

Hitchhiker

written by

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FADE IN:

INT. CAR - NIGHT

A pair of EYES stare into the rear-view. They belong to--

JACK BURNS (24) - Driving. Sitting next to him is KRIS SMITH (22) - Intoxicated.

The vehicle RUMBLES along the empty road. Woods on either side. Unsettling lack of street lights.

Kris slumps into his seat.

KRIS
(Slurred)
Fucking hell.

Jack glances at him.

JACK
You good?

KRIS
Yeah... yeah. I guess. I wont throw
up in here, don't worry.

Reaching under his seat, Jack pulls out a bag. Tosses it to Kris.

JACK
I'll take that as a warning.

Kris smirks.

KRIS
God, what a fucked up night.

JACK
Can't argue with that.

KRIS
I... I can't understand how you
stayed sober for the whole thing.
That seems like a nightmare.

Jack CHUCKLES.

JACK
Wasn't that bad. Just stayed
upstairs with Lisa.

KRIS

Oh shit... forgot she was there.
Where is she? You aren't driving
her home?

JACK

Nah. She's staying with a friend
for the night.

KRIS

Right. Well, I mean thanks for
inviting me to this thing. And
driving me home, of course.

Jack tosses another quick glance at him.

JACK

For sure.

A beat. Kris looks out the window--

KRIS

Fuck, it's creepy out here.

The woods seem vast in the darkness.

JACK

Yeah, guess so. Hey listen, what
happened to that girl you were
talking to?

Kris raises an eyebrow.

KRIS

That's too vague.

Jack rolls his eyes.

JACK

The brunette, you know? Kinda tall.
You were with her for a while.

KRIS

Oh, yeah. What was her name...
Janice... Janet something.
Whatever, I got her number.

JACK

Might be an awkward first date.

KRIS

Hopefully there won't have to be a
date.

Jack SCOFFS, playfully pushes Kris, who just CHUCKLES in response.

KRIS (CONT'D)
I'm a decent guy, trust me.

JACK
Yeah, sure you are.

He squints ahead at something.

JACK (CONT'D)
What the hell is that?

Kris looks in the same direction, at a small speck up the road. Getting closer. The headlights soon ILLUMINATE a HITCHHIKER (33).

KRIS
(Annoyed)
Oh, god.

Jack slows to a crawl. The Hitchhiker looks at them eagerly, but doesn't move.

JACK
What'd you think?

Kris looks at him. *Are you nuts?*

KRIS
Are you kidding me? Who's out here at night?

JACK
Lost hiker trying to get into town.

KRIS
We've seen zero cars on this road. Is he delusional?

A beat. Jack SIGHS. Looks concerned.

JACK
I dunno. Maybe he's desperate.

KRIS
Yeah, desperate to slit our throats.

JACK
C'mon, do you actually think that?

KRIS
You wanna take the risk?

Kris is noticeably more sober. A beat--

They both look back at the Hitchhiker. He waves both arms at them. Mouths "please".

They've gotten close enough to make out his outfit - cargo shorts, t-shirt and backpack. He's got short hair. Almost looks clean-cut.

JACK
He looks fine to me.

The car's stopped completely at this point. He looks at Kris, who just shakes his head--

KRIS
N...no! Of course he looks fine,
that's how you lure people in!

JACK
Look, what if it was you?

KRIS
First of all, I wouldn't be out
here, alright?

He EXHALES--

KRIS (CONT'D)
This is a bad idea.

A beat. Jack contemplates.

JACK
Look, let's what he says, at least.

Jack locks all the doors. Rolls down his window just a bit. They slowly move up to him.

Jack calls out at him through the tiny window opening--

JACK (CONT'D)
Hey!

The Hitchhiker jogs up to them, looking relieved.

HITCHHIKER
Man, you're a sight for sore eyes,
trust me.

JACK
Where are you going?

HITCHHIKER
Just into town. Look, if you could drop me off at a motel, any motel, that'd be fantastic.

KRIS
(Assertive)
What were you doing out here?

The Hitchhiker locks eyes with Kris. He SIGHS--

HITCHHIKER
Camping. With my girlfriend. We got into an argument before going to bed.
(beat)
Then I wake up to see my car speeding away with all our shit.
(beat)
Crazy bitch.

He lowers his head. Looks genuinely distraught. Kris seems a little less tensed. Not fully convinced, though. Jack looks at him.

