

GREEN

Well, are you sure that's a good idea?

MAX

What are you talking about?

GREEN

The roads aren't safe for a boy his age. You know what kind of maniacs are out there. Bunch of drunken lunatics.

MAX

It's not that bad.

GREEN

He was just hit by one.

MAX

How do you know he was drunk?

GREEN

What kind of nut just plows into a kid on his bike?

MAX

It was dark.

GREEN

That doesn't matter.

MAX

What are you doing?

(Pause.)

You want me to admit I turned this town into a shit hole

GREEN

You think that's why I'm here?

MAX

Go ahead. Say it. Tell me all about how much public drunkenness has gone up since I opened.

GREEN

Look. I'm not interested in that. Can we talk like adults, please? You know I never wanted that booze hole open in the first place. Now do you see why?

MAX

You'd better not be saying what I think you're about to say.

GREEN

I want you to take this check.

MAX

God damn it, Green.

GREEN

Now, be reasonable about this, Max. Look how much is there. This will easily buy this house and the saloon. And then you're free to move out of town to wherever you want. And that check's not chickenfeed.

MAX

You really don't get it, do you? Don't you understand that this is not just about the dollars? This is about freedom, Green. This is about me not having to answer to you or anyone else. This is about being my own boss. Running my own show. I would think that a self-made man like you would understand that better than anyone.

GREEN

You're ruining the town. You never wanted to be here anyway. And I'm giving you a chance to start over again.

MAX

In case you haven't noticed, that's exactly what I've been doing; starting over. And now that I'm finally making a go at it, you think I'm stupid enough to pull out?

GREEN

Oh, confound it! Don't you see? This is the worst option for all of us. If we do things my way, everybody makes out. The town is dry, I get back on top, you get back on top, you move back to the city, debt free, and even with a healthy chunk of cash in your pocket besides. Now, what's wrong with that?

MAX

(Who has started speaking midway
through what GREEN was saying.)

Whoa, whoa, whoa. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. Back up. What was that you just said?

GREEN

I said this way, everybody makes out.

MAX

(Overlapping.)

No, no. After that. You said something about getting back on top.

GREEN

Certainly. You'll be in a much better position—

MAX

No, you said you would be back on top. What are you talking about?

GREEN

(Pause.)

Max. My customers spend a lot of money at your bar.

MAX

What do you mean your customers? You think they're yours more than they're mine? Maybe my customers spend a lot of money at my bar. Ever think of it that way? And maybe they're not your customers anymore if they don't come into your store anymore. What say?

(Pause. GREEN merely sits there, enraged.)

Don't like that, huh? Well, tough shit. What makes you think you have a right to business here more than anyone else, Green?

GREEN

(In a savage outburst.)

Because I was here first, damn you!!! I helped build this place!! It's mine!! I earned it!! You waltz in here on my good graces, take my profits away, ruin my election, destroy my world, and you make money off of it! You've been here a few months. My family has been in this town for over a hundred years!!!

(MICHELLE, and ORVILLE enter.)

MICHELLE

What is all the screaming about?

GREEN

What are you doing here?!

ORVILLE

Grandpa, wait.

GREEN

I asked you a question. Answer it.

MICHELLE

He's just here to see me.

GREEN

And I told you I didn't want you consorting with this girl anymore.

MICHELLE

What? What did I do?

GREEN

You went behind my back, young man.

ORVILLE

Grandpa, I'm not a kid anymore.

GREEN

This is the daughter of the man who's ruining this town. Do you understand what that means?

ORVILLE

I think he's entitled to a living.

GREEN

Oh, there are those words again. You think. Well, you know what I think? I think that you think I'm some kind of dupe who's going to just idly watch as this town goes to Hell.

ORVILLE

That's not true.

GREEN

This is what you do? Your own flesh and blood? What's next? You going to open up your own squalid booze hole next to his, just to spite me?

ORVILLE

Maybe I'll do what suits me!

GREEN

We'll just see how long you'll make it out there, boy.

ORVILLE

Mr. Neumann, sir. I would like to offer my services to your tavern.

MAX

You'd what?

ORVILLE

I'd like to be your manager.

GREEN

Have you lost your mind?

MAX

You're serious?

ORVILLE

I have a five years experience as a manager.

GREEN

Oh, get a hold of yourself, young man.

MAX

Are you sure that's really what you want?

ORVILLE

No. But right now, I'm very sure about what I don't want.

MAX

You're on.

GREEN

(Pause.)

Well, I guess you've shown me, boy. To Hell with you. You can burn in Hell, you... traitorous little rat.

MAX

I think it's time for you to leave, Mr. Green.

GREEN

(Pause.)

You heard him, boy. Now stop this nonsense and let's go.

MAX

No, I'm not talking to him, Mr. Green.

GREEN

Come on, boy.

(Pause.)

Look. I'm sorry. Please come with me.

(Pause.)

Kiss your career goodbye, boy.

MICHELLE

Mr. Green, wait.

GREEN

You shut your mouth, young lady! This is your fault.

MAX

Don't you dare talk to her like that!

GREEN

(Pause.)

You need to calm yourself, Max.

MAX

You need to leave.

GREEN

You think I'm the bad guy here? You're the only criminal in this room.

MAX

Don't push me, Green. I'm warning you.

GREEN

Me? What did I do? Did I just let my son ride out into a dangerous street mere days after he was hit by a drunk driver?

MAX

Get out.

GREEN

Did I let my daughter behave like a working girl on a street corner?

MAX

Get out of here now, or spend the summer in the hospital.

GREEN

Oh, that would be a mistake, wouldn't it?

MAX

Having me sent to jail won't make your bones knit any quicker.

GREEN

That's alright, Max. Teach me a lesson. I'm an old man. I don't stand a chance against you. And the jury sure will think you're brave.

(Pause.)

No?

MAX

(Pause.)

I should really get over to the bar. We're always so busy, even the help I have can't keep up. Come on, Orville. We can get you started.

ORVILLE

Alright.

MAX

You want to come too, Green? Buy you a drink? Oh, that's right. You have to run your store. All by yourself. Oh, wait. It's Sunday. Well, looks like you might want to start opening on Sunday. Make a few extra bucks. After all, it won't cost you any extra labor, right?

(GREEN storms out the front door.)