

shrugged, then after a moment asked, "What kinda stuff you usually pull in that thing?"

Will drew his left arm back, let it rest on his lap under the table so she'd stop trying to avoid staring at it. "Machine parts. Got a whole load to drop off. Tons of parts." Taking the pot he filled her cup then his own.

"You mean that's what you're going to pick up."

"No, that's what I'm carrying."

When he looked up she was staring at him strangely, then she turned away, reaching for the sugar. "What's your name, if you don't mind my asking?"

"Will Offstead. Most of my friends call me Cap'n Ahab." He laughed, seeing her blank look. "It's from some old book. Never read it myself."

"My name's Doris Havershank." Her eyes fell to the cup cradled in her hands, then out the window. "See that yellow Ford? I knew the guy who was killed in that. He was a friend of my brother." She smiled at him. "I guess you seen a lotta accidents, hey?"

Silent, Will nodded.

"You married?"

"Was. She died ten years ago."

The snow was coming down heavily now; he couldn't even see the road. He'd be lucky if he made it into Billings. A drift had gathered around the wrecked Bug.

"You want to hear some music? There's some not-so-bad stuff in there, I guess." She made as if to rise, but Will held up his hand.

"No. No, I don't." He met her surprised stare briefly, then looked down at the table. "I don't like music, much. Used to, but not anymore." He scowled at himself, shook his head. There was silence in the cafe except for the rattle of the heater.

Doris began hesitantly. "My brother lost two fingers—stuck them in a combine. And my grandfather got his foot blown off in World War One. But he hated to read."

Staring at his empty cup, Will remained silent. His thoughts had suddenly grown dark.

The wind moaned and shook the door briefly, then fell away as if circling the building for another way inside. Doris gave an exaggerated shiver and smiled when he lifted his eyes to her face. "Yep. I seen alotta accidents. How about you? You been in many?"

"Only one." Will replied dully, his stomach twisting in a knot.

"Only one?" Her eyes were wide and empty.

Suddenly he wanted to snarl at her, fill those rabbit eyes with terror. Instead, he nodded once, feeling the tightness creeping back into him. "It was back east," he paused. "On a freeway. This guy in a VW Bug pulled out from the slow lane right into mine." He felt like pleading but savagely fought it back. "He wasn't doing more than thirty, and I was doing sixty." His hand encircled the chipped cup on the table in front of him. "I never seen anything like it. My truck just ate that thing up and spat it back out—a chewed up buring heap. Killed him instantly. It wasn't my fault, everyone agreed, there were a hundred witnesses. It made the national news." With a flick of his ringer he toppled the cup and watched as the few remaining drops trickled out. "He was a famous singer. I'd never heard of him, never heard anything he'd done."

Staring at the spilled coffee as if it were blood, Will did not look up as Doris stood up and slowly walked over to the counter. She returned with her white, blue and red rag, sat down, lifted the cup and wiped up the mess. Lifting his head, Will turned his gaze into the shadows where the jukebox squatted.

"And I never seen his name in any jukebox."

"Who was he?"

Standing up, Will shrugged. "Coulda been anyone." He hesitated, frowning, then walked over to the jukebox.

"That box is just full of nobodies," Doris said dismissively.

Standing in front of the machine he ran his gaze down the list behind the glass face. It was dark, and the glass showed

more of his face than of the songs beneath it. It didn't surprise him when he found the name. "He's here," he said dully. "He's on the list." He pointed dumbly, as a child might at an open casket funeral, then, suddenly feeling foolish, made a fist and struck the jukebox.

"Hey! Don't do that!"

Will ignored her. He could feel his muscles tauten around his neck like a noose, making his breath shallow and raspy, cutting off the flow of blood until his face grew hot. Reaching into a pocket he searched for a coin, a part of him afraid, terrified at the thought of hearing that dead voice filling the empty cafe. "It wasn't my fault," he whispered. Stepping around the box he bent down to look for the cord.

"Was he a rock star?" Doris stood behind him; he could feel her presence like a weight pressing down on his back.

"What if he was?" he snapped in reply as he found the cord and plugged it into the wall. A whirl thrummed in the jukebox and the lights flashed on, filling the glass. Will dropped a quarter in the slot and then stopped.

It was madness. It wouldn't mean a thing, just an empty voice, a ghost voice mocking everything that was still alive. It wasn't worth it, and it wasn't his fault. Facing Doris, he hissed "Why's he here?" Full of accusation and hurt he glared at her. "For months I looked—in every damn jukebox I seen, and he wasn't in any of them. Why here?"

Mutely, Doris shook her head.

He studied her pudgy face. The makeup was smeared beneath her watery eyes as if to make her gaze older and wiser, but it wasn't. Her lipstick was uneven, cracked by the dry air. She breathed loudly through her mouth. Her mousy hair fell in strings to her round shoulders, tangled with lost and hopeless dreams. She shifted her hips, leaning on one leg then the other in a broken mime of uncertainty.

