

# THE SECURITY GUARD

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By Phil Olson

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**THE SECURITY GUARD**  
**By Phil Olson**

SYNOPSIS: A warehouse security guard who takes himself way too seriously breaks in a new trainee.

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

JOHNSON  
BAKER  
BOX SPRING THIEF

**SET DESIGN**

Center stage is a park bench. Stage left is a water fountain. Stage right is a garbage can.

**SETTING:**

A security guard, JOHNSON, enters from up-stage left. Behind Johnson is security guard trainee, BAKER. They are in a park outside a big warehouse containing Spivitz Box Springs. They're on break. JOHNSON has a Styrofoam cup of coffee. JOHNSON takes his job way too seriously. Think Barney Fife on "The Andy Griffith Show."

**JOHNSON:** So, how's the first day on the job going?

*JOHNSON looks under the garbage can, doing recon work.*

**BAKER:** It's going great, sir.

*BAKER looks under the same can.*

**JOHNSON:** That's good.

*JOHNSON looks under the bench.*

**BAKER:** How long you been here, sir?

*BAKER looks under the bench. BAKER basically imitates whatever JOHNSON does.*

**JOHNSON:** I've been a security guard at Spivitz Box Spring and Sleep Products for 12 years. I've seen it all.

**BAKER:** I bet you have some good stories, sir.

**JOHNSON:** Yeah, I do. It's a great company. Nice perks. This park, for instance. Guess what it's called?

**BAKER:** Spivitz Park.

**JOHNSON:** That's good. You've been doing your homework.

*JOHNSON goes to drinking fountain and fills up his cup.*

**BAKER:** I read the brochure. It said the employees can come out here during breaks.

**JOHNSON:** Like Pavlov's monkeys. The whistle blows and they come filing out of that warehouse for coffee and a smoke.

**BAKER:** Ever have a robbery?

**JOHNSON:** No, sir. Twelve years here and no robberies.

*Suddenly, a man sneaks across the park, behind the security guards, carrying a box spring. He successfully avoids being caught.*

**BAKER:** That must be some sort of record.

**JOHNSON:** I was made for this job. Got my training in the Nam.

*JOHNSON crosses to garbage can and throws away cup. Then he crosses to BAKER.*

**BAKER:** Oh, my gosh, the Nam.

**JOHNSON:** Private First Class, U.S. Marine Corp, 43rd, DaNang.

You wouldn't know about that.

**BAKER:** No, I wouldn't, sir. A little before my time.

**JOHNSON:** That's where I got this little momento. *(Knocks on his leg, we hear a sound like his leg is wooden.)*

**BAKER:** Oh, jeez.

**JOHNSON:** It goes with me wherever I go. *(He pulls out an ashtray from his pocket. The ashtray made the "wooden" sound.)* Pretty cool, huh?

**BAKER:** Man! Look at that!

**JOHNSON:** Got it in Sang Chow.

**BAKER:** Can I hold it?

**JOHNSON:** Nope. That would be bad luck. You wouldn't want that, would you?

**BAKER:** Oh, no, I wouldn't want that at all.

**JOHNSON:** See that. I'm already helpin' ya.

**BAKER:** You sure are.

**JOHNSON:** Yes, sir. They couldn't have hooked you up with a better mentor.

**BAKER:** You're the best.

**JOHNSON:** *(Looks out.)* Mr. Davies. How are you today, sir? *(We don't see Davies.)* Him? *(Motions to the trainee.)* Baker. He's the new guy. *(Davies leaves.)*

**BAKER:** Who was that?

**JOHNSON:** Mr. Davies. Inventory control. He counts box springs. Duh. Davies thinks he knows the Nam. He was a supply clerk in Saigon. That isn't the Nam. He doesn't know the Nam. Is he gone?

**BAKER:** He's gone.

**JOHNSON:** *(In Davies' direction.)* You don't know the Nam! *(To BAKER.)* He thinks he does.

**BAKER:** He doesn't know the Nam. *(JOHNSON gives him a look.)* I don't know the Nam either.

**JOHNSON:** You're looking at a 40,000 square foot warehouse with over 10,000 Spivitz Box Springs. The best that money can buy. I sleep on a Spivitz box spring at home.

