THERE WERE THREE

Written By

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Based on, if any

Address
Phone Number
INT. BAR FRONT - NIGHT

We are in a bar; not the sort with happy faces, smiling eyes and bustling laughs. No, this is the sort of place one goes to drown out the ill sufferings of life's daily commute.

Here sits MANFRED, 72 years old. Paper and hand, scribbling words into a journal. The old guy finds comfort in scribing his thoughts into this book of his.

Down with the pencil and up with a glass of liquid pushed firm upon his lips. One of water and alcohol, one after the other.

Through framed eyes, Mannie's vision pans over to CLYDE the bartender.

Christ, the poorest soul of all, washing glasses, tapping benches with impatient fingers in ever waiting for a single customer. It's a droll cycle, and we are watching it.

Empty bar stools along the line, chairs the same. Manfred and the barkeep the only two in the damned place

MANFRED
How's business?

CLYDE
Midst of the week, working men pass through to rest the pain of the working day with a glass of intoxication. Weekends? Another story.

And to that, Manfred takes up his water; down with it and next the alcohol.

Manny lifts the empty glass in a gesture speaking the words, "I'll have another"

Clyde takes a bottle from a shelf, and whilst walking over to Manfred"

CLYDE
Isn't a place of well thought and serenity. People come here to drown the demons of life. and you know what? Some of 'em can swim.
And to that Manfred grins, Clyde fills the glass with brown liquid.

Manny lifts it to his lips and places it down again once empty.

    MANFRED
    I'll fit right in then.

Clyde returns to his place behind the bar, while the old man picks up his pencil and begins to write.

    MANFRED
    Fuck my old hands.

Places the pencil down, bending and twisting his hand

Clyde smiling impartially... A happy frown of sorts.

    CLYDE
    Haven't had enough to drink?

Manfred lifts the glass up and takes another gulp, places it down and laughs.

    MANFRED
    Just fucking old I think.

The two share a moment, a certain connection; an understanding.

Manfred pulls a little machine closer to him, a phonograph. Or a gramophone as others may know it.

    MANFRED (O.S)
    Lucky I have you. Insert new chapter. Wandering Souls.
We fly toward an entry door, and through it walks LADY LOUISA, an aura of strength and prowess, however, followed with an underlying pain.

In her hand a cigarette holder of great length and a magazine held up against her chest.

We watch her walk and Clyde work as Manfred speaks

MANFRED (O.S)
As I sat there in that booth, the monotonous bartender and mysterious woman irked at my need to know; a need to know what brought them here. What brought me here.

Lady takes a seat in a corner booth way away from Manfred, puffs her cigarette, unfolds the magazine and flicks through some pages.

She laughs, turns pages and smokes.

Clyde passes her a glance and:

CLYDE
Anything to drink miss?

Without even a head turn she:

LADY LOUISA
My husband loved a drink. Me? the thought of it makes me uneasy.

CLYDE
And so you come to a place with such volumes of alcohol?

LADY LOUISA
Where else can a woman come to find a man if not the local speakeasy?

CLYDE
Your husband-
LADY LOUISA
Has all the women he could ever
dream of in god's place.

She spares a look for Clyde, passes a grin and gets back to
her reading.

Manfred takes a swig of alcohol.

MANFRED
Places like this, people come to be
lonely, yet not alone... Loneliness
is purely a state of the mind.

LADY LOUISA
A state of the mind, yes.

CLYDE
But to escape, not so simple.

LADY LOUISA
I can give you an escape, over here
with me.

Clyde gives just a look.

LADY LOUISA
What, serving your loyal customer?

MANFRED
The old man can solve both
problems. Only work you're doin'
tonight is serving me alcohol, got
no one else here. So, you two come
over here, you can talk. And bring
a bottle or two of that there
drink, no need to get up then.

Clyde stops what he's doing and stares at Manfred's cheeky,
smug, smiling face.

Lady stands, as walking over to Manfred she:

LADY LOUISA
Here's a man who can think.

She takes a puff, places her magazine on the table and shakes Manfred's hand.

LADY LOUISA
Lady Louisa, don't use a sir name and lady sounds nice.

