

FEELING BETTER?

Written by

Amy Wang and Manouchehr Rimer

INT. FRAT HOUSE. NIGHT

After a long week of stress and studying, students from all around Stanford campus have made their way to a frat party. Music rages, drinks flow, and everyone is generally under an influence or trying to be.

In a quieter part of the house Helen (19), sipping a drink from a red solo cup, stands in a circle with two friends. She is bright-eyed and bushy-tailed (so to speak). She has made an effort tonight to look her best - there is clearly somebody she is trying to impress.

Her circle of friends comprises of Mark (19) and Katie (19). They are all, without exception, swaying dizzily to the pulse of the music playing in the background.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - DANCE FLOOR. NIGHT

MARK

So... how are things going with that guy you were talking about?

Helen and KATIE almost in unison
Terribly.

Both girls visibly deflate, though Mark perks up.

Helen (rallying)
Guys... I'm locking in. Tonight it's do or die. Either I'm hooking up with John or I'm going to abandon mortal men and pursue joining BASES as my one true love.

KATIE
You're so dramatic.

Helen
How else am I supposed to survive in a place like this? Bottoms up.

All three take a drink, though no one except Mark looks particularly convinced by what she's saying.

MARK

Wait... isn't he right there?

Helen's head whips up, first to the left and then to the right. She spots JOHN (19), tall and handsome, gyrating furiously on a table across the room and immediately ducks her head back down.

Helen (hissing)

Do not do that to me.

KATIE (Smirking)

Well would you look at that.

Helen sinks her head back into the circle; the cup slips from her fingers as she flails her arms.

Helen

There's no shot. I'm not nearly drunk enough to try and make a move.

KATIE (Handing Helen two shots she's just poured)
How do you know there's no shot if you don't even try and take one?

Helen (Slurring slightly, after tossing both back)
Fuck it. I'm going to go talk to him.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - HALLWAY. NIGHT

Through a blur of bodies and flashing lights, we see Helen walking determinedly down a hallway where John, leaning against a wall, solo cup in hand, is talking to a friend. She taps him on the shoulder, he turns around and they start having an inaudible conversation.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - JOHN'S ROOM. NIGHT

CUT TO:

Helen and John slam the door to John's room behind them while making out. TITLE CARD:[FEELING BETTER?] plays over the entire screen, partially blocking our view of the action.

Helen (Rallying despite her nerves)
Wanna get more comfortable?

JOHN (surprised, slurring)
Hell yeah

They get handsy sitting on John's bed, but his enthusiasm quickly fades. Helen, not realizing that John is clearly on the verge of passing out, is surprised.

Helen
Everything okay?

JOHN (slurring)
Yeah, yeah, everything's awesome... Just let me rest my eyes for a sec...

John leans back against the wall and collapses to his side. We hear him begin to snore.

Helen, hair frizzled and make-up smeared, visibly disappointed, stares at him in disbelief. However, before she can react, the shot's she's been pounding all night catch up to her. She pukes all over a sleeping John's lap.

Helen (horrified)
Oh my god! FUCK! FUCK!

Helen scrambles to her feet, shocked almost to sobriety by the mess she's made all over John and the bed.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - HALLWAY. NIGHT

She bursts into the hallway, a BOY and a GIRL flirting with each other turn to her startled.

Helen (to couple)
Any idea where I could find cleaning supplies?!

They both look even more surprised.

BOY
Supply closet's down the hall

Helen darts down the hallway. Looking left and right for cleaning supplies.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - SUPPLY CLOSET. NIGHT

As she reaches the supply closet, she stumbles and nearly falls before managing to steady herself on a nearby doorframe. Suddenly, she hears a strange noise coming from within.

Helen (Suspicious)
Hello?

She pulls open the door to reveal FRESHMAN (18) sitting on the floor, eyes closed and sweating profusely. He's clutching at the red lanyard around his neck like it's a talisman to ward off whatever nausea he's experiencing. It doesn't appear to be working.

FRESHMAN
(Retching weakly) I can't tell if I'm
greening out...

Helen
You sitting on any cleaning supplies?

FRESHMAN
what?

Helen
Nevermind. Do you want some water?

FRESHMAN

(Hopeful) Can you also try and find my friend? He's tall, kind of skinny. The last time we spoke he was tweaking about losing his NSO lanyard...

Helen

What's his name?

FRESHMAN (Lost)

Uh...I think it was something like...Tyler?
Tony? Todd?

Helen (Shaking her head)
I'll keep an eye out for him. But you should probably take it easy for a bit.

FRESHMAN

You too, man.

