

A Night at the Opera

by Jake Barnes

I picked out a book to read on the airplane. The title was *The Function of the Orgasm* by Wilhelm Reich. I didn't intend to read it; I was trolling.

On the way to Doc's house, we stopped in a bar on Franklin Avenue. The bartender kept looking at himself in a mirror behind the bar. "Everyone in Hollywood is an actor," Doc said.

Doc stood up, crossed the room, and sat down on a bar stool next to a smallish youngster with red hair. She looked like she took dictation for a living. Doc said something to her, and she laughed.

He had her bra off five minutes after we got in the door of his house. He took her downstairs. Her oh oh ohs floated up the stairwell like an aria.

I fell asleep that night thinking that if hell is other people, just how, pray tell, do any of us get to heaven.