MANFRED
Manfred Lynch.

Clyde watches the two with a sense of "Get over there and talk" His face says it all.

Lady takes a seat and:

Clyde grabs two bottles from a shelf and takes a seat beside the other two.

Louisa smoking her cigarette, Manfred pouring alcohol, clyde tapping fingers on the table.

A slight silence, each to their own devices.

CLYDE
May I ask the both, what is it that brought you here?

LADY LOUISA
My husband loved to drink... I hated it when he would do so. In a way he was banished from drinking in my presence. violence and bitterness would replace love and tenderness. So, he found peace in places such as this. Places where men could be intoxicated... A place away from life... Away from the

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(CONT'D)
wife... Away from me.

Both Manfred and Clyde intently listening, no drinking or finger tapping. Total emotional engagement.

LADY LOUISA
Years of life hating these... These rotting rat pits, full of men so...
So arrogant and... Think any of 'em, the ones who would drink, and drink, and drink. Think the love for their wife was closely matched?

Manfred takes a drink.
Clyde taps away on the table.
Louisa, welled up in the eyes takes a deep draw on the cigarette.
A short silence.

CLYDE
A glass of drink is yet to have touched my mouth. Don't have a wife to praise me for it though. I-

Manfred interrupts, leans forward, grabs his sound machine and:

MANFRED
Apologies. May I capture your voices for my memoirs?

Louisa nods yes, her face wet with tears thinking about her husband.

CLYDE
That is quite alright with me.
Manfred smiles, begins turning a small handle.

Louisa smoking, facing Clyde.

Clyde tapping fingers on the table

**CLYDE**

Worked amongst the devils drink since the age of 11. This bar was my fathers. He left it to me when he left. Would have been fine with him leaving if it was through death... I guess he was tired of taking care of me. Mother helped me run this place... She died a year later.

Louisa motions her arm, places a hand on his shoulder, Manfred drinking and turing the handle.

As he continues, we fly through the empty bar, seeing stools, chairs, booths, bottles and other things.

**CLYDE (O.S)**

I have been in this place since then, night after night filling the drinks of men... If they can be called men.

We fall in close on Clyde and hold then:

To Louisa smoking and Manfred drinking and turning the handle.

With a silence, Clyde creating a beat with taps upon the table. Tap... Tap... Tap... Tap... Tap...

**MANFRED**

You know, I was never the man to come to a place like this... Well, until I had reason.

Manfred takes a drink.
MANFRED
Could never stand being away from her, the wife. Not even a thought of alcohol. You know, after it happened I began drinking... Not heavily, but enough to dull my ill mind... To quiet the demons who oft speak in such high volumes.

CLYDE
The wife, did she leave you for-

MANFRED
Another man? If god can be defined as man then yes... I guess so.

Manfred finishes off his drink and pours another.
Louisa puffs her cigarette and:

LADY LOUISA
Seems as such we all have our reasons for being here.

We spin around the table, each with their own personas. The smoking. The drinking. The tapping.

We fall in on Manfred turning the handle, but is it Manfred?

CLYDE
Stories are but the aid to ones soul. I... I find a certain interest... An intrigue... Something about a story in general... it aids my heart... my mind... What else is a man to do in

(MORE)
a lonely place such as this? But to create stories... To create characters so powerful... So raw... So natural.

Clyde turning the handle of the small machine.
Smoking the cigarette and reading the magazine.
He seems to be the only one in the bar. Alone with his alcohol, his cigarette, magazine, journal and pencil.

CLYDE
End chapter. Insert Chapter 7. Loneliness. State of Mind. As I sat there in that booth, I thought to myself. Why must I do this... To be here in this place alone each night. Loneliness is a state of mind.

Clyde stops turning the handle, picks up a pencil and writes into the journal.

CLYDE (V.O)
As I sat there in that booth, the monotonous bartender and the mysterious woman irked my need to know; what brought them here; what brought me here. After all, loneliness is but a state of mind after all.

We fly away form the table where upon Clyde smokes and writes, as the phonograph play's Clyde's voice.
We glide through the empty bar. Chairs, stools and booths all desolate.
Through the nothingness then:

END