

So then she says

by Sean Brown

A woman walks in to a bar. She walks into my bar, and fourteen men turn twenty-seven eyes toward her. Mickey's only got one eye. He says he lost his right eye in a knife fight back east, and wears a patch because it makes him feel like a pirate. That's what he tells everyone. I know he actually lost it in an accident at the plant back in the day when he was fucking around without his goggles on. I know this because my old man and Mickey go way back, but I don't tell anyone. Mickey's been good to me, and I let him tell his stories however he wants. So twenty-seven eyes turn towards the door, towards this silhouette framed by the harsh afternoon light. This is a factory bar, full of blue collared losers, and its only two in the afternoon. These are shift workers though, so two in the afternoon doesn't mean much. The silhouette, however, means something. Clearly a woman, and we don't get many of those in this bar, especially at two in the afternoon. She saunters up to the middle of the bar and orders a whiskey. We all watch as she tosses it back, and orders another. She tosses that back too and slams her glass on the bar; clearly something was going on here. The glass clinks against her huge diamond wedding ring as she grabs the next one, and a jarring thud echoes out as she drinks it down and slams the glass hard on the old worn oak one more time.

I tell her she might want to take it easy.
She says that I should mind my own business.

I tell her that she doesn't look like she was from around here.
She says that we've all got to be from somewhere.

I tell her that she's a little out of place.
She says there's no place like home, and we're all drifters.

I tell her I like her style.
She says I'm just a child.

I tell her that sometimes life gets weird, but that drinking like this could cause her problems.

She says I don't know anything about her problems, or her life. She

says that she's only 28 years old, and married to a man her father's age. She says that she's a prisoner in her own life, and if she wants to get drunk at two in the afternoon with a bunch of union men, then she'll do it. She says I am welcome to go fuck myself.

I tell her I don't mean anything by it.

She says that someday I might understand that life doesn't always work out, and sometimes we have to take it as it comes, there are no other options.

I tell her there are always options.

She says that sort of optimism is for suckers.

I tell her we've all got problems.

She says that she isn't interested in hearing mine. And she orders another drink.

I tell her that she is certainly a bitch this afternoon.

She says that she's sorry, she is sure that I'm a decent person, but that she isn't looking for a friend.

I tell her that she ought to runaway with me.

She says that I couldn't hope to afford her.

I tell her that we wouldn't need much, as long as we had each other, we'd be alright.

She says that she's gotten used to the finer things in life and that she isn't sure she wants to give them up to runaway with an uneducated factory worker. She says it isn't personal, but that she's cast her lot in life, she is a West Hills housewife, a second wife, a trophy wife.

I tell her that she must have had bigger dreams than that.

She says dreams are for suckers.

And then she leaves.

