

HUMANITIES INSTITUTE
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Sniper (1993)

Luis Llosa Urquidi

OVERVIEW

Luis Llosa Urquidi was born in Lima, Peru in 1951. Arts run in his family since his uncle is Mario Vargas Llosa the Nobel Literature Prize Winner and Claudia Llosa, his niece who is also a film director as he. He is a film critic and a filmmaker, he has done many movies that have diverse themes such as explorations and nature developed in action movies with thriller facts. He got very popular in Peru during the decade of the 80s with *Carmin*, a soap opera that had characters as adolescents. He became very well known internationally with the release of this movie, *Sniper* (1993) which centers in Central America when the rebels wanted to overthrow a democratic government.

SYNOPSIS

An experienced sniper and an apprentice shooter are gathered in the Panamanian jungle to eliminate some bad guys. They also must fight against corrupted CIA agents, mercenaries and drug cartel members. Thomas Beckett is a marine who is going to team up with politician Richard Miller to eliminate a Colombian drug lord in the jungles of Central America, specifically in Panama. After Beckett has seen many deaths, he stills does what he needs to do, while Miller goes into this deep reflection of killing someone and the consequences that it can portray.

CHARACTERS

Thomas Beckett (Sniper)

Thomas Beckett The Sniper, loner and perfectionist. He is the Marine's corps Top Man. He is a professional and shows care for his teammates. He is Master Gunnery Sergeant Thomas Beckett and he is ready to be the best.

Perfectionist All his jobs are done in the most perfect and neat way. He needs to finish a task no matter what happens. He always does his 150 per cent.

Solidarity Show solidarity between his team mates and him or the people that fight next to him. While he has a reputation of getting his partners killed, he will do anything to save his partner's life no matter what.

Richard Miller, Apprentice

The Apprentice Shooter does not like to kill, and has not had any kills in his past. As soon as the movie starts to develop, he learns that the only way to survive in the Jungle with his situation is to kill the target. Colonel Richard Miller, he is dedicated and professional as well.

Discipline He shows a lot of discipline, and he follows directions even though sometimes he does not agree he knows that at the end it will be the best.

Humanity He shows to be very human in the sense that he struggles to take someone else's life, but when he realizes that is your life or the others, is when he changes and starts to realize that he has to do what he needs to do for the team, not for himself.

Chester Van Damme

Beckett's Senior Officer who is objective and serious, he is the one that prepares Beckett for his tasks.

Objective He does not express his feelings or facts that have happened to him, he informs of tasks without giving any evaluation of it.

Serious Thoughtful in appearance, and always gives an image of professionalism.

THEMES

Violence There are extremely forceful actions that are intended to hurt people throughout the movie or are likely to cause damage. The use of violence in this type of movies is a must because of the objectives that they need to have in order to keep the relationship as they need.

War Narcoterrorism and the presence of the USA in several Central and South America's countries are very relevant to the drug war that exists nowadays. The USA for many years has been the big brother of several countries and always is looking for some more power.

Conflict Between the nations there is also tension between different instances. The conflict that we can see here is when one part of Intelligence wants Alvarez dead and the other part wants him alive.

SCENES

Credits While the credits take place, the scenery is seen with instrumental slow music showing the spectators the environment of nature and jungle, especially the Panamanian Jungle and the river with a boat navigating on it.

Killing the target In the Panamanian Jungle, the Sniper and the other shooter killed the target and left the scene while they were protecting themselves with gunfire. The Sniper signs the shooter so they can leave. The Soldier complains about waiting two hours to be picked up, but suddenly a helicopter approaches. The Sniper goes first leading the path, while the Shooter waits for directions and he follows him. While leaving the jungle, the shooter is killed and the Sniper goes crazy on the helicopter pilot.

Going back The Sniper goes back to help his buddy, the Shooter. But, there are still a lot of gunfire and when the Sniper gets so he can help his friend another bullet gets into his friend's body. The Sniper (Thomas Beckett) picks up the body of his teammate who has been fighting beside him in the Jungle. He has to avoid several bullets that were aimed towards him, but also he has the helicopter that is covering his back. The Sniper is very upset because his friend died and he blames the commander that came to save them. Beckett gets a knife and gets the tag label with the soldier's name that was in the soldier's boot.

