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Bear in Mind

Janelle Marxhausen
SUNY Geneseo

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JANELLE MARXHAUSEN

Bear In Mind

INT. A 1990 RED JETTA – EVENING

The iconic Brown University bear logo takes the form of a car window sticker right below PATRICIA'S sleeping face. Her head rests against the window in the back-seat. MR. VERICK is driving. MRS. VERICK is purposefully flipping through a stack of pamphlets that say things like "All prospective students are welcome," and "Learn more about the #1 Community College in the country!"

She finds a particularly interesting fact in one of the pamphlets and mutters something inaudible to Mr. Verick.

MR. VERICK

That's great hon.

MRS. VERICK

(in a foreign accent)

I heard that they are having a college seminar in the High School tomorrow. You should definitely go.

Patricia's eyes flutter open. She sits up and starts to rotate a mug that a moment before was resting slackly in her hands. Its lettering reads, "Community College of Rhode Island."

PATRICIA

Mom, I'm sorry. I just really don't see the point in applying anywhere else. She turns to look at herself in the fogged up car window.

PATRICIA

Why didn't you tell me how badly this headband clashes with my hair?

Patricia tugs off the gold headband she's wearing and tucks a lock of her shiny auburn hair behind an ear.

MRS. VERICK

(cautiously)

Honey, we all know where you are probably going to go, but-

PATRICIA

(defensive)

But what? You don't think I'll get in? It's the only school I would ever go to, so I really hope I do.

Patricia starts to fiddle with the mug more nervously, tearing at the lettering. Mrs. Verick ceases her frantic pamphlet rifling.

MRS. VERICK

(firmly; without turning to face her)

Patricia, of course I think you will get in. I just think it would be smart to apply to a few schools around here. Are you not curious about even just *looking* at other places?

PATRICIA

(annoyed)

Looking? I can *look* at Vera Wang's new fall line, or Gwen's new couture faux fleece collection. But you can't just look at colleges. You have to *know* them. I *know* Brown. And I *know* I'm going to get in.

MRS. VERICK

Your father and I both know that you can get in, Patricia. But it's expensive.

MR. VERICK

It's not that expensive.

MRS. VERICK

(directly to her husband)

Yes it is. The cost of tuition is probably much higher than it was when you went there in the stone age, Richard.

A short silence.

MRS. VERICK

Look, wasn't today fun? Can't we just look at a few more schools? Don't you want to play the- um- um- how do you say it? Play the game?

MR. VERICK

It's the field. Play the field.

MRS. VERICK

Yes! Play the field! Don't you want to play the field? Just to see what is out there? Look, I'm not trying to tell you what to do, I just think you're being a *little* narrow-minded about this Brown thing.

A pause. Patricia is thinking.

PATRICIA

(snorting)

Play the *game*? That's one I've never heard from you before. Mr. Verick starts to chuckle as well.

MR. VERICK

Right? That was almost as bad as "cut to the race."

Mr. Verick and Patricia snicker meanly.

MRS. VERICK

Hey! Stop! Patricia, do not change the subject. I want you to answer my question. This is very important.

PATRICIA

Okay, okay, relax. I'll *look*.

Patricia holds out her hand for the pamphlets and then starts to sort through them carelessly. After about ten seconds she starts trying to flip through her fashion magazines and the pamphlets at the same time.

PATRICIA

But you guys know where I want to go. And remember you promised that if I got that journalism scholarship-

MR. VERICK

With a scholarship you could go to college on Mars and we wouldn't care.

MRS. VERICK

I'm not so sure about Mars. What I want to know is where this obsession with Brown University came from.

MR. VERICK

(chuckling)

I can't remember a time when she didn't want to go.

MRS. VERICK

Aye, I know. But why? I forgot how this even started.

PATRICIA

(interjecting)

I'm going to be a writer. Just like Dad. But I'm going to be famous.

MRS. VERICK

Richard aye, of course, this is all your fault. And now our baby wants to go all the way to Rhode Island-

MR. VERICK

But Brown is a wonderful school! And it's not even a two hour car ride-

MRS. VERICK

Don't *talk* to me about car rides! Now she thinks she has to be a writer and you know how she gets-

Patricia opens up a pamphlet and starts to read it more intently. Something obviously catches her eye.

