

A Cup Of Water

Andreas S. Erslev



1. A Red Light Bar In An Obscurely Lighted Distrect

"Could I get a cup of water?" I said softly to the young woman, behind the bar? "What?" she yealled. "A cup of water. With ice cubes please" I softly said, yet louder than before, and recived my cup of water. Only one triangular ice cube.

I was sitting at my old regular. Red light everywhere, ugly cliché paintings and different types of, supposedly funny, beer signs hanging on the walls. The tables in one room where these outdoor bench/table fusions. The room floor was made out of bricks. As some kinds of outdoor terrace. Maybe the smokey aroma once were let out freely. The one I was sitting in, were filled with these old red leather diner sofas. One could only imagine what riches and fortune would hide between the cusions. This area would have been the indoor part of the bar, according to my theori. A wall separated the 2 rooms. Even though It didn't servere much of a purpose. The windows were widowless and the door was missing. Just like the old days

The music was loud, so the yelling where even louder. With a twist of the neck, one would be able to listen to multiple conversations. Quite interesting, as others life's often seem more eventful, than what ones life seem. A loud banging were coming from the outdoor part of the room, as a foosball table where being enjoyed. The ratio of gender where quite equal, even though the male representation where a bit stronger. The sexual vibes where vibrating in the room, through the air, and the thick fog of ciggeret smoke. It was mostly the men that would make the particles of the air move sensually. Some would get a big of sensuality sent back, while others where lost in the empty foggy air.

Everywhere, every table was filled, most even hosted more individuals, than the intended capacity. Everything where unclear for the eyes and ears, since the ciggeret fog and loud music where isolating one as an individual. Everyone, everywhere where smoking and drinking, talking and laughing. Except my table. A four man table, where you could easily fit in a fifth person. But there where only me. I was quiet. I wasn't smoking. I was observing. Drinking my cup of water. With one, now circular, ice cube.

2. A Red Glance In My Water As The Ice Cubes Are Fuming In The Smoky Air

One might wonder, why a old man like me, would go out, a saturday night, to drink cups of water, at a place, where it's frownt upon. One shall have an awnser. I was there to observe the setting, of a man, who recently died under suspicious conditions. You see, i'm a private investigator. Well, a retired private investigator. Most of my days go by, as I sit at home, trying to find a hobby. One I could do for the rest of my days. Golf. Croquet. Crolf. Petanque. Old people curling. The wife goes to community events, such as garden competitions, amatuer art expeditions and local fairs. So far, the only hobbies of mine, that really has stuck, is stopping my drinking and smokeing.

It was a grusome death. Jack, the man, was seen walking next to all these women, leading him down to the docks, while smoothly singing. From what I've heard, it looked as if he where spellbounded by their singing. He boarded the ark at berth 13. No one saw what happend up there. About half an hour later, the women were seen leaving the ark, and a young woman was seen board- ing. The next morning, the police found a frozen body. Jack's body. With a knife stabbed through his heart. He was laying next to a note saying Jill. The old partners in crime. Jack and Jill. My old associates. I could almost call them old friends.

I was now trying to backtrack what had happend to him. Since Jack was found spellbound to the women with voices, I figured I'd better work out, how they bewitched him. Last I heard of him, he wasn't able to do a job, cause his woman had walked out on him. He properly had turrend to what a broken man normally turns to. A bar. A drink. A ciggeret. Another one. So on, till the last one. And then one more. This is my reasoning for being at a bar, saturday night, drinking a cup of water. Now, with refilled, melting ice cubes.

3. Red Lights Leads To New Ways

As my ice cubes in my cup of water had almost dissapered, like the icecap up north, I came to a conclusion. Unfortunatly for me, the bar didn't get me a clue of, what had happend to poor old Jack. So I had to try and see, why Jack had left the note, saying Jill. As I'm about to leave, a woman comes in to the bar. "Well, i'll be damned" I say to myself, as it's Jill standing right there, in the middel of all the smoke and sexual vibrations, with a one liter beer in her hand. A wave and a soft yell was all I had to do. My table now consists of 2 people. I let her get comfortable, as i go for a fresh cup of water. With fresh ice cubes.

