

STRAIGHT UP

By

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MAN - Any age, race

WOMAN - Any age, race

Both are beautiful. Both are wounded. Both are beautifully wounded.

BARTENDER - Any age, gender, race. The BARTENDER doesn't have any dialogue but may provide any and all kinds of commentary. Dealer's choice.

PLACE

A bar. Present Day. Sometime after midnight.

At Rise: MAN is sitting at the bar with his best friend, Johnny Walker Black, neat. After a few moments the WOMAN enters and sit, leaving two stools between her and the MAN. When the MAN and WOMAN speak they don't look at one another, but rather stare straight ahead into their own vision of things. There is, of course, an exception to every rule.

WOMAN

*(Rapping on the bar with her
knuckles, calling out to bartender)*

Stoli and Cranberry.

(BARTENDER silently acknowledges her, pours drink. They have a silent exchange when he places drink in front of her. WOMAN gets to business with her chosen poison, a generous pause follows. The MAN looks at her. Returns to his drink. Looks at WOMAN again, longer this time. Returns again to his drink. The third time MAN speaks.)

MAN

Hey.

WOMAN

*(Taking stock of MAN as she might a
vendor selling cheap, overpriced
umbrellas during a sudden
rainstorm)*

Hey.

MAN

*(Fortifying himself for some forced
casual chat)*

So, wh--?

WOMAN

*(Sudden and definite, not at all
interested)*

Look. I just want to drink. Plus I got a urinary
infection that needs tending, OK? So..just....

*(Garbled utterance designed to stop
him cold.)*

*F**++##*(*&())_***@&@(\$øø. I'm. So. NOT.
Interested! Got it?!!!!

MAN

(Hands up in mock defense)

WhoaWhoaWhoa! Sorry!

(Beat. Not able to let go)

Pardon ME.

(WOMAN still doesn't respond)

Hmmmpfff

*(Beat, then attempting some
spectacular wound to her femininity)*

What? You a dyke or somethin'?

WOMAN

(Nonplussed)

Yeah, actually.

MAN

*(Beat. His efforts to humiliate totally
diffused)*

Oh.

*(Thinks a while. Shrugs. Decides, ok,
everyone can change and grow)*

Um *(beat)* OK.

WOMAN

(Epic eye roll)

Glad you approve. Seriously. I'm totally relieved.

MAN

So, what are you doing h--

WOMAN

JUST a drink. OK?!! Just...

(cradling her drink)

Drinking.

MAN

(Beat)

Well, this is kinda a strange place for you--

WOMAN

Yeah well maybe I don't feel being with my *tribe*,
OK? Maybe that's why I came here.

MAN

(Beat)

Fair enough.

WOMAN

Again. Glad you approve.

MAN

(Clearing throat awkwardly)

(Beat)

So...woman problems?

WOMAN

Funny. That's funny.

MAN

(Inordinately pleased with himself)

Thanks.

WOMAN

No. Really. That was funny. It sounded like a bad movie. Woman troubles!

(Affecting a manly voice)

“Hey, what's up buddy? Woman problems?”

(WOMAN begins to laugh at the idea. MAN joins in. They laugh until they suddenly snort/laugh in unison. It surprises them, there's an awkward pause, they stop and return to their drinks)

MAN

(Beat)

But seriously. Woman problems?

WOMAN

(Acknowledging the nail on the head)

Fuck.

MAN

(Commiserating)

Fuck indeed.

WOMAN

(Beat)

You?

(MAN shoots her a look as if to say,

“What do YOU think?”)

Right. Sorry. Stupid.

MAN

S'alright.

WOMAN

No, seriously. That was stupid.

MAN

(Beat)

Sorry about the dyke thing.

WOMAN

I've been called worse.

MAN

-?-

WOMAN

By other dykes I mean.

MAN

Oh. That's *(beat)* rough. Man! Women are HARSH, man, that's all I'm sayin'.

WOMAN

(Laughing as in "You're telling me!")

Harsh. There's an understatement.

MAN

(Beat)

You have a great laugh. Someone musta told you that you have a great laugh, right?

WOMAN

Actually, women don't like loud.

MAN

(Not sure what to do with that)

Um. Really? That's..um--

WOMAN

(Interrupting)

Well, I'm generalizing, of course.

MAN

Of course.

WOMAN

But, yeah, you'd wouldn't believe how many--
(imitating prissy female voices)
 "Shhhhh!" "Keep it down!" Like all the noise is
 gonna trigger their fucking fibromyalgia or some
 shit!

