

SAVED -- WEB EXCERPT

...INT. IRISH PUB -- DAY

Paul sits alone at the bar, downing a shot. This is not an *Irish Style* Pub, but a real bar, tobacco stains and all. Technological advance has left the space a mess, wires, tubes, and equipment are scattered haphazardly Paul begins drinking from a Pint of Guinness as he lights a smoke.

The midday crowd is all regulars, barely keeping themselves from falling asleep in their drinks. The curtains are drawn; no daylight is allowed to disturb the guests. The only illumination comes from several cheap lamps.

A Rugby match plays on television sets around the bar, the sound MUTED. People sit at Gambling machines like robots, the din of their games of chance deafening.

Paul takes a sip and closes his eyes. When he opens them, he notices Jonah has sat down beside him. Jonah smokes a cigar. Each puff creates a noxious cloud of heavy smoke.

JONAH

You know, those things will kill you.

PAUL

You're one to talk.

JONAH

Yeah, but I think I've just about had it up to here with God's green earth.

PAUL

There are quicker, and easier ways to go.

JONAH

What, like jumping into Niagara Falls?

PAUL

Yeah, I suppose that would certainly do it.

JONAH

I'm just sick to death of it all, these misadventures in the promised land.

Paul smiles, it's clear he's enjoying the conversation.

JONAH (CONT'D)

No more credit cards! No more happy meals! No more Plus-Size Models! Down with Factory Outlets, Digital Fibre-Optic Cables, and Disabled Access!

PAUL

No more nights out in Club-Land.

JONAH

No more nights at home with a Six-Pack.

PAUL

No more Income Tax.

JONAH

No more Anthrax.

They laugh. Jonah moves closer, sitting down on the stool beside Paul.

JONAH (CONT'D)

I can see you are a true believer.

PAUL

In what?

JONAH

In chaos. In the subtle beauty of Free Will.

PAUL

Or the mess it creates.

JONAH

Anything is better than the alternative. His way, her way, any way. In the end, it doesn't matter, it's still a game with someone else making the rules.

PAUL

Keeps us docile. Keeps us happy.

JONAH

No one talks anymore. They open their mouths, sure, but the noises that come out sound more like grunts than any language I know. I suppose that explains why there are as many wars raging right now, around the world, as there are people.

Jonah smiles, motioning to Paul's pint to order the same from the rusted old ROBOT BARTENDER, a collection of aged buttons and gears, it's painted-on face cracked and peeling. It moves nosily along a track behind the bar.

Paul lights a smoke, forgetting that he has one already burning in the ashtray. Jonah notices, and sighs.

JONAH (CONT'D)

The true burden of the intellectual is that while they may have keen powers of observation, their personal lives are almost always a mess.

PAUL

It's no wonder they all kill themselves.

Jonah puts down his drink, looking Paul over.

JONAH

It's not that bad. No one should have to resort to that.

PAUL

Really? Look around, man. I mean, our entire society is based upon these dual tiers of life and death. Think about it, the fear of death is the driving force behind everything we know, and yet no one alive knows the first thing about death.

JONAH

What about science?

PAUL

Fuck science! I'm talking about actual, tangible, empirical sensation. What does death look like, smell like, What does it feel like?

JONAH

At my age, I'm prepared to take a few things on faith.

Paul chuckles. He takes a drag of his cigarette, breaking the flow of the exchange. Jonah leans back in his chair, checking his watch.

JONAH

What about your parents? Do they believe in anything?

Paul sighs.

PAUL
I think my Mother tried everything before
she finally gave up.

JONAH
And your Father?

PAUL
He didn't stay around long enough for me
to ask.

He takes a long gulp of his pint.

PAUL
It's funny. I always think of him on
birthdays.

JONAH
You have one coming up?

Paul smiles.

PAUL
Yeah, tomorrow.

JONAH
Well, happy birthday.

The front door opens and Adam walks into the bar, his
eyes darting wildly from face to face, searching.

PAUL
Look at history. When we look back at
ancient civilizations; the Romans, the
Aztecs. We say: "Boy, were they off."
Yet, the Roman Empire flourished for
hundreds of years.

JONAH
It was probably the public Bath-Houses.

Paul chuckles.

JONAH (CONT'D)
You can no more expect fish to fly than
to suppose that man will ever find his
place in the universe.

PAUL
What was that?

JONAH
Oh, nothing. Just something I heard once.

Jonah's expression changes. He senses something is *off*.

PAUL
Something wrong?

Jonah doesn't answer, he's busy scanning the bar. Narrowing his gaze on Adam, he smiles slyly. Adam is staring right back at him, his posture rigid.

JONAH
I'm afraid we've run out of time.

He grabs Paul by the arm, forcing him out of his seat.

PAUL
What the fuck?!

Jonah turns Paul in Adam's direction. He grabs him by the collar, holding him up like a prize.

JONAH
(Yelling) Finders keepers!

The other bar patrons look up from their drinks with mild attention. Jonah, with super-human strength, walks along the length of the bar, holding Paul up high. He slams Paul into one of the walls. Paul gasps for breath, pulling at Jonah's arms.

JONAH (CONT'D)
I was going to explain myself, but someone crashed our little party.

Paul struggles to speak, his larynx crushed.

Jonah produces a knife from inside his jacket, and brings it up to Paul's eye level. The knife is of Ancient Asian design, bejeweled and ornate. It gleams in the mid-day light.

An aged BRAWLER of a man, noticing the knife, stands up and approaches Jonah.

BRAWLER
Hey buddy...

With one arm, Jonah bats the brawler away. He flies through the air, landing hard on a table full of glassware. The other patrons take that as their cue to leave, passing Adam on both sides on the way out the door, the bar empties out quick. Adam stands rigid, tension in every muscle.

JONAH

(to Paul) You don't know it, but I'm about to do you a big favour.

Jonah punches Paul hard in the belly. Paul doubles over in agony. Jonah releases his grip, and Paul slides down the wall, clutching at his abdomen.

Adam cautiously moves deeper inside the bar.

JONAH (CONT'D)

Do you want to go away with this nice man, Paul? Listen to his empty words, his glowing endorsements? He's here to tell you that you may have already won ten million dollars, and I think you're just dumb enough to believe him.

Adam is almost at Jonah now.

JONAH (CONT'D)

It's not your fault, you're no dumber than any other talking monkey.

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