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**BAKER:** You're a company man, sir.

**JOHNSON:** That's right. Another three paychecks and I can get the mattress.

**BAKER:** Isn't it a little uncomfortable on the boxspring, sir?

**JOHNSON:** Sure, it's a little uncomfortable, but then again I slept in the rice patties of Kwang Lu during Tet . . . *(Sees someone coming.)* Oh, hey Jarvis. How's it going, buddy? *(Does hand signals to Jarvis. Jarvis is gone. To BAKER.)* Just something we got going. *(BAKER tries it.)* You can't do that yet.

**BAKER:** What does Jarvis do?

**JOHNSON:** Jarvis is a forklift operator. He's one of the guys.

**BAKER:** Seems like a nice guy.

**JOHNSON:** *(Nods.)* We may not get a lot of action at Spivitz Box Spring, but if anything should ever happen. *(Takes out his mace like he was drawing a gun and fakes spraying it.)* I'll be ready.

**BAKER:** Is that green mace, sir?

**JOHNSON:** Oh, yeah. *(Proudly puts the mace back.)*

**BAKER:** Can you teach me how to do that?

**JOHNSON:** In time. They promised me a gun next year. That's okay, cause I know karate *(Does a karate move.)* face, balls. Sorry. *(Almost hits Baker by accident.)* So where are you from, Baker?

*JOHNSON sits on the park bench and takes his shoes off.*

**BAKER:** Bakersfield. *(JOHNSON looks at him.)* I'm just kidding. See my name is Baker and . . .

**JOHNSON:** . . . Yeah, I know.

**BAKER:** I kid around sometimes . . .

**JOHNSON:** . . . Yup.

**BAKER:** I'm from Ojai, sir.

*The man sneaks across the park again, carrying another box spring. The guards don't see him.*

**JOHNSON:** Ever been in the service?

**BAKER:** Just the R.O.T.C.

**JOHNSON:** Nothing wrong with that. *(Snickers.)*

**BAKER:** I shot a bazooka.

**JOHNSON:** Great. You married?

**BAKER:** Getting married in August. My girlfriend is pregnant. Shotgun wedding. *(Makes sound of cocking a shotgun. JOHNSON dives for cover.)* I'm just kiddin'. I really love her.

**JOHNSON:** *(Getting up.)* You kid around a lot, don't you, Baker?

**BAKER:** Sometimes.

**JOHNSON:** I knew another guy that kidded around a lot . . . we were walkin' down the Ho Chi Minh Trail about three clicks from Destination Zebra. Don't ask. This guy, Myers, was just kiddin' and kiddin', not a care in the world. Guess what happened to Myers?

**BAKER:** I don't know. Something really bad?

**JOHNSON:** (*Nods.*) He lost a contact lens. Fifty bucks lost in the mud. He wasn't kiddin' around too much after that.

**BAKER:** Sorry. I won't kid around again.

*Another person walks by. We don't see him. JOHNSON stands up and salutes. So does BAKER.*

**JOHNSON:** Sir, how are you today, sir? Yes, sir. (*Lowers salute.*) He hates it when I salute him. I gotta, though. That's Captain Jack Parker. Operations Manager. He was my C.O. in the Nam.

**BAKER:** You must have a lot of history.

**JOHNSON:** He's the reason I'm here today. He saved my life twice, man.

**BAKER:** Twice?

**JOHNSON:** We were ridin' in a transport helicopter to DaNang. Captain was sittin' up front. I was sittin' by the door. Captain yells to me, "Hey, Johnson, don't fall out the door." He saved my life, man.

**BAKER:** That's beautiful.

**JOHNSON:** The second time we were in Kwang Tree in a hooch.

**BAKER:** What's a . . .

**JOHNSON:** . . . that's a foxhole. Friendly fire was coming over head. It looked like fireworks so I stood up to watch. Captain yells, "Hey, Johnson. Get down."

