

The Gamble

by

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INT. BLAKE'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

BLAKE, 30s, cleanly dressed, sits across from JACOB, 30s, messy PT gear, knife on his belt. Both hold three cards.

A deck of cards sits between them on a black table. Jacob draws a card, scowls, and tosses it onto a second pile. Blake looks at it and exchanges a card from his hand for Jacob's discarded one.

JACOB

It's been nearly a year since Hope died.

BLAKE

I know.

Jacob draws another card only to toss it onto the pile.

JACOB

They let the man who killed her walk.

BLAKE

I know.

The table creaks under Jacob's clenched fist.

JACOB

How can you be so calm? That piece of trash killed my sister. He killed your wife.

Blake takes a card and considers his hand. He tosses a card onto the pile.

BLAKE

I've come to terms with her death. She tried to testify against one lowly murderer.

Jacob tosses a card in and takes another.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

So an assassin killed her for loose lips. She died for the right thing. I can only respect her choice.

Blake knocks his free hand against the table. They both toss their hands down. Jacob sets down two kings and a three of clubs. Blake sets down a pair of aces and an eight.

Jacob tosses one of his three red coins onto the table.

JACOB  
So you're content with her murderer  
walking away with nothing more than  
a slap on the wrist?

Blake frowns as he shuffles the deck.

BLAKE  
He's done the time.

Jacob scoffs.

JACOB  
Three months house arrest doesn't  
strike me as time done for murder.

BLAKE  
What would you do then?

Jacob pulls his knife off his belt and puts it on the table.  
Blake's hands freeze.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Absolutely not.

JACOB  
I haven't even said anything yet.

BLAKE  
You don't have to. You're going to  
ask me to help you murder a man.

Jacob reclines in his seat and crosses his arms.

JACOB  
Hear me out. I've gotten word from  
a few old buddies of mine in the  
CIA.

Jacob picks up his knife and runs his finger along the edge.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
They'd be able to take him in a few  
days and we can have words with  
him.

Blake continues to shuffle the deck before he deals. Jacob  
knocks. Blake takes a card and scowls. Jacob has an ace, a  
King, and a Jack. Blake has only a two and three of clubs.

Blake tosses one of his black coins onto the table next to  
Jacob's.

JACOB (CONT'D)  
Nobody would notice or miss him.

BLAKE  
Except for his boss and his mob  
brothers, of course.

JACOB  
Then they'd share his fate.

Blake shakes his head and throws himself back into his chair.  
Jacob deals the cards. Blake checks his cards then knocks.

BLAKE  
Christ, Jacob. I'm trying to help  
you here.

They show their cards. Blake tosses his coin up onto the  
table.

JACOB  
Then help me kill the bastard. Let  
us put Hope to rest.

BLAKE  
I put her in the ground next to  
your parents. She is at rest.

JACOB  
Not to me.

Jacob slams the knife into the table and leaves it standing  
upright.

BLAKE  
What are you doing?

Blake yanks the knife out of the table and drops it onto the  
table.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Even if we did kill him, it won't  
change anything. Hope's dead,  
Jacob. Nothing will change that.

JACOB  
Maybe not. It'll make me feel  
better though.

BLAKE  
Will it?

Blake deals a new hand. Jacob knocks.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Will you feel better once you've  
killed that man with anger in your  
heart?

Jacob's face flushes as he flicks his coin onto the table.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
Would Hope be content knowing  
you're living with that rage?

Jacob stabs his knife into the table again. The tip pokes  
through the bottom. He stands and points at Blake.

JACOB  
Don't say her name. You don't  
deserve to say it. You don't even  
care for her.

Blake sets down his cards and leans forward.

BLAKE  
Hope was my wife, Jacob. You're an  
idiot if you think I don't miss  
her. You're a pitiful man now.

Jacob's eyes water and he falls back into his chair. He  
tosses his cards aside.

BLAKE (CONT'D)  
You have to let go, Jacob. Killing  
one man isn't going to change  
anything except spill more blood.

Jacob covers his eyes with his hand and his body shakes. He  
stops and looks at Blake.

JACOB  
What would you have me do then?

BLAKE  
Kill him.

Jacob's eyes narrow.

JACOB  
But you just went on saying not to.

Blake waves it away and picks up Jacob's discarded cards. He  
begins to reshuffle the deck.

BLAKE

"Don't kill him in anger" is what I meant. Killing him for justice's sake is another matter entirely.

Jacob wipes his eyes.

He shuffles the deck and deals. Two red coins and two black coins sit across from each other in front of each other.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

I want him dead, same as you. Only difference is I want him dead because he murdered someone.

Blake takes a card and tosses one in.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

There's a saying I like.

Jacob looks at Blake. He places his cards face down.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Kill them not because they wronged you, but because they done wrong. Do you understand?

Jacob laughs.

JACOB

You always were a goody two shoes. Justice was your drug. I can respect that though.

He reclines in his chair.

JACOB (CONT'D)

Fine. I won't kill him for Hope.

Blake's shoulders drop and he lets out a breath.

JACOB (CONT'D)

He will commit murder again.

BLAKE

Most likely.

Jacob smiles.

JACOB

It'd be a shame if his victim got lucky and killed him first.

BLAKE

Such a shame, indeed.

Blake knocks. They reveal their cards and Jacob tosses his coin onto the table with a huff.