

... and I liked it!

by Hannibal Tabu

WARNING: ADULT CONTENT!

Music pounded so loudly from elevated JBL Eons that Jen could feel the bass line moving the straps of her favorite Victoria's Secret bra. It was Thursday night, and like every Thursday for months, Jen was at O'Brien's, elbows on the bar. She liked to position herself so the stocky bartender Chuy could get a good look at the girls, which often led to cheaper drinks, especially if she rubbed Chuy's close cropped hair. She'd had a long day at the sports bar down the street, slinging ribs and dinner specials to paunchy dockworkers and ad execs from Saatchi & Saatchi, encouraging her insecurities with their eyes. It was 11:30, and Jen just wanted intoxicants to warm her spirit and numb her mind.

Thursdays at O'Brien's meant karaoke. The host was a bespectacled Black guy in his thirties called Toussaint who really knew the business.

"... show ya love, that was Frankie movin' ya with some Prince," Toussaint called over the PA, people applauding "I Would Die 4 U," something a lot of girls responded to whenever Frankie sang it. Jen was conceived six months after the cinematic release of *Purple Rain*, and the song didn't do much for her. When the opening chords of T-Pain's "Can't Believe It" streamed across her body, Jen tossed her beerless arm upwards yelling "whoo!" and gyrating wildly to the beat.

Out of the corner of her eye, Jen saw this girl -- Katy? Kimmy? Who knew? Whoever she was, she'd been to O'Brien's a few other times when Jen was there, and ... well, it was *weird*. It was like this girl was checking Jen out. Pretty in a vacant kind of way, the milky, satiny sheen of her skin was dewy, like she'd started sweating a little

from dancing. Powder blue eyes shone brightly, head inclined slightly forward as she watched Jen. Her left hand held a glass filled with the blue suppleness of an Adios Motherfucker, Chuy's specialty, which swayed slightly as she stood maybe six feet away.

The next singer was slow getting to the mic, and Toussaint sounded impatient. "Going once for Dave and Dave," he called. "Going twice for Dave and Dave, 'cause I've got other shit to do and people waiting to sing ..."

Openly staring at Jen, shaky from either the booze or the beat, the girl started moving closer, T-Pain seductively singing about a condo in Toronto. Jen looked down at her referee-styled work shirt, frowning a little at how tight it fit around her belly, wishing she had more discipline and kept doing the sit ups she'd made a new year's resolution. Jen looked up to see the girl standing right in front of her, red lipstick shiny in the bar's light, raven-colored hair spiky and tousled. Jen opened her mouth to say something, stickiness of her cherry Chapstick separating with her lips ... and the girl leaned in and started kissing her.

Music kept playing and somebody brushed past Jen on her right side, but she found herself putting nervous arms around the girl's thin waist, hands brushing across the dress' pink fabric to note the mole on the girl's right shoulderblade. Tasting like gin and Eclipse gum, the girl's tongue danced with Jen's, the top of Jen's breasts smushed under the bottom of the girl's more modest mammaries. For a moment, they stood there, like there was nobody else in the bar, nobody else in the world, eyes closed, pressed against one another and Jen's back pressed against the bar. Then Chuy must have seen something, because he started ringing the bell behind the bar and the cheers started.

Slowly, the girl pulled back, dazed eyes under fluttering eyelashes. Jen didn't know what to say, her fingers still dug into the forgiving

flesh of the girl's hips. "Shots on the house for these two!" Chuy yelled. Jen glanced around at Chuy's smile, then back to see the girl had been pulled into the arms of some biker, still smiling. Shaken, Jen took the shot glass in her hand, looked at it, then tossed it back to the sound of more cheers and the attention of a dozen guys.

