

Harv's Place

A Short Play

Written by

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Cast of Characters

Harvey: The owner and bartender of a small local bar. He's a guy in his mid forties.

Jerry: A frequent customer of Harvey's bar. He is also in his mid forties.

Bob: Another frequent customer of Harvey's bar. Fifties, sits at the bar, drinking and saying nothing, but occasionally may gesture his agreement, or whatever.

At Rise: Bob sits at the bar nursing a beer. Harvey enters with two bottles of wine and singing to the tune of "I've Got You Under My Skin." (If you don't know the tune, look it up on iTunes.)

HARVEY

(singing)

"I've got you under my skin. I've got you deep in the heart of..." You good, Bob? Need another beer?

(Bob waves his hand to signify that he's good. Harvey puts the wine down on the bar. He grabs a cloth and crosses to a table and starts cleaning it. Jerry enters.)

JERRY

Hey, Harv. Looks like it's gonna be a quiet night around here. Usually crowded by now.

(Jerry crosses to the bar and sits near Bob.)

JERRY

Bob, haven't seen you around for awhile. You okay?

(Bob gestures that he's fine.)

JERRY

Hey, how about some service here? What kind of a joint is this?

HARVEY

(singing)

"I've got you under my skin. I've got you deep in the heart of..."

(Harvey keeps wiping up the tables.)

JERRY

Bob, does Harvey treat you this way too?

(Bob ignores the remark. Jerry gets up and crosses to Harvey.)

JERRY

So? Harvey. Am I here or am I here?

(Harvey looks at Jerry for a moment and crosses back to the bar. Jerry follows and sits down. Harvey looks at Jerry again.)

HARVEY

Oh, shit. I was afraid of this.

JERRY

What? What'd I do?

HARVEY

Nothing. But when a customer comes in with that look in his eyes, it means...

JERRY

Customer? First you ignore me and now I'm just a customer? What happened to good old Jerry? In case you forgot, after all these years, that's my name. Jerry, Jerry, Jerry.

HARVEY

Oh, shit, it's starting already. You can see that look too, right, Bob?

JERRY

What look? Bob, do I have a look? I don't think I have a look. I just walked in. I didn't have time for a look to start developing, let alone maturing.

HARVEY

The look that says this is going to be one of those annoying, depressing evenings.

JERRY

You got that from just looking in my eyes?

HARVEY

When a customer walks in and I see that look, I know we are in for some cloudy days. Man, you are as welcome as a cold front in the middle of July. You open your mouth, nothing but fog and frost coming out. I can tell.

JERRY

Bob, did you hear that? "Nothing but fog and frost"? That's good, I like that. Harv, you ever thought about quitting this bar business and becoming a writer? Because with stuff like that, who knows, a Pulitzer or something.

HARVEY

Yeah, right, a Pulitzer. So you gonna give me a break by going or are you gonna torture me by staying?

JERRY

I'm hanging you from a wall, bringing out the dogs, gonna make your life miserable.

HARVEY

Great. Look, Gary...

JERRY

Jerry!

HARVEY

Why don't you go back home, turn on the TV and watch something stupid until you get out of this mood of yours. I'll even give you a couple of beers to take with you, on the house.

JERRY

I'm not in a mood, so why should I leave? Bob, am I in a mood? I just got here. So, I'm here for the duration. And give Bob another beer, he's running low. I'm buying.

HARVEY

I can see this is gonna be a fun night. So, what'll it be?

JERRY

What'da mean, what'll it be? Harvey, I've been coming in here for ten years, maybe more, right Bob, and you have to ask, what'll it be? What do I always have?

HARVEY

Coors Lite.

JERRY

Bob? Did you hear this? A Coors Lite?

HARVEY

Yeah.

JERRY

I've never had a Coors in my life, let alone a Lite.

(Harvey looks at Jerry for a moment.)

HARVEY

Martini, vodka, just a breath of Vermouth, two olives, one pearl onion, up.

(Jerry stares at Harvey for a moment.)

JERRY

Bob, am I in the wrong bar here? Is this some sort of parallel universe thing that I got myself into, only I don't know about it? (pause) Wait a second, wait a second, I'm getting the picture here. You act like you don't know what I always drink, I get pissed and leave. Ain't gonna work. And is this anyway to treat one of your best customers? Harvey, I think running this dumpy little bar has finally gotten to you. You've gone over the edge. Maybe it is time to try something new.