4. With A Red Ember Dangling, Exchanging Knowlagde With A Dripping Drink

"What the hell, are you drinking a cup of water for? At a bar? At this bar?" She started the conversation, with a rather aggressive tone in her voice.

I didn't blame her, this were our old regular joint. We had been doing buisness for many years, and always had our "after work beer" at this bar. It had been a couple of years since I'd seen her, since my ways of working had changed, in my later years. It had been ages since I had been to a bar. So I awsered:

"Jill. Dear Jill. It's been so long. Too long. The last couple of years, I've changed my ways. Now, I fokus on a healthy life style. Age changes you perspective of life, you know" I said, as I sat down in my seat.

Flick *Flick*, it said, as she tried to ignite a ciggeret. "So you left behind all the things you loved? Perfetic. But if you are all mister goody two shoes now, what are you doing at "The Sirens Collection"?" she asked, with tears in hear eyes, as the fist bit of smoke went straight for her eyes.

As I sip from my plastic cup, I get some of the water stuck in my throat, and as I'm coffing, I say "Well, ahm, you properbly heard, ahm, arhmaham, about Jack, haven't you?" as my coughing continues.

inhalation *exhalation* "Well, yes. I read it in the newspaper. But I just figured he had been drinking, and fell in some water. Hell, at this time of year, it can't take a long time, before you would freeze to death. But you just awsered my question, with a question. You got an awnser, and im standing empty handed. Cough up the goods old man." *Cough* *Cough*

As I had finished coughing, I explained the details I've gotten from the police, and the witnesses I'd talked to. We discussed how weird the whole ordeal sounded. Super natural. Something you see in a hollywood movie.

"This is the reason why i'm here. I figured, when his girl left, he would come here, to drown his sorrows. And then at some point, he'd be picked up by someone or something. But I've been sitting here for hours, and nothing has happend." I said with a wonderingly tone.

As we sat there, thinking, we slowly forgot about Jack, and started talking and reminiscing about old days. How fun it was to interigate people. Even though Jack from time to time, took it just a bit too far. Suddenly in the fog, the sexual vibrations changed. In a split second. The male vibrations got canceled out by one wave. Clearly coming from one woman. A woman singing, oh so beutifully. Most didn't notice her, but the right clientele did. Mostly lonely men. I almost dropped my cup of water. With ice cubes and everything.

5. Red Eyes Swelling From Smoke, And Deja Vu Fills The Blanks

My cup of water seemed to be boiling, as I looked at her. She was mesmerising. Her face, with a stripe on it, her eyes, her aroma, her aura, her voice... All so mesmerising. Jill grabbed my tie, and slammed my face down the table, took my tie and strapped it around my eyes and put her fingers in my ears. Obviously I couldn't see or hear anything, but Jill gave me an idea of what had happened. A man is being approached by the beautiful woman. As soon as she's in contact with him, the rest of the bar forgets about her. I'm let free from Jill's protection. As my head is ringing, we can follow the conversation the woman and her victim had.

She is listening endlessly to his boring monolog, about how his wife that left him. The conversation slowly becomes more about his passions in life. He's slowly being seduced, cause someone giving him attention.

"She's a man eater. They pray on men, they pray on sending them to the depths of the waters" Jill said "In the time of yore, they roamed the sea, and tricked sailors to fall in love with them. They would then drag them to the deepest part of the know waters. Since boats are so big now a day, they can't achive this, and has therefore evolved to lure men from the land areas, in there power." she said, with the most serious voice I have ever heard in my life. So serious, it could only be true. What she is, is unknown. But frightful she was.

After a while, the woman suggested a change of surroundings. The man agreed quicker than Lucky Lukes shadow. As the two got dressed, she slowly started to sing again. As she sang, it seemed he was zombified. With only one thing in his mind. What that one thing would be, is hard for me to judge. I surgested to Jill, that we could follow the two. "Maybe this is what happend to Jack" I said. Jill awnsered: "Go ahed, old timer. I'm staying here". As I had gone tired of the loud, smokey, sexually vibrating bar, I left Jill, without much thought.

