

JAKE'S BIRTHDAY

by

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TITLE OVER BLACK:

"JAKE'S BIRTHDAY"

FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

FRENCH FRIES cook in a deep pot of oil; A MAN'S HAND pulls a tray of fish filets out of the oven; A pre-wrapped piece of cake is grabbed out of the refrigerator.

INT. PARKED CAR - DAY

MARY (30) is at the wheel and her son LITTLE JAKE (5) is sitting shotgun. Ketchup is on his face, his hands sticky. He grabs a french fry from a container doused with ketchup.

Mary rummages through her purse.

MARY

Look, you're making a mess!
(tosses phone in his lap)
Here hold my phone.

LITTLE JAKE

Can I play a game on it?

MARY

No you can't.

Ignoring her, Little Jake presses a button on the phone.

LITTLE JAKE

It's turned off.

MARY

Good. That'll keep you from messing with it. Like you do with everything else.

LITTLE JAKE

C'mon, Mom, it's my birthday.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The french fries, now in a bowl, are dabbed with a paper towel soaking up the excess oil. They're transferred into a neat little stack on a plate.

The fish filets are carefully placed on the plate, via spatula, next to the fries.

A cabinet drawer is opened, a razor blade is retrieved. The razor blade slices into the cake's plastic wrapper. It's carefully unwrapped and placed on a saucer.

INT. PARKED CAR - DAY

Mary is taking stuff out of her purse. Jake looks at her, She looks at him.

MARY

Now you know that's too much ketchup.

She sighs, studies him.

MARY

Today's your. Uncle's birthday.

LITTLE JAKE

It is? Like mine!

MARY

Yep. Your Uncle Jake. You've never met him.

LITTLE JAKE

(laughs)

He has the same name as me? And the same birthday?

MARY

Mm-hm. He does. You look like him too.

(beat)

Wanna go see him? He lives around here I think.

Little Jake thinks. She re-stuffs her purse.

LITTLE JAKE

Does he have an X-box. Like the kind I want for my birthday and you didn't get? Or a Bazooka Gun?

MARY

(chuckles)

How do you know I didn't get you that for your birthday? And why would he have a Bazooka gun? Those are for kids.

LITTLE JAKE

That's why you should get me one.

MARY

Well, if you're good, maybe there's a surprise waiting for you later.

She shrugs. Little Jake processes what she said.

LITTLE JAKE

Is this person real?

MARY

Yes.

LITTLE JAKE

Is he your brother?

MARY

No. He's a play Uncle.

LITTLE JAKE

(confused)

A play Uncle?

MARY

Mm-hm.

LITTLE JAKE

Okay. Whatever you say.

Mary stops, gives him the eye, then refocuses on her purse.

MARY

Where are my keys?

A quiet moment.

LITTLE JAKE

(shrugs)

What do I say to him?

MARY

You say...Happy Birthday!

LITTLE JAKE

Okay. And what about after that?

Found her keys! She looks at him.

MARY

You'll figure something out.

(beat)

I don't even know what *I'm*
going to say to him. Go get
in your car seat.

Little Jake stuffs another fry in his mouth, hops into his booster seat in the back.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The fish and chips, piece of cake, and a glass of iced tea sit on a portable table next to a cell phone, in front of an easy chair.

The Man, JAKE (50), takes a seat. He has a uniform shirt on. He looks older than his age, his eyes losing their spark.

Jake forces a candle into the cake, whips out a PLAYBOY LIGHTER and lights it. Then he looks for a long moment at:

THE CELL PHONE SITTING ON THE TABLE.

He takes a piece of paper out of his pocket, grabs the phone, dials, puts it to his ear...

WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)

Hello, you've reached Mary. Leave
a message!

Without hesitation, Jake throws his phone at the wall. It shatters. Emotionless, he stabs a fry, eats it.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jake dumps the remains of his food into the trashcan, including his untouched piece of cake.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

A BROOM sweeps the pieces of Jake's cell phone into a dustpan.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Jake dumps the broken cell phone pieces into the trashcan.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Sparsely decorated. Small. Really *clean*. Everything's either white or dark wood. Bed, dresser, desk, chair. A large picture of JESUS CHRIST hangs above the headboard of the bed. That's it. No more pictures, no heirlooms, no TV.

Jake enters.

