

BETTING ON A LOSING DOG

Written by

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INT. CLUB - NIGHT

The sound of people PARTYING and MUSIC fills the room. The room is full to the max, with people dancing and having fun under neon lights.

The DJ is at the front of the house, trying to keep the energy in the room up. There are several tables sitting outside the dance floor, with parties happily talking and gossiping.

The bar of the club is just as full, with people coming and going for their drinks. A woman, HELENA (22), sits with a drink in front of her alone.

She picks up her PHONE to see a reminder: BIRTHDAY AT THE CLUB!!! She taps on it to pull up the calendar app to see that it is March 20th 2018, her birthday. A soft HUFF can be heard from her. She closes her phone and puts it down flat on the bar.

She leans over the bar a little, her face being deeply upset but not yet crying.

From across the room, JACK (23) watches Helena. He stands in the corner of the room with a drink in his hand. His hair is messy, but he wears a nice jacket with a shirt underneath that says "tits man". He pulls out his phone to the camera app and fixes his hair. He then begins to march over to Helena. As he walks over he looks down and quickly zips his jacket up. He then takes the stool next to Helena.

As he sits down he puts his head in his hand and looks at her. She doesn't notice him, and still has her head down in the bar. He then opens his mouth to speak, but then stops and pulls out his camera app again to check his hair again. After fixing it again he finally speaks.

JACK

Hey!

She doesn't respond. Jack waits a couple of seconds before speaking again.

JACK

Hey there!

Jack then taps her a little bit.

Helena finally looks up at him. Her makeup is now smudged as she was finally crying with her head down.

HELENA

Oh, sorry... I didn't hear you...

Jack looks a little surprised but quickly covers it up with a smile.

JACK
Its alright, pretty loud in here
right!

Helena shakes her head.

Jack's smile is now much larger

JACK
So, why's a pretty girl like you
doing her crying by herself?

HELENA
Well... (sigh) its my birthday
today...

JACK
Well Happy Birthday then!

Jack laughs.

HELENA
Yeah, well... I planned this out
for months to go here for my
birthday, but then shit happened
and now I'm the only one here.
Celebrating by myself.

Helena looks like she is about to cry again.

Jack looks around with a face of worry. He then calls over
the bar tender.

JACK
Yeah, can I get her another drink.

The bar tender shakes his head.

HELENA
Thanks I guess. I could use another
drink.

JACK
Who doesn't!

They both laugh.

HELENA
So... whats a guy like you doing
here.

JACK

Well, I actually happen to know the owners of this place. I'm actually really important.

He puffs out his chest at this comment.

Helena lifts her head up a little bit.

HELENA

Oh that's cool! So what do you do exactly?

Jack deflates his chest when she asks this and gives another worried look.

JACK

Oh yeah, I'm...

He takes another moment and puffs his chest again.

JACK (CONT'D)

Important guy. I don't really have a title.

Helena giggles at this.

HELENA

Okay, important guy, it's nice to meet you.

JACK

Oh, my name's Jack actually.

HELENA

Helena.

The drink finally arrives with the bartender putting it in front of Helena. Jack picks his drink up but stops at drinking it. He thinks for a moment.

JACK

Hey, you want to ditch this place? Maybe find somewhere cooler. I know many a cooler place.

HELENA

I thought your friend ran this place?

Jack's eyes open up a lot.

JACK

Yeah but like... You know... He
kinda follows me around for clout.
I know much cooler club owners.

Helena laughs again. She looks into Jack's eyes.

Jack's EYES shine with a certain glow.

She stands up and looks at Jack with her phone still on the bar.

HELENA
Okay important guy Jack. Why not.

Jack's smile grows giant as he jumps up off his chair. He then lifts his hands up which unzips his jacket to show his "tits man" shirt.

JACK
Yeah! This is gonna be the best
birthday you ever had!

Helena begins to die of laughter.

HELENA
Important guy and tits man I see!

Jack looks down to see his open jacket.

JACK
Oh that right! Its a joke shirt I
got today from my friend... who
owns this place... as a joke... But
the jacket is pretty nice right?
And it covers up this very stupid
joke shirt... that I did not buy...

Helena continues to laugh at Jack.

The phone continues to sit on the bar, with it flicking on with a notification on it showing the time to be 9:20 pm. The notification is from Helena's mother texting her a late happy birthday.

