

BAR UNION

Written by  
Jevonne Shepherd

Based on a story by  
Antoine Le

DRAFT 5/4/07  
WGA Registered # 1203010  
Bar Union Productions  
3712 Mentone Ave Unit 5  
Los Angeles, CA 90034  
(530)902-7134 or (323)841-1049  
barunionmovie@gmail.com



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FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

AIDAN is mid-20s. He appears years older.

His tie is loosened and his shirt unbuttoned at the collar.

He looks frustrated as he opens up the refrigerator to look for beer.

INSERT

Inside, there are only healthy foods and juices throughout the clean, orderly refrigerator.

On the top shelf, prominently displayed are several pre-made bottles full of baby formula.

BACK TO SCENE

Aidan grabs his jacket from a counter and walks out the door.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Aidan sits on a barstool hunched over the bar, where he is getting progressively drunker.

FRANK, the bartender, is also mid-20s. He is dressed in jeans and a black tailored shirt, unbuttoned suggestively, with the sleeves rolled up to display his tanned, muscled forearms.

He is vibrant, smiling, and appears years younger.

FRANK  
Bullshit, Aidan.

AIDAN  
No, brother. Truth.

Aidan takes a shot of liquor and winces.

FRANK

Aid, that's bullshit. You know it. I know it. Everybody that knows you know it...

AIDAN

(interrupting)  
Word is bond, man. When I was twelve. You weren't there...

FRANK

(pouring another round)  
I see your point. Six-figures a year, corner office, a smoking hot secretary. Life does suck, dude.

AIDAN

Hot?

FRANK

Dude, you're married. Not blind.

Aidan shoots a smirking Frank a dirty look.

AIDAN

Asshole.

FRANK

How is your dad holding up, anyway?

AIDAN

Living it up.  
(beat)  
Of course...

INSERT

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

TOM, Aidan's father, sits on the couch, drinking. He is under-dressed, in need of several days' worth of grooming.

He is surrounded by both full and empty bottles and cans of liquor. His wife's picture is seen next to him.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. BAR - NIGHT

AIDAN (CONT'D)

Moping around like it's '29  
and the market's just  
crashed.

(beat)

Acting like any minute now  
he's gonna find a tall  
building and...

Aidan makes a downward motion with one hand, a terrible thud on the bar, then picks up the shotglass.

He gives Frank a salute and drinks. Frank pours another round.

FRANK

Harsh. What's it been? Two,  
three months?

AIDAN

Six months, two weeks and  
(checking his watch)  
four days.

FRANK

Give him a break, man. What  
did you expect? She was a  
wonderful woman. I loved  
her, too. Everyone...

Aidan is quite drunk at this point.

AIDAN

(interrupting)  
Irregardless. I just can't  
fucking take any more of his  
fucking negativity. It ain't  
(MORE)

AIDAN (CONT'D)  
fucking like I don't fucking  
got enough on my fucking  
plate already.  
(beat)  
And you, fucking  
(beat)  
stop fucking telling me on  
how I should fucking feel!

FRANK  
(with a southern accent)  
Now wait a good ding dong  
dangit minute partner. You  
been watching that Deadwood  
again? Calamity Jane's got  
your tongue? How many  
'fucks' was that, anyway?

AIDAN  
As many as it takes to get my  
fucking point across!

The atmosphere is heavy.

Frank attempts to change the subject.

FRANK  
We're clearly two different  
people, cause if I just got a  
promotion...

AIDAN  
(interrupting)  
Correction. An offer. Which  
I haven't accepted.

FRANK  
You will.

Frank makes a motion to Aidan that he knows  
him.

AIDAN  
What? You know me? You  
don't know shit, Frank.

FRANK

I bet I know what Patricia  
thinks. I bet I know that.

INSERT

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Aidan walks in the door and is greeted by his wife,  
PATRICIA. She holds a swaddled infant in her arms. She is  
early 20s and dressed in comfortable bed clothes.

Aidan hands her the promotion paperwork. She reads it.  
She is excited and gives him an enthusiastic kiss.