Daydreaming Sitting in front of the dead shooter's boots, the sniper imagines and thinks of all the incidents and deaths he has made, as well as how his friend died in the field. He imagines those scenes with all the blood involve portraying a lot of violence. At the end he also thinks about his friend that just died.

Formal Conversation In Washington DC, in the Capitolio the high command intelligence assigns Colonel Miller the task of eliminating a group of mobsters in Colombia and Panama and he is informed that he is going to go with the best sniper, Thomas Beckett and that if this person at any time makes him uncomfortable or lacks liability that he should be able to disappear him because the mission has to be accomplished.

New task While in Panama, Beckett takes a taxi and he sees the different cultural manifestations of the hispanic country. Beckett goes to the US Military Station Head Quarry Heights, and talks to Chester Van Damme, one of the top executives, who is Beckett's Senior Officer. At the end, Beckett is assigned a task to eliminate popular leaders to give a democratic government to Panama. Moreover, he realizes that in this project he is with an apprentice shooter (Miller) that has never been in the Jungle, killed anyone and does not speak Spanish.

Flying to the Jungle Miller is in a helicopter with some other soldiers when the guerrillas start shooting at them. One of the soldiers is hurt, and everyone begins to tell Miller to shoot the guerrillas

because they are attacking them, but hesitates many times before shooting and never really does shoot at the enemies.

Miller in the military village When Miller gets into the village he sees many attitudes towards him, according to Beckett because they all think that he is a Sniper. One of them tells him that he is going to work with Beckett who is famous because all his partners get shot. Soon after, Beckett shows up and tells Miller to follow him. He plans to get more acquainted with him, so they go together to Beckett's space. Beckett starts telling him the difference between them -Snipers and shooters- and the platoons, or groups of soldiers that go to the Jungle and start to destroy the city and everything around it. Colonel Miller wants to discuss the plan that they have, but Beckett does not sound very enthusiastic about it. Miller looks at the tag bracelet that Beckett has with all the names of the shooters that have died.

Next day getting into the Jungle Beckett and Miller started to walk into the jungle and they found their ride which was a train. While on the train, Miller starts showing all the things that he has gotten in his backpack, and since these things seem ridiculous to Beckett he throws them out of the train. Miller asks about the soldier badge that he has and always carries with him, and Beckett replies that it's "respect." They got down the train and started to go inside the jungle deep into the bush. Beckett starts telling him certain advice like rolling down the sleeves of his jacket because we are going into the jungle. They cover their faces with green and black paint, and soon they start to walk. They go through the river, and Miller shows certain difficulties while walking through the jungle, Beckett starts hesitating about Miller's behavior. They continue walking through passages and Miller tells Beckett that he does not get any one's orders from nobody, that they have to fulfill their task. Some indigenous people start looking at them.

First Lesson While walking, Miller slips and falls down a cliff. He gets desperate, and replies badly to Beckett, but the Sniper says you save the most important thing that we have right now in the jungle, your weapon. They run into Cacique's tribes and Beckett shows respect and care for Cacique since they cover their backs all the time, Cacique likes Miller glasses so Beckett makes him give them to Cacique. While they are walking Beckett informs Miller about killing "EL Cirujano" because of revenge for Cacique and in exchange they are going to help them get to Alvarez hacienda. Miller does not agree with Beckett's orders and then, Beckett questions Miller about his shooting from the helicopter to a guerrillero, because he does not believe he is capable of that.

Attack to the Surgeon They continue walking, escorted by the members of the Cacique tribe when they have to hit the Surgeon while taking a bath at the river. Miller hesitates again and does not shoot to kill the enemy, but rather gives him a preventive shot. As a result, Cacique loses one of the members of his group. Miller and Beckett continue walking but now only by themselves because Cacique does not want to follow them any more. Miller asks Beckett if they are blaming them because of the dead, and even though Beckett says no, Miller knows that is his fault.

Guerrillas As they continue walking through the dense Jungle, they imagine different incidents, and keep thinking about their situations. They are thirsty, but then again they have a task to accomplish. They get separated and Miller starts to walk by himself listening to Spanish, and he keeps looking for Beckett. While surrounded by all those trees, Beckett surprises him from behind and tells him quietly, "Patrol" so they hide silently waiting for the patrol to go by. While talking they heard some shots and Miller says that belongs to a different type of weapon, and Beckett says that it comes from a former student of his, who now is a mercenary. They tried to fall asleep in the river but Miller was uncomfortable, and after listening to Beckett's recommendations was even worse. Beckett's dreams about the deaths that he has to carry with him on the back of his mind were the images that we could see while he was sleeping.

