

Hit The Road

By

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1 INT. DAY

JACK sits by himself in an office. He sits deadly still. No movement. While JACK is talking, music begins to play in the background.

JACK (V.O)

So, I guess I need to start from the beginning. I told you that I am a depressed alcoholic and failed musician who tried to commit suicide. I was once a kid who was young, full of potential, full of life. A bright and shining star in this cold and distant world. Now, no one wants to touch me with a 10-foot pole. Not even the church can fix me. If we're being honest, this all started back a few weeks ago, when Joanne and I got into a disagreement.

2 INT. DAY - THE KITCHEN

JOANNE is yelling at JACK. She is constantly raising her voice. JACK can barely get a word in.

JOANNE

YOU ARE A FAILURE!

JACK

Joanne, do you have to scream?

JOANNE

YOU'RE A COMPLETE IDIOT!

JACK

I'm not an idiot.

JOANNE

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD DO THIS TO "US". YOU RUINED EVERYTHING!

JACK

I didn't ruin you! I was sick and tired of this damn world treating me like shit and, well, it seemed like the best decision-

JOANNE

Yeah right. You always have a reason.
Always some slick comeback or some
newfound depressed outlook on life.
Fuck you, Jack.

There is silence in the room. Tension fills the air. JACK
begins to lose it.

JACK

YOU KNOW WHAT, FORGET IT! I'M DONE
LISTENING TO YOU YAP ALL DAMN DAY!

JOANNE

(quiet for the first time)
What?

3 INT. THERAPIST

THERAPIST

So, what you're saying is: "You wanted
her to leave?"

JACK

Yes. No. I don't know. I just got
tired of hearing her yelling at me for
everything I did wrong.

THERAPIST

And this was a normal conversation?

JACK

I would say so.

4 INT. DAY - THE KITCHEN

JACK

You heard me. We're done.

JOANNE

We're not "done". Not until I say so.

JACK

We're through. Finished. F-I-N-I-S-H-
E-D.

JOANNE

What am I supposed to do now, run back to my parents?

JACK

I don't care, just leave! Just god-damn leave!

JOANNE

I'm not leaving you.

JACK

Yes, you are.

JOANNE

You can't force me out like this-

JACK

(Pissed off. He throws an object across the room by JOANNE's head.)
GET THE FUCK OUT NOW! GET YOUR SHIT AND LEAVE!

5 INT. THERAPIST

THERAPIST

So, how did she take it?

JACK

I would say rather well, doc.

6 INT. DAY - THE KITCHEN

JOANNE

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU, JACK!

JACK

I CAN! I CAN BELIEVE IT! NOW LEAVE!

JOANNE

You're a dick.

JACK

You weren't any better, Joanne.

JOANNE
(Storming out of the house)
Fuck you, Jack.

JACK
(Standing by himself, he begins to
pour a glass of something)

7 INT. THERAPIST

THERAPIST
How do you feel, Jack?

JACK
I feel... free. I feel like I'm a new
man. For the first time, I don't have
a noose around my neck anymore. I can
finally breathe again.

THERAPIST
Can you Jack? For as long as I've
known you, you've been relying on
others for everything. You are a man
who has a void in his heart. Your
family, your job, hell, you lost your
wife. You try and fail to fill that
void no matter the cost. Whether it be
with a partner or you're music.

JACK
What are you saying? That I'm a
selfish, codependent child with deep-
seated parental issues? I could have
told you that for free.
(With a half-hearted apology)
No offense.

THERAPIST
No, Jack, I'm trying to tell you that
you need to stop relying on everyone
else to solve your issues.

JACK
What issue is that? The selfishness or
the codependency?

THERAPIST
The loneliness, Jack.

There is dead silence in the room.

THERAPIST

Look, you're a great guy. You're a dick, a stubborn jackass, and a chain-smoking alcoholic, but you are a good person. But most importantly, you listen Jack. Better than any other patient of mine. You are constantly using everything I've taught you.

JACK

Do I get a gold star and a cookie now?

THERAPIST

We ran out yesterday.

JACK

(Muttering)

Damn.

THERAPIST

Do you know what the problem is?

JACK

That's what I pay you for.

THERAPIST

Don't be a smart-ass.

(pause)

Your problem is that you're afraid of being alone. You're afraid that when Joanne walked out that door, you would never see her again. You thought that you lost her for good this time. And that scared you.