PATRICIA

You made it.

AIDAN

I haven't accepted.  
(beat)  
Should I?

Aidan leans over and kisses the baby.

AIDAN (CONT'D)

How's my little one?

PATRICIA

Little two.

She holds up a pregnancy test with a positive result.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

Perfect timing?

BACK TO SCENE

INT. BAR - NIGHT

FRANK

And...?

AIDAN  
I have a choice?

FRANK  
Exactly.

AIDAN  
What?

FRANK  
You already made your  
decision.

AIDAN  
Fuck you.

FRANK  
What's with all the profanity  
tonight?

Frank attempts to lighten up the mood.

FRANK  
Dude. I tell you? The lead.

AIDAN  
(awestruck)  
When?

FRANK  
In the morning.

AIDAN  
How?

FRANK  
My agent. What can I say?  
She thinks I'm wildly  
talented.

Frank grabs his crotch in demonstration.

AIDAN  
Didn't the last three?

Aidan leans back and almost topples off the barstool before  
balancing himself.

AIDAN (CONT'D)  
Actors. You're living it,  
bro. Me? Well, I'm...

Aidan looks around the bar and a painting catches his eye.

AIDAN (CONT'D)  
... I'm that guy.

Frank looks over and sees a guy sitting near the painting,  
resembling a boy-bander.

FRANK  
A fake-ass Ricky Martin?

AIDAN  
Worse. The painting.

Frank looks over at the painting and studies it for a  
moment.

FRANK  
Dude on piano?

AIDAN  
Dude at the end... drinking,  
regretting.  
(beat)  
My future.

FRANK  
You know that how? You can  
see him?

AIDAN  
He looks like Dad.  
(beat)  
And fucking Trish, man.  
(pouting)  
When was the last time she  
considered me? What I want?

FRANK  
Around the time she quit Grad  
school to tell you 'I do'.  
Or when she ruined a perfect  
(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

size two to give birth to  
Justin, your first born.  
Remember him? Or what about  
that time in high school...

AIDAN

Two?

FRANK

I'm guessing. I'm around  
actresses all day.  
(beat)  
Why am I reasoning with a  
drunk? She does a lot for  
you, dude. Right now she's  
probably at home worrying  
about your sorry ass. So,  
yeah, maybe you're right for  
once. You are depressing.

Aidan scrutinizes the painting further. He's focused on  
the man with his back turned at the end in the painting.

He becomes nauseous and queasy.

Frank acknowledges it and motions to another bartender.

FRANK

Cover me.

BARTENDER

Hey, congratulations, Aidan.

Frank hops over the bar, takes Aidan's jacket next to him  
and claps Aidan hard on the back and waits.

Aidan reluctantly and with difficulty climbs off the  
barstool.

He waves distractedly to the bar patrons and walks  
drunkenly with Frank toward the exit.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - NIGHT

Frank arrives at Aidan's house and parks his car at the curb.

FRANK  
You have the greenest grass  
of us all, compadre.

EXT. AIDAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Aidan and Frank stand on the front porch as Aidan opens the front door with difficulty.

INT. AIDAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Patricia enters the foyer, carrying Justin.

She appears concerned and anxious when Aidan enters the house, but is relieved when she sees Frank.

PATRICIA  
Good to see you.

She exchanges a brief, one armed hug with Frank.

Frank looks sheepish.

FRANK  
Yeah, uh, bye.

He turns to Aidan.

FRANK (CONT'D)  
You owe me. Big. Huge.

Frank exits hastily, leaving Aidan and Patricia in a standoff.

Patricia looks expectantly at Aidan.

AIDAN  
Patricia. Got a joke for ya.  
How many MBAs does it take to  
(MORE)

AIDAN (CONT'D)  
change not one but two pissy,  
shitty diapers?

PATRICIA  
One clearly. Good night.

Patricia turns on her heel and exits.

From the foyer, Aidan sees his father, TOM, seated on the couch in front of the television with a drink in hand.

