

INT. BAR - EVENING

A downtown bar, rustic, homey. The few people leaning at the bar probably drink here every night.

In the corner, sitting alone, is JOEY. Wearing a crumpled but expensive suit, his eyes are raw from crying. He nurses a half empty pint, staring into space.

FRAN, a bubbly barmaid notices him looking all forlorn. She decides to approach.

FRAN
Anything else for you, sir?

Joey shakes his head, not even looking. His voice is croaky and dejected.

JOEY
No thanks.

FRAN
Are you alright, my love?

JOEY
I'll be fine.

Fran takes a seat beside him.

FRAN
Penny for your thoughts.

Joey manages a smile, albeit without much joy.

JOEY
Honestly, it's fine. Just been a rough day.

She waits for him to elaborate. His eyes well up again.

JOEY (CONT'D)
A... a good friend of mine passed away.

FRAN
Oh god. I'm so sorry.

JOEY
Yeah. Poor devil. Gone too soon.

FRAN
What, was he sick?

Joey struggles to respond. Fran moves a little closer.

FRAN (CONT'D)

You don't have to tell me if you don't want to.

She places a comforting arm on his shoulder.

JOEY

It was one of those stupid things. You never think it's gonna happen to you until...

FRAN

I'm sorry.
(beat.)
What was his name?

JOEY

Mike.

Fran gets up.

FRAN

Don't go anywhere.

As she leaves, Joey regards a RING on his finger- a distinct emblem. He fights back tears, tugs at the ring-

A sudden vibration from his phone- incoming call. He abruptly declines the call, drying his eyes, leaves the ring on.

Fran returns with two shot glasses, and sits down.

FRAN (CONT'D)

What was the best thing about Mike?
What did you like about him most?

Joey considers, unprepared for the question.

JOEY

He... he would always say the stupidest shit. Got him into trouble a lot.

An actual genuine smile for once.

JOEY (CONT'D)

But he'd always make us laugh.

FRAN

OK. Well the next few weeks are gonna be pretty rubbish, sure. But every time it hits you hard, will you do something for me? Will you think of a time he made you laugh?

He nods, trying not to cry again.

FRAN (CONT'D)

Here.

She hands him a shot glass, and raises hers.

FRAN (CONT'D)

To Mike.

He stares at her for a moment, takes a calming breath, raises his glass.

JOEY

To Mike.

They down their shots, reeling a little from the strength.

FRAN

Duty calls, but come talk, OK?

As she gets up.

JOEY

Thanks. Means a lot. Really.

FRAN

Can't have people too down in here,
can I?

She goes back to the bar.

EXT. BAR - EVENING

Joey leaves the bar, looking a little better. He takes a deep breath of the evening air, getting himself together.

His phone vibrates again. This time he answers.

JOEY (INTO PHONE)

Yeah. Well sorry, but I needed a
moment, OK?

(listens)

Sure. It's done. All good now?

(listens)

Whatever.

He hangs up, pockets the phone- feels something in his pocket. Joey removes something wrapped in tissue. As he unwraps, there is blood beneath the tissue.

Joey grimly regards the object now revealed-

An identical ring to the one on his finger, stained with blood.

JOEY (CONT'D)

Sorry Mike.

Joey throws the bloodied ring into a bin, and grimly strides away.