Christ, he muttered, what would she know? Scowling, Will spun around and punched in the letter and number. He waited. Nothing happened.

Doris gasped. "Oh! I think it's broken. I think it broke a while ago."

Will's shoulders slumped. He took a deep breath, paused, then walked around to the left side of the jukebox. Gripping one end with his right hand, he clamped his metal fingers down at the other end. "Maybe it's just jammed." He rocked

it back and forth, harder and harder. Then the claws slipped and his left arm shot forward. The box rocked back, pinning his prosthesis between it and the wall. There was a loud crunch.

"Oh!"

Swearing, Will freed his arm, held it before him and examined the damage. The plastic flesh had shattered, revealing the rods, pins and springs of the inner mechanism. He flexed it. "It's just the shell. Just the outside-everything inside is okay." He smiled at her. "It's fine."

Doris stared as if he had just slit his wrist, her mouth gaping.

"I said it's fine!" Will snapped, pulling it away. Plastic shards spilled out on the floor. Will bent down and gathered the pieces, dropped them into his pant pocket. After a moment he turned and faced the jukebox. "Christ, what's this country coming to?"

Headlights flashed in the window and Doris turned. "it's Sam! He's come to pick me up."

Will nodded. "Yeah, I'd best be going. Gotta make it into Billings by tonight." They walked back to the table and he put on his jacket. "How much do I owe you?"

The door opened and an old man walked in amidst a flurry of snow. Pulling off his gloves he nodded at Will. "Evening. Nice rig you got out there."

"He just came in for a coffee." Doris explained, then said to Will. "That'll be fifty cents."

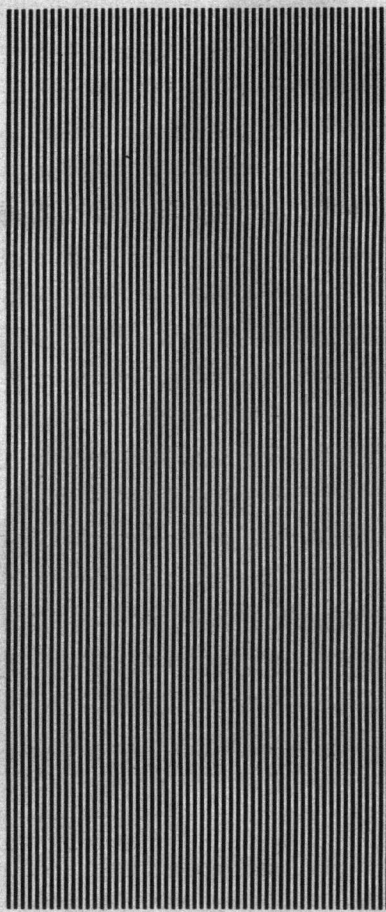
Sam waved his gloves, walked past them toward the counter. "Forget it! Don't bother, Dorry. Coffee's free on a night like this, Jeezus!"

"Thanks." Will replied. "Well, gotta drop my load off. I'll be seeing you, and thanks again."

"Drop it off?" Sam laughed from behind the counter. "You better pick it up first!" He laughed again.

"What're you talking about?" Will buttoned his coat with one hand, faced the door. "Gotta whole load of machine parts on right now. What are you, snowblind?" Laughing, he stepped out into the storm.

In the cab that damn burnt rubber taste returned to his mouth and he reached for his packet of Beeman's. Muttering, he checked all three mirrors, but the storm had turned them all black. He couldn't see a damn thing back there.



Eurogliders



April 1 - 8 pm with guests NEO A4
K-LITE presents
EDMONTON — SUB THEATRE

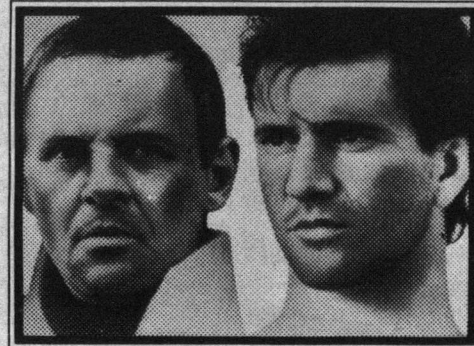
Tickets — Bass and all usual outlets — Info & Charge by Phone 424-3355
Co-sponsored by Alberta Culture

\$1.00 MOVIES

AT SUB THEATRE
(\$3.50 for non-U of A students)

8:00 pm • M

After 200 years, the truth behind the legend.



DINO DE LAURENTIIS PRESENTS

MEL GIBSON · ANTHONY HOPKINS

THE BOUNTY

An ORION PICTURES Release
©1984 Dino De Laurentiis Corporation. All Rights Reserved.

8:00 pm • R



SAT. MAR. 30

The COTTON CLUB

DOOR SALES ONLY — Doors open ½ hours before show time
REGULAR ADMISSION — \$3.50, \$1.00 for full-time U of A students
DOUBLE FEATURES: \$4.50, \$2.00 for full-time U of A students
Second Feature only for regular admission price