INT. JACK'S TOWNHOUSE - DAY

Helena's phone is once again seen, but now a crack is in the corner of the phone. It is now 11:09 am on March Helena sits on a bed with the phone next to her, she stares up at the ceiling.

The CEILING FAN creates a WHIRRING sound as it moves. The sound of someone else HUMMING in the room can also be heard. Cars outside VROOM past and BEEP, but are muffled a little.

Helena turns her head to look at a calendar on the wall. The year is now

The calendar has several marked dates, all of them about Jack. The 2nd, 3rd, 7th, 13th, 15th, and 17th are about job interviews, all of them x out. The 8th and 12th are about "business opportunities" that Jack had, they are also x out.

MARCH 20th only has an 'Interview! Go Jack!'.

Helena goes back to looking at the spinning fan again. The humming stops.

JACK
So, how do I look?

Helena leans up to look at Jack. The room is slightly dirty, with one window and a lamp in the corner. A book shelf of books lays in the corner, covered in dust. A desk is next to it, with a mirror on the desk's right. In front of the mirror stands Jack, he wears a black suit with a white undershirt. A red tie goes on with the ensemble, including a Bluetooth earpiece.

HELENA
You look nice.

She gives a soft smile.

Jack looks a little disappointed at this answer.

JACK
Yeah I look 'nice' but do I look like a lawyer?

Helena looks up and down at Jack.

HELENA
Yeah, I think you look like a lawyer.

JACK
Good, I didn't buy this earpiece for no reason. It makes me look really official right? Like a freakin senator!

Helena gives a soft shake of her head.

HELENA
Yeah, you look good. You do know how to use that thing right?

JACK

Huh, come on I obviously know how to use it baby. Jack knows everything, don't you know?

Helena lays back down on the bed.

HELENA

Okay, just making sure.

Jack looks at Helena on the bed. He then walks over to her and climbs into bed laying on top of her.

JACK

You know I got this right?

He stares into her eyes with a large smile.

She looks on with a look like she has already heard this one before.

HELENA

Well... I hope you got this. The last...

Jack cuts her off with a laugh.

JACK

The last couple times were flukes, nothing to worry about. I am Jack, and Jack is greatness. Once I get the job, everything is gonna be great. Then you wont need your job, you can stay here all day.

HELENA

Jack, I think we would still need...

He cuts her off again by placing his finger on her lips.

JACK

Don't worry, Jack's got this.

Helena looks into his eyes.

Jack's EYES stare back into Helena's but then they look away from her as he gets off her.

HELENA

I believe you Jack. You got this.

She gives him a soft smile. He returns the smile and then picks up a briefcase and heads out the door.

HELENA

Oh could you please take out the trash on your way out.

JACK

Oh, I already did that. Before you woke up of course.

Helena looks at him for a moment.

HELENA

Alright, thanks. Oh and you know what today is right?

Jack stands in the frame of the door, Helena leans up in the bed looking at him waiting for his response.

JACK

Uh.... Yeah of course I know baby don't worry!

He tries to leave but Helena asks again.

HELENA

Well? What's today?

Here face has become gloomier as Jack tries to guess what today is.

JACK

Baby listen, I know what today is. You don't got to worry about it. I gotta go I'll be back.

He finally marches out of the door and leaves. She sits there staring out the door with a frown on her face.

Jack walks down the stairs WHISTLING as he goes. He enters through a doorway to the kitchen, behind him is a living room area. He picks up his keys off the kitchen counter. A window is in front of the room, a green car sits in front of the house past the window.

He walks past the trash, it has not been taken out yet. He stares at it for a moment, but shakes his head and leaves it.

He comes up to the front door, on the floor is a LETTER that says "Overdue" on the front. He picks it up, still WHISTLING. He opens the letter, it is a letter telling him that his rent is overdue for TWO MONTHS. He then crushes the papers in his hands.

Helena looks out the window to see him leave in the green car. The sound of him STARTING THE CAR is heard as he leaves.

Helena continues to look out the window, on the BED is SUITCASE with some clothes in it. The only sound being her breathing and the slight sound of wind.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A man sits at a clean desk with a phone and name plate that says GEORGE B WAYNE on it. The man, 60, has grey hair and is wearing a blue suit with a matching blue tie. He is looking down at some paperwork with a pen in his hand. The sounds of the OFFICE fill the room, with murmurs and footsteps. There is a window and you can see the busy street and the muffled noises of the cars also fill the room. Then two KNOCKS at the door ring out in the room.

GEORGE

Come in.

