

Raising The Bar

By

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INT. MCGUIRE'S PUB - EARLY EVENING

Trinkets and beer signs hang from the wall in a clean, darkly illuminated bar.

A man, WILL, tends to a small number of customers. He approaches three patrons seated at the bar.

WILL
Hey guys, my shift's ending. I'll need you to cash out.

All three men reach for their wallets. The first, BENNY, is a tattooed man in his thirties wearing a mechanic's outfit.

The second, ALAN, is a dapper twenty-something who wears a business suit with a loose tie around his neck.

At the end of the bar sits JEREMY, a thirty-something who quietly reads a book with a smile on his face.

BENNY
So, are we playing today?

WILL
Sure thing guys. How about it, kid? Want to play?

JEREMY
Play... what?

BENNY
See kid, at the end of Will's shift we each have to tell a story from our week. Whoever has the best one, according to our bartender here, gets a free beverage.

JEREMY
Aha. And it has to be a true story?

The others all laugh.

WILL
A mostly true story, if you catch my meaning.

JEREMY
Uh, sure...I mean I don't have much-

(CONTINUED)

ALAN (CUTTING HIM OFF)
Alright, he's in. You first, Benny.

BENNY
Okay, I got a good one this week...

INT. CAR GARAGE - DAY

BENNY works under a truck changing oil, grimy.

BENNY (V.O.)
So, I'm in the shop on Monday and I'm thinking it's about time to eat lunch, when out of the blue I hear these footsteps coming up behind me in the garage.

Benny looks towards the source of the sound and is blinded by daylight, a large shadow slowing approaching him.

BENNY (V.O.)
In walks the scariest biker I've ever seen.

The light dims to reveal WILL (AS THE BIKER). He wears leathers and a frightening grimace. Benny's terrified.

BENNY (V.O.)
This guy looked like he'd eaten wood nails for breakfast and washed them down with kerosene.

INT. MCGUIRE'S PUB - EARLY EVENING - CONTINUED

WILL
Big guy, huh?

BENNY
Are you kidding me? This guy was HUGE!

INT. CAR GARAGE - DAY

Will (as the biker) now looks a foot taller than he did previously. He has a case to his side that looks like it could carry any manner of weapon.

BENNY (V.O.)
This guy has this bag on his side, and I know he's packing heat. So
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BENNY (V.O.) (cont'd)
I'm shaking in my boots, and he
says...

WILL AS BIKER (WITH DEEP VOICE)
Picking up.

Benny runs to retrieve the keys.

BENNY (V.O.)
Well, of course I run to grab his
keys. And as I come back, I sort of
forget I'm holding this dirty oil
filter in my hand.

Benny returns, keys outstretched, but trips and loses grip
of the oil filter in his hand. It flies through the air and
hits the biker at the foot of his boots.

BENNY (V.O.)
At this point I know this guy is
going to kill me, right? I'm
closing my eyes, thinking it's all
over...

The biker reaches for the bag at his side. Benny closes his
eyes expecting the worst.

Out from the bag pops...a Chihuahua, barking at Benny.

WILL (AS BIKER)
Awww...it's okay Mr. Pickles, the
man didn't mean it.

INT. MCGUIRE'S PUB - EARLY EVENING (CONTINUED)

ALAN
A chihuahua on a Harley. Now I've
heard everything.

BENNY
Not exactly. That's the kicker...

INT. CAR GARAGE - DAY

The biker speeds past the garage opening on a pink Vespa
with the barking chihuahua sitting in a basket in front. He
presses the horn, which sounds like a bicycle bell.

INT. MCGUIRE'S PUB - EARLY EVENING (CONTINUED)

BENNY

I'm telling you, man, it was hysterical.

ALAN

Ah, that's nothing. I've got a good one, and it's from last night.

WILL

Let's hear it.

INT. BURLESQUE CLUB - NIGHT

ALAN sits in a lounge chair in a ritzy, old timey looking club where women are walking around in extravagant clothing. He sits in the company of TWO OTHER MEN, while a woman brings them drinks. Women on the stage kick their legs high in the air.

