

"LAST CALL"

Written By

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INT. DIVE BAR - NIGHT

It's late, almost last call. The dive is nearly empty.

A gruff-looking BARTENDER (50) stands behind the bar.

There are three people sitting at the bar: A young man named TOMMY (24), pale with brown hair who thinks he's hot stuff. A woman named JOSEY (36), brunette curls, some runaway wrinkles, and bright eyes. The third is a man off to himself at the end of the bar.

Tommy is hitting on Josey, everyone else has left and she's his last chance for the night.

TOMMY

Come on now doll, I've had my eyes on you all night. I know you're the only real woman in this place.

He gives her a wide, toothy grin.

JOSEY

Of course I'm the only real woman in this place, kid, the others cleared out over an hour ago.

TOMMY

You know what I mean, lemme buy you a drink.

Josey rubs her glass and plays with her necklace.

Tommy sees the glass and quickly carries on.

TOMMY

My name's Tommy, what's yours?

JOSEY

Tommy...isn't it a bit late to be trying this hard?

TOMMY

I'm still trying, aren't I?

JOSEY

It isn't past your bedtime? You should get home so your mother can tuck you in.

TOMMY

Come on darling, don't be that way. Let's beat this joint.

JOSEY
And if I say no?

TOMMY
I think you'll find that I can be-
His voice trails off as he glances past Josey.

TOMMY
(continued)
Something on your mind, friend?

The man at the end of the bar doesn't reply. His name is FLOYD (43), he's a rough-looking man with a hard, whiskered face hiding beneath a fedora.

TOMMY
I said you got something to say?

FLOYD
She already said it, son. Bit late
to be trying that hard, ain't it?

Tommy stamps his feet as he approaches Floyd.

TOMMY
Now listen here, deadbeat, you'd
better take a step back and-

Floyd stands up, towering over Tommy. There's a long pause as Tommy deflates.

FLOYD
Tommy, wasn't it?

Tommy nods.

FLOYD
(continued)
Here's an idea, Tommy. Hit the
bricks.

Tommy rushes for the door.

Josey and Floyd's eye meet.

JOSEY
Keep me company while I finish my
drink, mister?

FLOYD
(beat)
That fine young man wasn't company
enough for you?

JOSEY
If I want his company I'll visit
the local middle school.

Floyd waits a moment before joining her.

JOSEY
You got a name?

FLOYD
Hudson. Floyd Hudson.

JOSEY
What brings you down this way,
Mister Hudson?

FLOYD
How about your name?

JOSEY
Josey.

FLOYD
That short for something?

JOSEY
You didn't answer my question,
Floyd Hudson.

FLOYD
Work. Down here working.

JOSEY
What's your line?

FLOYD
You ask a lotta questions for a
girl who was shoving boys off all
night.

Josey raises an eyebrow and smirks.

JOSEY
Been watching me all night, have
you?

FLOYD
Just since I got here.

JOSEY
You watch people for a living?

FLOYD
No, but you can find out some interesting things by watching people.

JOSEY
What can you tell about me, then?

FLOYD
I can tell you're a regular.

JOSEY
How?

FLOYD
The bartender kept pouring you the same drink, he knows your poison.

JOSEY
You're right, I come here every night. What else?

FLOYD
You were married, but not anymore.

JOSEY
Fascinating, how can you tell?

FLOYD
Ring-mark on your finger.

JOSEY
Very good, go on.

FLOYD
That's about it.

JOSEY
Come on, you're on a roll so far.

FLOYD
How about I ask a question, and then I'll tell you what else I know.

JOSEY
Fair enough.

FLOYD
Do you always answer strange men's questions?

JOSEY
How do you mean?

FLOYD
When some bum tells a woman he knows things about her, she normally doesn't take it too well.

JOSEY
I don't mind, I'm a pretty open book.

FLOYD
Then how come you were pushing boys away all night and then decided to talk to me?

JOSEY
Well "boy" is a pretty accurate word if we're talking about that kid you sent away.

FLOYD
Really though, why me and not him?

Josey's eyes wander, looking a little forlorn.

JOSEY
I come here every night and get smooth-talked by the same duds. Vultures, picking away at me like a carcass in the desert, trying to get something out of me because I play hard-to-get. But I know one day someone interesting will come along.