The door opens and Jack walks in, he has his large smile on as he enters.

JACK

Hi, I'm Jack, I'm here for the interview. The receptionist told me to just knock.

George looks up from his work and at Jack. He looks up and down at Jack and shakes his head with a smile.

GEORGE

Yes, I remember. Sit down sit down.
You have a big future ahead of you!

George opens a cabinet on his desk and pulls out a file. Jack continues to smile as he sits down in the chair with confidence. He then scoots himself a little further towards the desk.

JACK

Thank you sir that means a lot to me.

George reaches out his hand to shake Jack's, which Jack accepts and shakes. It is a visibly strong hand shake.

GEORGE

I'm looking forward to getting to know you. This interview is going to be pretty simple, just want to get some more information on you. But from what I've read I think you'll fit perfectly into our firm. Now, it said in your resume that you were a grad from Harvard?

Jake crosses his leg in his chair, he begins to tap his FOOT.

JACK

Yes, the best years of my life, I just loved it. I learned a lot there.

GEORGE

Well I hope you did, it is Harvard law after all.

Both men give a small laugh.

GEORGE

It also said you did your undergrad at the University of Penn. I was an Undergrad there myself-

Jack cuts off George and raises his fist up.

JACK

Go Penn!

George and Jack both laugh again.

JACK

Yeah, I loved being there as well. I was actually a part of the football team and my friend was actually the mascot guy.

GEORGE

Really?

JACK

Yep, I remember he let me wear the um owl head one time.

George freezes for a moment and looks at Jack.

GEORGE

Owl?

Then the phone at his desk rings and he picks it up.

GEORGE

Yes Debbie?

Jack looks at George with a smile as George talks on the phone. Then he raises his eyebrows and goes straight faced. He then smiles again at George. George then hangs up the phone.

JACK

Owl head? I actually meant Quaker,
I also knew the guy that did
Temple's mascot back in the day.

George narrows his eyes at Jack.

GEORGE

So I guess you got along with
people who wear funny costumes then
huh.

Jack laughs a little bit.

JACK

I guess I did.

George looks down but then looks back up at Jack.

GEORGE

Ok, well it says here you were last
at Ballard Spahr! I actually know
someone who workes there, his name
is John Kalle. Did you know him?

JACK

Knew him? We were the best of
friends, I mean we were constantly
doing cases together and going out
and golfing.

George looks kinda shocked by this answer and takes a minute.

GEORGE

Really? He never mentioned you.

JACK

Oh he probably did, you just don't
remember.

GEORGE

I also don't remember him ever
liking golf.

JACK

Are we talking about the same Jack?
That guy cant get enough of golf!

George continues to look a little taken aback by this
information.

GEORGE

Well, alright then. It's good to
know you know good people in our
field.

Jack gives a bigger smile and then begins to tap his foot a little bit faster and we can hear it in the room.

GEORGE

Ok, well it says on your file that you were born in Philadelphia.

JACK

Yes, I grew up in North Philly. Me and my family were very poor and my poor mother actually died.

GEORGE

She did?

JACK

Yeah when I was just five.

GEORGE

I'm sorry for your loss.

Jack begins to sniffle and looks like he is going to cry.

JACK

Its okay, I was just lucky that my father was there to take care of me.

GEORGE

Well tell him that he raised a good son.

JACK

Oh he's dead as well.

George's eyes light up with surprise. He then stays quiet trying to find the words.

GEORGE

Two dead parents? Sorry for both your losses.

Jack looks like he is about to cry.

JACK

Thank you. Now, do I have the job, because I kind of have a meeting soonish.

Jack now looks fine and like he did before he started talking about his "dead" parents. Then a ring buzzes out from Jack's pants.

JACK

I have a call. Can I quickly step out for a second?

GEORGE

Sure, thing. We can pick this up in a minute.

Jack stands up and leaves the room, as he does George begins to look at the resume file on Jack. He picks it up and slaps it down several times. He then picks up his phone.

INT. Hallway - DAY

Jack is standing in the hallway trying to use his earpiece but it won't work. So he just pulls out his phone and answers the call, he talks quietly so as to not let others hear him. Other employees walk past him and the sounds of the OFFICE can be heard.

JACK

Hi Ma, yeah I'm at the interview. Naw, its going great. I never understood why you never trust me with this stuff, I can definitely be a lawyer with only three weeks of online law school. Na-No Ma I did not say you and Dad were dead this time. Its not gonna be like with the other places, now I got to get back to it. I'll call you when I'm done.

