

THE BLACK CAR
OR
"YOU KNOW, LAST WEDNESDAY, THE 18TH."

Written by

Matt de Simone

15 pages
04/01/2016
m_de_simone@aol.com
540.424.7044

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - NIGHT

TOMMY, 23, lanky in stature, with greasy black hair which pokes at his eyelids, wears a black, buttoned-down and black slacks. He polishes a wine glass behind the bar.

SAL, 40, salt and pepper buzz cut, wears a white buttoned-down, grey slacks, and a red necktie. He sips from a scotch-rocks. Sal slumps in his bar stool. Reads newspaper.

SAL

It's 1987. Shouldn't sell those hate-bombs... This shit right here is scary.

Tommy clears his throat.

TOMMY

Sounds like it.

He hangs up the glass on a wire hanger, picks up another, and polishes. Tommy taps his foot and widens his eyes at Sal as he reads the newspaper. No response.

Tommy hops the bar, walks over to the front door, and reaches for the latch that locks the front doors, but don't turn the lock. He wears a blue HOSPITAL BAND on his right wrist.

Tommy doesn't lock the door due to...

SAL (O.S.)

So? Maybe one more? I have not yet begun to defile myself.

Tommy takes his hand down from the unlocked door, then walks back around the bar, grabs a rag, and begins wiping the counter top on his way to Sal.

Sal smiles and watches Tommy wipe the bar. He lifts his empty glass of brown ice. He shakes it.

Tommy grabs the rag and flips it over his shoulder.

TOMMY

No, Sal. I gotta get outta here. Forgot to pick up Mom and Dad's medication because I was out all night last night.

SAL

All night? Geez, Tommy. I've been in town for three days. Enjoyed a few of your cocktails.

(MORE)

SAL (CONT'D)
From the sound of it. Your folks
are pretty sick.

Sal takes another sip from his glass of brown ice. He notices a photo of what looks like a young Tommy and his parents enjoying a day at the ballpark in a frame behind the bar.

TOMMY
Like I said, "Cancer Week '86."

SAL
Shame. I feel like I was *supposed*
to spend a few evenings in here
with you. I think you've needed to
talk to someone.

TOMMY
Maybe. But seriously I need to-

SAL
Say, why were you out all night
last night.

Tommy turns to Sal.

TOMMY
Stuff. Got carried away a bit.

Tommy stares out the window and wipes his brow, then smears his hand down his face.

SAL
Yeah, you're young. I can imagine.

Sal smiles as he takes an old, leather wallet out of his pocket. It contains only a couple of bucks, some folded pieces of yellow paper from a legal pad.

One of papers fall onto the counter. A list of names. The writing is illegible and erratic.

TOMMY
Yeah. So, anyway, I need to snag
their meds before midnight. Sorry,
Sal. Tomorrow night.

Sal wears a blank stare, then curls a smile.

SAL
Yeah, tomorrow.

TOMMY

If had all the money in Hell's piggy bank, we'd drink all the Scotch under the sun.

SAL

Do you know for a fact how money that entails?

Sal puts the paper back into his wallet and flops the dollar bills on the counter. Tommy looks down at the small stack.

TOMMY

Not that.

Sal smiles and slides the money on the tab to Tommy.

SAL

For one scotch? Even the devil don't tip that high.

TOMMY

Oh yeah?

A female NURSE, 30, BANGS on the front window. She wears pink, blood-stained scrubs. Cuts run down face and her right ear partially hangs off of her head. Her blonde hair is pink.

The sight and sound almost knocks Tommy off of his feet. Sal turns to the window. Both focus on the Nurse outside.

NURSE

Help me! Oh, god!

SAL

Christ!

Sal gets out of his stool. Tommy leans his torso over the bar and grabs Sal by the shirt.

TOMMY

Where in the hell do you think you're going?

SAL

Letting her in, kid. She's hurt.

The Nurse screams outside the window. Her voice is muffled, but still loud.

NURSE

Help me, please!

Tommy lets go of Sal. Both turn their attention outside but continue their argument in the bar.

SAL
What else do you think we should do? She's obviously in trouble.

Tommy stares at the Nurse and shakes his head. The Nurse BANGS repeatedly.

