

MIXED FEELINGS

Take a bartender, mix in a bit of a crush, add a splash of jealousy, a pinch of fate, and serve over ice.

INT. REGAL HOTEL'S PRY-BAR - NIGHT

Happy hour is in full swing. The SIGN "Pry-Bar" with a picture of a PRY BAR hangs over the entrance. The lighting is dark with a blue color scheme. Hotel customers and bar patrons talk business and pleasure, laugh, and order drinks.

JARED, late-twenties, deftly maneuvers to fill and refill drinks with KARL, early thirties with a wistful soul patch.

Jared looks to the entrance for someone.

KARL  
Claire's not here yet.

JARED  
No one's talking to you, Karl.

Karl snorts a laugh and continues to fill drinks.

EVELYN, mid-twenties, all legs and cocktail dress, sits at the bar. Evelyn taps the surface with a manicured finger.

JARED (CONT'D)  
(even and civil)  
Oh. Hey. The usual?

Evelyn nods and Jared starts to mix her a MARTINI.

EVELYN  
Actually, I'm in the mood for something a little dirty.

Jared adds a bit of OLIVE BRINE to the martini.

EVELYN (CONT'D)  
This will do for now. Thanks Jared.

Jared moves away and helps a TOURIST pay for his order.

Evelyn watches Jared while nibbling at the OLIVE.

KARL  
Hey Evelyn, you're looking very-

EVELYN  
No one's talking to you, Karl.

CLAIRE, early twenties petite and practical, walks in the entrance hand-in-hand with BRAD, late twenties, all uptight and businesslike. Jared gives a small smile when he sees her.

A BUSINESS WOMAN in a dark pantsuit with hair down flags Jared down to pay. Jared reads the name on the CREDIT CARD.

JARED  
Have a good evening, Audrey.

Audrey, the Business Woman, smiles and takes her receipt.

JARED (CONT'D)  
Wait, don't you work for the bar  
several blocks down?

Audrey shrugs and makes her way to a table with a half-dozen other businesswomen. Jared smirks and shakes his head.

Brad marches over to a table with people in suits that look just like him. Claire ambulates to the bar.

CLAIRE  
Vodka tonic, Jared. And forget the  
tonic.

Jared starts to pour.

JARED  
Flight that bad?

CLAIRE  
It wouldn't be if I didn't have to  
go every six weeks.

JARED  
Brad's work still takes him back  
and forth? Why you follow him then?

CLAIRE  
It's the only real time I get to  
spend with him anymore. I don't  
mind, the drinks are billable.

Jared passes Claire her GLASS.

JARED  
Bartenders wouldn't happen to be  
billable would they?

Claire looks surprised and pleased. Evelyn, eavesdropping, looks surprised and cross. Evelyn steals a look at Brad.

CLAIRE  
Why Jared, that's bordering on  
flirting with customers.

JARED  
My apologies. Here, let me get you  
drunk and silly.

Claire lets out a laugh and sips her drink. Evelyn fumes, knocks back the rest of her martini and slips away.

CLAIRE  
You are so bad. Don't let my  
boyfriend catch you saying that.

Jared looks to Brad and his group.

JARED  
I could take Clone-y McClonerson.  
I'm not just a bartender, you know.

CLAIRE  
Oh, really?

JARED  
Nope, I'm a secret agent. I can  
kill a man a dozen different ways.

Jared leans in close.

JARED (CONT'D)  
And you know how Bond always got  
the girl?

CLAIRE  
Yeah...?

Jared and Claire hold each other's gazes.

JARED  
Totally not me. I just kill people.

Claire and Jared share a conspiratorial laugh.

Brad emerges next to Claire.

BRAD  
What's going on here? Claire?

CLAIRE  
Nothing, just talking.

BRAD  
It looks like more than 'talking'.

JARED  
Then you're kind of an idiot.

BRAD  
...Excuse me?

Karl wriggles past Jared.

KARL  
 Sorry, sir. It's been a stressful  
 night, can I get you a fresh-

BRAD  
 No one's talking to you.

CLAIRE  
 Brad, I see him when we come here-

BRAD  
 Yes, that woman told me about that.

Evelyn stands at the far end of the bar, smug.

MR. PRY, late forties, heavysset with a sweaty mustache,  
 schlepps out of the manager's office.

MR. PRY  
 Is there a problem here?

BRAD  
 Indeed. I don't think I can stay at  
 a hotel where the bartender is  
 allowed to harass the guests.

MR. PRY  
 Is this true, boy?

Jared is about to protest, but Evelyn saunters over.

EVELYN  
 (faux innocence)  
 Oh, Mr. Pry, Jared constantly leers  
 at me and says suggestive things. I  
 didn't want to say anything but...

Evelyn teases the neckline of her dress. Mr. Pry notices.

JARED  
 That is such a lie! I never-

Mr. Pry holds up a hand to Jared and turns to Brad.

MR. PRY  
 I'm very sorry. Rest assured that  
 Jared is no longer employed here.

JARED  
 Jared is no longer what now?

Brad looks down his nose at Jared.

BRAD

Fine. We can stay. Claire, with me.

Brad ushers Claire to his table. Claire looks back at Jared.

CLAIRE

(mouths)

I'm sorry.

KARL

That's not fair, Jared never-

MR. PRY

No one's talking to you, Karl. Go  
and refill the ice.

Karl stomps off to get ice. Jared turns to Mr. Pry.

JARED

Sir, I don't understand why-

MR. PRY

Don't be stupid, boy. His business  
is worth more than you. Your last  
check will be in the mail tomorrow.

Jared takes off his APRON and throws it at Mr. Pry and makes  
his way to where Audrey sits at her table, now alone.

JARED

(agreeably)

You must think I'm good if you keep  
coming here. Looking to hire?

Audrey stands and hands Jared a BUSINESS CARD.

AUDREY

We could find a place for you.

Audrey leans in close.

AUDREY (CONT'D)

But I never came for the drinks.

Audrey winks and strolls out the door. Jared looks at the  
business card and smiles. Jared turns around to see Mr. Pry,  
Evelyn, Claire, and Brad all regarding him.

Jared salutes them with the business card.

JARED

Later!

Jared strides out of the Pry-Bar.