Jack then slicks his hair back a little bit as he gets off the phone. He then reopens the door and steps in.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Jack retakes his seat and crosses his legs again.

JACK

So about the job?

George stares at him furiously.

GEORGE

Hey Jack, I got someone on the phone that I think you should talk too.

Jack taps his foot again quickly and gives a worried smile.

George puts the phone on speaker.

JOHN

Yes, this is John Kalle.

Jack jumps up in his seat and straightens out his legs as he gives a big toothy smile and speaks through his teeth.

JACK

John, how are you? Ready for that golf tournament, buddy?

JOHN

Who the hell is this, and why the hell would I play a golf tournament, I hate golf to no end.

Jack gives a nervous giggle and looks at George.

GEORGE

Thanks John, I'll talk to you later

George ends the call with John and looks at Jake with complete rage.

GEORGE

So, you lied to me about John. In fact, you lied about ever working at Ballard Spahr. I don't know what is or is not a lie from you. Who the hell are you!

Jack looks around the room and then back to George and nervously laughs. He tries to respond with something but stops himself.

JACK

I'm... an important guy.

George shakes his head.

GEORGE

Nothing then. Not a damn word was real. Get out.

Jack stands there for a moment. He then turns away, his face full of rage.

JACK

Hey, just remember my name...

EXT. OUTSIDE JACK'S TOWNHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Jack walks down the sidewalk next to his house, he pulls out the earpiece and throws it on the ground and begins to stomp on it.

JACK (V.O.)
Because I'm gonna be important. And
everyone will know me.

Jack is outside kicking his front gate to his house over and over again. From a window, Helena looks down at Jack as he toils and kicks the gate.

JACK (V.O.)
You said it yourself, I got a big
future in front of me.

INT. JACK'S TOWNHOUSE - AFTERNOON

Jack opens the door and walks in. He look furious as he tries to control his anger. He goes to his fridge and opens the door up and takes out a bottle of beer. He covers his face with his hand as he stands there. From the entrance to the kitchen from the living room Helena watches Jack.

HELENA
Jack.

Jack pops up and gives his regular smile like nothing has happened.

JACK
Hey baby, you wont believe this but
i'm pretty sure I got the job!

Helena stares at him with a blank expression. The suitcase sits next to her.

JACK
Yeah, they said they loved my
resume and that I could be a really
big addition to the firm.

He leans on the kitchen counter looking at her. He then looks down to see the SUITCASE.

The SMILE on his face begins to damper.

JACK
Where you going?

HELENA
I'm leaving Jack.

There is a solid moment of silence between the two of them.

He then begins to laugh at her.

JACK

Ha ha Baby, very funny joke. Now
come on I'm gonna take you out
somewhere nice tonigh-

She walks forwards towards him slowly.

HELENA
With what money?

JACK
Um, my mone-

HELENA
No, with my money that I make at my
job Jack.

Jack huffs and steps back from the counter.

JACK
Well I mean, who cares who's money
it is. Your's is mine as mine is
your's and all that (under his
breath) but I do wish that more of
it was mine...

Helena moves in closer.

HELENA
Jack. That is my money. From my
job. The only job that keeps this
house a flout because you want to
chase some.....

She puts her hands on head and then throws them up in the
air.

HELENA (CONT'D
Fever dream that you're a lawyer
from two weeks of online school.

JACK
Oh come on, its its you know very
prestigious.

HELENA
It is barely a school!

JACK
Is this about money! Fine here's
your money! Money from that job
that you seem to love so much more
then me!

Jack throws a couple of dollar bills at Helena.

Helena stands there staring at Jack looking like she is about to cry.

HELENA

You think this about money, Jack!
This is about everything!

JACK

Of what's everything then huh?!

She begins to point at her fingers as she lists off things.

HELENA

The lying, the not taking
responsibility, the not giving a
shit!

He turns away from her and begins to laugh.

JACK

Oh please! Lying when have I ever
lie-

Helena kicks over the open trash can.

HELENA

How about the trash, Jack! The
Trash! You were leaving the house,
and yet you needed to lie anyway to
get out of a simple task! And now
your sitting her trying to tell me
you don't lie!

Jack comes in closer to Helena.

JACK

That wasn't a lie! That was just me
forgetting!

HELENA

How about when I asked you if you
paid the rent?

JACK

I- I- I did that-

Helena points in his face.