PATRICIA

Hey, there's a lot of stuff in here about extra-curriculars...

MRS. VERICK

Yes, I know. But I'm sure you'll be fine. You're always writing for that newspaper in school, so don't worry about it. Have you talked to Alice about-

PATRICIA

Dad, how involved were you in High School?

MR. VERICK

Oh well you know, I didn't know I wanted to go to Brown until very late but-

PATRICIA

(cutting him off)

But how involved were you?

MR. VERICK

Uh...well let's see. I was Homecoming King, Senior Vice President, head of science club, one of the representatives in Student Council...and oh I got some Varsity letters, and an All-County track award...I was in the literary association, a peer leader...

PATRICIA

You were *Homecoming King*?

MR. VERICK

Yeah ha-ha...that was fun.

PATRICIA

What? Why haven't you ever told me that you did all of this?

MR. VERICK

I don't know, it didn't seem important.

PATRICIA

(whispers to herself)

But it's so important.

MR. VERICK

What'd you say?

PATRICIA

Nothing.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

It is the end of the day or in between classes; the hallway is loud and teeming with students. But one student stands out. Patricia is forcefully making her way through the traffic, using a combination of hopping and jogging.

PATRICIA

Vicki!

VICKI is standing in the main lobby that Patricia is trying to get to. She turns toward Patricia and waves shyly.

VICKI

I thought you said you had to go home and study?

PATRICIA

(finally reaching her; out of breath)

Nope. Listen. I just talked to Alice for like. Two hours-

VICKI

Your guidance counselor?

PATRICIA

(still trying to catch her breath)

And she said that. I need to. Get more involved. *(a big inhale)* If I want my application to look even decent!

VICKI

Oh, my god, relax. Trust me, once a college admission officer takes one look at your grades-

Patricia is distracted by a poster hanging on the wall across from them. In giant, barely legible handwriting, the poster reads, "Don't be a hack, vote for Jack!"

PATRICIA

(holding her hand up to Vicki)

WAIT. What's going on?

JACK DOLE stands next to the poster with his entourage, and is handing out packets of gum. He's wearing his golf uniform and holding a club. Even though the main lobby is crowded, we can make out bits and pieces of what he's saying.

JACK

Vote for Jack, he'll give you a pack!

His goofy smile, incredibly creative mantras and unabashed confidence are a hit with the crowd. Many students are gathered around his display and he's giving out high-fives, getting punches on the arm and hoots from the crowd. They start to join in with their own creativity.

STUDENT 1

Vote for Jack, he's got our back!

STUDENT 2

Vote for Jack, he's great in the sack!

Patricia is seen suddenly making her way towards the center of this crowd. She seems to have left Vicki mid-sentence.

JACK

I've got a great back swing.

Jack says this with a wink and smiles out at the crowd. With his club, he pretends to hit a golf ball with great force, and watches intently as it sails into the distance. The crowd cheers.

JACK

As President of the Golf Club and a proud member of the junior class I ask you... for your vote. Thank you.

Jack bows magnificently and everyone continues to whoop and clap. Patricia, upon getting to the center of the mob, makes her way straight past Jack to read the rest of his poster. Nobody seems to notice her as she almost presses her nose up against the smaller print at the bottom:

VOTE JACK DOLE FOR JUNIOR CLASS PRESIDENT

She turns to find that Vicki has followed her through the crowd. Patricia grins even more widely at her friend.

PATRICIA

How much experience do you have in campaign management?

INT. CLASSROOM – AFTERNOON

It is those first few minutes before class starts. Most people are sitting either in their chairs or on the tops of their desks. Jack is in the back with some of his golf friends, pretending the clubs that they're wielding are light sabers. Patricia is turned around in her seat in the front row of desks. She and Vicki are chatting animatedly.

VICKI

Come on, are you serious? I've been thinking all day but it's really hard to come up with stuff. Nothing rhymes with Patricia.

