

## Tonight's Scenes from the Local

As I walk up the side street to the town's main drag to begin this latest effort of unedited nonsense, I stop to watch a little bit of baseball game and think about a movie, *Man Push Cart*, I started to watch before leaving for the pub. The movie is about an immigrant from Pakistan (who speaks almost perfect English-please) who operates a push cart in New York. In the movie, the dude is constantly seen carrying around a propane tank, even when he's not working. Now, I haven't been to NYC in a long time and when I was there last, I certainly was not on the lookout for immigrants carrying propane tanks, though now-a-days... My question is, does this happen down there?

Now, I am at the end of the side-street and standing on the corner of the main drag. Here, cool kats, typically is where I take a right and gait towards my local fav. However, tonight I take a left to visit a new pub that opened but three weeks ago. Tonight's Track Wreckard takes place there. Though the grand opening is tomorrow night, I have been here twice just to check the place out, and drink beer. Honestly, it's not really my type of joint, but the food is ok, beer cold, and they employ two good looking-ehem, female- barkeeps. My major issues with the place are its weak beer selection and, so far anyway, the choice of juke box music played by customers: metal. Ok, I have no real issues with metal, but I really do not like listening to it all night long, especially when it's hair metal.

Upon entering the place, I am surprised to find it fairly packed. Every construction worker for miles, except me, has decided to drop their paycheck here. Sadly for me, the only seat at the long arse bar is one next to the lottery machine. Blah. This means lottery playing baboons will constantly be brushing up next to me with delusions of grandeur and, even worse, may try to strike up some small talk while they wait for someone to take their ticket and money.

Though I dislike being near the lottery machine, I do have three pretty good views of the televisions that are showing the Red Sox game. However, the one I choose to watch is blocked by the place's cook. God! Move already! Go cook something, or something.

I look around and see a few familiar faces from my local fav. Nobody I ever talk to, but people I've definitely written about in a past Track Wreckard or two

Watching the crowd, I get the feeling everyone in here knows each other, and the barkeep. The last time I was in here, she told me she once worked at a fairly popular bar not far from here and that she expected people to follow her to this place. It appears as if she was right. Suddenly, approx 90% of the people exit the place to smoke. I find it crazy that so many people smoke these days.

For it being fairly early on a Friday night, the people here are pretty wasted. It's maybe 7:30 and one guy next to me, Tom, is pretty toasted. He sounds just like Buf-

falo Bill from *Silence of the Lambs*.

Along with noticing how wasted everyone is, I also notice they are all jumping into each other's conversations. I'm talking about cross bar conversation butting in.

A really good looking girl, who walked into the place about two minutes ago, joined her boyfriend, but the guy is king of ignoring her. The woman is wearing a shirt that shows off her cleavage. A drunk guy, taking advantage of the girl's boyfriend's ignoring her (what an awful sentence), has struck up a conversation with the cleavage showing female.

"Did you just look at my cleavage?" she loudly asks the drunk man. "I saw you look down!"

"Ah, well, no." he answers. "I had to burp and didn't want to in your face."

I howl to myself.

Being the amazing over-hearer I am, all conversation are about people's past. No words about the future are spoken. Sad, really.

The barkeep has been going on and on about her heartburn and how "she's on fire" and how she's never had heartburn. He asks the owner to run to the store and buy her some Roloids or Tums. He agrees and leaves.

Metal song after metal song plays, so I jump up and play five smackahs worth of Social Distortion, opening with "Cold Feelings."

Stupidly, with one of my favorite bands playing on the juke, I decide to loose myself in one deep daydream. During this time, I think about the two last stories that will close my next book. Two stories that have been giving me some trouble for some reason. This and that. That and this. It all crosses my mind. I really should have done this while all those hair nation tunes played. I also think about taking my daughter to see *Care Bears on Fire* in August. They are a band of three young girls (8th and 9th grade, I believe) who play some pretty good pop punk. I want to take Reilly, my 8 year old daughter, because she recently began music lessons and I think seeing young girls close to her age playing on stage may motivate her. The show is in August and on a Saturday afternoon in Boston. It could be great fun. I haven't decided if I should just buy the tickets and bring her, or talk to her about it.

As my Social D songs end, a pony tailed man (one of the familiar faces from the local fav) has stuffed some cash into the juke, all of which apparently went to fuel The Scorpions hour. And not the fast, good Scorpions stuff, but the slow ballad crap. He's also wearing too much cologne! Pee-yat-zoo!

