

Saint Bonnie and The Stove

By

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INT. GRUMPY'S BAR - NIGHT.

A quiet Midwest country bar. The floor is slightly dusty.

The place is empty, save a YOUNG WOMAN at the bar, and an OLD MAN at the far end.

He is dressed in an old traveling cloak. Despite his receded hairline, his gray locks are grown out down to his lower back.

He is slumped in front of a large half-full glass of beer, a menu, and a jar of PICKLED EGGS.

A GRIZZLED BARMAN approaches.

BARMAN

You good?

The old man picks up a little. He replies in a slightly slurred London accent.

OLD MAN

Yeah. You?

The barman replies with a curt nod before turning away.

OLD MAN

(Interrupting)

What's your name?

The barman turns back, annoyed.

BARMAN

Kyle.

The old man extends his hand.

OLD MAN

Winifrid.

The barman accepts, disbelievingly.

BARMAN

Really?

OLD MAN

Or Bonnie, if you prefer.

BARMAN

I'm not sure which is better.

(CONTINUED)

BONNIE

Hey, have a word with the pope, he  
gave me the name.

The barman rests on the bar, hands spread beneath him.  
Bonnie sticks two thumbs toward himself.

BONNIE

Yes son, St Bonnie at your service.  
Patron saint of brewers, file  
cutters and...

He circles his hand in the air, aimlessly.

BONNIE (cont'd)

... Germany as a whole.

The barman doesn't flinch.

BARMAN

Are you going to want food?

Bonnie looks at the things in front of him. Then waves the  
barman away.

BONNIE

No, my good man. Pickled eggs shall  
be a fine accoutrement to my  
beverage.

The barman takes the menu away, shaking his head. Bonnie  
grabs his beer, talking to no one in particular.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Yes my son. Big deal me. Made my  
name in the 7th century. I felled  
the Donar Oak!

He swings his beer around, almost falling off his chair. The  
young woman flicks her eyes toward him suspiciously. He  
smiles down the bar.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Big twat of a thing. Locals  
worshipped it, dearie. I says, "You  
Kraut bastards" i says.

He swings his index finger into the air.

BONNIE (cont'd)

"I will cut this bastarding tree  
down, and your Thor will not even  
turn up for a cup of tea."

He smiles down the bar again. She turns away a little.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
So i cut it down, and guess what?

She turns away a little more. Bonnie doesn't notice.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
Nothing. Not even a sausage.

He turns back to the bar, waving his hand around again.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
Henceforth, vis-a-vis,  
notwithstanding, the Abramhamic God  
is accepted throughout Fresia and  
the rest of Deutschland blah blah  
blah.

He reaches for the pickled eggs.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
Moving on. Little known secret;  
that's where the Christmas Tree  
came from.

He takes the top off the jar, jams his hand into the  
egg-filled fluid.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
Of course, I'm not the famous saint  
associated with the esteemed  
festival.

He picks an egg out, inspects it.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
No mate, that was Mr St Nichol-ass.

He drops the egg back, reaches for another one. The  
bartender comes back, rests on the bar-back a few meters  
away.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
Yes my son, but we both got a  
company car, so to speak.

He inspects the second egg.

BONNIE (cont'd)  
Well, you know what he got. Do you  
know what i got?

Apparently satisfied with his choice, he sits back, egg raised beside him. The woman and bar man just look.

BONNIE (cont'd)

A stove! A bloody stove. The pagans, being a frugal lot, unlike you yankee bollockses, used the tree i cut down to cook a feast, so i got a stove. Not a Christmas tree, not an ax. A stove.

He stares off into the distance as he swings the egg to his mouth.

BONNIE (cont'd)

The fat, kiddie-fiddlin' wanker gets a Coke sponsorship, and big bugger-off sleigh with a load of reindeer...

He takes a bite from the egg.

BONNIE (cont'd)

... and i get a fucking stove.

EXT. GRUMPY'S - NIGHT.

A staggering Bonnie is helped outside by the barman.

BONNIE

I s'pose i shouldn't complain. At least it's changed with the times. Used to just be three stones stuck together.