HELENA

No you did not Jack! I talked to
the landlord and they told me your
two months late on it! Where did
that money go, Jack!

JACK

I don't know- she was probably lying-

Helena clamps her hands to her head.

HELENA

Why would the landlord lie about that, Jack! No, no of course it's someone else's problem! It's everyone else's fault except yours right! 'Can't get a job because no one likes me, can't be the fact that I lie about what I am all the time'! This is everyday, every month, for years Jack!

She points into his chest.

Jack smiles and pushes her finger off her.

JACK

Yeah you know what, it is everyone else's issue Helena! No one can see my talent in this tow-

HELENA

Shut up!

JACK

Helen-

HELENA

What is today Jack?

Jack takes a couple steps back and opens the bottle of beer in his hand.

JACK

I guess it's the day you're leaving, like that's totally gonna last!

HELENA

What is today Jack, Answer Me!

JACK

Who cares what today is Helena!

There is silence in the room for a second as Jack gets deep into Helena's face.

JACK

I don't care what today is, or
whatever your on about! Five years
this is been on for! Five Years
Helena! You could have left at any
time but right now you want to do
this! You're just hateful towards
me because im about to get a better
paying job then you right?

Helena begins to cry.

JACK (CONT'D)
Taking away your womanly
independence huh! Sorry that I know
that I'm greatness, and now I see
that you don't see that either! I
thought you did once! But don't
worry, you'll see one day and I
forgive you right now for not
seeing my grea-

HELENA
It's my birthday Jack.

Jack shut up. He stares at her for a long moment. They stare
at each other for a while.

JACK
It is?

HELENA
It is.

He continues to look at her.

JACK
Um- I I knew tha-

She turns around from him and walks away to the door frame.

HELENA
Not gonna say the truth once huh?

She looks deeply into his eyes again.

His EYES don't twinkle like before, it then cuts back to the
moment they met and her staring into his eyes. It then cuts
to all the moments of her staring into his eyes.

HELENA
I don't think you ever did Jack.
You're not an important guy, hell
you're not anything. I don't know
who you are. Who are you, Jack!

Jack stands there unable to speak. He then musters something.

JACK

I'm Jack.

Helena picks up the suitcase and begins to leave.

HELENA

You don't even know either. I hoped that I would know, maybe that love I saw in you was real. But it's nothing. I'm done waiting for you to be the person that I hoped you were. I can't- I just can't be here for you when you're not even backing yourself Jack. Goodbye. Oh, and I paid for the rent for the last two months. You're welcome.

She walks away from the door frame.

Jack stands there not knowing what to do. The sound of her opening and closing the door is heard. Jack looks over to the window.

He sees her, as she gets into a cab and gets ready to leave. He looks away and thinks for a moment. The sound cuts out to static

EXT. OUTSIDE JACK'S TOWNHOUSE - AFTERNOON

He comes outside to her, he talks to her for a moment. They both come in for a hug. He says the only true thing he can.

JACK

I love you. I need you.

INT. JACK'S TOWNHOUSE - AFTERNOON

In the real world, Jack continues to stare out the window as she leaves.

He turns around and huffs.

JACK

Who gives a shit anyway, she was a total fucking bitch anyway!

He kicks the trash on the floor around and throws his bottle of beer on the ground, CRASH!

JACK

She's gonna be back, I know she will be! Why the hell should I beg for her love! No she's just a fucking whore who wanted my love and didn't want to provide me with anything!

He walks up the stairs roughly stomping up. He enters his bedroom.

JACK

She just doesn't get me! No one fucking does! How could they? I'm better then them, how could they know anything!

He begins to smash up his room, first the mirror, then the desk, then the bookshelf, he even tears down the ceiling fan.

JACK

That fucking bitch doesn't know anything! Not me not anything! She needs to get out of her own little fucked up world and see fucking reality!

He then walks into his living room. In the room is a couch, a record player, a DVD shelf, a TV, a lamp, a picture of Helena and Jack together, and a coffee table. He begins to destroy it all.

JACK

No one believes in me! That's why I fail! You know what, im gonna be successful without her or anyone! I'm gonna be the biggest name in the world, I'm gonna have a beautiful family, with a hotter woman then she ever was! TOO FUCKING HELL WITH HER!

He finally stops and looks around to see the destruction that he has caused.

He looks below his foot to see the photo of the two of them together. He picks it up.

He sits down in his destroyed chair, and stares at the photograph. He says nothing as he stares into it. Nothing at all.

THE END.