

A Friend In Need

Written by

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EXT. STREET - LIQUOR SHOP - LATE NIGHT

A location at the far end of a dead-end street. For folks with good taste, this isn't a good place to stop.

TOM(60s), a stocky man with a receding hairline, is about to close his shop.

OS: The sound of fingers clicking.

Tom turns around, sees BEN, a 40-year-old man with a stubbled face and short hair.

This is a face that has taken a lot of punishment. Traces of past bruises and cuts are visible.

BEN
Hi, Tom.

TOM
Oh! Hi, Ben.

BEN
Would you mind?

TOM
(smiles)
Not at all.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - LATE NIGHT

A gloomy moonless sky.

The place belongs to a person with little to no money.

Ben drinks from a bottle while glancing about aimlessly.

Sweat on his brow implies that he has walked a considerable distance.

The houses are spread out over a large area. They are old and weathered.

Ben stops outside his-

HOUSE

Ben unlocks the door, goes in and closes it.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

He flicks on the lights.

The same as the outside. It is sparsely furnished.

LIVING ROOM

Ben walks past a couch with his back towards it, stops dead in his tracks.

He looks to his left at the SMASHED and BROKEN WINDOW.

JACK(OS)

Hi, Ben.

Ben tightens his grip on the bottle and turns around.

JACK (40s), sits on the couch, his left arm in a sling. He has a bony build and a razor-sharp jawline. Even when seated, it is clear that he is taller than Ben.

JACK

You fucking piece of shit.

BEN

(amused)

Someone's angry at me.

JACK

Yes, I'm.

BEN

What the fuck are you doing here?

JACK

Picnic.

BEN

You want your other arm to be broken as well?

JACK

No.

BEN

I'm serious.

Jack pats his sling lightly.

JACK

I agree. No joke there. I underestimated you the last time.

BEN

Good. So get the fuck out of my house if you don't want to deal with two slings at once.

JACK

So... You think that I broke into your house and that too quite-
(points at the broken window)
- professionally, and waited for you to return so that you could tell me to fuck off.

Ben chugs down the remainder of the bottle and throws it at Jack.

Jack catches it.

BEN

Either you get out of here in ten seconds or I'll beat the crap out of you.

JACK

I don't doubt it. You can beat me to a pulp, oh wait, you did.

(looks down at his sling)

But, if I were you, I'd be a little more careful this time.

BEN

And why is that?

JACK

Coz I'm not alone this time.

Ben gets alert, looks around.

BEN

What do you mean?

JACK

I knew that you were dumb. Get in, guys.

FOUR MEN get in from the smashed window, each holding a STEEL BASEBALL BAT.

They stand behind Ben.

Jack stands up. He is indeed taller than all of them.

JACK

Now, let's just get over with it.

BEN

You are making a mistake.

JACK

I don't think so. Give me my money.

BEN

I don't have it.

JACK

You gonna regret this.

BEN

I said - I don't have it. Give me some time I will-

Jack signals one of his men.

Man#1 takes a step forward and swings the bat towards Ben's left leg's rear knee.

Ben screams and falls on the wooden floor.

JACK

Hit him on the other leg.

Man#2 lands his bat hard on Ben's calf.

BEN

(screams)

Stop! You son of a bitch!

JACK

That's not gonna help you, Ben.
I'll take my money or I'll take
your life.

BEN

Wait! Wait. I'll give you the
money.

JACK

Please do the honors. I'm waiting.

He crawls his way to the couch, slides his hand underneath
the seat cushion.

JACK

Don't try to even act smart. Or
else the coming blow will directly
be on your head.

BEN

I'm not.

Ben comes out with a SEALED WHITE PLASTIC PACKET.

JACK

Is that the money?

BEN

Yes, it is.

Jack takes it, rips open the packet.

A cloud of BLACK POWDERED SMOKE erupts from the packet.

JACK

Fuck! My eyes!

Other guys also curse.

Along with his accomplices, Jack tumbles to the ground.

JACK

I'll fucking kill you!

Suddenly, Tom kicks open the main door, armed with a PUMP
ACTION SHOTGUN.

Ben gives Tom a little smile as he glances at him.

BEN
Thank God.

TOM
Gotcha.

EXT. TOM'S LIQUOR SHOP - SAME NIGHT - FLASHBACK

BEN
Would you mind?

TOM
(smiles)
Not at all.

Tom enters the shop, emerges with a beer bottle, and hands it to Ben.

BEN
Tom.

TOM
Yes?

BEN
I need your help. I'm expecting
some guests.