As I left the bar, stalking the man and woman from the bar, I realised that I had completly forgotten to question Jill about the note. It had to wait. The bar had given me exactly what I came for. As the woman was singing, it looks as if the man can do nothing, but follow her directions. They come to this old house, with paintings of happenings at sea. The house is called Odysseen.

I sat in the cold weather, waiting patiently, for how long, I don't even know. Suddenly, they come outside again. There are several women. His walking again. Still as if he was spellbound. The snow under their feet, seemed as concrete condition. They board the same ark, Jack had been murdered on. Berth 13. After about 30 minuts, the women left. I had to go up there, and see what they had done with the poor man. I wish I had a cup of water, to ease the nerves. With ice cubes.

6. Red Glow Beneath The Melting Ice, Retreat To The Fuming Embers

Water everywhere. Ice everywhere. If only I had a cup. Drowned. The poor man, was lying beneath the ice. A red glance seemed to glow from his eyes. It got stronger and stronger, as he started to sink down, to the depth of the water, he had died in. I couldn't do much, and I didn't want to be seen, so I quickly left.

My journey, from the bar to the end of a man, gave me a insight of how Jack died. It also seemed like, my secrets hadn't been spilled. The women seemed only, to be interested in the men, not their secrets. But I couldn't give up now. What I had Witnessed, nacked my curiosity to much. My old profession, had became my new hobby.

I went back to the bar, in hope of finding Jill there. My luck hadn't run dry. She sat at a table, dominating a group of lonely men. As she so often had done, back when we were associates. The sexual vibrations had become more goal oriented. Some still went for whom would accept it. Some still went back and forth, between new lovers. But most went to Jill. As she stood on the table, yelling and spilling beer, on the lost souls who sat around her.

The table I early sat by, was still free. For some odd reason, since the rest of the bar was overpopulated. I got myself a cup of water. With ice cubes.

"Could I get a cup of water?" I said softly to the young man, behind the counter? "What about a beer?" Yelled the muscular man. "A cup of water would be just fine. With ice cubes please" I said, with a bit irritation in my voice. "Okay mate, you got it." He then said, with a smirk on his face. He came back with a cup of Coca Cola. That Bastard. I put the money for a cup of water, and left. At least I got my ice cubes.

The bar isn't a pleasant place, for an old man like me. Especially when one, has quit smoking and drinking. Sitting there, trying not to bum a fag from the table besides me. It had gone easily earlier today, but after seeing that poor man drown. Watching his red eyes disappear below the ice. Good god, I got to have a smoke. "Excuse me, could I buy a cigarette from you?" I asked a young lady, the next table over. "You can have one, you old geezer." she said, while her and her table were laughing. "Thanks young lady. Enjoy your evening" I said, with a smirky smile on my face.

Flick *Flick* Darn lighter. It always works when the old missus needs her candles lit, but now, well now it's as retired as I am. *Flick* *Flick* *Ignition* Thank god. I take my first drag. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale. I completely forget about what I'm doing at the bar. I take a sip of my cola. There's rum in it. Like the temptations wouldn't stop. I went to the bar, and demand to get a nice, cold cup of water. With ice cubes.

7. The Red Dead Devil Dancing On A Table, As The Skinny Bitch Starts Dancing

Ah, I said to myself, as I place the cup of water on the table, and the first bit of the water, runs smoothly down my throat and Fills my stomach. Takes some of the heat from the room. I succumb. I buy a pack of ciggerets at the bar. I smoke one. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale. I observe Jill, as she rules as an emperor, and her slaves are doing her bidding. She properly hasn't paid for a beer, since I left. It would seem, as if it was a privilege to buy her alcohol.

The ciggerets wants more. They want company. Beer. Vodka. Something that has a percentage. "No!" I tell myself, as I zombified walk to the bar. "I would like a beer." The words flew out my mouth. I can't control it. I buy a beer. I drink a bit of it. Then a bit of water. Sip, sip sip. One beer leads to another, as with the ciggerets. It has been so long, since my tastebuds has tasted the magnificent taste of the golden fluid.