On Task They continue looking for the target so they can accomplish their objectives. Beckett knows that the mercenary is following them and that he was the one that killed his former shooter. Miller and Beckett keep moving on task while talking about their past, they realize that they have many things in common, but also other things that are very different. They talked about their future plans, and Miller realizes that Beckett does not have any other life than just the one about killing people. They continue walking through the jungle, and Beckett feels some things that Miller does not.

Visiting a camp From the very beginning they get into the camp, Beckett affirms that there is

something wrong. The camp looks isolated, they see many meat hanging and nobody around. They manage to get into one cabin, which is the chapel, where they see the Priest dead with his rosary on his hand and the signature of the Surgeon with no finger on the hand. Cruelty and violence done by the people that killed the priest is what one can see. Miller starts to think who can be doing so many terrible things. Beckett tells him that is the person that he shot in the river so he tries to convince Miller that they need to be performing their mission even though they do not have the contact anymore. Miller says that it is suicidal, but Beckett affirms that every mission is suicidal.

Quest to their objective They continue their way to the Hacienda, when they stop so they will get some type of rest and continue by dawn to their final destination. Sniper was guarding carefully while Miller was sleeping. Beckett knew the mercenaries were going to come looking for them, so he kind of sets up a plan that helps kill the mercenary. Then, they started to continue their quest to their targets, and they were discussing a little bit but basically they agreed to finish with their task. Beckett seriously tells Miller that this time there is no doubt, "one shot, one kill". Far away from each other, from different places they need to take down these two mafia leaders at the same time. Many guardians that protect the leaders are armed and ready to fight. But Miller and Beckett have split so they can take down these two leaders -Ochoa and Alvarez-.

Protecting the Hacienda While they are split from different positions so they both can kill Ochoa and Alvarez, the Hacienda is being protected all the time. At night rottweilers with security guards walk around the Hacienda, Beckett that is laying on the ground covered in grass, he is protected with manure that he places a little to the side where he is so he can go unnoticed that way the dogs will not bark at him.

Miller's first death The next day very early Ochoa and Alvarez show up at the hacienda. Miller follows exactly the directions given by Beckett. But Beckett at the moment when he wants to shoot Alvarez, he starts fighting with another mercenary. Miller kills Ochoa and everybody starts shooting and they both start running for their lives. They get back together and they are again fighting for their lives. Beckett gets wounded and tries to wrap his arm so he can continue with his objective.

Fighting against each other While they are trying to survive, Miller continues having an aggressive attitude towards Beckett. Miller shoots various times at Beckett but does not hit him, until while he is ready to give his last shot, someone says do not move, Beckett sees this from far away and shoots at him and kills him. Miller runs fast from the jungle, and he appears in a ruined building where he gets together with Beckett.

Beckett tells Miller that is over They listened to some soldiers speaking Spanish so Beckett tells Miller that is over and that he should go to catch the helicopter. He was going to cover his back while he escaped from there. While they are executing everything, they trap Beckett and take him to the Hacienda.

Miller's thought As Miller listens to the helicopter, and sees his freedom, he realizes that his friend, his mentor, is trapped by the enemies so he goes and gets him.

Beckett's tortured When Beckett is with Alvarez's soldiers, Alvarez comes and asks him who he is, the Surgeon comes and affirms that they are going to spend a lot of time together. While he starts asking questions and interrogating him, he never answers any of the questions that the Surgeon does but he breaks his fingers.

Miller's revenge Miller listens to the suffering of his mentor Beckett and returns for revenge, first he stabs Alvarez and continues to fulfill his agenda. He kills the surgeon and frees his mentor Beckett. When they were leaving everyone started to follow him and chase him.

Rescue On their way to the helicopter one guy follows them, Beckett hurt, and tortured with broken fingers he manages to take a shot to the guy and kills him before he tries to kill Miller. They left the Jungle, and in a short dialogue that Miller tells Beckett, there is a lot of hope for Beckett. "There is always Montana" is the last expression that Miller gives Beckett, so he does not have to continue with that type of life.

IMAGES



In the Panamanian Jungle, the Sniper is the one that has the specific tasks.



Miller and Beckett observing patiently their target.



Miller and Beckett one more time with their weapons.



Miller becomes a great Sniper after he spent time with Beckett.