TOMMY
No... How did she-

NURSE
Please! He's coming for me!

Sal huffs and puffs. His eyes go from Tommy, back to the front door, and then back to Tommy again.

TOMMY
She was dead. I didn't mean to-

SAL
What's going on? Do you know her?

TOMMY
How is it-

The Nurse BANGS once again.

Tommy looks at the Nurse crying. The Nurse BANGS with less force.

NURSE
Tommy?

She looks over her right shoulder as if something is approaching. Sal looks wide-eyed at Tommy.

TOMMY
Shit.

Tommy runs over to the door, unlocks the top lock, and lets the Nurse into the bar. She collapses as soon as she reaches the foyer. Tommy slams the door and locks it immediately.

Sal kneels down beside the Nurse. He addresses her wounds.

SAL
Get something for these cuts.

Tommy runs over and grabs some linen cloths of silverware off the bar top. He slings them open, the silverware flies behind the bar. A steak KNIFE bounces on top of the bar.

SAL (CONT'D)
You have any First-Aid?

Tommy throws Sal the linen while he runs back over to Sal and the Nurse.

TOMMY
What? I don't know how the-

SAL
What don't you know, Tommy?

TOMMY
I-I went to hospital last night.
Anxiety issues.

Tommy shows the band on his wrist.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
She took care of me.

The Nurse begins to plead to Sal and Tommy incoherently. Sal tries to clean her off. She waves off the rags.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
After I was cleared, I asked her if she wanted to meet up sometime. She was working until the morning, but said I could hang out with her on her break.

SAL
Tommy, what the fuck happened to this girl? Did you do this?

TOMMY
No! It wasn't me. We walked along the sidewalk around the hospital. Took a detour out towards the park across the street. Then, this car showed up.

The Nurse looks back over Sal's shoulder toward the large window facing the street.

NURSE
The car.

Tommy kneels down beside Sal.

TOMMY
It was black.

Nurse shivers, shakes her head, and breathes through her teeth. Tommy place his hand on her arm.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I knew it was trouble from the start. We ended up running.

NURSE

Run.

TOMMY

The car sped up. She got hit. I ran away like a coward.

NURSE

Run!

The Nurse screams and points to the window. Tommy and Sal swing their heads to the window.

He looks outside. A BLACK, 1977 BUICK LeSABRE creeps by the window. Its windows are tinted jet black.

Tommy covers the Nurse's mouth while she screams.

Tommy and Sal's eyes follow the car until it's out of sight.

SAL

Is that the car?

TOMMY

Yeah. We need to get the hell out of here.

Nurse screams in terror again. Sal tries to console her but the Nurse pushes him away.

Sal chuckles.

SAL

I don't think you can get "hell" out of here if you tried, boy.

The Nurse's eyes cut to Sal, hold, then roll back. She "faints." Sal drops the portion of the Nurse he attended onto Tommy, and then stands.

TOMMY

She's dying, man. We have to get her out of here!

SAL

Tommy, Tommy, Tommy.

Over Sal's shoulder, THE DRIVER, 60, stands outside of the front door. He wears a black three-piece under a Kashmir trench coat. Driver's face is pale yellow with creepy eyes.

Sal turns to the Driver. Tommy holds on to the Nurse, and reaches for Sal, but Sal backs off.

SAL (CONT'D)
You should've locked the door.

The Driver stares at Tommy, who is frozen in terror.

TOMMY
(to himself)
The door... No... Sal?

The latch on the door turns, the door SQUEAKS open, and The Driver enters the bar.

TOMMY (CONT'D)
Stay away from us! Who in the hell
are you? Sal, what the-

The Driver holds up his gloved right hand, which stops Tommy mid-sentence. Driver lowers his hand. He's calm. Tommy pants.

DRIVER
You have something that belongs to
me. I'm here to peacefully retrieve
what's mine, thank you.

Sal walks beside Tommy as he tends to the Nurse.

TOMMY
You call this, "peacefully?"

DRIVER
This is none of your business and
yet all yours at the same time.

Sal leans back on the bar. The Nurse's eyes open and peer over to Sal, then back to Tommy, and then shut again.