Enough is enough. "No more beer!". I chuck the last bit, and do the same with my water. I go to the bar. I ask for a skinny bitch. Water with a percentage. I found a loophole.

I hadn't been drinking for a long time, so the alcohol had a great opportunity to kick in. And it did. Fast. Jill was still controlling her army of men. I had to talk to her, I just had to. But finding a hole, where one could talk to her, without a group of men staring and listening, would be a tuff operation. She hadn't even noticed me. No one seemed to have noticed me. A shadow on the ground. A fly on the wall.

I tried to follow Jill's table closely. The laughing, the talking, the dancing on tables. Everything seemed important to notice. I was a bit too far away, so half of the time, I couldn't hear what was said. I had to put the pieces together, from what I heard. But in the end, nothing seemed out of the ordinary.

The bar was calling for last round. It was also getting late. I had to strike now. A young woman came up to me. It was the woman I bumed a ciggeret from. She said "Payback time, gezzzer, hand over a ciggeret." I threw one over the table without even looking. "So what's your name, eh" she asked. I didn't have time for this. And even if I had, I wouldn't. I'm a happily married man. Be gone wench. I told her I didn't have time. She nodded and left.

The alcohol made it easier. The plan. The plan was simple. Just walk up to her, and ask for a conversation. That can't be too hard, can it? I walked up to her table. She saw me. She went quiet. The table went quiet. It seemed like the whole bar went quiet. No one noticed me before. Now I am the only thing anyone could see. I lit a ciggeret. Took a sip of my skinny bitch. "Jill... we gotta talk."

8. The Red light Ember disappears, As The last fag dies out

"Closing time" it came from the bar "everybody out!" I grabbed my skinny bitch, and walked towards the door, with Jill in the back of my shoes. I asked Jill, if she knew any place, where we could talk. She knew this small pub. A seacret pub. With a password and everything. Apperently this rich bloke owned it. Gamling, poker, guns, you name it. That kind of place.

"There is a detail I haven't told you about Jack's death, Jill", I started out, after we had placed us self in the far corner of the bar. "Next to Jack's body, there was a note saying "Jill"." I continued, as I lit a ciggeret. Jill looked shocked, almost terrified. I wondered why. Why would she have such a reaction? "Are you okay Jill?" I asked with a comforting tone in my voice. "Yes, yes" she said "I'm just a bit suprised that I was the last person he thought of! I would have thought it would be his precious girlfriend, he was so maddly in love with." she said, still with a terrified facial expression.

She had a point. As we sat there, in a moment of silence, where the only motion, was the hands moving up and down, so the ciggeret could do it's purpose. I started to wonder, if maybe Jill had something to do, with Jack's death. Maybe the note was a clue. Maybe Jill is still as dangerous, as back in the day. She didn't hesitate to violence. One of the things, we had to keep seacret.

I started to think back to the bar. When the mesmerising woman entered, and Jill protected me, from falling into her possession. How did she know this womans agenda? Back in the bar, she even had a stronger sexual vibration, than the mesmerising woman. She controlled a whole table full of lonly men. Like she was in command of them. Like they where spellbond by her. She didn't even need any singing. She just needed her aroma. Her aura. She had done this, all the years i've known her, but I never thought about it before now.

She always used a ton of makeup on her face. I'd only seen her once without makeup. She had scars. So many scars. Stripes upon stripes down her face. She had always been excellent at singing. She started to sing.

I wouldn't listen. I rushed to the bathroom. I put toilet paper in my ears. It didn't work. She slowly came through the door, while the rest of the bar had gone silent. Everyone was spellbound by her. Men and women. She washed the makup of her face. I saw the stripes. I saw her in a new light. She went from an old friend, to a goddess.

I got to say my last words: "Why did you kill him?" "Cause he diserved to die, Cornelius." "What had he done?" "It's all in the past now. As are you" I dropped my skinny bitch. The glass shatered. It all went black. Lungs filled with freezing water.