

THE STALKING LIGHT

by

Rainy Knight

OVER BLACK:

Heavy rain chatters. The creak of a door opening, and the patter of rain gets louder. Followed by squishy footsteps.

FADE IN:

INT. HARRY'S BAR - NIGHT

Lights flicker. Two women and a man enter a near-empty establishment.

Shoes soaked. Umbrellas down. Room lights stop flickering.

WADE (O.S.)

Let there be light. Thank you,
Lord Jesus my Savior.

Enter, DEE, late 20s, long raven hair, thin build, pretty face. Closes her umbrella.

DEE

Jeez, what a night.

MARCEL, mid-20s, dark-skinned, handsome, and built like a football running back, shakes rain off his Trench coat.

MARCEL

Can't believe he called us out
in this weather.

DEE

Yeah, Sean of all people.

Followed by BETH, mid-20s, short brown hair, knockout looks. She eases out of her leather coat to reveal a buxom body. Expensive necklace. Bracelet, too.

BETH

Something's wrong.

WADE (O.S.)

It's the end of the world.

All eyes swing to WADE, 60s, rotund and stuffed in a disheveled suit. He sits facing the window, staring out.

On his table are two whiskey bottles.

WADE (O.S.)

There's that light again.

Wade lifts a glass of Jack Daniel's and drinks.

Marcel turns to the girls. Frowns. The trio of 20-somethings look around the empty bar. They take a seat at a table.

BETH
Where is everybody?

DEE
At home. Where we should be.

WADE (O.S.)
Ain't seen a soul all night.
Hallelujah, it's an open bar.

Front door swings open. In steps SEAN, early 30s. Long, lanky frame, and wearing a brooding expression.

Rain drips from his heavy coat. Puddles the floor. He looks at Wade. Then turns to his friends. Strides to their table.

MARCEL
Well, well, the rain man
cometh.

Marcel and Sean bump fists.

Beth smiles at Sean. Gets up and is about to hug him. But he shakes his head, gestures for her to remain seated.

Beth's smile fades. Anger brewing.

Sean pulls a chair and sits. Shakes water from his head like a dog. Looks at everybody. His face expressionless.

BETH
Well?

SEAN
Well what?

BETH
Does the word girlfriend ring
any heart bells?

Beth trades a puzzled look with Dee. Marcel shakes his head.

BETH (CONT'D)
I go to your place, you're not
there. I leave you messages,
you don't call back. You want
to break up, then do it like
it means something.

SEAN

I don't want to break up. It's not what you think.

BETH

Then what?

MARCEL

Bro, if you're in trouble, we're here for you. Just say the word.

SEAN

The word? Okay, the magic word tonight is truth. Before we leave this place, we're gonna get to a certain truth.

DEE

But why here?

SEAN

Relax. We're also going to celebrate my birthday.

BETH

Your birthday is next month.

SEAN

So indulge me. Wanna hear my birthday wish? I'd like to play a little game?

MARCEL

You're kidding.

SEAN

I'm serious.

BETH

This is so not like you.

DEE

What kind of game?

INT. BAR - LATER

They huddle around the table. In the middle of the table is an empty beer bottle, resting on its side.

SEAN

Truth or Dare. One round.
That's all I'm asking. Then
we're gone. Promise.

DEE

One round?

SEAN

One and done. Everybody takes
a turn.

The others nod in reluctance.

Sean spins the beer bottle. It goes round and round. Then
stops, pointing at him. He smiles.

SEAN

Beth, truth or dare?

BETH

Truth, I guess.

SEAN

Then truth it is. Is it true
you cheated on me? Slept with
my good buddy Marcel?

MARCEL

Whoa. What the fuck, Sean?

SEAN

Shut up, Marcel.

Beth freezes. Bounces a glance off Marcel.

SEAN

What do you say, girlfriend?

BETH

Once.

SEAN

Once? Ooh, I'm thinking a
little more than once. Right?

BETH

Yes. More than once. But it's
over. Swear it.

Sean turns to Marcel.

SEAN

Wanna add anything, Bro?

MARCEL

Sean, it was one of those things. I can't explain it, it just happened. I'm sorry. But like Beth said, it's over.

SEAN

It just happened, over and over. You know what, I accept your apology. It's all good.

Sean extends a hand. Marcel hesitates, then they shake on it.

Dee turns to Beth.

DEE

Holy crap. We're best friends and you never said a word.

BETH

I got my reasons.

SEAN

The unbearable truth isn't always sweet. Beth, your turn.

Beth looks Dee in the eye.

BETH

Truth or dare?

DEE

... dare.

BETH

I dare you to empty your purse on the table.

Dee glares at Beth. Looks at the men.

DEE

Seriously?

SEAN

Empty your purse.

Dee balks, then flips her purse over. The contents spill out on to the table.

Beth reaches over and sorts through the items. She pulls out a gold bracelet. Holds it up to Dee's face.

BETH

You're busted, bitch.

Dee stands.

DEE

This is a frickin-ass setup?

MARCEL

You took her bracelet?

DEE

Yeah, I took it. Like a month ago... but I never had it in my purse. She set me up.

SEAN

Tell her why you took it.

DEE

Because she deserved it.

Those words have Beth on her feet. In Dee's face.

BETH

How did I deserve you stealing my three-thousand dollar bracelet?

DEE

You Kardashian-wannabes are always flaunting your shit. Cars, jewelry – boyfriends. Use, abuse, replace. Like everything's a bloody tampon.

