

JOHNS

Written by

Vin Conzo

*"A man is nothing without his
individuality..."*

- I'm not sure.

Ya gotta figure someone
has said that at some point.

"Names are not always what they seem."

- Mark Twain

From one of his books.

INT. SEEDY BAR - DAY

We think - It's so dark and dingy you can't even tell. This is not exactly the ideal place to wet your beak, but hey, liquor is liquor.

The room is empty, except for one patron, JOHN, hunched at the bar. He's exactly the type you'd expect to be in a place like this. His hoodie, jeans, and sneakers appear too young for the stress lines on his face.

BARTENDER pours a double scotch, slides it to John.

John barely lifts his head, downs it in one effortless gulp.

The DOOR swings open letting in a BLAST OF SUNLIGHT that gives us our best view of John so far - a man who has clearly seen better days.

In steps a PEPPY man in a suit. He's upbeat despite just walking into the pit of despair. He plops in a stool three away from John, nods. John grits his teeth, doesn't reciprocate.

PEPPY

Rough day?

John ponders ignoring him before answering.

JOHN

Rough life.

Peppy smiles. John doesn't.

Peppy points to John's empty glass. Then to Bartender.

PEPPY

Two of what my friend's having.
I'll start a tab.

Peppy slaps a platinum card on the bar.

Bartender pours two doubles, slides them to Peppy. Peppy slides one to John. He holds his up in toast.

John returns the toast, half hearted. John downs it. Peppy nurses his.

PEPPY

So, what brings you to this fine establishment at 3 on a weekday?

John rolls his eyes.

JOHN

With all due respect, I don't come here for the friendly banter.

PEPPY

Sorry pal, it comes with the drink. What's the old expression, misery loves company?

JOHN

I've never found that to be true.

PEPPY

I get it-I get it. Not a people person. We can't all be.

JOHN

Pff, People. Don't talk about people. I'm at my wit's end with people. Whenever I go out, people always... let's just say I never go out... for good reason.

PEPPY

Well hey, you're out now. And as luck would have it, I don't even consider myself a real person.

John lets a smirk sneak on his face.

PEPPY

You ready for another?

JOHN

Huh? Oh, yeah... how bout a shot this time?

PEPPY

Deal.

(to Bartender)

Dos shots of bourbon, my good man.

QUICK SHOTS

Down the hatch. **ONE. TWO.**

Peppy shadowboxes to deal with the burn. John takes them like a champ, doesn't move from his stool.

JOHN

I'm just sick of it, man. Everyone is too damn accepting of their fates! They're all just cogs in the universe's wheel.

THREE.

JOHN

Spin. Spin. Round and round. Yes, sir, may I have another.

Bartender slides him another shot.

JOHN

No, I meant...

He shrugs, downs **FOUR.**

JOHN

And the worst part is... up until recently? I was just like em! But no more, man. No damn more. I've seen the light.

PEPPY

What?

Peppy isn't paying attention, instead he struggles with his fourth shot. The pain now impossible to hide. Still, he troops on, holds up 2 fingers to Bartender.

JOHN

(shaking his head)
Life, man. Life!

Peppy holds up **FIVE.**

PEPPY

Right. Right. Here's to life!

John grabs his fifth.

JOHN

To life. Fuck it.

He does it with no problem. Peppy looks like death.

END QUICK SHOTS

LATER

John remains in place. Peppy lays his head on the bar, now more miserable looking than John. He moves his open hand side to side like he's sticking with a blackjack hand.

PEPPY

I had no intemtion of getting this bombed. You're a bad influent, ... I never even got your name.

JOHN
I didn't give it.

PEPPY
Oh. What-what's your name?

JOHN
Don't worry about it.

PEPPY
Don'-don't worry about...? I just bought you a bottle's of whiskey, and you can't even-even tell me your name? What the hell is that? That's bullshi... What the hell?! Why won't you tell me your--

JOHN
JOHN, alright?! It's John.

Peppy's eyes light up.

PEPPY
Joh--No way! What a co-inkydink...

JOHN
Oh, no...

PEPPY
John! I'm John, man. You're John. I knew you looked familiar... Barkeep!

JOHN
Not again!

Bartender slides over.

PEPPY
Guess what?! My name is John, and that's hi-his name--

BARTENDER
Heh, no shit? His name is my name too!

LIGHT fills the bar.

PEPPY
Whatttt?! John, dya hear that?!

He turns, but John is gone. The Bar's door swings closed.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

John flips his hood and walks down the block hurriedly, avoiding eye contact with the people who pass by. He peeks behind him, and runs smack dab into a WOMAN. His hood falls.

WOMAN

Ow! Why don't you watch where you're going, you-- John?

JOHN

No!

WOMAN

John! Hi, John!

JOHN

Shh. Shut up.

MAN (O.S.)

Hey, is that John?!

JOHN

Dammit.

There's a commotion. All the PEOPLE on the streets start to migrate towards John with smiles on their faces like he's a celebrity.

STREET FOLK

John!/Hey John!/How's it hangin, John?!

John's walk turns into a full blown sprint. He runs by a small KID.

KID

Hey! There goes John--

John darts into a--

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

--and ducks behind a dumpster. He catches his breath, peers out to see if anyone followed. He's in the clear.

JOHN

I can't take this anymore.

Suddenly we hear a Man HUMMING.

John's face goes ghost white. He slowly turns to see a HOMELESS MAN sitting right beside him.

Homeless Man stares at him, still HUMMING.

JOHN
STOP humming that song!

Homeless Man doesn't listen, he hums on. Clearly, the tune is one John is familiar with. (You will be too.)

JOHN
Stop!

HOMELESS MAN
(stops momentarily)
I'm sorry, I can't do that, John.
(more humming)
DAH-DAH DAH-DAH DAH-DAH-DAH...

John bursts out from behind the dumpster in a frenzy, back towards--

EXT. CITY STREETS - CONTINUOUS

And runs right into the middle of the road. He looks like a madman with nowhere to hide. What now?

More people recognize him. They all seem to locate him in unison.

STREET FOLK
John!

A RANDOM MAN responds.

RANDOM MAN
Who me?

STREET FOLK
No not you. John! Look!

Random Man sees John.

RANDOM MAN
Oh, that John! Hey--John, look out!

HONK!K!K!

John turns just as a CITY BUS rears down on him--

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

A small group of MOURNERS stand before a large coffin.

A PRIEST finishes off a eulogy prayer.

PRIEST

... We loved him because we saw ourselves in him. In a way, we are all John. So as the Lord calls another of his children back to his kingdom, we pray that John spends his eternity in peace with the people he loved most. May John be with us all.

Priest does the sign of the cross, and pushes a lever, which starts the casket lower and lower into the ground.

As the casket sinks further, we see a headstone appear.

The casket sinks fully into the ditch and reveals the headstone in full--

FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS

JOHN JACOB JINGLEHEIMER SCHMIDT

HIS NAME WAS OUR NAME TOO

FIN.