**BAKER:** The man's a saint.

**JOHNSON:** (*Nods.*) Then he says to me, "What do ya need a babysitter or something?" How did he know I had a baby daughter?

**BAKER:** He didn't.

**JOHNSON:** "No," I says. "My wife is taking care of her at home, but thanks." That's the kind of guy he is.

**BAKER:** I'd take a bullet for that kind of man.

**JOHNSON:** You and me both. (*Catching himself.*) Back to work. Pop quiz. A man walks in the warehouse, says he's Spivitz's nephew. Says he's got a box spring at will call. Wants to pick it up himself. What do you do?

**BAKER:** Ask for the proper I.D.?

**JOHNSON:** That's right. He says, "I don't need no stinkin I.D., my uncle owns this company and if you don't let me through I'm gonna have you fired." You want to get fired? *(Baker shakes his head no.)* Well, now, you're at the point of decision, aren't you? *(BAKER nods.)* Staring down the barrel of Charlie's AK 47 without a gun. What are you gonna do, soldier? What are you gonna do?

**BAKER:** Let him through?

**JOHNSON:** No, you don't let him through. He doesn't have clearance. He may walk out of here with one, maybe two, box springs. Do you want that on your conscience?

**BAKER:** *(Sheepishly.)* No.

**JOHNSON:** I don't care if he's George W "I'm not goin to the Nam" Bush. If he doesn't have clearance, he doesn't get in.

*Baker is really shaken, almost in tears.*

**BAKER:** I . . . I'm sorry. It . . . it's just my first day.

**JOHNSON:** That's okay, son. Good learning experience. You'll be fine. Here, clean yourself off. *(Hands him a handkerchief to wipe the sweat off.)* Don't let Captain Parker see you.

**BAKER:** I won't.

**JOHNSON:** I just pray to God you're never faced with that kind of decision without a gun. I'm not saying you will be, I'm just saying ya gotta be prepared for anything. *(Pulls out the mace like he was drawing a gun.)* Well, breaks over. Back to work. *(Starts putting shoes back on.)*

**BAKER:** *(Looking off.)* Sir, look over there. The guy with the box spring.

**JOHNSON:** Looks like another happy customer.

**BAKER:** He looks a little suspicious, don't you think?

**JOHNSON:** Nope.

**BAKER:** Can I go check him out? Just to make sure he's not stealing it?

**JOHNSON:** Let me get my shoes on. I'll go with you.

**BAKER:** I can handle it, sir. I'll meet you back at the warehouse.

**JOHNSON:** You sure?

**BAKER:** Yeah, I'll be fine.

**JOHNSON:** Alright. See ya at the warehouse . . . Oh, here, take the mace with you. *(Hands him the mace.)*

**BAKER:** Thanks. Be right there. *(He leaves up-stage right.)*

**JOHNSON:** *(To himself.)* "Take the mace." *(Laughs.)* Twelve years and I've never needed mace.

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*JOHNSON picks up his coffee cup and donut. He hears a loud “slapping” noise.*

**BAKER:** *(Off stage.) Oww!*

*JOHNSON drops to the ground.*

**JOHNSON:** *(Runs toward Baker.) Baker . . . Baker!*

*BAKER comes walking back to the park bench very slowly, holding his nose. His face is all green.*

**JOHNSON:** What happened? Are you alright?

*BAKER sits on the bench.*

**BAKER:** He was stealing the box spring . . . I was gonna get him with the mace . . . The nozzle was turned around. *(Still has hand on nose.)* And then he hit me. Hard.

**JOHNSON:** Where’s my M-16? *(Looking around.)* Where is it?!

**BAKER:** Think worker's comp will cover this?

**JOHNSON:** The horror! *(Looking up, for the helicopter.)* Where’s the support?! We’ve got injured!

**BAKER:** How did I do on my first day? *(Takes hand from nose. There’s blood on his hand.)*

**JOHNSON:** Medic!!

*JOHNSON faints. BLACKOUT.*

**THE END**