BARMAN

You OK to get home?

BONNIE

Course mate. Not actually driving, when you think about it.

The barman deposits him on the wall outside the bar.

BARMAN

I'm trying not to.

The barman makes his way bar to the door.

BONNIE

See you then. Won't be back for a while.

(CONTINUED)

The barman waves his hand behind his head nonchalantly.

As he approaches the door, a shot of light appears over the sky behind him as a WHOOSH cuts through the silence.

He spins around to see the street empty.

Standing by the door, he steps backward as a crashing sound, accompanied by breaking glass, comes out of nowhere.

INT. DRUNK TANK - NIGHT.

A haggard Bonnie stands in front of the SERGEANT's desk in an otherwise empty room.

SERGEANT  
Name?

BONNIE  
Winifrid of Wessex.

The sergeant looks at him briefly before shaking his head.

SERGEANT  
Occupation?

BONNIE  
Patron Saint.

The sergeant looks up again.

SERGEANT  
Why don't you take a little nap  
Winifred?

INT. BONNIE'S CELL - MORNING.

Bonnie is fast asleep.

Suddenly some water hits him in the face.

SERGEANT  
Oh Winifred... wake up, someone's  
here to see you.

Bonnie SPUTTERS the water away.

BONNIE  
Who?

INT. DRUNK TANK - MORNING.

Bonnie stumbles out of his cell and looks up.

There, by the desk, is a WHITE-BEARDED MAN in a smartly cut red suit.

Bonnie's eyes open wide in anger.

BONNIE

You!

The man raises his hands in supplication. Bonnie points an accusing finger.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Predator of children! Rider of  
flash sleighs!

WHITE-BEARDED MAN

Bonnie.

Bonnie storms toward him.

BONNIE

Sergeant, arrest this man for being  
a twat!

The sergeant turns toward them.

SERGEANT

Mr Kringle?

KRINGLE

It's fine.

Kringle points toward the corner. Bonnie reluctantly follows.

BONNIE

Piss off, Nick. What do i need from  
you?

NICK

Gee, i don't know, Bonnie. Maybe  
some blasted bail?

Bonnie folds his arms.

BONNIE

I'm a saint, i can do what i want.

(CONTINUED)

NICK  
You know it doesn't work like that.

Bonnie drops his arms.

BONNIE  
What is it, you flash git?

NICK  
Look, i know you're a little sore  
about the stove.

Bonnie brings up his hand, palm toward Nick.

NICK  
Bonnie, it was centuries ago. She  
chose me. Get over it.

After a second, Bonnie brings his hand down in defeat.

NICK (cont'd)  
Anyway, I know you're in a funk  
lately; kicking around small towns  
bearing your name. I was thinking  
you could work for me. Population's  
growing exponentially. I need to  
contract some work out.

Bonnie SNORTS.

BONNIE  
Sorry, I've got an uncomfortable  
cell that needs lying in. Thanks  
for the offer, though. Much  
obliged.

He turns away.

NICK  
(Interrupting)  
You could ride around in a  
Christmas Tree or something...

Bonnie turns back.

MONTAGE:

1 - Nick wanders around a stereotypical Santa workshop with  
a smirking Bonnie.

He points to various elves going about thier business.

Bonnie pushes one over for a laugh.

(CONTINUED)

2 - Nick shows points of interest on a map of the world with a lazer pointer, talking and gesturing animatedly.

He turns to see a sleeping Bonnie.

3 - Nick pushes Bonnie into a chimney mock-up in the center of the workshop.

Bonnie lands at the bottom, covered in soot, being laughed at by the elves.

INT. SANTA'S GARAGE - DAY.

Nick and Bonnie flank a large object covered by a tarp.

NICK

Well, big test run today, see if you're up for it.

BONNIE

What're you talking about? It's only the 5th.

NICK

You're going to Eastern Europe, man. They have a little pre-Christmas there. Just some shoes left out. Leave some candy. No biggie.

Bonnie shrugs.

BONNIE

Sounds easy. How do i get there?

Nick breaks out in a big grin. He steps backward, pulling the tarp away.

