

Jumped 20 feet – to save his son

When the killer started shooting frantically in the movie theatre, James Rohrs took his four-month-old baby Ethan and fled up some stairs –leading nowhere. Far below, Rohrs saw the shooter coming towards him. Rohrs took Ethan in his arms – and jumped.

Four-month-old baby Ethan Rohrs is sound asleep in his father's arms. It's hard to believe that just a few hours ago he lived through a shootout that left 12 dead and 58 wounded. Next to them are Ethan's mom, Patricia Rohrs, and his four-year-old sister.

Changed seats

"We were going to sit in the front row at first, but then we found better seats further back. Maybe that's what saved our lives," says James Rohrs, his eyes red from tears and lack of sleep.

Like most of the other moviegoers in auditorium nine at Century 16 Cinema in Aurora, Colorado, the Rohrs family believed it was a stunt when James Eagen Holmes, 24, stepped up in front of the screen during the premiere of *Batman, The Dark Night Rises*. Holmes was dressed in full body armor with a bullet proof vest, a gas mask, and gloves – all in black – and armed with an assault rifle, a shotgun, and a handgun.

"Everyone wore costumes"

"Pretty much everyone wore costumes at the premiere, so we didn't think much of it," James Rohrs explains. "But then the shooting started. It was like a dream at first, before we realized it was for real. It was total chaos. People screamed and fell all around us."

Just like now, Rohrs had Ethan in his arms when the shooting began. He threw himself and his son over the seats directly in front of them, lying flat on the ground, protecting the baby. While he was crawling towards the exit, his wife, Patricia Rohrs, picked up their daughter and ran.

"A kid next to me got shot, but I didn't have time to help him. I had to get my child out of there," says Patricia Rohrs, crying.

"All I see now are the children's faces"

James Rohrs took flight up some stairs, but there was no escape.

"I sat there with Ethan crying in my arms when I saw the shooter coming at us. I panicked. I thought he was going to kill my baby. I didn't know what to do, should I hide Ethan up there somewhere or jump with him? I was scared that I would drop him or break his neck. It was about 20 feet to the ground below."

When bullets came flying just to the right of Rohrs he decided to jump. His elbows are scratched from protecting Ethan from the fall.

Patricia Rohrs saw her husband jump and ran up to him.

"I ran up to James and we got out together. My daughter fell and I had to drag her out. All I could think about was getting my kids out of there."

The Rohrs family was taken straight to the hospital, luckily none of them was severely injured. But the painful memories will stay with them for life.

“All I can remember now are the faces of all of those children in there,” says Patricia Rohrs.

Bullets entered next door

Ryan Johnson, 22, sat with his friends in the theater sharing a wall with auditorium nine.

“Suddenly we heard loud pops coming from the other room. Then we saw smoke. First I thought it was fire crackers, but then we heard guns go off. At that point people started getting up and everyone panicked when bullets started coming through the wall”.

According to the police Holmes acted alone, but eye witnesses talk about a suspicious individual who stood by the emergency exit just before Holmes came bursting through. It is impossible to enter the exit from the outside, and witnesses claim Holmes was let in by someone else.

Emeli Emanuelson

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