HARVEY

Dumpy little bar? That's what you think this place is,
Gary, dumpy?

JERRY

Jerry!

HARVEY

Get the hell out of here.

JERRY

Are you crazy?

HARVEY

Look, I don't know who the hell you are. You come in here acting like you own the joint, that you're a real regular, so I try and humor you, but when you start making fun of my little place of business, that's it. So get out.

JERRY

Oh, so you don't know me. I'm not a regular? Then how do I know your name? How do I know Bob's name?

HARVEY

My name is on the sign outside, smart guy. And for all I know, you and Bob went to school together. Now get out of here.

JERRY

Harvey, me and my old man own the plumbing business down the block. We put in the plumbing for this place just before you moved in.

HARVEY

Stop, please, you're driving me nuts.

JERRY

And two weeks ago, I went out with that cute, little waitress, Rosie, who helps you out when things get busy.

HARVEY

I've never had a waitress work in this place, ever.
Sometimes my lazy son comes in and helps, but no Rosie.

JERRY

Ok, I'm going nuts, I guess. I've never been in here before tonight. If that's the way you want to play it. I don't need your place, Harv. A new bar, The Cellar, opened not a block from here and they'll be happy to have my business. I can tell you this, you've lost your mind.

(Jerry exits.)

HARVEY

What an asshole. Comes in here like he owns the joint. I hate guys like that. You know him, Bob?

(Bob shakes his head
indicating no.)

HARVEY

Fixed the plumbing in here. Went out with Rosie the waitress. You ever see a waitress in here, Bob?

(Again Bob shakes his head
no.)

HARVEY

Look, watch the place for a second, will ya? I've got to run down to the cellar and check on a little leak in one of the goddamn water pipes. Make sure it hasn't turned into a Niagara.

(Harvey exits and Bob
continues to nurse his beer.
Jerry enters and looks around
as if he has never been in
the bar before.)

JERRY

Now this is the kind of bar I could call home. Yes, I think this is going to work fine for me.

(Jerry crosses to the bar and sits next to Bob.)

JERRY

The name's Jerry.

(He holds out his hand to shake Bob's. Bob shakes Jerry's hand but says nothing and then goes back to his beer. Jerry stares at Bob for a beat.)

Right. You know, to me it's really important to find a bar that feels perfect. Know what I mean? For example, last night, I was at that bar, The Cellar, down the block, but for some reason, it's not for me. Just didn't feel right. So tonight, I decided to try Harv's Place. And I think this is going to work. Feels good, real good. I usually can tell right away.

(Harvey enters and crosses to behind the bar.)

HARVEY

(singing)

"I've got you under my skin. I've got you deep in the heart of..." (stops singing) Thank god, no Niagara. Hey Jerry, how's it going? The usual, Coors Lite?

JERRY

(hesitantly)

Ah, yes, Coors Lite. And give Bob here another beer. Always good to get off on the right foot when you're new to a place.

HARVEY

Yeah, new to the place. That's a good one. (pause) Jerry
can I ask a favor of you?

JERRY

I guess so, sure.

HARVEY

Maybe a little later tonight you can go down into the cellar
with me?

JERRY

Ah, down in the cellar? With you?

HARVEY

Yeah.

JERRY

And why would I want to do this?

HARVEY

To check on a leak in one of the pipes.

JERRY

And then what?

HARVEY

Well, being a plumber and all and seeing as you put all of
the plumbing in this place before I opened, I figured you'd
know what to do. I ain't looking for no favors here, I'll
pay the going rate.

JERRY

Plumber? Look, I think you must have me confused with
someone else. I'm not sure how you know my name but I'm a
statistician with International Transunion Global and I just
moved into this neighborhood last week from Connecticut. I
don't know a wrench from a hammer.

HARVEY

Bob, you hear this guy? I have him confused with someone else? That's a good joke, Jerry.

JERRY

Bob, have you ever seen me in here before?

(Bob stares at Jerry for a moment and then goes back to his beer.)

HARVEY

If you've never been in here before, then how do I know your name?

JERRY

I don't know.

HARVEY

And how do you know Bob's name?

JERRY

I just used a generic name. Statistically speaking the chances of Bob being called Bob are actually quite high.

HARVEY

And you and your old man didn't install all of the plumbing in this place?