Underneath, A METALLIC-GREEN CHRISTMAS TREE, decked out in glowing tinsel and replete with handle bars.

Bonnie's eyes open wide in delight. He pulls his elbows down to his sides, fists clenched.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Get in!

He immediately hops on.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Nick, this is the dog's.

Nick reaches for the handles.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

You haven't seen the best bit.

He flicks a switch and a massive glowing star flies out the front, lighting up the garage door.

BONNIE

Better than any red nose.

Nick smiles again.

NICK

Yes indeed. All right, get out of here.

He hits another switch and a low engine whine emanates from the tree.

Bonnie rubs his hands in delight as the garage door opens.

BONNIE

Job's a good-un.

Bonnie grabs the throttle and SHOOTs out of the garage.

Nick steps into the door frame, watching the streak of green, high against the arctic sky.

INT. OUTSIDE IMRE'S ROOM, HUNGARY, NIGHT.

Bonnie tip-toes down the hallway to a pair of sneakers outside the door.

He's slowly depositing candy as the door opens.

He straightens, candy hidden behind his back.

There stands nine year old IMRE, in his pajamas, puffy-eyed.

IMRE

Papa?

BONNIE

Ummm, no mate. Just Santa Claus dropping off some candy and all that.

IMRE

Mikulas?

Bonnie shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

BONNIE

That what you call him here? Why not.

IMRE

My friend Lajos told me you weren't real.

Bonnie sticks his lower lip out.

BONNIE

Well...

He drops to his knee, conspiratorially.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Look kid, it's like this; you're sort of right. We're around for those that want to believe, but who wants to anymore? In reality, what role does religion, or even fantasy play in today's society?

The kid stares at him.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Take it from me, mate. I've been around long enough. In the end, you'll come to understand that life is just one disappointment and disillusionment after another, and you'll never be truly happy.

He looks at Imre.

Imre looks at him,

then starts to CRY.

Bonnie rolls his eyes.

INT. SANTA'S GARAGE - NIGHT.

Nick and Bonnie flank the Christmas tree vehicle.

BONNIE

Sorry, mate. It's not for me. I'm just not good at it the way you are.

(CONTINUED)

NICK

You won't change your mind?

Bonnie shakes his head.

BONNIE

You looked after me, Nick. I'll never forget it. No hard feelings?

He extends his hand over the tree. Nick smiles and joins the handshake.

NICK

Of course.

Nick moves away toward the workshop door.

BONNIE

And Nick...

Nick turns back.

BONNIE (cont'd)

My best to the missus?

Nick nods, smiling again.

As he leaves, Bonnie turns to the corner, where a three by four rectangular object sits, covered in a tarp.

He approaches it with a familiar grin.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Well, old friend.

He pulls the tarp off to reveal a modern oven/stove-top, lying on it's back.

BONNIE (cont'd)

Lets hit the night again.

He pulls open the oven door and sits cross-legged in the oven, facing the bottom.

He twists a knob behind him, and the stove rings light up, like jet engines.

Slowly, haphazardly, the stove gains speed and altitude as it chugs out the garage door, into the night. The door starts to close behind it.

Suddenly, it loses power and drops out of sight.

(CONTINUED)

The door continues to close, but just as it finishes, the stove appears again, moving steadily across the sky.

FADE OUT:

About a month or so back, my friend Jake Kulju (Enunciated "Koo-you". I call him the Cool Jew, although, to my knowledge, he's neither cool, nor Jewish. However, he does bear a striking resemblance to a westernized visual understanding of Christ, who is clearly Jewish, and arguably cool. Anyway, I digress.) called me up and asked me to drive an hour and half into Western Minnesota to pick up a wood-burning stove he saw on Craigslist.

He kindly offered to stop on the way back, for a drink on his dime. We had a drink in Grumpy's in a town called St Bonifacius. As i munched on a pickled egg (Disgusting. Don't do it.) i remarked that I'd wager the town was locally know as "St Bonnie". A couple of Minnesota girls proved us right minutes later.

On the way back, we noted that "St Bonnie and The Stove" was a great name for a story. Jake, this is my ode to you, Cool Jew.