PATRICIA

What? That's absurd. Everyone knows every word rhymes with something.

VICKI

I'm not sure if that's true. Why can't we just use a nickname, like Patty, or Pat? That would be so much easier. We both know that you aren't a big fan of nicknames but-

Patricia leans in to glare piercingly at Vicki. Vicki winces. The teacher strolls into the room. Patricia flips her hair back dramatically and snaps herself back around to face forward. Vicki rolls her eyes, then leans in and whispers at Patricia's back.

VICKI

I could only think of other people's names, like Alicia or Trisha.

PATRICIA

(whispering back)

What about militia? That could totally work.

VICKI

You're running for Junior class President, not Commander-in-Chief.

Patricia looks up dreamily.

TEACHER

Okay, everyone in your seats...That includes the Jedis in the back...Gentlemen? Jack and his posse, looking let down, take a seat.

TEACHER

Okay, so raise your hand if you did the reading last night.

Everyone raises their hand. The teacher pretends to count.

TEACHER

Hmmm...ten, eleven...okay. Now, who wants to answer my question about the US Presidential election of 1824?

Everyone puts their hand down, except for Patricia.

TEACHER

That's what I thought. Patricia, I have no doubt that you know what made the results of this election distinguishable from most other elections?

Patricia inhales largely.

PATRICIA

The presidential election of 1824 was the first election where the winning candidate did not receive the majority of the popular vote. The winning candidate in this case was John Quincy Adams, who was also one of the more notably fashionable presidents. This happened in the elections of 1876, 1888, and 2000 as well.

TEACHER

Great.

Patricia beams.

TEACHER

Now, can anyone tell me why this is significant?

Patricia's hand shoots into the air again. The entire class groans. Then, over the noise, a voice from the back.

JACK

I think it's kind of unfair.

TEACHER

(eagerly)

What was that, Jack?

JACK

Well, I just think it's unfair. The other guy should've definitely won.

TEACHER

(encouragingly)

You mean Andrew Jackson, right?

JACK

Uh, yeah.

TEACHER

Good! Why do you think so?

JACK

(struggling)

Well...if like...almost every single person in the entire country voted for the other guy...

TEACHER

Jackson?

JACK

Yeah Jackson...well then, it just seems kind of stupid that the uh, unpopular guy won.

TEACHER

Good! Very good, Jack. Does anyone have anything else to add?

PATRICIA

(without raising her hand)

Well I disagree completely.

The entire class groans again, this time more loudly.

PATRICIA

The electoral college was created in our country for a reason. Our founding fathers didn't trust the populace to vote for the leader of the entire country, so they made sure that representatives from each state, who were definitely more informed than the average citizen at the time, would make the ultimate decision.

TEACHER

That's true. But it was a very different time period. Does anyone think that the electoral college is still necessary in present day politics?

JACK

I don't.

TEACHER

And why not, Jack?

JACK

Because! I'm running for President of the class. And I would want to know that if I win the election, it's because everyone wanted me to.

Some light applause and cheering. Phrases like, "Vote for Jack!" and "Yeah Jack!" can be heard.

INSERT

A close-up of Patricia looking livid and raising her hand again.

BACK TO SCENE

Patricia starts to talk over the chatter.

PATRICIA

Well, I'm running for president too, and I would rather be voted into office by the more informed voters.

The class goes silent.

VICKI

(whispers)

This isn't your best campaign strategy.

The bell rings and everyone gets up to leave. Close-up of Patricia's furious expres-

sion.

CUT TO INT. GROCERY STORE — DAY

Patricia is walking down an aisle with her mom. Mrs. Verick is pushing a cart.

PATRICIA

I can't believe you guys made me go food shopping with you. I have so much to do.

MRS. VERICK

We never get to see you anymore; we miss you, Pattycakes. And I like that bag. Patricia makes a disgusted face at the nickname, but then smiles at the compliment.

PATRICIA

It's Gucci.

She looks down at her bag admiringly.

PATRICIA

Yeah well, I've just been so busy with the election. I can't believe it's in two days.

MRS. VERICK

Honey, do you even care about being president? Or do you just want to win?

