

TROUBLES

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. TAVERN - DAY

The worn, old drinking hole every small town has. Behind the bar a female BARTENDER, 40s, polishes a glass. Hard, bitten, she's seen her share of pain. At this hour, she's the only one in the bar.

Through the door walks TIM, 30s, an everyman. Not too anything. He pauses to look around before he comes to the bar.

BARTENDER
What can I get you?

TIM
Cold beer. Light beer.

She runs a tap and fills a mug.

BARTENDER
Welcome. You're new, right?

TIM
In the last two days I've driven fifteen hundred miles. I'm as thirsty as a sponge. And I'm looking for work.

She slides the beer to him.

BARTENDER
Know anything about fracking?

TIM
Not a damn thing, but I'll turn in eight good hours for eight hours of fair pay.

He gulps down the beer.

BARTENDER
If you don't mind hot and cold, they'll hire you in a minute.

TIM
That's what I wanted to hear.

He grabs his beer and motions toward table.

TIM
Mind if I take it over there?

BARTENDER
Just don't take it outside.

With a grin, Tim half limps to a table, sets down his beer, and takes a seat. Relief oozes out his pores.

Then, his phone CHIRPS.

He pulls out his phone and checks the message. Frowning, he takes the back off the phone, pulls out the battery and SIM card, lays everything on the table. Smiling, he leans back and sips.

The Bartender delivers another mug and a small bowl of bar mix.

BARTENDER
(nodding at phone)
Bad news?

TIM
Sometimes, you just want to start over, know what I mean?

BARTENDER
Sure do. I dumped number three last month.

They laugh together before she goes back to the bar. Tim eats mix.

WINSTON (O.S.)
WHOOEEEEEE!

WINSTON, 30s, skinny, yellowed teeth and fingers, slides onto a chair and grins at Tim.

TIM
What're you doing here?

Winston pats his pockets and pulls out a pack of cigarettes and a lighter.

TIM
You can't smoke in here.

Winston ignores Tim and lights up.

WINSTON
We do what we want, right, Tim-Boy?

Tim looks at the Bartender who seems to ignore the smoking.

TIM
How the hell did you find me?

WINSTON
You can run, but you can't hide.
Didn't some boxer say that?

TIM
Why don't you just leave before you
get us both in trouble.

WINSTON
It ain't me that's gonna get you in
trouble.

TIM
Look--

Grabbing a chair and turning it around is STASH, 20, black
and covered in bling. Sunglasses, tattoos, he's your
standard pusher. He sits and grins.

STASH
Tim, my man.

TIM
Stash, how--

STASH
Timbo, I can see you're a little
edgy. How about a nickel bag?
Maybe a dime?

TIM
No, no nickel or dime or anything.
I'm over that.

STASH
I hear you, I dig. It's the same
tune you always say.

The Bartender appears at the table.

BARTENDER
Everything all right?

TIM
(looking from Winston to
Stash)
Yeah, sure, it's fine. I'm OK.

The Bartender nods and moves off.

TIM
(to Winston)
See what you've done. She's
watching.

WINSTON
Relax, relax, we're not doing
anything.

JONATHAN (O.S.)
There you are.

Tim looks up as JONATHAN, 45, in suit and tie crosses the
room and takes a seat.

JONATHAN
You're a hard man to keep tabs on.

TIM
I was going to call you.

JONATHAN
Sure, sure you were. My borrowers
call all the time, especially when
they drive off in my collateral.

TIM
I make the payments.

JONATHAN
You made some payments. Care to
guess how many months you've
missed?

TIM
I'll catch up.

JONATHAN
That's the spirit. Got a job?

Tim glances over at the Bartender who seems interested in the
table. Tim smiles, and the Bartender nods.

TIM
Got a line on a job.

JONATHAN
And that's almost the same thing,
right? Tim, why don't you just
give me the truck so I can sell it
and repay your loan.

TIM

How will I get around if you take my truck?

STASH

I got someone who can stake you.

TIM

A loan shark is the last thing I need.

WINSTON

Hell, we can knock off a liquor store if we need cash.

TIM

Keep your mouth shut.

WINSTON

Excuse me for trying to help.

TIM

You're no help. None of you are any help.

STASH

Well, look at that.

They all turn to the door where MAY ANN stands. 20 and as trashy as you can imagine, everything she wears is too small and too tight. She traipses across the room like a four-dollar hooker as Stash grabs a chair for her.

MAY ANN

Thank you, Stash. Hello, Timmy.

TIM

May Ann, what, how, aren't you supposed to tending Lulu?

MAY ANN

Mama took Lulu so I could be with you. Don't you want to be with me?

STASH

I be with you.

TIM

Don't even think it, Stash.

WINSTON

This is great. We let Mary Sue--

MAY ANN

May Ann.

WINSTON

Distract the clerk while we take the money.

TIM

We're not robbing any liquor store.

JONATHAN

Just hand me the keys. It'll be better that way.

MAY ANN

(to Jonathan)

Don't you look cute.

JONATHAN

You know, you don't have to stay with this loser.

TIM

What the hell. Stop it right there.

Tim looks over at the Bartender and smiles, as if everything is OK. The Bartender half smiles back.

TIM

All of you listen. You're all going to stand up and leave.

MAY ANN

You don't want me?

JONATHAN

(to May Ann)

We don't need him.

TIM

Stop right now. Get up and leave. I came all this way to get rid of you.

STASH

I be thinkin' someone needs a blow.

WINSTON

Action, we need some action.

TIM

This is crazy.

Behind the bar, the Bartender looks at the table--where Tim sits all alone. He gestures and speaks to empty chairs.

FADE OUT.