

No Going Back...

by

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MIKE'S VOICE
To my friend Chris, molder of our
city's youth...

FADE IN:

INT. BENSON HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

An upscale Portland, Oregon hotel.

MIKE TALBOTT (40) is the embodiment and personification of old Portland money - from attire to enunciation.

He stands at the front of the banquet room, cordless microphone in hand.

MIKE
Frankly, such a frightening
proposition scares the hell out of
me and makes me want to enroll my
kids in private school tomorrow.

LAUGHTER from the CROWD.

CHRIS ERICKSON stands at the front of a crowd of 50 taking in the speech. Newly christened 40, he is handsome, intelligent, and trying to keep up with the Jones's.

MIKE (CONT'D)
In all seriousness, I am blessed
and honored to have someone like
Mr. Erickson I can call a friend.
To Chris on his 40th birthday!

He holds up his drink.

THE CROWD
To Chris!

Chris looks sheepish. He holds up his micro beer then takes a big pull off of it, overwhelmed but also loving the adulation.

INT. MEN'S RESTROOM - NIGHT

Chris and Mike stand at side-by-side urinals relieving themselves.

CHRIS
Open marriage.

MIKE
Or something like it.

CHRIS
You're serious about this.

MIKE
We've been married a long time,
buddy.

CHRIS
You do know there's no going back?

MIKE
Who would want to?

He finishes relieving himself, flushes, and walks away,
leaving Chris to ruminate on the topic.

CHRIS
Who would want to?

He chuckles to himself.

INT. BENSON HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

The party has broken up into cliques. Mike stands with
Chris. Chris already has a healthy glow.

A waitress AMBER (25) brings each of them a beer on her tray.
She eyes Chris seductively. She is beautiful with bedroom
eyes.

AMBER
Happy birthday.

He can only grin. Mike frowns and shifts uncomfortably.

Amber walks away. She looks back at Chris once more,
smiling. He returns the smile.

He starts to take a sip of his beer, still looking in her
direction before-

-his wife JULIE (39) intercepts the beer. She is an
attractive kindergarten teacher. She whispers in his ear.

JULIE

Slow down. You're gonna have hell
to pay in the morning, honey.

She kisses Chris on the neck.

SABRINA (40s), Mike's wife accompanies Julie. She is
attractive, reveling in her high society status. As they
move away from Chris:

SABRINA

You ever think you just gotta let
him go, let him do his thing?

Silence. Julie reflects.

JULIE

Sometimes I think I liked him
better when he was still a teacher.
He's changed, you know.

INT. BENSON HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

In a corner Chris is propped up against the wall talking to a
group of friends. Mike approaches the group and covertly
hands Chris a beer.

MIKE

Nobody saw a thing.

Chris takes a quick pull. Knuckle bumps between the two.

CHRIS

Thanks.

The group disperses. A BEEP, and Mike pulls out his smart
phone. He eyes it.

MIKE

Shit. Walk with me.

He and Chris walk out of the room.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Chris and Mike move toward the closed jewelry store in the
lobby. Amber turns around to them from the jewelry store
window.

She kisses Mike on the neck and embraces him. He accepts the embrace but with obvious reservation. Chris looks on from a distance. He hears nothing of their conversation.

MIKE

What do you need?

AMBER

I'm just a little short 'til next week. I'll pay you back ASAP.

(beat)

The car runs great.

Mike pulls out his wallet and discretely hands her a wad of cash.

Chris tries to be a fly on the wall-to no avail. Amber sees him.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Amber again eyes Chris seductively before she turns and departs.

Chris moves toward Mike.

CHRIS

(to Mike)

Does Sabrina--

MIKE

No--and you're not gonna tell her. We both agreed that what--who we don't know... well, you get the idea.

CHRIS

A little too close for comfort, don't you think?

They move toward the elevator.

MIKE

Portland's a small town, buddy.

INT. BENSON HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

Mike sneaks Chris another drink as they stand talking to another group of friends.

Chris studies the pint for a moment before partaking. He is glassy-eyed.

From across the room Julie eyes him. She marches toward him.

JULIE

This is not you. What are you
trying to prove?

She glares at him. He turns his back to her and chugs the beer.

INT. BENSON HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

Chris is thoroughly intoxicated now. A HUSBAND and WIFE shake his hand and hug him respectively, getting ready to depart.

HUSBAND

Don't forget the Advil.

The wife hugs him and kisses him on the cheek. She whispers in his ear.

WIFE

Take care of that wife of yours.
She loves you, you know.

Chris is given pause for thought. He frowns as the two walk away.

INT. BENSON HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

Mike has his arm around Chris now, escorting him out of the banquet room. Chris staggers in his intoxication.

Across the room Julie looks on in disgust. Sabrina stands with her.

As they move out of the room Chris trips, nearly knocking over a table. Only Mike prevents him from crashing into it.

