half a step back.

"Please. You're scaring my children."

"That's enough! Move back!" Suddenly, Jimmy's imposing presence was at Jake's side. The deputy stretched out one arm in front of Jake, while gently pushing on the chest of the nearest reporter with the other. "Step back," he repeated, his tone sharper.

Eric appeared from the other side, helping Jimmy shove the *melée* back another step. He raised his voice above the cacophony of complaints. "If you don't leave Ja— Mr. Green and his family alone, you will all be removed from the park on public safety grounds."

"That's unconsti—," the reporter nearest Eric began to object.

Eric fixed him with a glare. "This is my town, I'm the Sheriff, and you can have a nice stay in our jail while you find yourself a lawyer and file a case against me in Topeka." He looked around at the rest of the crowd. "Mr Green will be speaking during the opening ceremony in a few minutes. You'll have plenty of opportunity to get pictures then. Meanwhile, you *will* leave him and his family alone."

There was some muttering, but the journalists began to back off, either peeling away towards their news vans or returning to where the Governor, looking rather put-out, was standing with his aides.

Eric turned to Jake. "You okay?"

"I think so." Jake quickly checked Lily's forehead, finding only a faint red mark, before he turned to the rest of the family. "Mom? Heather?"

"We're fine." His mom reached out and patted him on the arm, while Heather nodded wordlessly at him. "Come on. Let's sit down."

Jake cast a glance at the reporters, some of whom were still eyeing him from a distance, before he followed his mom across the grass to join the Richmonds. He was glad the couple of local news crews and the pressmen who'd pitched up a month or so back for the memorial services for the New Bern War had been infinitely more respectful.

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Cut to a shot of a memorial to one side of a dirt track. Push in to show a list of names, headed by Johnston Green.

VOICEOVER

While helping Robert Hawkins
secure the future of our country,
this local hero was also leading
the defense of Jericho against
hostile attacks from a neighbouring town:
a fight in which his hometown lost 65 men,
including his own father.
He then became a key member of the resistance
to the subsequent occupation by troops
from the illegitimate ASA government
in Cheyenne.

Cut to (captioned with "Local farmer and lifelong friend"):

STANLEY RICHMOND

New Bern had this machine gun
and we were in a lot of trouble,
but Jake made one hell of a dash
up the hill under fire
so he could get in position to take it out.

Cut to Stanley at a different point in the interview:

STANLEY RICHMOND

We all thought we were going to die that day,
but Jake told us we'd get through, and we did.

After they'd arranged themselves around the picnic rug, Jake handed Lily to Heather to soothe. Stanley started making faces at her, and soon Lily was gurgling happily again. JJ, with Mikey and the Richmond boys at his heels, had run off to play with some schoolfriends he'd spotted.

Once he'd seen his family safe, Jake headed toward the platform where the opening speeches would be made. The reporters and news crews were now camped in front of it, and a few of them tried to engage him as he approached, shouting questions at him. He was relieved to see that Eric's earlier threats seemed to have left most of them a little subdued.

Those who hadn't yet been cowed did at least quiet when Gray kicked off proceedings with one of his less bombastic speeches: ten years hadn't changed him much. The crowd listened attentively and clapped him politely, and afterwards the Governor, who offered up the usual brand of politician's trite nonsense. But when Jake stepped up to the microphone, there was a storm of cheers and catcalls. Jake grinned and shook his head, knowing it was part genuine appreciation, although he didn't think he deserved it, and part teasing him for this ridiculous celebrity status he'd acquired. As if to reinforce the point, the reporters surged forward, pushing and shoving to get the best positions.

Until the reporters pitched up in town a week ago, this was the part of the day Jake had been dreading most. It seemed so entirely unnecessary, but Gray—and what seemed like half the town—had badgered him, and he'd had a call from the Governor about it. Even Eric had thrown his weight behind the idea of Jake "saying a few words". Although Jake suspected that might be because Eric thought he'd get asked himself if Jake refused.

Jake cleared his throat, and the crowd quieted. *Dad could do that*, he thought. He suddenly felt like it wasn't him standing up there, but Dad. He cleared his throat again, more nervously, and leaned toward the microphone.

"You know, I feel like a bit of a fraud being asked to do this." There was a slight ripple of laughter. "I wasn't even in town ten years ago today." He spotted Hawkins standing in the crowd near the side of the stage. Darcy stood to his left and Sam loomed—how that kid had grown the last few months!—on his right. Jake smiled at him. "I guess I was doing my bit on the big stage to help defeat the Cheyenne government and free Jericho."