Helen laughs again, this time a little more at herself than the freshman, as she turns around and stumbles back out into the party, still on the hunt for cleaning supplies. She's making palpable progress until she feels a hand on her shoulder, and turns to find Mark, swaying loosely and clearly bothered by something. A look of relief washes over her face.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - HALLWAY. NIGHT

MARK and Helen (to each other)
I need your help!

Helen

How urgent is yours?

MARK

More than you can imagine.

Helen (sighing)
Fine, what's up?

MARK

Look, you know how Katie said the thing with that British guy was going terribly?

Helen

(Smirks) You mean her current flavor of the month? The eight foot rower-something with the Hugh Grant accent?

MARK

Yeah, that one.

Helen

What about him?

MARK

Do you think he's here to stay? I mean... Do you think she's serious about giving him a shot if he can get his shit together?

Helen (surprised, yet pleased)
You're hoping he doesn't, aren't you!

MARK (Flushing)

Look.

Helen looks slightly taken aback by Mark's revelation.

Helen (Skeptical)
Don't tell me you've gone granola! You're into Flannel and Birkenstocks now?

MARK

I could be if she was the one wearing them.
Is that bad?

Helen

No... Still, you guys have been friends for so long that it feels a little crazy for this to happen now.

Before Mark can reply, somebody taps Helen's shoulder. She turns around to find ASHLEY (21).

ASHLEY (Swaying, visibly drunk)
Hey Helen!

Helen (Smiling with a little bit of strain)
Hey Ash! Crazy to see you outside of BASES.

ASHLEY (Hiccuping)
Just indulging in some of this fine delicacy. (Gestures with her cup) If you know what I mean...

Helen opens her mouth to reply but a man of distinctly unclear origin swoops in from behind and grabs Ashley by her waist. He's wearing an NSO lanyard around his neck, which Ashley grabs for leverage as the two begin making out passionately, much to Helen's amusement and discomfort.

Helen (Chirpily)
Well, that's one kind of way to indulge in frat delicacies. Great seeing you!

She turns, not even clear on where she's going except away from Ashley and her taste in men. As soon as she's a few feet away, another person taps her on the shoulder.

FRESHMAN (Somewhat recovered)
Hey! You found my friend!

Helen can't help but chuckle a little at the freshman's excitement.

Helen
Looks like he's having a good time.

Turning to Mark, she sighs.

Helen (CONT'D)
You know what? If a frosh can go for it, you might as well.

She takes Mark's hand and they start to make their way through the crowd towards Katie, weaving through a sea of bodies while the music rages on. Before they reach the group they'd left, she turns to him, her expression dead serious.

Helen (CONT'D)

Look, before you take off you need to be strategic about this, okay? We both have known Katie long enough to understand that she is not going to be into you if you approach this like you approached it with me - down bad and fine with showing it. You remember that whole thing with the French dude?

MARK (interrupting)

I thought he was British?

Helen (CONT'D)

No, the French dude from last year. Look, the nationality isn't important. What we need to keep in mind is that he came on with the puppy dog thing and she was totally not into it. So you have to do some work, you know? It has to be her idea.

MARK (skeptical)

You're telling me to gaslight her?

Helen

No... I'm saying you need to be strategic. She should think she's the one that's doing more of the wanting. Make it think it was her, you know?

INT. FRAT HOUSE - DANCE FLOOR. NIGHT

She drops Mark off with the group, which opens up to accommodate them in the press and movement of the dance floor that's formed. She makes sure Mark makes eye contact with Katie, who looks surprised but not displeased at the intensity of his gaze, and then makes her way back down the dark hallway.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - HALLWAY. NIGHT

She turns to face the room. Behind her, people continue to stumble and chat. Defeated, she sits slouched against the wall opposite the door to John's room, with her head buried in her arms.

Helen
It's so over.

After a moment, she hears footsteps from behind, and she lifts her head to see Mark and Katie walking with their arms slung over each other's shoulders. As they pass, Mark turns and looks at her.

MARK (mouthing)
Thank you.

Though in despair, Helen can't help herself from smiling.

Helen (self satisfied)
Bet he made her think it was all her.

The next moment, hit by an epiphany, her eyes open up.

Helen
Make him think it was all him!

She scrambles to her feet.

INT. FRAT HOUSE - JOHN'S ROOM. NIGHT

Bursting into the room and going over to John, she sits next to him and arranges her features into a gentle, calming smile before she shakes him awake. With a jump, John sits upright and looks down at his vomit covered lap in pure horror and disgust. He looks Helen in the eyes demanding an explanation.

Helen (saccharine)
Hey... are you feeling better?