

Sweet Sorrow

by Jake Barnes

He sat at the bar and waited for her. He looked at the noon drinkers with indifferent eyes.

She apologized when she arrived. Something her boss wanted at the last minute. He nodded. He knew what her boss was like.

They sat at a table covered with a tablecloth as white as snow. They held hands.

It's good to see you, she said. I hoped you would call, but you didn't. I just got back, he said.

Was it awful? she asked. He shrugged. Yes and no, he said. He didn't offer to explain.

They ordered, ate. She was taking small bites of her dessert when she asked if he had seen Janet since he had been back.

No, he lied. She started to cry. He leaned forward, took her hands, smiled. It's you and only you, he said.

She pulled away. She dabbed at the corners of her eyes with a handkerchief.

When they left the restaurant, she went one way, he went the other. He didn't look back as he drove away, and she didn't either.