His dinner is left untouched.

Aidan comes over and takes a piece of bread out of Tom's plate and eats it.

He sits down on the sofa next to his dad.

The two sit in silence.

Aidan passes out.

INT. AIDAN'S OFFICE - DAY

WE SEE a large picture of CARNEGIE HALL being displayed on Aidan's computer background.

Aidan sits behind his desk looking over the promotion paperwork.

After a moment of hesitation, he signs and brushes it aside.

MIA, Aidan's secretary, enters the office. She carries some documents and a pen.

MIA  
(looks at the promotion  
paperwork)  
That wasn't so bad, was it?  
(beat)  
Voila.

She points at the weekend slots which are all highlighted with meetings.

MIA (CONT'D)  
For the life of me, I  
couldn't find time for the  
performances.

AIDAN  
(sarcastically)  
Yeah, thanks for giving it  
that old college try.

MIA  
You bet.  
(beat)  
Look, you can still write in  
your spare time. Right?

AIDAN  
Spare? Writing isn't  
performing.

Aidan gives Mia a stern look.

MIA  
Maybe you can pass them on to  
your kids, like an  
inheritance. You share the  
same genes.

AIDAN  
I have my dad's genes. That's  
not very reassuring.

MIA  
You are so negative, Aidan.

Mia leaves the calendar on Aidan's desk and turns towards  
the door. Realizing that she forgets something, she stops.

MIA  
This came earlier.

She hands over a couple of papers. The first page reads:

*"Thought you might want to get it for yourself so you can  
stop bothering me at work - Frank".*

INSERT

A copy of the painting with its title and address to the gallery that sells it.

BACK TO SCENE

Mia peeks over Aidan's shoulder.

MIA  
Nice.

AIDAN  
(points out each man in the painting)  
Yeah, it's called the Aidan Brand story. Here's who I should've been. Here's people laughing at me because I'm not gonna be that guy.  
(beat)  
And here's me at the end, miserable just like my dad.

MIA (CONT'D)  
(laughing)  
Aidan, you serious? It's the same guy. Look at his nose, chin, that line down his forehead. I'm no shrink, but that's not miserable. That's celebrating.

Aidan looks closer and points at the guy at the end.

AIDAN  
That guy's clearly depressed.

MIA  
His back is turned.  
(beat)  
Maybe he's really just enjoying the good times.

Aidan looks at Mia in exasperation then back at the painting.

MIA (CONT'D)  
Gotta go. Bruce's been  
waiting all day.

She motions to the documents and turns to exit as Aidan still stares at the painting.

MIA (CONT'D)  
Congratulations are in order.  
You'll get a bigger office.  
You can put in a keyboard.

Mia exits.

Aidan's computer starts to display a slideshow. It's pictures of: PATRICIA GRADUATING, HIS PARENTS AND HIM, HIM PERFORMING AT A CONCERT, TOM TEACHING HIM PIANO WHEN HE WAS LITTLE.

Aidan reflects, then continues looking at the painting.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tom sits on the couch staring dumbly at the television.

He takes a long draught of his drink.

Aidan enters carrying a brown PAPER-WRAPPED PACKAGE and places it in front of Tom.

Tom continues staring dumbly at the television.

Aidan waits several seconds for a reaction from Tom that never comes.

AIDAN  
Brought you something.

Tom looks up.

AIDAN (CONT'D)  
It reminds me... of you.

Tom picks up the remote and mutes the television.

He turns toward Aidan with mild interest.

AIDAN (CONT'D)  
I wasn't sure if you'd like  
it.

Tom looks mildly amused as he opens the package.

He shoots Aidan a quick look as Aidan clears away the  
discarded paper, then studies the painting.

Aidan bunches the paper together and turns to leave the  
room.

TOM  
I know this.

Aidan stops and turns back to his father as Tom smiles up  
at him.

Aidan smiles with the slightest relief.

The two start setting up the painting in the room.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Your mother and I used to  
debate for hours over a pint  
at O'Reilly's over what he  
was doing.

