

A Brighter Future

Written by

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INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

JACOB, early 20's, gazes at the bedroom ceiling with an envelope in his hands. He sits up and places himself at the foot of his bed, stares at the letter addressed to him.

A loud BANG strikes the door, HENRY stumbles over his own feet, intoxicated.

JACOB  
What do you want dad?

HENRY  
(Slurring words)  
Gimme that! Is this another letter  
from those so called prestigious  
schools you keep talking about.

Henry walks over to Jacob and snatches the letter from his hands.

JACOB  
Thats mine! Give it back!

HENRY  
(Grins intensely)  
Is this what you want to do with  
your life? Just waste it away.

Henry tears the envelope into tiny particles as he watches it float to the floor.

JACOB  
But why? I don't understand. It  
could be a bright future for me.  
All you care about is yourself.

HENRY  
If that were the case, then why  
haven't I put you out in the  
streets.

Henry struts to towards the bedroom door, stumbles over his own feet.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
School is a waste of money. Find  
yourself a real job.

Jacob stands from his bed as tears run down his face.  
Overwhelmed that his father has a point.

JACOB  
Maybe your right.

HENRY  
I'm always right boy, I've had the  
same job for thirty years.

Henry walks out the bedroom door SLAMMING it shut.

Jacob kneels and picks up the shredded envelope piece by piece.

INT. HOUSE - LIVINGROOM - DAY

Jacob walks downstairs to see Henry passed out on the recliner with a can of beer rested on his lap.

Jacob walks over the TV and shuts it off.

JACOB (V.O.)  
It's funny he always talks about  
being resourceful but manages to  
leave everything on in the house.

Henry grunts as he wakes up.

HENRY  
Hey! I was watching that.

Henry grabs the remote and turns the TV on.

HENRY (CONT'D)  
Go make yourself useful and get  
your old man another beer.

JACOB  
Haven't you had enough?

HENRY  
Don't sass me boy, do as your  
father asked.

Jacob walks over to the kitchen and reaches into the refrigerator to grab another beer.

INT. HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

As Jacob stands there with a can of beer in his hand he reconsiders on his decision.

JACOB  
(Yells)  
You know what dad! You can get your  
own damn beer.

Henry enters as he slams his fists onto the kitchen counter.

HENRY

What did you just say to me? Don't talk to me that way ever again. You wouldn't want to end up like your brother and mother now, would you?

Henry snatches the beer from Jacob's hand.

JACOB

Yeah, what happened was they left your sorry ass. I can't believe I've hung around long enough to put up with this.

Henry raises his hand towards Jacob.

HENRY

How dare you!

Jacob shields himself with both arms frightened.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I put food on the table and keep a roof over your head. This is how you repay me!

Jacob lowers his arms and clenches his fist, raising them by his waist side.

HENRY (CONT'D)

You going to hit me boy. You ain't got the guts.

Jacob stares down at the kitchen floor as his body trembles from the adrenaline. He takes a deep breath to calm himself.

JACOB

No I'm not. I'm better than that. I know what I need to do.

Henry stares at his beer and CRACKS it open. Stumbles onto the kitchen table as he spills his beer.

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY

Jacob pulls his cell phone out his pocket to call his brother HENRY JR, early 30s.

The dial tone RINGS.

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
Hello little bro. What's wrong?

Jacob slowly breaths into the phone.

HENRY JR. (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Is it father again?

JACOB  
Yes. I can't take it anymore. I want to be like you and get away from this hellhole.

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
Than do it. I have no regret for leaving when I did. Let's just say it was the best decision of my life.

JACOB  
Father said I'm not smart enough.

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
He said the same thing to me. Believe in yourself. You're fully capable of anything you set your mind to little brother.

Jacob smiles with ambition.

JACOB  
I really appreciate you saying that. It's exactly what I needed to hear.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
I have a question.

HENRY JR.  
Sure, what is it?

JACOB  
Our father has always been mentally abusive. Mom says that he's not right in the head. How did you manage to get out?

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
 Lots and lots of patience. Steer  
 clear of his insults. Honestly I  
 should've done this a long time  
 ago.

JACOB  
 What's that?

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
 Pack your things and move with me  
 until you set off for college.

Jacob stutters of confusion.

JACOB  
 How did you know about that?

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
 I have a sense for those sort of  
 things. We are brothers after all.  
 See you around eight?

JACOB  
 Sounds good to me. Henry?

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
 Yes?

JACOB  
 Thank you for everything you do.

HENRY JR. (O.S.)  
 Of course! That's what I'm here  
 for.

Jacob hangs up the phone, heads through the front door and  
 runs upstairs.

INT. HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jacob grabs his duffle-bag from the closet and begins to  
 pack. His phone BEEPS as a notification pops up on his phone.  
 He swipes up on his phone see it's an email from the school.

Jacob begins to read the email:

JACOB  
(Reading)  
Congratulations! I am pleased to  
announce your admission has been  
full granted. Welcome to the Penn  
State family.

Jacob jumps with excitement.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
I can't believe it. Guess I'm not  
dumb after all.

A loud BARGE strikes the bedroom door. Henry enters.

HENRY  
Where do you think you're going?  
Run off like everyone else, after  
everything I've done.

JACOB  
I can't take it anymore. You've  
been manipulating me all my life.  
I'm doing what's best for me.

Jacob grabs his duffle bag and shoves his phone into Henry's  
face. The words of congratulations appear before his eyes.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Looks like I'm not as stupid as you  
said I was.

Jacob exits.

HENRY  
You'll never be nothing more than a  
pawn.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jacob stands on the curb, anxiously waiting.

Henry Jr arrives in his car a long with MARY, 50s, in the  
passenger seat.

Henry Jr and Mary exit car.

JACOB  
Mom! I didn't know you were going  
to be here.

MARY  
Of course I would. I wouldn't miss  
this for the world.

Mary hugs Jacob.

MARY (CONT'D)  
Congratulations, by the way.

JACOB  
You heard?

MARY  
You think the news would slip past  
your dear old mother.

Jacob puts his bag in the trunk of the car.

HENRY JR.  
Shall we? We have a long drive  
ahead of us.

Henry Jr gives Jacob a high five.

JACOB  
I sure won't miss this place.

Jacob, Henry Jr and Mary enter car.

Henry stares out the second floor bedroom window, sipping on  
his beer.

Jacob gazes out the car window as he looks back at Henry.  
Jacob turns his head with no remorse.

OVER BLACK SCREEN:

JACOB (CONT'D)  
You'll see that one day I will be  
better than you. My real future  
begins today.