He glanced around, and his gaze fell on Eric and Bill and Jimmy. "But I knew that, back home, all of you were playing your part. You know," he chuckled, "my father used to say: I've been to big cities and I've been to foreign countries, but I will take the good people of Jericho over any other city. I guess that was another thing my dad was right about. Today, we celebrate ten years of being, once again, the town he was proud to call home. The town *I'm* proud to call home."

He dipped his head in acknowledgement, and ducked away from the microphone as the crowd clapped and cheered again. Once more, he grinned to himself: *my god, if Dad had seen this....!* He shook his head as he returned to the Governor's side, and Gray stepped up to the microphone a second time to say a few final words. *By god, if only Dad had lived to see this....*

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Cut to (captioned with "Local resident"):

ANDREA OLSEN

Mayor Green—that was Jake's father—
put him in charge of the Rangers.
My husband was one of them, you know.
After his father died, he practically led the town.
Oh, Gray Anderson was mayor,
but Jake was in charge.
And then, of course, he led the resistance
when we were occupied by Major Beck's troops.
Heather, that's Mrs Green now,
she worked in Major Beck's office
and stole all sorts of information.
They were quite the couple!

Cut to: Jake with Heather, JJ, Mikey and Lily in Lincoln park during the tenth anniversary celebrations.

Walking off stage, Jake found himself once more the center of a media scrum. He hesitated,

not wanting to drag the pack of reporters back over to his family. Then he heard a familiar voice from just behind him.

"I think Mr Green has given you quite enough, don't you?" Hawkins' quiet tones indicated it was not a question. "I'd advise you to leave him alone." He put his hand on Jake's shoulder and steered him through the crowd. The reporters shuffled back nervously, and Jake wondered just exactly how Hawkins had managed to put the fear of God into them when Jake had failed so miserably to do so. He guessed being a trained CIA killer had something to do with it.

Hawkins accompanied Jake back to where Heather and the others were waiting. With a nod to them, he turned back to Jake. "You know, I think it might be best if you and your family left. Those reporters," Hawkins glanced over his shoulder at where the news crews still clustered together, eyeing him warily, "they're not going to give you any peace all afternoon."

Jake opened his mouth to object, and then glanced at Heather, who had Lily back on her lap. He knew she was trying to hide it, but he'd learned to read her pretty well over the last ten years, and he could tell she wasn't really enjoying herself.

"Yeah." Jake nodded at Hawkins. "Yeah. Maybe that's for the best." He looked back down at Heather and she gave him a small, relieved smile. He reached down and squeezed her shoulder. "I'll go round up the boys."

"Here." Hawkins fished in his pocket for a set of keys. "Why don't you go to our house. You'll be able to see the fireworks from there, and I don't think the reporters will trouble you...."

Jake took the keys with a wry grin. "Thanks."

Pushing into the crowd—the reporters seemed to have given up on chasing him for the moment, but he didn't expect it would last—he soon found Mikey and sent him, complaining, back to his mother. He carried on looking for JJ, growing increasingly worried as he saw no sign of him amongst the other children running around the swings and slides in the playground, or up and down the line of sideshows and amusements. Then, glancing in the other direction, he caught a glimpse of JJ sitting on the edge of one of the fixed picnic tables near the refreshment stand. He seemed to be talking to someone. As Jake wove through the crowd towards him, he saw just who it was.

Fury coursed through Jake and he cursed under his breath. These people were *unbelievable*. First he'd had Heather terrorized in their own house a week ago, and now he was interviewing a seven-year old kid....

Stretching his legs to cover the last few yards in a half dozen long strides, Jake heard the man say, "—dad must have told you lots of stories about what he did during the war?"

Closing the final strides, Jake could see the slightly puzzled look on JJ's face, although his son was saying politely enough, "I guess. May I—?" Then JJ's expression changed to one of guilt as he caught sight of his father, in the moment before Jake grabbed the reporter by the shoulder, turned him, and smashed his fist into his face.

The reporter went down in a heap, almost taking out the cameraman, who'd been hovering behind him filming JJ. There was a sudden silence, punctuated by a women's scream, and a quiet, shocked "Dad!" from JJ.

"Come on." Jake held out his hand to his son, still looking down at the reporter. JJ slithered off the

table and took Jake's hand, while the reporter wiped a hand across his mouth, leaving a bloody streak on his cheek.

"What happened?"

Jake glanced up to see Jimmy pushing his way through the quiet crowd.

"He hit me!" the reporter spat, pushing himself up on his elbows.

Jake put his foot on the reporter's chest, not hard, but enough to hold him down. "And if you try to interview my son again without my knowledge or permission, I'll do a lot worse than that," he growled.

