

THE MARTIALIST VOL. TWO NO. THREE

A Note from Your Editor

By Phil Elmore

Thank you for subscribing to *The Martialist*! This is our third issue of YEAR TWO, the second season of our publication. Remember that this is only half of the magazine, too. The other half is our free content at **themartialist.com**. You may not always agree with what you read here, but we hope you will find it interesting and informative.

The exchange of ideas is vital to education – and education is part of what makes survival and success in self-defense possible. **You may read things here that strike you as wildly inadvisable** or as spectacularly good advice. You may read things you love and you may read things you hate. **If so, write your own article and tell us what you think** in a future issue of *The Martialist*. We will regularly feature point-counterpoint articles that look at both sides of issues. I will seriously consider any article that crosses my desk, though I cannot promise they will all make it in. This is your magazine and I welcome your feedback.

- Phil Elmore, phil@philelmore.com.

DISCLAIMER

YOU MUST BE 18 OR OLDER TO READ THIS MATERIAL!

I AM NOT A LAWYER and THIS IS INFORMATION ONLY. I do NOT encourage you to do anything. You MUST consider the legal implications of everything you do, exercising **YOUR JUDGMENT** as an adult. You also MUST follow the law or **PAY THE CONSEQUENCES.** *The Martialist* is for entertainment purposes only and cannot be construed as legal advice.

Monday Morning Hindsight Second-Guess 20/20 Quarterbacking

By Phil Elmore

I'm going to kill you.

That's right. I'm announcing my intent to kill you, and your friends, and your family. Whether I'm an international terrorist, a neighborhood drug warlord, a violent schoolyard bully, or a boyfriend turned stalker is irrelevant. You've been warned.

So why don't you *do* something?



Photo by Lawrence Keeney

What's that? You say you don't know what to do? I can just guess. If you're a frightened ex-girlfriend and you arm yourself, your friends will call you paranoid. If you're a local government, your constituents will complain that they're living in a police state. If you're the Federal Government, your citizens will start screaming that you're taking their civil rights. Everything you do to protect yourself, to enhance your *security* at the personal or community level, must by definition be *general*. You must attempt to plug all possible holes in your defenses. You must live like a prisoner within walls of your own making. You must be ever-vigilant, all-knowing, and long-suffering.

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See, that's the hell of it. I make the rules. As the attacker, I set the time and I choose the place. I select the method. I have the initiative. You must attempt to live your life or run your city or lead your nation *while* on the lookout for me. I can relax. When I'm ready to attack, I'll do so fully prepared. You, on the other hand, can't afford to relax – at least not completely. Every second you're not alert is the second in which I might hurt you.

Are you tired yet?

The *real* kick in the face, of course, is that you can't be everywhere and you can't see everything. Even knowing I'm coming, even preparing for my attack, even living behind walls with guns and knives at your side, you *can't* foresee everything. You're not omnipotent. For every door and window that you lock, I can find another. If I want to kill you, if I'm willing to trade my life to do it, if I *hate* you enough, I will kill you – and if I fail in that, I can at least *hurt* you and those around you.

When you're staring through eyes blurred with tears at the wreckage caused by my hate, don't expect your neighbors to offer much support. Oh, they'll mutter their sympathies in the beginning – but sooner or later, they'll want to know why you *failed*. They'll want to know what you did *wrong*. They'll tell you it was *your fault*.

After all, you knew I wanted to kill you. I told you so, didn't I?

You must not have wanted to stop me enough. You must not have been smart enough. You must not have been alert enough. After all, you knew there was a

threat. Why didn't you stop me? Why *couldn't* you stop me?

All self-defense involves risk. No individual, no matter how alert, no matter how well trained, can foresee every threat or neutralize every foe. To make matters worse, most of the *potentially* threatening situations we encounter each day aren't threats at all, but perfectly mundane parts of life.

The same is true for nations. No nation of *free* citizens, no matter how strict its security measures, no matter how strong its military, no matter how vigilant its police, can prevent every act of terrorism. To make matters worse, most of that nation's law enforcement and security measures are seen as infringements on citizens' rights. In the majority of cases, it is only peaceful and largely law-abiding citizens who are affected by these restrictions.

When a woman is raped, should we start asking her why she didn't see it coming? When an armed man is struck from behind, should we demand to know why he wasn't looking backward? Why, then, when a nation suffers a terrorist incident, do we immediately seek to blame our own men and women for failing to stop it, our voices strident with the self-righteous infallibility of 20/20 hindsight?

Why do we blame everyone *except* the attacker, everyone *save* the rapist, everyone *but* the terrorist? What's wrong with us?

Why didn't we see *that* coming? ♠