TOMMY
I don't even know what that means.
I'm going to call the police. Why
are you after us?

The Driver then smiles.

DRIVER
You, Tommy. I'm after you.

TOMMY

What? Me? I don't even know you, man. I got nothing.

DRIVER

Oh, but you do. You know you do.

TOMMY

Huh?

DRIVER

How's your mom and dad?

Tommy lays the Nurse on the porcelain floor and stands.

TOMMY

(to Driver)

I'm not asking again. How do you know my name? How do you know my parents?

(to Sal)

And how do you know this guy?

SAL

Tommy...

The Driver holds up his hand, which silences Sal.

DRIVER

I'm here for you, or specifically, I'm here to close the deal. Although, I do hate it when you people refer to my negotiations as "deals."

Tommy steps past Sal. The knife slung across the bar earlier lies behind.

TOMMY

What is this? No. You're not-

DRIVER

Oh, please. Enough with this nonsense.

The Driver reaches into his coat and pulls out a LEGAL PAD. He flips over two of the pages and points down to the pad.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Last Wednesday the 18th, I quote: "God, if you won't find a way to save my parents, the devil will do just fine."

Tommy's eyes widen.

TOMMY

Wait. I never said... I thought that-

DRIVER

"Said," "thought," whatever. All is the same in my rule book.

Sal reaches over the bar and thumbs through some bottles.

TOMMY

Rule book?

DRIVER

Yeah.

The Driver holds up the legal pad.

Tommy turns to Sal.

TOMMY

Who are you really, Sal?

Sal, still bent over the bar top, looks back at Tommy, then continues his rummage.

Tommy scratches the back of his neck, turns his back to the Driver, notices the knife on the bar top, then turns back around to face the Driver.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Alright, so what? You want the girl too? You hit her with your car. We didn't do anything to you.

DRIVER

But you did, Tommy. This negotiation was set up last Wednesday the 18th.

Tommy clinches his fists.

TOMMY

This isn't... I just *thought* it. Like, "Hey I hope my parents don't die from cancer."

DRIVER

Indeed.

TOMMY

"Indeed," what?

The Driver's brow quivers.

DRIVER

There's a knife behind you. You've "thought" about using it. First, on me. But then, you wanted to stab Sal's alcoholic ass over there being alcoholic.

Sal almost falls over the bar. He then pulls out the bottle of scotch from the well and then lops back over the bar onto his feet.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Sal just wanted to drink. I needed an assistant. The negotiation was made soon enough.

Sal uncorks the bottle.

The Nurse sits up with a jerk. She looks at the Driver, then to Tommy. She wipes blood from her face.

NURSE

This is pathetic.

Tommy almost falls back onto the bar top.

TOMMY

What the-

NURSE

It's taking way too long.

Sal pours himself a shot.

SAL

Tell me about it.

The Nurse stands up and gives herself a once over, huffs, then puffs.

NURSE

I'm a mess.

(to Driver)

I think this whole situation with the kid's parents and the cowardice and the blah, blah, blah have Mr. Man With The Black Car here feeling sentimental all of the sudden.

The Driver rolls his eyes and puts the legal pad back into his inner coat pocket.

Tommy turns and swipes the knife. Sal holds the glass of scotch in hand, entertained by Tommy's heroics.

Tommy lunges at the Driver who raises his gloved hand and telekinetically stops Tommy mid-swing. Tommy looks up to his hand, paused by an invisible force, then back to the Driver.

DRIVER

You still don't understand.

The Driver snatches the steak knife from Tommy's hand.

Sal turns from the Driver back to his glass of scotch.

SAL

Here we go.

The Nurse folds her arms and leans against a wall while she looks on toward the action.

NURSE

(to herself)

"I wanna always be a Nurse," I said. "I don't wanna lose my job. I'll do anything," I said. Boy, oh boy. Some "devil's assistant's" living, I'll tell ya.

The Driver holds the knife to Tommy's throat.

DRIVER

You're already dead, boy. You're going to get what you want. Aren't you happy?

TOMMY

Go to hell.

DRIVER

Now, that's better. I was beginning to think you were full of heart but abundantly clueless. Good.

The Driver slashes Tommy's throat. Blood spits across the porcelain floor.