*(Calling out to the heavens and to all
 the patrons of the bar)*

CAN SOMEONE PLEASE TELL ME WHAT'S
 UP WITH THE LESBIANS AND ALL THE
 FUCKING FIBROMYALGIA???!!!!!
 AMIRIGHT???!!!!!

MAN

*(Getting on the bandwagon, even
 though he has no idea what he's
 talking about)*

Fuck THAT shit!

WOMAN

(Raising a glass in fellowship)

FUCK that shit!!

(Beat)

You think a man ever worries about being too loud?

MAN

(Actually taking the time to consider)

No. No we don't.

WOMAN

THANK YOU!!!! THANK YOU VERY
 FUCKING MUCH!!! A man would NEVER worry
 about that. It would be--

MAN

(Interrupting)

--UNMANLY!!

WOMAN

UNMANLY! Exactly! But a woman? Don't even!

MAN

Yeah, unmanly.

(Beat)

She thinks you were too loud?

WOMAN

Oh.

(Beat)

Yeah. In a manner of speaking.

MAN

(Loudly, being clever)

A manner of speaking TOO LOUDLY, ay?

WOMAN

Yeah. That's right.

(Beat)

You liked that, didn't you?

MAN

Huh?

WOMAN

You liked that joke. You made a joke. You thought it was funny. You were proud of it.

MAN

(Cautiously)

Yeah....

WOMAN

No. You were proud of it. That was your instinct. That was your gut. You didn't question. Just DID it.

MAN

Yeah.

WOMAN

It's natural. Normal! That's all I want to do. Just put myself out there. Not apologize. None of this fake humility crap.

(Slipping into a mocking voice)

"I'm so vulnerable. I need you to take care of me. My inner child wants loooooooooovvee."

(Back to normal voice)

I hate it. It's so, so, so----

MAN

Dishonest.

WOMAN

YES! DISHONEST! THAT'S IT!

(Beat)

Guess that makes me a bitch.

MAN

Well--

WOMAN

Bet no one ever calls you a bitch.

MAN

Well---

WOMAN

NO! No one ever calls you a bitch.

MAN

Well.. you lose a ball game...or...prison...but--

WOMAN

Yeah but--

MAN

(Beat)

I'm supposed to be a prince, ya know? Some sort of knight. Rescue a woman, woo her, sweep her off her feet, be all

(He mimes a huge, manly, muscled man)

All that stuff. Never imagine let alone want to fuck another women. That shit.

WOMAN

That is total bullshit. I'm sorry about that. I genuinely am.

MAN

Not as sorry as I am.

WOMAN

How can you not want to fuck other woman?

MAN

Exactly. My point. Right there.

WOMAN

What? You're supposed to be in a coma or something?

MAN

Pretty much.

WOMAN

Yeah.

(Beat)

That what you did?

(Beat)

Fuck another woman?

MAN

No.

WOMAN

No?

MAN

(Beat)

Worse.

WOMAN

Worse? What?

MAN

Used a certain...word.

WOMAN

A certain--

(Figuring it out)

Ooooooooooh. Well. Fuck. Yeah. That's-- Whoa. Yeah.

MAN

Alright!!

WOMAN

Sorry. Just sayin.

MAN

Yeah. No turning back after that shit. Genie's out of the bottle for sure.

WOMAN

Point of no return.

MAN

Out of the fire.

WOMAN

Straight into the frying pan.

MAN

(Beat)

You ever...?

WOMAN

Once. It wasn't pretty.

MAN

Never is.

WOMAN

Doesn't go over big in the circles I run in...I mean...unless it's...you know...an empowering thing. Whatever the fuck that's about.

(Beat)

Now, dick. I've used dick. She's a dick. Don't be a dick. That sort of thing.

MAN

Huh, interesting. It's like--choosing a weapon. Whaddya they--

WOMAN

Dueling.

MAN

Yes! Dueling. Choose your weapon. Pistols. Sabers.

WOMAN

Cunts. Dicks.

MAN

(Beat)

And no matter what--

WOMAN

Somebody gets hurt.

MAN

(Beat)

Shit.

*(Several beats of silence, to the point
of discomfort)*

So...I guess you wouldn't wanna--

WOMAN

(In no uncertain terms)

Nope!

MAN

Yeah.

(Beat)

I didn't think so.

*(Both take a long, slow drink. They
stare straight ahead)*

(BLACKOUT. END OF PLAY)