JERRY

No. My father is a retired lawyer living in Florida and filling his days with golf. He knows less about plumbing than I do.

HARVEY

And, I suppose, you didn't go out with little Rosie a couple of weeks ago?

JERRY

Rosie? Look, I just got divorced a month ago and decided to move back into the city.

HARVEY

Okay, Jerry, if you've never been in here before, how did I know you drank Coors Lite?

JERRY

Good guess. It is one of those statistical things. Many people drink Coors Lite.

HARVEY

No. Not a guess. You're the only one who comes in here and orders Coors Lite. I keep a small stash of it around just for you. Right, Bob?

(Bob nods his assent.)

JERRY

Look, I think I'd better get going. It's been a long day and this is just getting a bit strange for my taste. You guys have a great night. Maybe I'll come back on normal Thursday instead of crazy Tuesday.

(Jerry exits.)

HARVEY

Hey, Jerry. Are you nuts? Crazy Tuesday? What the hell's he talking about? (pause) Bob, what do you make of that? Never seen anything like that in my life. Imagine good old Jerry acting like he doesn't know us. Statistician my ass. I'm gonna give him the business the next time he comes in. Gotta hand it to him, he was convincing.

(There is a loud banging sound.)

HARVEY

Holy crap. If that pipe broke I'm gonna break Jerry's neck the next time he comes in.

(Harvey runs off stage. Bob continues to nurse his beer. Jerry enters and crosses to the bar.)

JERRY

Hey Bob. What a day, what a day, what a day. I get a call about five thirty in the morning. That bar down the street, the Cellar, some asshole kids sneak in after they close and throw a big firecracker in one of the toilets. The place is trashed, water gushing all over the damn place. It's going to take them months to reopen, if they ever do. I was there all day trying to fix the mess. Good for the bottom line but jeez do I need a drink.

(Harvey enters.)

HARVEY

(singing)

"I've got you under my skin. I've got you deep in the heart of..." (stops singing) Oh, man, Jerry am I ever glad to see you.

JERRY

What?

HARVEY

One of the pipes down in the cellar is leaking.

(Jerry gets up from the bar stool.)

JERRY

Not you too. Holy crap, it's never going to end today. Come on, let's go take a look.

HARVEY

Relax, relax, it's not that bad. Sit back down. It can wait. So what'll it be? The usual?

JERRY

You bet. I might drink ten of them tonight. And give Bob another beer. Looks like he needs it.

HARVEY

Martini, vodka, just a breath of Vermouth, two olives, one pearl onion, up.

JERRY

You got it.

HARVEY

And how's the old man?

JERRY

It's a miracle Harv. A month ago they said he was going to die from the stroke and now he's back at work. I told him he didn't have to come back at all, but that stubborn son-of-a-bitch just can't stay away.

HARVEY

To you're old man.

(The three raise their glasses
and drink.)

JERRY

If you saw him, you wouldn't even know anything happened.

(Bob gets up, puts a few bills
on the bar.)

HARVEY

Heading home, Bob?

(Bob shakes his head
indicating yes.)

JERRY

Take it easy.

HARVEY

See you tomorrow.

(Bob waves goodbye and exits.
Half of his beer is left in
the glass.)

HARVEY

That's one strange guy.

JERRY

Has he ever said anything?

HARVEY

The first time he came in he told me the kind of beer he liked, Coors Lite, and that's been it. He comes in, sits down, I give him the beer. Never says a word.

JERRY

Well, at least he doesn't cause any trouble, like some of your other customers.

HARVEY

Yeah, I know what you mean. (pause) Hey, I forgot to ask you, how was that date with Rosie? Good?

JERRY

I think I'm hooked, Harv. After all these years of living the bachelor life, she might be the one.

HARVEY

No way. You thinking of getting hooked after just a couple weeks?

JERRY

She drives me nuts. I can't stay away from her. Anyway, it's time to start settling down. I think it would make my old man happy. We'll see. Now, let go take a look at that pipe.

HARVEY

I hope this isn't going to be a big job.

JERRY

Don't worry, we'll fix it, we'll fix it.

(Jerry and Harvey exit. Bob enters. Looks around the bar like he has never been there before. He sits at the bar, picks up the half glass of beer and finishes it. He slowly starts to laugh as he gets up. The laugh gets louder as Bob crosses to exit. Just before he exits, he stops laughing and looks around one more time and exits. Lights slowly fade to black.)

The End.