"Did you hear that?" The reporter squinted up at Jimmy. "He assaulted me, and now he's threatening me." He pushed Jake's foot away and turned his head to look for his cameraman. "I hope you got that on tape."

There was silence for a moment, and then Jimmy said. "Well, I guess I, uh, I'm going to need that as evidence." With a slow, casual movement, he reached out and took the camera out of the surprised cameraman's hands. He flipped open a slot and pulled out the camera's memory card with such a practised hand that Jake wondered how many times he'd had to do it before.

Shoving the camera back at the cameraman, Jimmy held out his hand to the reporter. "Why don't we head over to the First Aid station and get you cleaned up?"

The reporter got to his feet, keeping a wary distance from Jake. "You're not going to arrest him?"

There was some muttering from the crowd, and the reporter looked around uneasily, realizing maybe he'd miscalculated.

"Well," Jimmy gave a slight shrug, "there's maybe some doubt here about just who started things. I think we're gonna need to review the evidence very carefully before we decide just who," he took the reporter's arm and turned him around in the direction of the First Aid post, "to arrest."

Jake shook his head, laughing inwardly as he watched Jimmy march the hapless reporter off. Somehow, Jake didn't think *he'd* be the one spending a night in the cells.

As the crowd around him began to drift away, he looked down at JJ, still clinging to his hand. "You okay?" When JJ nodded uncertainly, Jake smiled at him. "Come on. Let's go find your mother and the others and get out of here."

On the way back to the rest of the family, Jake tried not to think about how mad Heather was going to be with him. There was no point trying to swear JJ to silence; the news would be all round town in a couple of hours, and someone was sure to tell Heather within the next day or two. Then there was the small matter of trying to convince JJ that he really had meant what he'd said a few weeks back about how you shouldn't hit people. He was still pondering how to do that when they reached the others. Heather had hold of Mikey's hand, while Gail carried Lily.

"There you are. We were wondering—?" Heather stopped and gave him a sharp look, before she said with a sigh, "What happened?"

"I—." Jake hesitated.

"Dad got into a fight," JJ offered. He clutched Jake's hand a little more tightly, apparently aware that his mom was not going to be best pleased by this news.

"Really? A real fight?" Mikey let go of Heather and ran forward and grabbed Jake's free hand. "Really, Dad?"

Underneath Mikey's excitable tones, Jake could hear his mother's quiet but despairing, "Oh, Jake!"

He closed his eyes for a moment because, God, he was in so much trouble. When he opened his eyes again he saw, as expected, that Heather was giving him the Look. He shrugged. "That reporter who was at the house a week ago...."

She raised her eyebrows. "So you ran in to him today and decided to, what, hit him?"

Jake bridled a little. She knew him better than that, didn't she? "He was trying to interview JJ," he pointed out.

Heather looked back at JJ, who nodded mutely.

"Hmm." Heather looked at Jake thoughtfully, and then shook her head wearily. "I hope you're going to have another long talk later with both your sons about why hitting people is a bad idea?" She held out her hand to JJ, who let go of Jake's hand and took hers. "Come on, let's go home."

As they turned and, with Gail at their heels, began to make their way back to the park entrance, Heather caught Jake's free hand and examined it. Then, much to his surprise, she kissed his bruised knuckles.

Raising her gaze to his, she chuckled. "Can't say as I wouldn't have hit him too," she admitted, too quietly for their sons to hear.

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VOICEOVER

Jake Green is now a husband, father,
successful local businessman
and pillar of the community who is
reluctant to talk about his heroic past.

Cut to: Jake climbing out of the pilot's seat of a small airplane, looking embarrassed and shaking his head at the camera.

VOICEOVER

The only time he has been willing
to speak on camera was during
the tenth anniversary celebrations today
in Jericho's Lincoln Park

Cut to: Jake standing at a microphone, with Gray and the Governor of Kansas behind him:

JAKE GREEN

I was doing my bit on the big stage
to help defeat the Cheyenne government
and free Jericho.
The town I'm proud to call home.

Cut to: Jake receiving a medal from the President of the restored United States of America.

VOICEOVER

This modest man is reluctant to accept
the praise due to him.
But we, and a grateful nation,...

Cut to: photograph of Jake superimposed over an American flag.

VOICEOVER

Salute a true All-American hero.

Disclaimer: These stories are based on the Junction Entertainment/Fixed Mark Productions/CBS Paramount Television series *Jericho*. They were written for entertainment only; the author does not profit from them nor was any infringement of copyright intended.