Patricia picks up a super-size package of gum off the shelf of the aisle they're walking down. She looks it over.

PATRICIA

Both of course. It's going to look so good on my Brown application though...I really need this.

MRS. VERICK

Do you really think you need *this*?

PATRICIA

Well, yeah. Handing out gum really seemed to be working for Jack.

Mrs. Verick stops in her tracks to look at Patricia incredulously when Mr. Verick suddenly pops into the aisle, jogging. He is smiling widely with a can of something held high above his head in a victory pose.

MR. VERICK

I found the beets! Finally, I've been looking all-

MRS. VERICK

(angrily)

Beets? Since when have we ever eaten beets? I said peas. We need some frozen peas.

Her pronunciation of peas really does sound a lot like beets. Mr. Verick, looking crestfallen, slowly lowers his arm with the can of beets and starts to turn back around.

MR. VERICK

Oh. Okay, well I'll just go put these back then.

MRS. VERICK

No, no, it's okay; I'll do it. You get the rest of the list with Patricia, please.

She hands him the list.

MR. VERICK

Got it.

Mrs. Verick hurries out of the aisle. Mr. Verick and Patricia walk slowly down the aisle with the cart.

MR. VERICK

Okay, hmmm, let's see. Well, everything on the list seems to be crossed off already, ha-ha...

PATRICIA

You know I think we should buy some magic markers too. I need them for my flyers.

MR. VERICK

Oh, you're still making more? Are you trying to wallpaper the entire school with them? Because that sounds like an excellent campaign strategy to me-

PATRICIA

Daaad.

MR. VERICK

Ha-ha. So, why don't you tell me about the election?

PATRICIA

I think it's going okay so far. Jack's very slightly in the lead, but I have a couple more days to change some minds. I think if I just-

MR. VERICK

Does everyone know your plan?

PATRICIA

What do you mean?

MR. VERICK

I mean, once you're elected, what are you planning on doing?

PATRICIA

Um...

Mr. Verick stops the cart to pick up a package.

MR. VERICK

Oooh, awesome. Avocados- Well, that's definitely something you might want to think about, honey. Do you think we could persuade your mom to make her special Guatemalan guacamole tonight?

INT. HALLWAY – NEXT DAY

Patricia is trying to catch up to Jack, who is sauntering down the hall with his entourage, casually twirling his club and adorned in his golf garb, as always. As Patricia almost reaches him, she spots a "Vote for Jack" poster to her right. She looks around to make sure not too many people are watching, and then unmercifully tears it down and quickly tacks on one of her own flyers in its place.

Close-up of the flyer: "Vote for Patricia, she's tough as a militia."

PATRICIA

Jack!

Jack spins around. Patricia looks sweaty and desperate.

PATRICIA

What time are the second round of speeches today?...I can't find a single person who knows.

He looks her up and down. She is wearing very professional-looking clothing.

JACK

Wow. Don't you look like a hole-in-one.

After he says this he pretends to shoot Patricia with his golf club and blows smoke off the top of it. Then he laughs.

JACK

They start in a couple of minutes...Good luck with yours.

Patricia eyes him suspiciously.

PATRICIA

You too...

Jack turns to walk through the double doors of the auditorium. When he opens the door a booming chorus of "Jack! Jack! Jack!" fills the hallway. He looks back to Patricia, smiling smugly. The cheers reverberate around them even after the door slams shut.

Vicki has materialized behind Patricia. Patricia turns to her with tears in her eyes.

PATRICIA

I can't believe I'm saying this, but I think I might actually lose to that *idiot!*

Patricia collapses into Vicki's arms with the weight of this final realization.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL – MORNING

A banner strung across the main entrance reads, "Junior and Senior Class Election Day."

INT. A 1990 RED JETTA

Patricia gazes dolefully out of the passenger side window at the banner. Mrs. Verick is pulling into the parking lot.

MRS. VERICK

You know, I heard that they're having a club seminar today.

PATRICIA

How do you always know about these seminars?

MRS. VERICK

Aye, I don't know. The school sends me at least ten e-mails every day.

Patricia snorts.

