

Cal Provost-Neumann // CWR1010.20

THE BOTTOM OF A GLASS AND THE BATHROOM FLOOR

FADE IN:

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE OF THE BAR - NIGHT

MIKE, a man his late thirties or early forties in a large coat walks down the sidewalk. He rubs his hands together and blows in them for warmth. He enters a quiet bar, a real hole in the wall.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Mike hangs up his jacket near the door. A few other guys are playing pool or sitting in corner. At the bar are PHIL, the bartender, and GABE. Also in his early forties, Gabe smokes an unfiltered cigarette and is clearly grossly intoxicated. His speech is badly slurred. Mike sits down next to him.

MIKE

Hey Gabe.

GABE

Mike! You ol' bastard, where you been?

MIKE

Wasn't really in the mood for an early start tonight.

GABE

Well, better late than never.

Phil brings Mike a beer. Mike sips on it.

MIKE

Thanks Phil. So, how you been Gabe?

GABE

Same ol', same ol'. Another day, another fucking hangover.

MIKE

You ever think about cutting down on the drinking?

GABE

That would imply that I thought. I drink so I don't have to do that.

MIKE

Yeah, that's what I figured.

GABE

This ain't like you, Mike. You usually just bitch about the Giants. Now you're all concerned about my drinking? I've been drinking like this for years. Ain't a problem.

MIKE

You pass out all the time now. And I know those dents on your car aren't from when you're driving to the bar.

GABE

You worry too much, Mike. About everything. Your wife called you yet?

MIKE

No. She's still at her sister's.

GABE

Fuck 'er! You don't need the bitch! So you had to borrow some stuff to pay back Franky ... so what! She didn't need to freak out at you!

MIKE

It was her stuff.

GABE

You're **married**. That makes it **your** stuff.

MIKE

She's got a point. Coming here every game night and betting more than I can afford to lose?

GABE

You'll make it back.

MIKE

I better.

GABE

You have enough to place a bet tonight?

MIKE

No. Next game. Franky's not taking anymore IOUs.

GABE

Damn shame.

MIKE

One of these days your bar tab and what you owe Franky's gonna catch up to you too, Gabe.

GABE

These guys know me. They'll give me a break if I really need it.

MIKE

They didn't give me one.

GABE

You didn't **really** need it. You were able to pay Franky what you owed him, right?

MIKE

And my wife left me because of it.

GABE

Fuck her! I'm telling you!

MIKE

She said we'd talk it out if stopped coming here. Stopped gambling and drinking. Gave it a clean start, you know?

GABE

Look Mike, I care about you, and I'm telling you, she ain't worth it. She left you over some small shit. We'll be here, night after night. We're your friends.

MIKE

I appreciate that.

GABE

I gotta take a piss.

Gabe stumbles getting up, and falls to the floor. Mike moves to pick him up.

GABE (CON'T)

I'm fine. Lemmie go.

MIKE

You sure?

GABE

Yes. I just gotta piss.

He walks over to the bathroom and practically falls through the door. Mike motions to Phil and he's brought another beer. A bump is heard from the bathroom. Mike gets up and quickly goes to check on Gabe.

INT. BAR BATHROOM — NIGHT

Gabe is lying face down on the floor next to a toilet, sticking partially out of the stall. Part of the porcelain is broken off from the bowl, the pieces lay on the ground. Gabe is lying in a pool of his own vomit and blood. His head is bleeding heavily.

MIKE

Jesus Christ! Get the fuck up, Gabe!

Mike pulls Gabe up violently. His face is covered in his own fluids. Phil runs in.

MIKE (CON'T)
He's not fucking breathing!

Mike tries to start giving Gabe the Heimlich Maneuver while Phil takes his pulse.

MIKE (CON'T)
He's still not fucking breathing!

PHIL
He's got no pulse either.

Mike stares disbelievingly at Phil for a moment. He then continues to perform the Heimlich Maneuver, but now violently and poorly. A small amount of sick continues to trickle out of his mouth, but it's quite clear that Gabe has died.

MIKE
No! You son of a fucking bitch!

PHIL
He hit his head too hard, Mike.
He's dead.

MIKE
Call a fucking ambulance!

PHIL
Hold on just a minute.

Phil starts going through Gabe's pockets.

MIKE
What the fuck are you doing?!

PHIL
Gabe had a long tab; I'm just taking what's mine.

Phil pulls a couple bills out of Gabe's wallet and starts unfastening his watch.

INT. BAR — NIGHT

Mike runs out of the bathroom and goes behind the bar to the phone. He dials 911. Everyone else has left.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE BAR — NIGHT

Mike is sitting on the curb outside the bar. His head is down. Ambulance lights flash wildly. Two EMTs come out of the bar with a full body bag on a stretcher and go to the ambulance. Phil comes out of the bar behind them and stands next to Mike.

PHIL

Damn fucking shame. Gabe was a good friend, a good customer.

Mike looks up at him blankly. He no longer seems to care that it's freezing out.

PHIL (CON'T)

Certainly as good a cue as any to close up early for the night I suppose. I'll see you for Monday's game, Mike. Have a good night.

Phil goes back inside the bar as the ambulance drives off. Mike slowly gets up and walks to the end of the block. He puts a quarter in a pay phone and dials.

MIKE

Marie? I'm so sorry, sweetheart. For everything. Can I see you tomorrow? I'll be clean, I swear. I'm done.

FADE OUT.