

Helium

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Version: 1.0
Draft Updated: 13-03-21

Premise: Lying is a lot of work.

INT. APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

We hear TIM inhale. Open on TIM, a figurative bum, late 20s, standing in the kitchen.

BRANDON, 30, walks around the corner, wearing glasses and a party hat.

Tim quickly throws something into the garbage can.

Brandon notices Tim standing suspiciously in the kitchen. He wipes cake off his face.

BRANDON

Hey, have you seen my birthday balloons?

TIM shakes his head.

BRANDON

You sure? I can't find them anywhere, and there were twenty-eight in here a few minutes ago. Y'know, one for each year.

TIM shrugs.

BRANDON

Ok, no worries.

He turns to leave. Stops at the last minute.

BRANDON

Ohhh, but you know what? Someone was asking me about that movie you showed me. What was it called again?

TIM shrugs, struggling to hold in his breath.

BRANDON

Oh no, you remember. The one with the... it's A Wes Anderson movie.

TIM shakes his head violently.

BRANDON
(feigning remembrance)
No, you definitely know
what it is. There's these
dogs, and they're on an
island, and -

TIM exhales for dear life. Gasps for air.

TIM
(high-pitched)
Isle of Dogs.

He regains his composure.

Brandon and Tim stare at each other.

BRANDON
Did you -

TIM
(scoffs)
What? No. That's - That's
crazy. Crazy. How would
I even -

BRANDON
You know, you could tell me.
You could tell me if you
did do that.

TIM
What? Wow, that's - That's
insulting, to say the least.
That's really - the lack of
trust. There's a lack of trust.

BRANDON
If you huffed the balloons,
you could just say that you
huffed the balloons, and I
wouldn't be mad. I might even
think it was impressive,
inhaling enough helium to
fill a children's birthday
party. In one sitting.
Especially since you can't
get high off helium.

Especially since there would be *no reason* for you to do something like that at all.

TIM

Yeah, that sounds really impressive. Whoever did that would probably be - probably a pro.

BRANDON

(pissed)

Tim.

TIM

(defensive)

This is just how I sound. It's my voice. Don't be a dick.

BRANDON

That's 'just how you sound?'

TIM

Yeah. It's always been how I sound. You don't remember at community college, all the girls would call me... 'Small.'

BRANDON

'*Small?*'

TIM

Small as in 'high-pitched.'

BRANDON

Mm hmm.

(then)

Tim, we went to the same community college. The girls called you 'small' because Yelena told everyone that you had a micropenis.

TIM

(laughs nervously)

Haha. Oh. Oh yeah. Classic.

I forgot. What actually happened was, was yeah. Last week, there was... a fire.

BRANDON

There was a *fire*?

TIM

Yeah. I - So I was walking down the block to get groceries, and I was right by my favorite Dominican grocery store, and there was like, an old man, and he... he fell into traffic.

BRANDON

An old man fell into traffic.

TIM

Yeah, he had a huge hat. It was super fucked up.

BRANDON

Go on.

TIM

So then these guys - these thugs, they saw the old man and they all rushed in to save him.

BRANDON

Thugs rushed in to save the old man from traffic.

TIM

Yes.

Brandon sighs.

TIM (CONT'D)

And then the old Dominican lady behind the deli counter saw everything through the - the window, and she dove out from behind the deli counter

because one of the thugs was her son, and she knocked over a fire extinguisher, and it fell over some of the meats - the Iberico ham and chalupa - and it set off the sprinklers.

BRENDAN

(facepalm)

An elderly Dominican woman knocked a fire extinguisher over some Iberico ham while rushing to save her gangbang son, which then set off the sprinklers and flooded the store.

TIM

Yyyyyyyyyyyyyyes. And so I think what happened was that the tanks didn't have any water left in them, so that when - there was a Dodge Caravan which caught ablaze.

BRANDON

A Dodge Caravan caught ablaze.

Brandon's eyes narrow to slits. Tim sweats under the pressure.

BRANDON

Tim, I think you did huff the helium. I think you did, *somehow*, get through twenty-eight helium balloons in the three and a half minutes it took me to use the bathroom.

TIM

(quietly)

Fuck you.

BRANDON

Excuse me?

TIM

(still quiet)

Fuck you.

Brandon lunges at Tim - they go down grappling with one another.

END