PATRICIA

Really? And you read them all?

MRS. VERICK

Yup. And I think you should go to this one. It actually looks pretty interesting.

PATRICIA

Nothing about High School is interesting to me.

MRS. VERICK

Oh yeah? Well did you know that there was a fencing club?

Patricia laughs.

PATRICIA

You wouldn't catch me dead in one of those shiny polyester astronaut suits.

MRS. VERICK

Ha-ha, okay. But you should really think about going.

Mrs. Verick stops the car and Patricia starts to get out.

PATRICIA

Okay. I'll think about it. Maybe it'll take my mind off of this stupid election.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY

Vicki and Patricia are walking to class. They are passing many "Vote for Jack" posters, but Patricia isn't ripping any of them down. Vicki, noticing her downtrodden mood, is trying to cheer Patricia up.

VICKI

Look! A club fair!

PATRICIA

Ugh, my mom was talking about that all morning.

Patricia and Vicki walk into the cafeteria over which a "CLUB FAIR!" sign is hung.

VICKI

We should sign Jack up for Poetry Club, ha-ha.

Patricia sees a sign that says FASHION CLUB and her eyes widen. She disregards Vicki's statement completely and walks over to the table in a trance-like state. She starts to paw at a handbag that is sitting atop the display.

PATRICIA

(whispers)

Gucci.

Patricia seems to need to gather herself before she speaks to herself.

PATRICIA

(still whispering)

I didn't even know we had one here.

Patricia turns to Vicki, suddenly brighter.

PATRICIA

What if I just joined this? *And* poetry club *and* fencing club. Don't you think that'd be enough? For my application?

Patricia grins radiantly at Vicki, who does not return her smile.

VICKI

Are you kidding? You're going to give up *now*? We only have to last for the rest of today. And come on, look at your opponent! I didn't think it was possible, but he's getting even more ridiculous.

A shot of Jack. He's visible from the cafeteria doors. Jack is standing behind a campaign table, grinning goofily and giving out thumbtacks. He has a megaphone.

JACK

Vote for Jack, he'll get you a tack!

BACK TO SCENE

Patricia sighs.

PATRICIA

Look Vicki. I appreciate your help but...the only reason I did this was so it would help me get into Brown.

VICKI

But don't you care at all? I know that nobody else thinks this yet, but I *really* do think you would make a better president than Jack.

PATRICIA

There's no point! No one's even listening to me. I don't have anything more to say and I'm just past the point of caring anymore.

VICKI

(sharply)

Well. Then I guess I don't care anymore, either.

PATRICIA

Fine.

Vicki walks quickly away without looking back. Patricia is suddenly all alone. She looks around, gives the girl behind the fashion club table an awkward smile and then glances down to rummage through her own Gucci bag. She finds her phone.

INSERT

One missed call: Dad

BACK TO SCENE

She presses redial and starts to walk toward the exit door of the cafeteria. Mr. Verick picks up on the first ring.

MR. VERICK

Hey! I had some extra time at work and I wanted to know how you were doing. How's your stellar campaign going?

PATRICIA

It's, um, good.

MR. VERICK

Is everyone liking your campaign strategies?

Patricia glances towards the door where Jack is.

PATRICIA

(quavering)

I don't know, Dad. Nobody wants to listen. And I don't even really have a plan.

MR. VERICK

What? How can people not listen to *you*? All you do is talk. You just have to make them listen. And you always have a plan for everything. Why is this any different?

PATRICIA

I don't know...

MR. VERICK

You could at least try, honey. Whether you get into Brown or not, you'll regret it if you don't at least try today.

Patricia doesn't respond.

MR. VERICK

I gotta get back to work, hon. Good luck today. I love you.

PATRICIA

Love you, too.

INT. HALLWAY

Patricia walks brazenly out of the Club Fair and into the hallway where Jack is still handing out thumbtacks. There is a person in a giant animal with horns costume standing next to Jack. Patricia appears beside this person. She taps him on the shoulder.

PATRICIA

Excuse me, could I borrow that for a second?

STUDENT 1

Yeah, sure.