MIKE

Easy, buddy.

Chris rights himself and turns to the crowd.

CHRIS

I'm 40. I can't party like I used to.

LAUGHTER from the CROWD.

Chris and Mike exit the room.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Mike escorts Chris to the elevator door and all but shoves his friend into the elevator.

As the door is still open between them:

MIKE

You gonna make it?

CHRIS

See you at breakfast.

The elevator door closes between them.

INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Chris is propped up against the wall, half-conscious. A moment later the door opens.

Amber stands before him.

AMBER

Happy birthday.

INT. CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

She leads him by the hand out of the elevator. Chris is mesmerized, seemingly powerless against her charms.

She slams him up against the wall, kissing him forcefully. Chris is stunned. Then he accepts her embrace, returning the kiss.

They pull back from each other. She leads him by the hand down the hallway. He stops at his room. She pushes him against the wall, kissing him some more.

He fumbles for the room key from his pocket. She reaches into the pocket, stroking his crotch along the way. Chris groans in pleasure.

A moment later she unzips his fly. Chris's back to us, Amber kneels down and performs fellatio on him. Chris's eyes roll back in his head.

A few seconds later she stops, stands, and opens the door. She pulls him into the room.

The door closes behind him.

INT. BENSON HOTEL - BANQUET ROOM - NIGHT

Mike re-enters, unbeknownst to everyone but Julie. She watches him. She looks disturbed. An omen? They eye each other.

Mike smiles awkwardly.

INT. CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Julie walks with Mike and Sabrina toward their respective rooms. Fueled by alcohol, Mike and Sabrina are all over each other.

Julie looks envious.

They reach their rooms across the corridor from each other.

JULIE

See you at breakfast.

Sabrina kisses Mike on the neck and doesn't seem to have heard her friend. She pulls away from Mike for a moment though he tries to stop her.

SABRINA

Honey, stop!

Laughter from both. He continues to paw and grope her.

SABRINA (CONT'D)
 (to Julie)
 Happy baby making.

Julie forces a smile.

Sabrina pulls out their room key, opens the door, and leads Mike into their room. The door slams behind them.

Julie stands there for a moment. She hesitates before turning to her own door.

She enters and closes the door behind her.

A moment later Julie opens the door and storms out, teary-eyed.

CHRIS (O.S.)
 Julie, wait!

JULIE
 Let me go!

Mike and Sabrina open their own door, aroused by the commotion. They see Julie storm off.

MIKE
 What the--

Chris stands at the door in a bathrobe. Amber is nude, concealed behind him.

Sabrina glares at Chris for a moment then takes off after Julie.

SABRINA
 Julie!

Mike eyes Chris coldly. Jealousy? Guilt? Fear?
 Inadequacy?

Chris merely looks guilty. Still, he can't take his eyes off of his friend.

FADE OUT.

An ALARM CLOCK BLARES over black.

FADE IN:

INT. ERICKSON HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - MORNING

Chris rolls over in bed to turn the ALARM OFF. He turns back, and Julie is nowhere to be found.

SUPER: "THREE MONTHS LATER"

Chris climbs out of bed, grabs his bathrobe, and lumbers out of the room, putting the bathrobe on along the way.

INT. KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Chris enters to see Julie, elegantly dressed for work, standing at the island pouring over the newspaper. She doesn't look up.

From the decor we can see that this is an upper-middle-class existence. The house, though older, has been substantially remodeled with stainless steel appliances, granite counter tops and the like.

A flat-panel TV is mounted conspicuously on the wall for maximum viewing.

JULIE

(without looking at him)

Coffee's ready.

CHRIS

Thanks.

He moves toward the coffee maker. Julie continues to scour the newspaper. Chris pours himself a cup of coffee.

He notices a breakfast of eggs and salsa simmering on the cook top.

He looks up, and Julie has left the room.

A few moments later a CAR'S ENGINE can be heard STARTING.

Chris moves out of the room.

INT. FRONT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Also elegantly decorated. Chris looks out the window to see Julie backing her Volvo station wagon out of the driveway.

He sips his coffee as he watches.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Julie stops for a moment, still in the driveway. She looks to the front window.

INT. FRONT ROOM - DAY

Chris looks out the window. In this exchange we can see that the divide between the two is figuratively huge.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

Julie backs out onto the street and drives off.

INT. FRONT ROOM - DAY

Chris continues to look on.

EXT. WILSON HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Students move into the school through the front doors.

INT. WILSON HIGH SCHOOL - CHRIS'S OFFICE - DAY

In his capacity as a vice principal Chris sits behind his desk in a suit and tie. A misguided student we'll call CHASE (16) sits before him, forlorn.

Long silence.

CHASE

I got it from his liquor cabinet.

CHRIS

Does your dad know?

CHASE

I replaced it from another stash he has.

CHRIS

I see.