Sal takes his shot.

The Nurse picks the blood out of her hair.

Tommy drops to his knees, holds his throat, and bleeds at the Driver's feet. Tommy breathes heavy, but not hampered. His eyes wander up to the Driver who taps his foot repeatedly.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

Are we done, Tommy? May we leave?

Sal grabs the bottle of scotch, wipes his chin with his sleeve, and walks over to Tommy and all of his blood.

The Nurse unhinges herself from the wall and saunters over to the group.

Tommy lets down his hands as he stares at the pool of blood around him on the floor. Blood continues to spit from neck.

TOMMY

I don't feel shit.

SAL

Yeah, we know.

NURSE

Haven't you been listening to the big guy here?

Tommy looks up at the Driver, who widens his eyes. The Driver drops the knife at his side.

DRIVER

Don't make me regret this decision.

TOMMY

What "decision?"

The Driver points inside his coat.

DRIVER

Last Wednesday, the 18th. Remember?

Tommy buries his head into his hands.

TOMMY

Oh God.

The Driver stomps his foot down with a loud THUD.

Tommy, Sal, and the Nurse's head jerk toward the Driver.

The Driver exhales.

DRIVER

(to Tommy)

There will be none of that, especially where you're headed.

TOMMY

Where?

DRIVER

I believe you told me to "go to hell?" Indeed.

(to Sal and Nurse)

Let's go. There's more work to be done this evening. This town is filthy and weak.

The Driver straightens his attire and walks to the exit.

TOMMY

Wait.

The Driver stops, but doesn't turn to face Tommy.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

My parents' cancer, is it-

The Driver continues out the door, walks around the giant car, and enters. The engine ROARS.

Tommy stands, runs his bloody hands through his hair, and look at Sal and the Nurse.

SAL

He doesn't really negotiate well, does he?

Sal shakes the bottle of scotch and walks by Tommy. He exits the bar and gets into the car's passenger side outside.

The Nurse walks up to Tommy and looks at his throat wound.

NURSE

That's a nasty one. Come on, I'll get you as stitched up as neat as I can muster.

TOMMY

What do mean? Where are we going?

NURSE

Me? I'm going to a few more "negotiations," or "deals," as they say. He really does hate it when we call them that.

(beat)

You're going to be spending the rest of you life hoping that a throat slash a day is the least of your worries.

She places her hand on Tommy's shoulder.

NURSE (CONT'D)

It's for a good cause, though. You are one of the few who probably don't deserve eternal damnation. However, by hook, or by crook, or by loving someone too much, you end up running for your life forever and ever and...

Tommy sighs as he stares at the photo of his parents across the room.

NURSE (CONT'D)

Well, I think you get it. There will be another car coming for you. Smaller. Faster.

Tommy vision rests on the photograph. The Nurse pats Tommy's shoulder and walks to the exit. She opens the door.

TOMMY

Wait.

The Nurse turns back to Tommy.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

In Hell, will I get to see you again? You know...

Tommy points to his throat wound. The Nurse smiles and leans her body into the door.

NURSE

"Hell?" What's life been like after "Cancer Week '86?"

The Nurse flickers her eyebrows and exits the bar. She enters the rear passenger side of the black car. The engine ROARS again and the car rolls away.

EXT. DOWNTOWN BAR - CONTINUOUS

Tommy runs out of the bar. He looks for the car. Gone. No trace. He looks down to see he is still covered in blood.

The ROAR of another engine is heard. Tommy turns to see a black, 1988 FERRARI F40 rips down the empty, downtown street.

The Ferrari pulls up in front of Tommy. The windows are tinted jet black. The door swings open. Tommy can't see who's inside. He hears a voice.

VOICE OF J.F.K. (O.S.)
Get in the car, Tommy. I got some
place I want to show you and you
won't believe who's there.

Tommy hesitates, then gets in to the Ferrari. The engine
ROARS again. The wheels spin. The Virginia license plate
reads: DAMNED. The car peels off down the street.

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - CONTINUOUS

The evidence is sprawled out for all to see, then slowly
fades away, along with each and every piece of the interior
of the bar. Only the photo of Tommy and his parents remains.

END.