JACK
C'mon. We can't not.

A beat. Kris finally concedes.

KRIS
Fine.

Jack unlocks the door. The Hitchhiker breaths a SIGH of relief. Enters the car, right behind Kris, who seems to notice.

HITCHHIKER
Thank you, so much.

He takes out his wallet. Removes a twenty dollar bill and holds it up to Jack.

HITCHHIKER (CONT'D)
Please, take it. You deserve it, you're a life-saver.

JACK
Nah, just keep it. We can find a motel easy. Sounds like you've been through enough tonight anyways.

Jack and the Hitchhiker CHUCKLE. Kris barely cracks a smile.

HITCHHIKER
But are you sure you guys don't
want it?

KRIS
(Quick)
Don't worry about it.

The Hitchhiker nods.

HITCHHIKER
Alright. Thanks again, I mean it.

Jack STARTS the engine. They start moving. It's silent.
Slowly, Kris puts one hand into his pants pocket.

JACK
Camping, huh? I feel like it's a
bit too cold for that now.

HITCHHIKER
I suppose so...

His demeanor's changed dramatically. In one SWIFT motion, he
pulls out a HANDGUN and points it at the back of Kris's neck.

HITCHHIKER (CONT'D)
Keep driving. Do what I say or he's
dead. I'm not fucking around.

Jack goes white. Face drops.

JACK
Y...yeah. Okay.

Kris just grimaces. *For fuck's sake.*

LATER

It's still silent. Still tense. Kris is breathing HEAVY.
Jack's arms are shaking. He quickly peeks at Kris, his face
saying sorry.

The hitchhiker hasn't moved. He's calm. Composed. The
headlights LIGHT up a trail entrance up ahead.

HITCHHIKER
Pull over up there.

Jack SIGHS. Obliges. He brakes, parking the car to the side
of the road, just next to the trail.

HITCHHIKER (CONT'D)
Alright, both of you get out.

Without taking his aim off of Kris, the three exit the vehicle.

EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT

With the headlights acting as the sole light source, the Hitchhiker gestures for Kris and Jack to start down the trail. They walk for a bit. And then--

HITCHHIKER
Stop right there.

They stop. Both turn around. In the pale moonlight, we see that Kris's face has contorted into one of pure anger. Not fear. Just adrenaline.

HITCHHIKER (CONT'D)
Here's what we're gonna do--

His weapon lowers slightly. Kris notices. Takes the chance--

He PIVOTS in place. The Hitchhiker FLINCHES, takes a SHOT at Kris. Just misses. Kris LUNGES at the Hitchhiker, restraining his arms. Jack just stands in bewilderment.

Kris KICKS out a leg. The Hitchhiker falls to his knees. Kris wrestles the gun away. Points it at the Hitchhiker. Hesitation. And then--

BANG! The Hitchhiker slumps. Kris PANTS. Jack looks horrified.

JACK
Shit!

Kris looks at him.

KRIS
You wanna call the cops?

Jack shakes his head--

JACK
Fuck no. Do you want to deal with that?

KRIS
Self-defense, right?

JACK
Yeah, but-

KRIS
Fuck it, lets get out of here.

He looks at the gun, not knowing what do with it.

KRIS (CONT'D)
It has my fingerprints. I can't
leave it here.

JACK
Fine, yeah.

They start jogging back down the trail. They enter the--

CAR

They sit in silence.

KRIS
What're you doing? Let's go!

Jack puts up a finger--

JACK
I think need to puke, hang on.

KRIS
Yeah, well hurry up.

Jack stumbles out of the car.

ROADSIDE

He jogs to the trail entrance. Bends down. But doesn't puke. He quickly glances back at the car. Kris is slumped into the seat, hands in his face.

He DASHES back down the trail, towards the body. He starts searching it with intent, pulling out a CELL PHONE and a picture - of Kris. He EXHALES. Pockets the items.

He runs back into the--

CAR

He STARTS the engine. Looks at Kris again. They hold each other's gaze for a second. There's something subtle about Jack's expression. Contempt. Kris doesn't seem to notice.

JACK
(Cold)
That was a bad idea.

KRIS
Yeah, no shit.

Jack looks back to the road. Starts driving. We see his eyes in the rear-view. This time, they're full of malice.

CUT TO:

BLACK.