

Jack excerpt:

We were getting ready to go to The Pub on a Saturday night that she was able to get off. We were meeting the guys, Anna, and Luke down at the bar. Harper came out of the bedroom dressed in tight jeans, a white t-shirt, and cowboy boots. Her hair was in loose waves down her back. She looked damn sexy. I had been thinking about asking her to move in with me and I knew that I had to tread carefully or she would shut me down. She was very independent and I didn't think I had a good chance of her saying yes, but I had to try to get her out of that shit hole she lived in. It wasn't safe and I hated her staying there.

“So I've been thinking, maybe we should consider you moving in here.”

“Um, thanks, but I'm gonna keep my apartment.”

She smiled at me and went back to the bedroom. She hadn't even thought about it, just brushed me off. She was supposed to at least consider it. She came back out a minute later putting in earrings. I wasn't backing down that easily. She needed to at least hear me out.

“I think we need to talk about this some more.”

“Talk about what?”

I looked at her incredulously and started to fume.

“You know what.” I was getting pissed. “You practically live here already. Your shit takes up over half my closet. This is the next logical step. Besides, your place is a shit hole and I don't like you staying there. It isn't safe.” With every word, my voice grew louder until I was practically shouting at her. She very calmly

walked over to me, but I could see the anger brewing in her eyes. Shit. I fucked that up.

“That *shit hole* is all I can afford. I’m working double shifts so that I can live there. And in case you’ve forgotten, you put three locks on my solid, oak door, so I’m pretty sure it’s safe.” Her hands were on her hips and she was breathing heavily trying to control her temper.

“Look, if you gave up your apartment and moved in here, you wouldn’t have to work so much and you could focus on writing. You wouldn’t have to work at all if you didn’t want to. I can take care of you. I make enough money for both of us to live comfortably.”

“So now I need to be taken care of? Pretty soon, I’ll be staying here ironing your socks and cooking all your meals for you!”

“I wouldn’t say no to that.”

I had meant it as a joke, but based on the look on her face, she didn’t find it funny.

“So let’s say I give up my apartment. We’ve known each other two months. What happens if we get in a fight, like right now, and we go our separate ways. Or you become a huge ass and I decide to cut off your balls? Or a car falls on top of you because someone, maybe me, lets the jack down with you under it? Then where do I go? What do I do for a job?”

“Okay, I’m going to take that comment sarcastically and assume you wouldn’t actually try to castrate me or murder me at my job.”

“Take it however you want. I’m just throwing out some ‘what ifs’. Jack, this is still too new and I’m not going to change my way of life to live with some guy that I met two months ago!”

Coldness seeped into my bones. I was trying to move forward with her and she was thinking of things that were going to pull us apart. She didn’t give a fuck about me. I get that moving in might be too fast, but *some guy*? Guess I didn’t really know her all that well. I put my hands in my pockets because I was about two seconds from hitting something.

“Some guy, huh? Is that what I am to you? Just some guy you’re fucking? Ya know what, how about we table this discussion for now. The guys are waiting on us.”

I turned around and walked out the door, not really caring if she followed at this point. She did follow me and climbed into the truck and slammed the door. The drive to The Pub was uncomfortable, but I wasn’t going to try to fix that. All I wanted to do right now was get a drink and forget that conversation. I walked right up to the bar and ordered some drinks. I drank down a shot and then carried my other drink over to the table where the guys were sitting.

“Did you get me a drink?”

Harper looked around for her drink and then looked at me. I sneered at her. She could get her own fucking drink.

“Nah. I wouldn’t want you to think that I’m taking care of you. Ya know, you have to be able to order your own drinks in case we get in a fight and I leave you.”

I downed my drink and slammed it on the table. Everyone at the table fell silent and stared at the two of us. This had not been

my intention. I didn't want to drag others into our fight, but my head was itching for a fight. Harper walked over to the bar and ordered a drink. Anna left to go talk to her.

"What the fuck was that man?" Luke looked over at me in disbelief.

"I asked her to move in with me and she basically told me no because we were gonna end eventually."

The whole table sat in stunned silence. They all knew how I felt about her and I didn't think they were too happy about it either, but they were trying not to say anything. Harper and Anna returned a few minutes later with some drinks. Harper set one down in front of me. I couldn't help the comment that flew out of my mouth.

"Do I need to worry about this being poisoned?"

Harper turned to me with a glare. "Excuse me?"

"Well, I mean, you already told me that you had plans to murder me at work. Figured maybe this was a sneak attack."

Sean turned to Harper. "Seriously? You told him you had plans to murder him?"

"No, I was posing a scenario in which we wouldn't be together anymore."

"And one of those scenarios was you murdering him."

Harper started to get flustered and couldn't find the right words to say. I inwardly laughed. The guys were just busting her chops, but I thought it was hilarious. She got herself into this and she could get herself out.

"I was just... I was saying that people break up and it wasn't smart to move in together."

Cole was the next to speak up. “So he asks you to move in and you plot to murder him?”

I tried to hold back the laughter. She was making a total ass out of herself. I could jump in and try to help explain, but she kinda deserved this. When she got mad, she made some pretty crazy comments. It was one of the things I loved about her, but right now, it made her sound crazy as fuck.

Sebastian handed me his business card. “Just in case you decide you need some extra security. Remember what she can do with a paintball gun.”

“Look, this ass suggested that we move in together and that he ‘take care of me’. I was just saying that it wouldn’t be smart because if something happened, it would leave me out in the cold.”

Logan looked at me with a baffled expression. “Total asshole move, dude. What were you thinking, offering to take care of your girlfriend?” Logan turned to Harper. “If you ever do decide to take care of him, you give me a call. I have plenty of places to bury a body.” The whole table erupted in laughter and Harper stalked off towards the bar.

Anna turned a glare on the entire table. “You don’t have to be such assholes. That conversation was taken out of context. You guys sure know how to make someone feel like shit.” She turned and stormed off and we all looked at each other, then broke into laughter again.