A threesome walks into the place and stops to look at a picture, or something, on the wall. I can not see at what they are gawking. One of the three is an older woman, one a younger woman, and the third is a man about the same age the younger woman; 25 or so. They sit down to my left and the eldest has a thick British accent. Turns out, the older woman is mom to the younger woman, and the male

is the best friend of the younger girl. Yes, they are friends with the barkeep. They order the drink they saw pictured on the wall. I am not sure what it is, but it did include some raspberry booze. The two younger folk liked it, while the older English woman did not. She said "it tastes like medicine." The younger girl downed the remainder of her mom's drink.

The barkeep, the cook, and another owner (who does various duties around the bar) converge to discuss Tom and if they should shut him off. They should.

The English woman and her daughter have gotten a hold of one of the owners and bragging about a band they think the bar should have play. He listens and walks away. He's not two steps away and the daughter is on the phone with someone saying, "Just come to the bar across from the fire station and bring a CD."

A commercial plays on the TV for The Blue Man Group. This reminds me of a line spoken in The Trailer Park Boys movie that had me roaring at the time, and now again alone the bar. "If this bitch blows (referring to a blue dye bomb in an ATM machine), we're going to look like those blue bald dicks who bang on the drums."

Pause for more laughter.

Holy crap! A couple, under my radar, has seated themselves to my right and the guy is a dead ringer for the guidance counselor on Freak and Geeks! It's uncanny.

Someone has ordered a drink called The Three Wise Men. The barkeep is not sure what's in the drink. She says aloud, "I know it's three whiskies...Jack, Jim Beam, Johnny Walker, Jameson...but I'm not sure which." She asks several customers, including me. I have no idea and ask if there's a bartender cheat book behind the counter. Nope. (I just looked it up. It's Johnny, Jack, and Jim. All first name whiskey names. There's your hint should you find yourself in the same situation.)

I overhear Tom, for maybe the third time, start up a conversation with an unsuspecting victim with, "You look familiar, are you in the Carpenter's union?" I crap you negative. Three times. Oddly enough, the cleavage woman has been kind of hanging out with Tom and shooting pool with him. Also, earlier she stepped outside with a drink in her hand, to which the cook told her to get back inside with the booze. He was outside having a smoke and caught the transgression. The cook makes great onion rings, by the way, and he gave me free fires the last time I was in here but I did not eat them.

A young woman, 17-18, walks into the bar and up to the English woman and her party. She's carrying a CD. She's the English woman's youngest daughter and is in the band; an instrumental band. They call the owner over and discuss the band. The owner sounds encouraging, but ends the talk with, "Ya well, we'll see. I have a lot of bands inquiring about playing here." Of course, they do not get the hint and after he walks away, they talk about how great it will be to play at this place. Hell, I could see the look on

the owners face he certainly wasn't expecting a tenniebopper band. However, I am fairly curious because they live near me.

The time has come to leave this joint as I've grown board silly.

Walking down the drag, I pass several storefronts but stop in front of a language school. Inside, I spy a bookcase of some sort, but what really grabs my attention are the three hideously ugly horse head wooden sculptures that sit on the top of the bookcase. What the hell?

I continue my walk home and as I near my house, I pause to watch some fireworks. These fireworks are pretty good, not your run of the mill bottle rockets and such. Roman candles, twirly exploding things, and starburst popping things light up the sky around the neighborhood. The fireworks come from the yard of a neighbor who does this stuff about once a week. Funny, the guy is a State Trooper and fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts, but they're always damn cool.

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You're Drunk...and you recall how much more fun and charming it was to hit the record store and pick out albums, tapes, and cds over selecting and dragging file names on to your iPod thing.

You're Drunk...and you begin to think that an economy based, for the most part, on debt may not be such the greatest thing in the world.

You're Drunk...and you realize that those who should be most responsible-parents- rarely are.

You're Drunk...and you caught yourself repeating yourself

You're Drunk...seeing double and loving it, until the bed spins.

You're Drunk...and you seriously consider if punching that asshole at work would be worth losing your job in today's crappy job market.

You're Drunk...and you wonder if you've ever been "that smelly person" without knowing it.

You're Drunk...and though it may be the alcohol talking, you couldn't agree more.

You're Drunk...and you're thinking it's time to nuke the war that's going on inside your head.

You're Drunk...and you caught yourself repeating yourself

You're Drunk...it's been a good night.