TOM
Not again.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - PRESENT

Tom unleashes a barrage of five powerful shots. Each of them strikes Jack and his men in the chest or on the head.

Blood splatters on the walls and ceiling around them.

BEN
Fuck! That's loud!

TOM
I know. Be quick. Supplies in the
truck.

EXT. BEN'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

The now visible moon hangs among the clouds.

A USED PICKUP TRUCK is parked on the street.

On the back of the truck, four shrink-wrapped dead bodies are piled.

Ben throws in the fifth.

Tom stands beside the truck, smoking. Ben catches his breath.

BEN
You could have at least helped me
with this.

TOM
I did.

Tom checks his watch. It shows 1:34. He sighs.

The silence gets broken by the sound of a POLICE SIREN. With its lights on, the police cruiser approaches the two.

BEN
Fucking neighbours.

TOM
What did you expect?

They watch as the police cruiser comes to a halt next to the truck.

Behind the wheel sits OFFICER JANE(40s).

TOM
Place them properly and lock it.

Ben proceeds with the task.

Tom stubs out his cigarette on his truck's taillight.

Jane gets out of the cruiser.

Tom walks over to Jane.

TOM
Noise Complaint?

JANE
Yes. To be specific - loud gunshots
complaint.

TOM
I'm afraid we are the culprits.

Jane eyes the back of the truck. The dead bodies are visible.

JANE
For what?

TOM
For cleaning up the mess that my
friend made.

He returns his gaze to Ben, who slams the truck's tailgate shut. Ben drapes a huge black cloth over the bodies.

JANE
He is...

TOM

Yeah. He's Ben. A little stressed right now.

(turns to Jane)

Not to worry. They were some little pieces of shit.

JANE

But who?

Tom takes a moment to consider, looks back at Ben. Ben shrugs.

TOM

Jack.

JANE

Oh! I hear you.

TOM

That's about it.

JANE

I expect no more complaints tonight.

TOM

I promise. Thanks Officer.

Jane gets in the cruiser, reverses it, and speeds away in the direction she came.

BEN

As simple as that.

TOM

Yeah.

EXT. WOODS - RURAL ROAD - TRUCK(MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

Ben and Tom sit in silence. Ben drives on the isolated road.

Tom checks his watch. It shows 2:34.

A turn to the left awaits them at a distance.

BEN

There. Right?

TOM

Yeah.

Ben takes the left turn, drives on a-

NARROWER PATH

The woods get thicker.

A SMALL RED FLAG on the side catches the truck's lights a little way ahead.

BEN
Fuck! It stinks more than ever.

TOM
What did you expect?

Ben stops the truck beside the flag.

BEN
Fuck! The smell!

Ben covers his nose and mouth with a cloth. Tom isn't bothered by it.

The flag is set on a rough trail that winds through the trees.

Ben and Tom follow the trail, which leads them to a-

CLEARING

Where, under the moonlight, a LARGE ALGAE COVERED BACKWATER gleams.

BEN
(sighs)
Let's be quick. We also got a little cleaning to do.

Tom nods.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

Scrubbed and cleaned. It seems as if nothing happened here.

Tom sleeps on the couch. Ben stands by the broken window, swaying the panel, upset.

OS: A knock on the door.

Ben tenses up. He wakes up Tom.

MAIN DOOR

Ben opens the door. Officer Jane along with OFFICER DAN(20s), stand outside.

TOM
Hello Officer. Any problem?

JANE
No, there isn't a problem. We've come to check what happened here around midnight.

TOM

Here?!

BEN

What happened here, Officer?

DAN

Your neighbours complained about loud blasting sounds coming from your house at night. Like a firearm shooting.

TOM

Oh really!

DAN

Yeah. And Officer Jane here responded to the complaints but you weren't here.

JANE

That's right.

BEN

Coz I was with Tom. At his place.

TOM

Yeah. All night he was with me.

BEN

He's right. I was with him. So, I don't know how they heard anything coming from my house.

Jane and Dan exchange glances.

JANE

Did you get that? All clear?

DAN

Crystal.

JANE

Then maybe it's nothing. We'll get going. Sorry for bothering you.

BEN

No problem. Duty first.

TOM

We're good people.

JANE

Surely.

Jane and Dan get in their police cruiser and drive away.

BEN

As simple as that.

TOM

Yeah. Acquaintances do come in handy.

BEN

No shit. You craving something?

TOM

No. You?

BEN

A beer.

TOM

(sighs)

Of course, a beer.

END.