

"Goodnight Jack"

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. WAREHOUSE ROOF - NIGHT

A man hoists himself up through a hole of a warehouse roof. Panting, JACK (40) wears a trench coat and his face is covered with a laughing clown make-up.

Under the pouring rain, his face beaten by the wind, Jack stands on a warehouse slippery roof. He starts to run to the next warehouse and turns back.

Behind him, police officers appear through the hole where he has just emerged. Reaching the edge of the warehouse, Jack jumps and lands on the next roof.

EXT. WAREHOUSE #2 ROOF - NIGHT

Jack makes a long leap, but almost slips in landing and is thrown off balance. He tries to recover, closely grabs a pipe, and manages to stand up.

He resumes his course. He reaches the edge of the second roof and manages to jump on a large rusty pipe that relies the warehouse to another.

Under his weight, the pipe breaks and Jack disappears from the policemen's sight.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Soaking, Jack hangs to a steel cable relying two cranes. With an incredible agility, he pulls himself up to the cables, and walks like a tightrope walker to one of the cranes.

INT. CRANE - NIGHT

Jack enters the crane. A last glimpse in his back. From the second roof, police officers start to shoot at him.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

As the clown make-up starts to run on his face, Jack reaches the ground and nervously scans around. He takes a paper out his pocket and reads it as rain pours on it.

DR. ETIENNE MARCEL

9703 BOOTHAM TERRACE

Jack pockets the paper and starts to run down the street.

FADE TO:

INT. DR. MARCEL'S "OPERATING" ROOM - DAY

A shitty little room with a dentist chair in the corner, a foul kitchen piled high with dirty dishes. In the center of all this is a make-shift medical set-up: a table with scalpels and other surgical equipment.

Jack sits in the dentist chair facing DR. MARCEL -- a fat bald man in his 50's. Dr. Marcel sneezes, talking with a French accent.

DR. MARCEL

You came to the right place, Jack.

Jack's blue eyes glances about uneasily as the man sneezes again. Dr. Marcel sees he's anxious and smiles.

DR. MARCEL

After this, you'll exactly look like my own son.

JACK

That's comforting.

Dr. Marcel turns his back.

DR. MARCEL

French Medicine academy banned me. Fools they are. That night I just had a few drinks and --

JACK

(interrupting)

I know --

Dr. Marcel turns back. He holds a large syringe.

DR. MARCEL

Try to relax, Jack.

(injecting)

I'll have to remove your face, you know. Completely.

JACK

Yeah --

DR. MARCEL

And replace it with a new one.

Jack just nods.

DR. MARCEL
It'll be \$5 000 -- cash.

Dr. Marcel holds out his hand and Jack hands him a rolled-up wad. The doc opens a drawer and throws the money in it.

DR. MARCEL
Parfait! I love America. If every client could be as easy as you!
(a beat)
Are you a fan of Brigitte Bardot?

JACK
Who?

Dr. Marcel shakes his head with spite.

DR. MARCEL
Americans.

He takes a make-up remover cotton ball and starts to wipe the clown make-up leftover off from Jake's face.

DR. MARCEL
All the same. Clowns --

Jack straightens up.

JACK
I could go somewhere else.

DR. MARCEL
Just trust me. You saved us after all.

Jack looks at him.

JACK
Us?

DR. MARCEL
Yes. Back in 1944. Omaha Beach. D-Day--

He picks up a scalpel, spits on the end to clean it off, and tests it on French President Sarkozy's picture. Jack watches as it cuts right through.

DR. MARCEL
My grand-dad was there. Well -- on the wrong side. Died with some of his new friends -- in a German blockhaus.

Jack grimaces.

JACK
About my face, I --

DR. MARCEL
(smiling)
Do not worry, mon ami. Just like I
told you, like my own son.

Every trace of make-up has disappeared. Dr. Marcel now tightly straps Jack's hands and legs on the dentist chair, checks the leather strips, and crosses his arms on his chest, staring at him.

DR. MARCEL
In three days, you'll be able to
take the bandages off.

JACK
(sleazy)
Three days --

Dr. Marcel gently adjusts the dentist chair and pulls it back.

DR. MARCEL
(smiling)
Goodnight, Jack.

Jack's POV as Dr. Marcel approaches with the scalpel and we--

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Jack is lying in a hospital metal frame bed, his head entirely bandaged.

A yellowish light bathes the bare room.

Jack slowly wakes up. He first moves a finger, his hand, then his arm. He cautiously sits down on the verge of the bed that squeaks as he moves. Jack raises his hand to his head and feels the bandages.

JACK
(to himself)
Well. At least, I'm still alive.

He gets up and takes a look at his reflection in a mirror on the wall. His blues eyes pierce through the bandages. He notices his head had inflated.

By the mirror, Jack sees a "Far Side" calendar. He tears a sheet off where it reads: October 29.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ROOM - DAY

Jack walks back and forth in the room, like a lion in a cage.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Jack is sitting on the bed.

The door opens and Dr. Marcel enters, a meal tray in his hands. A silverplate dish-cover is placed on it.

DR. MARCEL

Feeling better today, Jack? One more day and you'll be a brand new man.

He puts the tray on the bed by Jack.

DR. MARCEL

Today, my special treat. The specialité du Chef.

(proudly)

Baguette, pâté, ratatouille, Brie cheese, and Bordeaux wine. All these things why I miss home.

He takes the dish-cover off the tray and lets appear a bowl with a reddish mixture.

DR. MARCEL

Well -- I had to mix all this for you.

Like a magician, he delicately takes something out his inner pocket.

DR. MARCEL

Voilà!

A STRAW

He hands it to Jack.

DR. MARCEL

Bon appetite!

He's about to step out.

DR. MARCEL

See you tomorrow -- son.

He bursts out laughing and steps out, leaving Jack alone.

His straw in hand, Jack lowers his eyes, looks at it, lets it drop, and finally pushes the tray away.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. ROOM - DAY

CLOSE UP on the calendar where it reads: October 31.

Jack is sitting on the bed. He cautiously turns his trembling around his head, removing the bandages. At his feet, the bandages silently fall.

Jack's POV: the last bandage around his eyes is removed. Jack sighs.

He gets up, approaches the mirror, and stares at his reflection.

Jack's head has been turned into a pumpkin carved like a Jack-o'-lantern!

He screams --

INT. DR. MARCEL "OPERATING" ROOM

Dr. Marcel is peacefully sleeping in the dentist chair, snoring.

On a shelf, a framed photograph shows him, happy, in a country fair, hugging a little boy. Dr. Marcel's son --

The little boy has the same pumpkin head as Jack.

FADE OUT:

the end