



STANLEY THE WHALE: LITERARY EXCELLENCE

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Cherry Red

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So my buddy Tommy and I are in Vegas, and after a long night of drinking and self-loathing, he decides that we should go to a strip club. I'm not so sure. He reminds me that I'm a pussy and that I need to stop being such a pussy. I reluctantly agree. A guy dressed up like a palm tree, outside The Palms casino, catches our attention. He's selling VIP passes to a place called Club Tiki for the low-low price of \$40. Green floppy branches are bursting out of his head; they sway when he talks. He asks us if we want to see something worth seeing... We do, so we pay him cash. He gives us the passes and in a blink, a cab pulls up and away we go.

We arrive at the club, this discrete brick building, and we walk through the velvet

curtain entrance. This pretty Asian girl dressed in an albino rabbit fur nightie takes our drink order. We order two Hamm's and take a seat as she hops off to get our drinks. The club is dark, yet somehow bright at the same time. Lots of neon lights and everything is sparkly, even the floors. Eighties hair metal, the calling card of the strip club, is blaring so loudly I can barely hear myself drink. We sit there for a couple hours, throwing back beers and watching girls come out, bend over, shake their tits, and take their clothes off for money. Nothing too spectacular until the DJ announces their next dancer, a crowd favorite he says, Cherry Red. The place erupts in cheers and whistles.

And out struts this tall blonde wearing cut-off jeans and a white tank top with red lingerie popping out underneath. She's thin, but when she slowly takes off her jean shorts she's sporting this awesome apple-shaped ass in a dental floss red thong. Soon, the tank top comes off and her big breasts in that tiny bra look like two bowling balls wearing yarmulkes. She's only in her underwear for about two minutes before everything comes off and the dollar bills start flying. We and the crowd of about thirty or so men all gape at her; hell, even some of the dancing girls on the other stages have stopped to watch her, mesmerized. She's dancing and spinning around this pole and you can tell from her smile and the way she flaunts her assets that she loves the attention, like it's feeding her, keeping her alive. I resist her charms, until she looks at me and winks and I can't look away; it's just me and Cherry Red and no one else.

Then Tommy nudges my shoulder and tells me to look, over there, and I nearly spill my drink because through the curtain walks this midget - sorry - dwarf in a little suit with a little tie and even little crocodile shoes. He nervously walks in, like he's unsure of his footing, and Tommy and I can't help but stare. I notice that everyone else in the room is looking at him too, like it's the Second Coming of Compact Christ. I don't laugh or anything, it's a person after all, but I can't help but gaze upon this little guy waltzing in here unexpectedly. Then I remember the dancing naked woman a few feet from us, so I turn back to her to find that she's stopped her dance routine even while the music plays on. When the music finally ends and the DJ says Cherry Red, everybody, the crowd doesn't even clap. I watch Red stumble around the stage snatching up the paper money, looking equal parts pissed off and embarrassed, until she disappears behind the curtain.

The night goes on. At one point Tommy leaves me to go get a private dance, so I just sit and watch more dancers get naked and get money thrown at them. But while these girls are dancing I can't stop glancing over at the dwarf, like he's part of the show. The weird thing is, the working girls appear drawn to him; even the Asian in the rabbit nightie who's fallen way behind on my drink order. This little guy is getting big attention, and he looks like he's having a good time because he's laughing and smiling a lot. Suddenly, he hops up on a chair and all of our eyes are on him, wondering what he'll do, when he declares in his high octave voice that the next round of drinks is on him. Everybody cheers. We're all happy and drunk

and we're all watching him, when he abruptly jerks his head back like he's been punched in the face.

We all watch to see what's wrong. He wipes his hand on his forehead and pulls off this small wad of napkin that's crumpled up and sopping wet. He looks up and we follow his gaze to the bar where, standing in her lacy red lingerie with a big straw protruding from her mouth is Cherry Red, pointing at the dwarf and laughing. The dwarf stands there for a moment with this hurt look on his face and a spitball in his hand. Then, even as one of the other girls tries to stop him, he climbs down from the chair and pushes his way through the curtain that leads outside of the club, and we all watch him disappear just as quickly as he'd arrived.

And the room is silent, except for the sound of heavy metal thumping loudly through the speakers and the violent screech of Cherry Red's maniacal laughter. I look around the room and notice that once again, all of the eyes in the room are on Cherry Red, and when she turns to me our eyes meet and she winks. I want to look away. I know I should. But, I don't.



3 Likes

tags / the dwarf was hot at the tables earlier in the evening, he brought a \$100 bankroll and a pair of Nike knockoffs, he left with \$17500 and crocodile shoes, the spitball almost literally punctuated the end of his trip, it was also the most memorable aspect, few lay claim to winning \$27k and being spitballed by, a crazed stripper in the same day, he had the jealous ire of many a colleague, around the water cooler that following week