JACK

Maybe it did. But hey, maybe it's for the best.

THERAPIST

For the love of God and all things that are holy Jack, get out of your own way. Stop holding yourself back from happiness. You're the only person stopping yourself right now. You keep blocking and dodging everyone who ever tried to make you feel good about

yourself. You think that everyone hates you, but you only hate yourself.
(After a long pause.)
So, what did you do after Joanne left?

JACK
I remember I began to play a song.

THERAPIST
What song did you play?

JACK
I don't remember.

THERAPIST
What did it go like, Jack?

JACK thinks to himself. He begins to wander off into his own mind. There is a ringing sound, and faintly, guitar chords start playing. He breaks out of the trance when THERAPIST snaps her fingers.

THERAPIST
(Snapping finger)
Jack! Hello. Are you there?

JACK
Yeah, I'm here.

THERAPIST
Good. God forbid I lose another patient.

JACK
It hurt you know?

THERAPIST
What did, Jack?

JACK
It hurt when I played her song. I just sat there and thought about what I had done. I treated Joanne so horrible when we had that argument. Hell, I don't even remember what the argument was about.

THERAPIST

From what I hear, it sounds like you regret everything you said to her.

JACK

Yeah. I guess so.

THERAPIST

"I guess so?" After all the work we've done in the past few hours, all you can say is "Yeah, I guess so"?

JACK

(Visually Frustrated)

What do you want me to say? That I regret everything I did in that argument? That I feel pity for Joanne? Admit that I'm just a monster that she can't deal with anymore? I spent two years trying to survive on my own, and it fucking sucked, it sucked a lot? But when Joanne waltzed into my life, everything changed everything? And then, I started drinking again.

THERAPIST

That's a start.

JACK

This is about Joanne.

THERAPIST

How is this all about Joanne, Jack?

JACK

She's going away.

THERAPIST

Going away to where?

JACK

She's leaving for college in a few months. She's going to the University of Texas for her nursing degree. She wants to be a children's nurse.

THERAPIST

Well, at least she's following her dreams.

JACK
 (uninterested)
 Yeah, her dreams.

THERAPIST
 Our time is up. I'm sorry we couldn't
 finish this. We can pick this up again
 at our next session.

JACK
 See you in two weeks.

JACK begins to leave. As he heads to the door, THERAPIST
 stops him.

THERAPIST
 Hey, Jack?

JACK
 Yeah?

THERAPIST
 Tell her your sorry. It may not be
 enough to save your relationship, but
 just let her know, okay?

JACK
 Yeah, I'll tell her. And doc?

THERAPIST
 Yes, Jack?

JACK
 Thanks.

JACK walks out of the office.

8 INT. DAY - THE HOUSE

JACK is walking into JOANNE's apartment. He looks at his
 keys, fidgeting with them in between his fingers. He goes to
 unlock the door to discover that it is already unlocked. He
 opens the door and sees JOANNE sitting at the table. She
 isn't paying attention to JACK. She sits with her head down.
 There are moving boxes in the house. She is exhausted.

JACK
 Hey.

JOANNE
(Sleepily)
Hey Jack. How was therapy?

JACK
It was... good. It was good.

JOANNE
That's good. Hey, someone left a package for you while you were out. I placed it on the counter.

JACK
Do you know who it's from?

JOANNE
No clue. It just says it's from your parent's old address.

JACK begins to open the box when JOANNE begins to talk to JACK.

JOANNE
Hey, I know that I pushed you too hard the other week. I was being too overdramatic, with the move and college-

JACK
I thought it was about the film.

JOANNE
Hey, if that studio didn't want you to be in that film, that's their loss, okay? No matter what anyone else says, I still think you're the best actor/musician I know.

JACK
I'm the only actor and musician you know.

JOANNE
Not true. I know all your acting buddies. And your agent. And then there's that one time-

JACK
Okay, so you know a few people.

JOANNE

Yeah. I know some people. Perks of being the producer's daughter.

JACK

Hey, there's something I wanted to tell you.

JOANNE

Yeah, Jack?

JACK begins to think to pull JOANNE in. He brings JOANNE closer and hugs her.

JACK

I don't want to lose you.

JOANNE

(laughing)

What?

JACK

You're leaving for college, right?

JOANNE

In a year, Jack.

JACK

Still, it's 12 months.

JOANNE

I'm not going anywhere. I promise. You're not getting rid of me that easily.

JACK

That's fine with me.