

Of All the Gin Joints

a *The Defenders* fanfic

by **Rodo**

JESSICA JONES HAD been banned from half the bars in Hell's Kitchen at some point or another. Not that she really cared, or that she remembered what led to it, but it was a bit inconvenient when she had a really bad day/week/month/year and needed to get sloshed pronto. Like right now, she had to walk to the dingiest little shithole of a bar she'd ever been to because all the other bars didn't like customers who might punch a wife beater or break up a brawl by tossing one of the drunken bastards through a window. Thankfully she'd never managed to offend the hard-ass bitch who ran the biker's bar called Josie's.

The place violated at least six health-code regulations, but Jessica didn't give a shit. It had booze, and nobody was hitting on any woman brave enough to enter it, probably because the regular clientele assumed she carried a gun and was some sort of psycho, but that suited her just fine. They had whiskey, and they didn't cut her off whenever they thought she'd had enough. Josie's provided what she was looking for in a bar experience, and Jessica was willing to put up with customers that hadn't bathed in a month if she could just get drunk in peace. She needed that after the shitshow that was fucking Kilgrave.

Of course, just when she needed a bit of quiet and booze, things didn't work out the way she wanted them to. Did they ever? She'd arrived at Josie's, alright, and she was on her third glass of whiskey, but the only free seat at the bar had been next to some yuppie douche that thought playing tourist to how the other ninety-nine percent lived was a fun way to spend an evening. For fuck's sake, the dude was still wearing his suit and even a pair of glasses.

"Don't you think you've had enough?" the fucker asked when Jessica was barely feeling a buzz. She just shot him an angry glare and ordered another two

fingers. The butch woman that ran the place knew her well enough by now to oblige her without being as annoyingly preachy as yuppie dude.

"This is your fourth glass," he remarked with the most obnoxious smirk Jessica had ever seen on a man. "In the last half hour."

"Fuck off," she grumbled.

The man just raised his hands in an effort to appease her. "Hey, don't blame me for being a bit worried that you're drinking more than a seasoned alcoholic."

Jessica shot him a glare between gulps. "At least I'm not the asshole that wears shades indoors. At night."

She couldn't believe it when his smirk widened. "No. You're the asshole that insults a blind man." He tapped his chair with the cane that he kept at his other side and that Jessica hadn't noticed. Great. Just great.

"And how would a blind man know how much I drink?"

"I pay attention."

"Then you haven't drunk enough," she shot back, and watched as his smirk froze and turned into a frown. He took his glass with an ease she wouldn't have expected from a blind man.

"You may have a point there," he admitted and took a sip of his own.



"Do blind people get the spins?" she asked him, after at least half a bottle and who new how many hours? She was feeling it, alright, because even Jessica knew that you didn't ask these sort of questions sober.

"Why do people keep asking that?" he asked with a pout that *almost* made her giggle. He was cute, once you looked past the get-up. Like a puppy that had just tripped over his feet. Trish would say it woke some maternal instinct in her but she really couldn't care less.

"How the hell should I know? I was just wondering?" she answered, taking another swig. Huh, when had she switched from whiskey to tequila and why was there a worm in her glass?

"It's just that Foggy used to ask as well," he mumbled, staring into his glass, although staring probably wasn't the right word.

"What's a Foggy?"

"My best friend. Former best friend. Partner. You know how it is."

Boy did she ever. It was a wonder that Trish was still around, and that was more because they were sisters than anything else. At least now she knew why he was drinking, she supposed.

"Relationships end," she said with a shrug. "You'll get a new boyfriend soon. You're pretty enough."

Oh God, why had she said that? She really needed to slow down. She'd just called a man pretty. It was the worm, she decided. There was probably some sort of hallucinogenic substance in it. Maybe she should report the bar to the police tomorrow. Anonymously, of course. Selling customers contaminated beverages was just not done.

"Not my boyfriend," blind dude grumbled. "Business partner. Opened an office together after law school."

"You're a lawyer?" Well, it explained the suit at least. Still, she'd never met a blind lawyer before. Didn't you need to read a lot? Maybe she'd ask Jeri when she saw her again, which hopefully was far, far in the future.

"Anything wrong with that?" he shot back, and there was an edge to it. Even in her drunken haze Jessica noticed that there was an edge to him that became more pronounced the more he drank. Strange.

She shook her head before remembering that he couldn't see it. She took another gulp. "No. Nothing wrong. Some of my best ... yeah, I know some lawyers, and they're not nice people, but I've met worse. Significantly worse."

He frowned. "So have I," he replied, before pouring her another from the bottle that stood between them.



It was already starting to dawn when they finally stumbled out of Josie's. Lawyer guy held his cane in his hand and stumbled haphazardly. He caught himself, which was lucky, because Jessica sure didn't have enough of her reflexes left to do it for him. For a second, he swayed, then turned left, just as Jessica was turning right.

"See you around, I guess," she mumbled under her breath.

"Possibly," he answered, then he staggered off, the cane swaying back and forth. Jessica was left standing at the curb, wondering if it was really true that you heard better if you couldn't see any more, because she'd been sure she'd never had heard

that had she been in his place. After a moment, she decided she didn't give a fuck either way and proceeded to make her way back to her own crappy apartment.

The next afternoon, Jessica woke up the usual way: with a headache and a dry mouth. She buried her head in a pillow that really needed a wash until she had to face the fact that she couldn't just go back to sleep. She sighed and hoped last night didn't turn out too bad. She remembered a guy in a suit, Josie's and some truly disgusting tequila, but she was alone in her bed, so that was something. She didn't even know the guy's name. Probably wouldn't see him again either, so why bother?

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