He hands her the megaphone he's been holding. Patricia jumps atop Jack's campaign table in one swift bold motion and clicks on the megaphone. It squeals. Sounds of dissent are heard among the students as they look around to locate the source of the noise.

PATRICIA

Can I have everyone's attention please?

She already has their attention. Patricia spots Vicki and they lock eyes for a second. Vicki gives her a questioning look. Patricia clears her throat.

PATRICIA

Hello everyone. I'm Patricia Verick and I'm running for Junior class president.

An obnoxious boo is heard above the increasing silence, and there is some snickering. Patricia continues on.

PATRICIA

I know that a lot of you don't really have a good idea of who I am. I'm not on a sports team like Jack and I know that in my almost three years here, I really haven't done all that much to reach out to many of you. And honestly...I have never regretted it more. I feel like I missed out on so many experiences, and so many possible friendships. We have one more year together, our senior year, and during this year, I plan on trying to get to know as many of you as I possibly can. I want to be president because I feel that I am qualified, but also because I feel it will help me accomplish this goal of reaching out. Because after next year, we

all go our own separate ways, to chase down our separate goals, and there will be no turning back.

She inhales. It's silent. Everyone is listening.

PATRICIA

And. I *know* that you guys know that Jack isn't going to give anyone a free Mac. Or find a way to get us lunch from Bennihanna's like he said in his speech. That would be a completely inappropriate use of the class budget. And while on the topic of budgets, I've been in advanced math classes since the ninth grade and I think I'd be great at dividing our class funds reasonably. Also-

Jack sees his opportunity and shouts out over Patricia's speech.

JACK

HEY EVERYONE! I got me a yak!

The crowd around the table whoops and cheers loudly. Many of them band together and attempt to lift Jack's friend, who is wearing a moose costume, on their shoulders. The horde of students is now gathered around him and they start to leave the section of the hallway, following Jack and chanting in unison, "Jack's got a yak!" Soon, Patricia is the only one left in the area, still standing on the table. She slowly lowers herself down into a sitting position. Vicki seems to appear out of nowhere, and puts a hand on her friend's shoulder.

VICKI

You had them there for a second.

PATRICIA

Yeah.

VICKI

And you always had my vote.

PATRICIA

Thanks.

A beat.

VICKI

Are you gonna be okay?

PATRICIA

Yeah, I guess. But to be honest...how could one really expect to win against an animal as graceful and majestic as the long-haired bovine found solely throughout the Himalayan region of south Central Asia? The yak may have split from-

VICKI

Oh my god. Shut up.

INSERT

A montage of school newspapers with Jack's face plastered on the front page, smiling his toothy smile, with titles like, "Jack Dole becomes Junior Class President," and then, "Junior Class President Steps Down After Students Demand Free Computers."

INT. A 1990 RED JETTA – WINTER – DAY

PATRICIA

Look!

A grinning Patricia scoots into the passenger seat and throws an intricately knitted scarf at her mom.

PATRICIA

I made this for you in fashion club today.

Mrs. Verick gasps dramatically.

MRS. VERICK

Wow! Thanks, Pattycakes. It's really wonderful. I can't believe you did this yourself; you're getting so good.

Patricia sticks her tongue out playfully at the nickname.

PATRICIA

You're very welcome. The teacher only helped me out a little bit.

MRS. VERICK

That was nice of her. Can you put it in my purse for me, please?

PATRICIA

Yeah, sure.

MRS. VERICK

Speaking of my purse, did you finally get your yearbooks today?

PATRICIA

Ha-ha, nope, not yet, but hopefully we'll get them sometime before the end of senior year, before we're already packed up and shipped off to college.

MRS. VERICK

Oooh, and speaking of college. I think a letter might have come for you in the mail today.

A beat. Patricia snaps her head in her mom's direction.

PATRICIA

You *think*?

Mrs. Verick smiles and pulls a large beige envelope out from under her. We see the iconic Brown University bear logo in the top left corner. She hands it to Patricia.

MRS. VERICK

Here you go.

Patricia's eyes are bright and her expression hopeful as she excitedly tears the envelope open.

FADE OUT