BETH

Well, you're a bloody thief.

SEAN

How did you know it was in her purse? Did you set her up?

BETH

No I didn't. I just... knew.

DEE

You should thank me. I gave you an excuse to go shopping. Again.

SEAN

Did you replace the bracelet?

BETH

Well, yeah.

SEAN

Is it the one you're wearing?

Beth looks at her wrist and stares.

BETH

Well, yeah it is.

SEAN

All good. Now Dee, apologize to Beth. You were wrong.

Dee keeps her eyes cast downward.

DEE

Sorry. I was gonna return it. No, really. I'm sorry, Beth.

SEAN

Accept her apologies, Beth.

Beth looks at the \$3K bracelet. Offers it to Dee.

DEE

Here, take it. Shit. You weren't all wrong.

SEAN

Thank you, ladies. Believe me, this is small potatoes compared to what's coming.

The ladies hug. A little bit of tears flow.

WADE (O.S.)

There's the light again. Sure as rain it's the Apocalypse.

MARCEL

What are you talking about, old man?

WADE

The bright light coming this way. It's almost here.

MARCEL

Give it a rest before I kick a hole where the light don't shine.

Dee cracks up. Beth chuckles. Sean stares intensely at Wade.

SEAN

Please. Let's finish the game.
Dee, you're up.

With a grin, Dee stares at Sean.

DEE

Fine. Sean, truth or dare?

SEAN

Truth.

DEE

What's going on? Really. This
bar? You disappearing on us?
You and Beth? It's so weird.

A sullen look on Sean's face. He opens his coat and pulls a
SNUB-NOSED .38 from his waistband. Sets the gun on the table.

Everybody's expression goes serious. The others look at the
gun. Then at Sean, and back to the gun.

SEAN

The old guy's right. Death is
coming and it's not stopping.

MARCEL

Sean... you're scarin' me.

SEAN

This gun tells a certain
truth. Shoot it and it changes
things. Just like that. But,
it takes a human to set it in
motion. Like driving a car.

BETH

You want to... shoot somebody?

SEAN

I've had this gun for a long
time. I thought tonight, it's
time to set it in motion.

Sean reaches for his revolver. Spins the cylinder. The gun
trembles in his hands.

SEAN

Marcel, truth or dare?

MARCEL

Maybe we should -

SEAN
Truth or dare?

The gun points in Marcel's direction.

MARCEL
(after a beat)
Dare.

SEAN
I dare you to go over to that
old codger and bring him to
our table.

Marcel stares at Sean. He spins his eyes to Wade. Marcel
stands and walks over. Stop at the old guy's table.

MARCEL
Hey, chief, sorry for what I
said earlier. No hard
feelings. Me and my friends
thought maybe you wanna join
us. Beats sitting all alone.

Wade holds his glass of whiskey as if considering the
invitation. Tosses back the drink.

The old man pushes back his chair and stands. A little
unsteady. He looks at Marcel, then over at the others.

WADE
Yeah, I'm game.

Wade picks up his bottle and glass. He follows Marcel.

SEAN
Pull him a chair, Marcel.

Marcel pulls an extra chair and Wades sits.

SEAN
I'm Sean. You met Marcel. The
ladies are Beth and Dee.

WADE
Nice to meet ya.

SEAN
We're celebrating my thirtieth
birthday, which is next month.
So, Wade, how old are you?

WADE
Sixty nine, I recollect.

Sean points the gun at Wade. Wade sees the gun and shakes.

WADE

Did I say something wrong?

Marcel, Beth and Dee look at each other.

SEAN

Let's you and I play a little
game of truth and dare.

The hammer of the gun cocks. Anguish on Wade's face.

SEAN

I want you to describe this
Armageddon thing to us.

WADE

It's a big light. Coming fast.
Blinding. Death – God, don't
kill me. Please, don't...

SEAN

Stand up and walk over to the
window. Tell me the truth.

Wade stands and holds up his hands. Stumbles over to the
window. Sean trains his .38 on Wade's head.

BETH

Sean?

Everybody follows. Bar lights go out. Semi-dark now.

MARCEL

Let it go, Sean.

SEAN

(to Wade)

What do you see, one light or
two lights? The truth, Wade.

WADE

Two.

SEAN

Those are car lights. Right?

Wade looks hard at Sean. He nods.

SEAN

Then you owe me and my friends
an apology. You crossed the
line. That night. Remember?

WADE

I remember. I'm so, so sorry.
I didn't mean it. It was
raining and I couldn't see.

SEAN

Bullshit. It wasn't the rain.
You know that. Say it.

WADE

It wasn't the rain.

SEAN

So what was it?

WADE

It was... it was the drink.

SEAN

You forced us off the road.
Comprende? But you didn't even
stop. Didn't call for help.

WADE

I panicked.

Sean puts the gun in his mouth. BANG. Everybody gasps. Wade covers his head. Mumbling. After a few seconds, he looks up.

Sean smiles. Blood from his mouth.

Then, blood drips from Marcel's nose. A gash appears on Beth's head. Blood covers her face. Dee's eyes roll back in her head. She collapses.

SEAN

My friends died at the scene.
I survived, for as long as
could take it.

Wade weeps. Sean leans down and hands him the gun. Wade takes it. A light coming from the window. Shining BRIGHT on Wade.

SEAN

In the end, I did the right
thing. Your turn. I dare you.

Wade puts the .38 in his mouth – BANG.

FADE OUT.