

Ein Berliner

By  
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(an excerpt)

## CHARACTERS

CHAD           Caucasian male, mid-thirties. Former track star.

JAKE           Asian-American male, mid-thirties. Drummer in a rock band.

## SETTING

Chad and Joan's apartment in Connecticut.

CHAD and JOAN's house in Connecticut.  
It is JOAN's birthday party. CHAD is  
in their bedroom, sitting on his bed,  
partially burrowed in the guests'  
coats.

CHAD  
(his German pronunciation  
is awful)  
Fraulein! Get me a drink! No no no, I don't want no  
stinkin' Heinekein, honey.

(CHAD lifts his bottle  
high)  
I want some Davy Crockett moonshine rot gut firewater Jacky  
Daniels, if you may. Straight up, guten tag, Fraulette.

CHAD takes a swig from the bottle and  
spills whiskey on a coat.

CHAD (CONT'D)  
Oops. My apologies...

CHAD picks up a fur coat and starts to  
converse with it.

CHAD  
Mrs. Handelman. It's a pleasure seeing you again. What a  
mighty fine fur coat you have, better to blend in with the  
pack.

A knock at the door.

CHAD  
(cont'd)  
The door, Fraulein You have a customer!

JAKE  
(offstage)  
Chad, are you in there?

CHAD  
Nope.

JAKE  
(offstage)  
Chad, it's Jake.

CHAD  
Get in here on the double, private. Hup hup!

JAKE  
 (offstage)  
 The door's locked, sir.

CHAD  
 Then knock it down.

JAKE  
 (offstage)  
 Negative. Joan will scoop my eyeballs out with a melon baller, sir.

CHAD  
 Ah, yes. Eyeballs wrapped in prosciutto. Ten-four.

CHAD wrestles with the coats and finally emerges. He gets up and opens the door. JAKE gives him a huge bear hug.

JAKE  
 Dude, there's some guy doing Frank Sinatra with a twelve piece band!

CHAD  
 Yep.

JAKE  
 It's like the "Night of the Living Dead" meets "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous" down there.

CHAD  
 I need a drink.

CHAD gets up and looks for his whiskey.

JAKE  
 I hear that.

JAKE sees the bottle of whiskey, picks it up and takes a swig, then hands it to CHAD.

JAKE  
 Whatchu doing up here anyway? Isn't she gonna slow roast you if you don't join the party?

CHAD  
 She won't notice. Where were you? It's late.

JAKE

You know how it goes with these gigs. C'mon, man, let's go party, knock back a few, do the foxtrot- maybe I'll find a fat hen to lay me a golden egg.

CHAD

I'm not going into the viper pit.

JAKE

Then let's drive to the city, lose a few teeth.

CHAD takes a swig of whiskey.

CHAD

I'm goin' to Germany.

JAKE

Fuckin' wild.

CHAD

I'm most concerned with nouns. Nouns have a gender, or they do not. Berliner means donut. Donut is masculine. Brot means bread. Bread has no gender. Torte means pie. Pie is feminine. It seems totally arbitrary.

JAKE

Dude, fuck Germany. The hell you gonna do there? Practice your grammar?

CHAD

I'm going to learn to enjoy sauerkraut with my sausages.

JAKE

What about the club thing? It's not too late, we could-

CHAD

-you don't have that kind of money.

JAKE

Think about it - we'd make a great team - you got great ear for talent, and I've got a ton of experience working in bars.

CHAD

Sorry man-

JAKE

I've already found the perfect location - near the 'Dise, but not too close so we don't look like we're scrambling for their run-off. But of course, if you have any ideas, I'm totally open. Man, Boston is ripe for a kickin' new rock club-

CHAD

-Jake!

JAKE

Plus, my band will finally have a regular place to play, you know, so we can really build a fan base-

CHAD

-I'm leaving the country.

JAKE

You don't have to go.

CHAD

Even if I wasn't leaving, I still don't have the money.

JAKE

(takes hold of CHAD's  
shirt)

What about this?

CHAD

Joan bought it.

JAKE

How much?

CHAD

Three hundred and sixty.

JAKE

That's more than half my fuckin' rent.

CHAD

She's the one with the moolash. I'm just a piece of bronze statuary.

JAKE

Divorce her. Get a fat settlement.

CHAD

And invest in your club?

JAKE

Jackpot.

CHAD

Divorce her...

JAKE

Drop the bitch.

CHAD

Fuck you.

JAKE

She cut you off long ago. You're just a ghost limb.

CHAD

I haven't done shit in years, Jake. Why start working now?

JAKE

That's your problem, man-you need to do something-

CHAD

-I find that I enjoy gardening-

JAKE

-bloody Christ...

CHAD

I'm busted up. Rusted through.

JAKE

Connecticut has fucked with your head, man.

CHAD

No. You fucked up my life, Jake.

JAKE

You gotta bring it to that?

CHAD

I'm just stating a fact.

JAKE

Chad-

CHAD

-You know I was on my way. I had it.

JAKE

You don't know-

CHAD

-I was made for the big time: Olympic solid gold medals and ribbons and champagne and glory-

JAKE

-Twelve years ago! It happened twelve years ago.

CHAD

And I had to mess up my knee.

JAKE

We were shit-faced. It was an accident.

CHAD

Tendons blown apart.

JAKE

Don't blame me, man. The doc said you could have come back.

CHAD rolls out of the bed and gets into the starting position for a race.

CHAD

Call it, Jake.

JAKE

Fuck, Chad-

CHAD  
(threatening)

-Call it.

JAKE

Fine.

JAKE stands up and assumes the demeanor of an announcer.

JAKE

Ladies and Gentlemen, you're all in for a real show, get your camera trigger fingers ready cause tonight because we have, in lane one, two-time NCAA gold medalist in the 100 meter dash, Chad Revere!

CHAD stands up and waves to the audience, and then resumes his position.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, are you ready? One, two, three, go!

CHAD dashes across the stage. He raises his arms in victory.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Unbelievable! There you have it, ladies and gentlemen. 9.98 seconds! Chad Revere has done it again! What an amazing performance! Three-time NCAA gold medalist, and the fastest man on the collegiate track! Hold up, everyone wait a minute...Chad Revere has set a new NCAA 100 meter dash record! What a champion! History in the making, right here in Indianapolis! Ladies and gentleman, Chad Revere!

CHAD does a slow victory lap around the stage. JAKE claps.

CHAD

Louder! I wanna hear the crowd ROAR!!! ROAR!!!

JAKE starts to halfheartedly cheer.

CHAD (CONT'D)

I just broke the NCAA record!

JAKE cheers louder. CHAD finishes his victory lap and collapses at JAKE's feet.

JAKE

Congrats, champ.

JAKE hands CHAD the bottle and CHAD drinks in celebration.

CHAD

I was incredible. Wasn't I?

JAKE

You were. No doubt.

CHAD starts angrily stamping on the floor.

CHAD

(at the floor)

Remember, Joan? I was fucking incredible! I was a champ! That's right! You hear me?

CHAD takes a swig.

CHAD

You know what was the most amazing thing?

JAKE

What?

CHAD

I spent more time sailing in the air. You know, your heels never touch the ground. Just the balls of your feet, propelling you forward. Spikes grabbing the rubber track. Secured.

CHAD drops into the starting position, in the blocks.

CHAD

The glory may be in crossing the finish line, chest first into the ribbon, but it's the start. That's the gold.