ALAN (V.O.)

It's my brother Mike's bachelor party, and his best man, this guy named Kai, has brought us to this club with dancers...but not exactly the nudie kind. More like nineteen thirties cha-cha dancers. So I call up this waitress because I don't know what kind of crazy bar this is, and I ask if I can get my brother a dance...

Alan talks to a waitress and slips her some money.

ALAN (V.O.)

She tells me that if we want the best dance in town, we need to go to the back room and ask for Charlie.

INT. BACK ROOM OF BAR - NIGHT

Alan and Kai sit in chairs near a stage.

ALAN (V.O.)

We go to this room and I'm thinking Mikey is going to get the best night of his life. I mean, we've dropped a couple dimes to the waitress, if you know what I'm

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ALAN (V.O.) (cont'd)
saying. The next thing I know, the
door opens and...

A door in the side of the room opens, and WILL (AS MALE
DANCE INSTRUCTOR CHARLIE) comes out. He wears a black
skin-tight ballet suit.

WILL (AS DANCE INSTRUCTOR CHARLIE)
I'm Charlie. So you guys are the
ones who wanted dance lessons?

INT. BACK ROOM OF BAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

ALAN (V.O.)
I paid two hundred bucks... and I
figured none of us knew how to
dance. So this Charlie guy shows
us how to tango.

Will (as dance instructor Charlie) is taking each guy and
instructing them in dance, placing them in front of one
another and putting their hands in the right places.

INT. MCGUIRE'S PUB - EARLY EVENING (CONTINUED)

JEREMY
I'll drink to that story!

Will takes a place in front of Jeremy.

WILL
We've had two pretty amazing
stories so far. Think you can top
them?

JEREMY
They're a hard act to follow. I
don't have anything that good.

WILL
I bet you have something.

BENNY
Yeah, tell us something crazy!

ALAN
Win that drink from us!

Jeremy sighs and smiles mostly to himself.

(CONTINUED)

JEREMY

Well... I met this girl.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY - CONTINUOUS - INTERCUT

WILL (AS JEREMY) is at a table reading as a GIRL passes. She is tall, dark, and beautiful with piercing eyes.

The girl drops a book she's carrying. Will (as Jeremy) bends over to pick it up and hand it back. They lock eyes.

JEREMY (V.O.)

I don't know what is was...

Will (as Jeremy) hands the book back and gestures to the book he's reading. It's the same as hers. Time slows.

JEREMY (V.O.)

There was this single second where I felt like I knew someone I had never met before. Like I knew something important was happening. I saw everything.

EXT. FIELD - DAY - INTERCUT

It's a year later, and WILL (AS JEREMY) and the GIRL sit in a field with a picnic. They lovingly embrace.

JEREMY (V.O.)

I don't even know why I'm telling a story about it. It's strange.

INT. HOUSE KITCHEN - DAY - INTERCUT

WILL (AS JEREMY) and the GIRL, another year later, look around an empty and undecorated room, then smile widely at one another and kiss. She wears a ring.

JEREMY (V.O.)

I felt like I was living my entire life in one moment... like time had no bearing, and I knew where I wanted to be.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY - INTERCUT

Another year later, WILL (AS JEREMY) and the GIRL lay on the bed watching a tv program. They kiss, and a baby bump is revealed.

JEREMY (V.O.)

I'm not sure I can remember any of it... but it was good. I know it felt good.

INT. MCGUIRE'S PUB - EARLY EVENING (CONTINUED)

Will smiles at Jeremy from behind the bar.

BENNY

I think you're too deep for me.

ALAN

What happened next?

JEREMY

Nothing. I know it's silly.

Before he knows it, Will is filling Jeremy's glass.

ALAN

Hey, no fair!

WILL

Better luck next time fellas, we have our winner.

Will walks out towards the exit.

BENNY

Hey, Will, how about you stay and grab a dink with us? On me.

As Benny asks this, the door to the bar opens and the GIRL (from the story) walks in holding a small child. Will smiles at her and she returns it, beaming.

WILL

Another time, fellas.

He winks and walks out the exit with her.