FLOYD
And you think I'm something interesting?

JOSEY
We've gotten this far, haven't we?

Floyd raises an eyebrow as Josey gives him a smirk.

JOSEY
(continued)
I go to the same deadbeat job every day and the same shit hole bar every night, hoping that something interesting will happen. Something that just...breaks the normal chain

JOSEY
of events and makes this life worth
dragging my feet through.

There's melancholy in her voice and her eyes fall
momentarily.

JOSEY
(continued)
There's my answer. Your turn.

FLOYD
You wanna know what else I know
about you?

Josey nods.

FLOYD
(continued)
Your name is Josephina Carlisle but
everyone calls you "Josey," it's
been your nickname since you were a
little girl back in Racine,
Wisconsin, where you grew up with
two sisters. Married once, widowed
once. You live at 1540 South Wabash
in a cheap room above a Chinese
laundry. Your day job is at the
bank three blocks north and two
blocks west, and this shithole sits
between the two almost exactly.

Josey's face has gone pale, her bright eyes widen.

JOSEY
Just how long have you been
watching me, Mister Hudson?

FLOYD
Since the day after that fifteen
grand disappeared from the bank
vault. Until a week ago, I would've
believed everything. "Lonely, dull,
bored, blah blah blah."

JOSEY
Is this your idea of a joke?

FLOYD
No, it's your joke. I'm just not
buying it. You see the cops didn't
find any fingerprints or witnesses,
but it didn't take a genius to tell

FLOYD
it was an inside job. The safe had
been opened, not cracked, so they
knew whoever broke in knew the
combination.

JOSEY
And what does all this have to do
with me?

FLOYD
Bank employees were prime suspects,
but you already know this because
you were questioned and had a
rock-solid alibi set up...here. You
said it yourself, you frequent this
place and the same vultures pick
away at you every night. Nobody was
gonna notice if you slipped out
during a busy evening.

JOSEY
I didn't-

FLOYD
Those vultures remembered you were
here, how could they forget? But
were too drunk to notice that you
slipped away for a few minutes to
rob that bank.

JOSEY
I didn't rob-

FLOYD
Josey, I'm never wrong. Not about
my work.

JOSEY
(beat, voice shaking)
Are you police?

FLOYD
I'm afraid not, Josey. Like I said,
I'm down this way on business. You
see, I'm good at what I do. I know
who took that money. But even when
I know I'm right, I have to confirm
it. I'm here for confirmation.

Josey's hands have begun to shake. Floyd grins.

FLOYD
(continued)
And...you just gave it to me.

JOSEY
Who are you?

FLOYD
Told you, name's Hudson. I'm a specialist.

JOSEY
In what?

FLOYD
Whatever my employer requires.
Repossessions in this case.

JOSEY
Who's your employer? The bank?

Floyd shakes his head.

FLOYD
To be honest, Josey, I'm impressed.
You knew the vault combination,
when the money would be there, even
the perfect place to get an alibi.
You've got talent, I don't see that
often. But it's not what you know,
it's what you don't know. And what
you didn't know, was who that money
really belongs to.

(pause)

It's dumb luck, really. You thought
you robbed a bank. But in reality
you stole from some much bigger
people, and they want their money
back.

JOSEY
Do I dare ask what happens if I
don't return the money?

Floyd pulls his jacket back to reveal a slick black
automatic in a shoulder holster.

FLOYD
Nothing good.

She watches Floyd out of the corner of her eye, not daring
to look at him straight.

JOSEY

Mister Hudson...Floyd...could you do me a favor please?

FLOYD

I'm not in the business of doing favors, ma'am, I've got a reputation to keep up.

JOSEY

I understand that and I won't disrespect you by asking to let me go, but-

FLOYD

You want to know if there's a way that this ends with you still alive.

JOSEY

I would appreciate it sincerely.

FLOYD

They don't want you dead, Josey, they just want their money.

JOSEY

So if I give you the money-

FLOYD

Then I'll drive you to Union Station myself.

JOSEY

(beat)

It's at my apartment.

FLOYD

Where? Under the mattress?

JOSEY

Loose floorboard.