AIDAN  
Pint?

Tom chuckles the slightest bit.

TOM  
She went for the chateau  
briand. Best steak in town.

AIDAN  
Still is.

The two sit down on the sofa in silence, each waits for the  
other to speak first.

Tom takes a drink and motions to the bottle.

Aidan looks at the bottle hesitantly.

TOM (CONT'D)  
Good night last night?

AIDAN  
My finest hour.

TOM  
One more won't kill you.

Tom lifts the bottle and hands it over to Aidan.

Aidan takes a swig while staring directly at Tom.

AIDAN  
Pretty tough year, huh?

TOM  
Not my finest hours. Haven't  
had many of them.

Aidan sits in silence as he reflects on the loss of his mother.

AIDAN  
She was the best.

TOM  
Gave me enough rope to play  
cowboy, even when I got  
caught up in the rope and  
hung myself.

Aidan and Tom both take drinks and appear thoughtful.

AIDAN  
Do you miss her? Too much?

TOM  
There's no statute of  
limitations on grieving.  
(beat)  
She is my life. Without her,  
there's no Tom Brand. Me.

AIDAN

You stopped writing.

TOM

I didn't. I spent more time  
on it then I did on her.

(beat)

It didn't come.

AIDAN

Regrets?

TOM

Too much, too little, too  
late.

Aidan looks at Tom knowingly.

TOM (CONT'D)

I've had my turn. It's yours  
now.

AIDAN

Two kids and a mortgage  
performing at the colleges?

TOM

(interrupting)

I wasn't talking about that.  
(looks at the picture of his  
late wife)

I should've taken her out  
more often.

(beat)

Why don't you take that wife  
of yours out for a change?

AIDAN

No sitter.

TOM

Been a while, but I know a  
thing or two about babies.  
No statute on that, either.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Aidan stands in the middle of the room half-dressed.

Patricia sits in front of a vanity applying her makeup.

Occasionally she peers at Aidan in the mirror.

AIDAN

If you're not up to this...

PATRICIA

Pass this up? Three whole  
hours without shitty, pissy  
diapers?

AIDAN

I was drunk...

PATRICIA

(interrupting)  
Since December?

Aidan stands almost helplessly, guilty. He starts playing  
some notes on the keyboard in their bedroom.

PATRICIA (CONT'D)

I can find something.

AIDAN

Why?

Patricia turns to look directly at Aidan.

PATRICIA

Why what?

AIDAN

You could've got your MBA.  
(beat)  
Why'd you marry me?

PATRICIA

Because I wanted something  
more from life than just  
letters behind my name.

AIDAN  
You got what you wanted.

PATRICIA  
What did you want, Aidan?

AIDAN  
Carnegie Hall.

PATRICIA  
What do you want now?

Patricia turns back to the mirror and resumes her grooming. She waits for an answer.

Aidan braces himself and walks over to her.

Patricia does not turn her head, but watches him approach in the mirror.

Aidan bends and rubs his hands softly along Patricia's shoulders and arms, until they come to her breasts.

Aidan and Patricia gaze at each other in the mirror as he outlines the contours of her abdomen hesitantly.

AIDAN  
Everything I have.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tom is at his post on the couch.

Justin is seated in an infant seat opposite him.

Tom looks at the baby but does not interact with him.

When the baby fusses, Tom lifts him onto his lap.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Aidan and Patricia sit at the table in front of the BAR UNION painting.

They are ready to enjoy their STEAKS as Frank serves Aidan a ginger ale and Patricia an enormous glass of milk.

He walks away smiling as Aidan and Patricia toast.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tom sits very still the sofa opposite the painting.

The living room does not appear to be cold and empty like before as pictures and portraits of his family are seen surrounding him.

Tom realizes that he has done so much in his life. He comes to a revelation that he needs to appreciate everything he has done.

He is the OLD MAN sitting at the end in the painting.

Tom looks down to Justin, who's sleeping peacefully, and smiles.

FADE OUT.