INT. CAR ON STREET - DAY

Little Jake looks bored. Mary notices something out the window.

MARY

I think that must be his truck.
So he should be home.

LITTLE JAKE

Are we there yet?

MARY

Didn't you just hear me say that's
his truck?

LITTLE JAKE

(mumbles)

Yes. But I wanna go home.

MARY

Remember what I said earlier? About
being a good boy?

She studies him.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

At the desk, Jake unwraps a white handkerchief and reveals a .22 CALIBER PISTOL. He opens his desk drawer and pulls out a bullet. He puts surgical gloves on.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY (MOMENTS LATER)

Jake cleans the gun, every inch of it. Very meticulous. Then he buffs the bullet. When he's done, he loads the gun, places it back on the handkerchief.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Mary and Little Jake get out the car.

MARY

Lock the door.
(to herself)
Especially around here.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Mary and Little Jake head towards the entrance. Nobody's outside.

MARY

It's quiet around here.

LITTLE JAKE

I know. Where are all the people?

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Jake is taking a shower. He shuts the water off.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Jake sits on the bed, the large picture of Christ watching over him. He grabs a pillow, then the gun.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING STAIRWELL - DAY

Mary and Little Jake walk up and reach the top of the stairs.

MARY
(looking around)
Think it's...this way.

She guides Little Jake down the hall.

INT. OUTSIDE JAKE'S DOOR - DAY

Mary and Little Jake step up to the door.

MARY
Knock on the door.

LITTLE JAKE
You knock.

MARY
No. You knock.

LITTLE JAKE
Noooo.

MARY
Yes. Knock. Now.

Little Jake lazily knocks. They wait. No answer.

MARY
Again. Harder. He sleeps like a
log.

Little Jake knocks harder.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Jake has the gun pressed against the pillow against his temple. A tear squeezes it's way out of his eye, but his face is expressionless. We hear Little Jake's KNOCKING. Jake hasn't caught onto it yet.

INT. OUTSIDE JAKE'S DOOR - DAY

No response. Little Jake looks at Mary: *what now?*

MARY
One more time.

Little Jake sighs, kicks the door as hard as he can.

LITTLE JAKE

(playful)

Uncle Jake! I know you're in
there!

He knocks again, this time in a pattern: KNOCK-
KNOCK...KNOCK-KNOCK...

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The gun is still against Jake's temple. He averts his eyes,
hears something.

SOUND OVER OF LITTLE JAKE'S KNOCKING: KNOCK-KNOCK-KN-KNOCK-
KNOCK, KNOCK-KNOCK...

INT. OUTSIDE JAKE'S DOOR - DAY

Mary turns.

MARY

C'mon, let's go.

Little Jake puts his mouth up to the door frame.

LITTLE JAKE

Uncle Jake! Un. Cle. J. Ake.
Come out, come out wherever
you are.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Jake wraps his gun, puts it on the desk, tidies up a bit
and exits.

LITTLE JAKE (V.O.)

Ooooooh-woooooow-Eeeee--

INT. OUTSIDE JAKE'S DOOR - DAY

Mary smacks Little Jake on the back of the head.

LITTLE JAKE

Ow!

MARY

Are you finished?

Jake's door is opened. Jake peaks out, looks at Little Jake.

LITTLE JAKE

Surprise! Happy Birthday, Uncle Jake!

MARY

Hey Jake.

Jake can't take his gaze off of Little Jake. He smiles.

MARY

Are you busy? Can we come in?

A long pause before...

INT. FOYER - DAY

Little Jake walks away to explore the place. Mary and Jake stand quiet for a moment. They whisper, move towards the living room.

MARY

I think it's time he knows
who you are.

JAKE

Uncle Jake?

MARY

I think we should ease him into this.

JAKE

I've been calling.

MARY

I never gave you my number.

They watch each other for a moment.

LITTLE JAKE (O.S.)

Ooooooh!

JAKE

You look nice. Older.

MARY

I'm not the little girl you met
five years ago, Jake.

LITTLE JAKE (O.S.)

Is this real?

They turn. Jake's holding the gun, aimed in their
direction.

MARY

JAKE!

Little Jake fires. Jake is hit - he falls to the floor. The
force of the shot sends Little Jake falling backwards.

MARY

(stunned, low)

Oh my God-Oh my God.

Blood seeps from Jake's head.

BLACK.

The End.