FLOYD

That's good. Let's go.

Josey nods and stands up, Floyd rises with her.

FLOYD

Tell me, do you really come here every night hoping that someone will change your life for the better? You're too smart to believe in that fairytale.

JOSEY

We're all optimistic about something.

FLOYD

But you were so desperate for action that you robbed a bank? Not to prove to anyone else that life isn't a waste, but to prove it to yourself?

(pause)

When did you start?

JOSEY

What do you mean?

FLOYD

I can tell this wasn't your debut.

Josey holds up the necklace.

JOSEY

This. Pocketed it from a nickel and dime store back in Racine. I was nine.

FLOYD

You've been waiting for something to happen all this time?

Josey shrugs. Floyd chuckles.

FLOYD

(continued)

Well Josey, it just did.

Josey puts on her coat and steps towards the door.

Unbeknownst to her, Floyd sets a yellow envelope on the counter.

The bartender picks it up and thumbs through the money inside.

Floyd raises his index finger to his lips.

Suddenly, there's a *CA-CHUNK* noise as Josey locks the door.

JOSEY

Drive me to the station, huh?

Floyd turns around at the same time as Josey, her tears are gone and her face has gone cold.

JOSEY

(continued)

You really think your employers would be okay with that? You knew a lot Floyd, but you said it yourself. It's not what you know, it's what you don't know. Ben?

Floyd reaches for his gun, but freezes as he hears a *CLICK* behind him. He turns to see the Bartender aiming a pistol at him. Floyd grins.

FLOYD

How long have you known?

JOSEY

Since you first paid Ben to rat on me.

FLOYD

Did Ben tip you off or did you figure it out yourself?

JOSEY

Does it matter?

FLOYD

Oh it does to me. You're good Josey, impressive to say the least.

JOSEY

Let's cut to the chase.

FLOYD

I agree. Tell your boy here to drop the gun and we'll talk this out.

JOSEY

I don't take deals, I make them. And we both know you're not dropping your gun.

FLOYD

Glad we're on the same page, now give me the money and walk away. Take it now because it's the best you're gonna get.

JOSEY

Now it's your joke I'm not buying. Fifteen grand isn't shit to your people, not enough to send muscle for. They want to send a message.

FLOYD
Exactly, so take me to the money.
Now.

(pause)
You have an alternative?

JOSEY
Shoot him, Ben.

BEN
(beat)
No.

Josey and Floyd both turn their heads.

JOSEY
Excuse me?

BEN
Like you said, big people behind
that money. We kill him and they'll
send someone else.

JOSEY
I paid you a fair-

BEN
Five grand, that's a third. And now
I'm asking you, triggerman, what
are you offering?

JOSEY
Ben, he's a professional gunman.
You try to bargain with him and
you're dead.

FLOYD
She gave you five, huh? How'd you
like the full fifteen?

Josey pulls a snub pistol on Ben, who turns his gun at her
as Floyd pulls his gun on her as well.

FLOYD
Well if that's not cutting to the
chase, I don't know what is.

JOSEY
Twenty goddamn years I work alone
and get pinched twice. I trust you
and-

BEN

You broke your own rules, it's your own damn fault.

Floyd glances at Josey. They make eye contact and Floyd nods to her.

FLOYD

Your choice, Ben. Me or her. You're gonna shoot one of us and it's getting late.

Ben turns his gun back to Floyd.

BEN

Stop talking, your job's done here.

FLOYD

Now.

Floyd lowers his gun.

Josey whips around and shoots Ben twice. He falls down dead. Floyd and Josey aim at each other again.

FLOYD

Gimme a reason to let you live.

JOSEY

You're sweet on me.

FLOYD

Nice try, do better.

JOSEY

Because you have no idea where that money is.

FLOYD

You told me.

JOSEY

Bullshit, if you believed me you'd have dropped that hammer by now.

FLOYD

And if you were a killer you would've shot me too.

JOSEY

You think I won't?

FLOYD

You don't want to. That was your first time, I can tell. You're no killer.

JOSEY

I'm whatever I have to be.

FLOYD

Then make the call. You're the mastermind, it's your call.

(pause)

This is what you've been waiting for, right?

CUT TO BLACK.