

## CHAPTER 7

The way Parker figured it, those dice had lost him a perfect chance tonight to maneuver Dixie aboard that forty-seven-foot Nautical, a luxury boat that could take the Gulf Stream like a slow walk around a shady park. Once she saw it, she'd warm up to the idea of sailing to St. Thomas. Two, maybe three weeks together, kicking back, swimming and snorkeling. Wearing little more than suntan lotion—

Unless they took her family along. That'd be okay, too.

He tossed the red cubes into a black satin pouch printed with Chateau Lafitte's logo. Astin had told him earlier, walking around the inn together, pointing out the renovations he'd made in his family home, to take the dice as a souvenir.

Some souvenir. What he needed with Dixie was *loaded* dice.

This trip was a thing he and Dixie needed to do. If not St. Thomas, then fly to Spain, Italy, someplace with no ties for either of them. Play awhile. Laugh away all the problems keeping them both on edge around each other. Wasn't a trouble in the world couldn't be remedied with a shot of laughter and Mediterranean sunshine. But swept under a rug, out of sight, problems hardened like stone. Every so often you'd trip on that bump in the carpet. Recently, he'd almost tripped up good, shoving her into another man's arms.

Parker tied the string that cinched the dice into their pouch. Wasn't easy being with a woman as independent as Dixie. Hell fire, if she absolutely refused to sail, they could fly to St. Thomas, St. Martin, Aruba, Tortuga, dammit, *Australia*, for that matter. Anyplace would do. Just natural to think of boats first, in his business and living on an island.

Across the way, Dixie headed back from the ladies room. Watching her walk toward him in that easy, no-nonsense manner of hers gave him a sweet ache. He grinned, remembering the real pain she'd dealt him at their first meeting, all hundred and twenty pounds of her.

"What's so funny?" she asked.

"Fancy gambling establishments usually have a bouncer." He tossed the dice pouch on his palm. "I'm thinking you could bounce any man in this restaurant on his nose in three seconds flat. Looking at you tonight, no one would believe it."

"Three seconds for the first man, maybe. Surprise is a great equalizer. Are you trying to find me a steady job?"

He slid his arm around her waist, landing on that sexy curve just above her rump, where it was made to fit. If their lives fit together as well as their bodies, they'd have no problems. As they walked, she settled against him and Parker knew that nothing in his life had ever felt so right. The piano player broke into a smooth rendition of Cole Porter's "Always."

"If a steady job would keep you closer," he said, "I might push for it." He tucked the dice pouch into his pocket.

They strolled toward the foyer, where Astin Gray was saying goodnight to a man and woman ahead of them. When the couple pushed on, Astin shook Parker's hand.

"Your evening was satisfactory, I trust?"

"Even better than expected." Dixie smiled her agreement, and Parker added, "Once the word is out, guess we'll need reservations a month in advance."

"Parker, I like that prediction. I would love to wave it in the face of every naysayer."

"I saw the write-up," Dixie said. "Four stars, isn't that the equivalent of excellent?"

"The food gets high marks. I have an accomplished chef, excellent staff. The twenties' decor, though..." He grimaced comically, and for an instant the worried young boy in him showed through.

"A man with a new idea is a crank, until the idea succeeds. Or as Einstein said, 'Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.'" Parker glanced around at polished wood and etched mirrors. "Meticulous renovation equals big bucks. Did you hock an arm *and* a leg?"

"Let's just say we need to realize a healthy margin within six months or that antique slot machine and a heavy chain will substitute nicely for concrete overshoes. Parker, I was hoping we could meet tomorrow to try out the catamaran. Early on, I have an hour or two free."

Parker nodded absently, his brain racing ahead, seeing the hole those hours would make in the weekend. Lousy damn timing. Wouldn't think twice, usually, but he'd made a big deal about Dixie being late tonight. Could be why their weekends rarely worked out.

"I'll see if it's available," he said. "Why don't I call you?"

"Around eight?"

*Eight a.m.?* Snuggled up to a warm, curvaceous brunette, Parker would not want to rush the morning. "Guess you'll need to be back here in time for lunch?"

Astin shook his head. "We serve lunch only on Sundays. Saturdays we open for dinner. But didn't the boat's owners mention they would be leaving town early Monday?"

Yes, they had, dammit to hell, which left Saturday to do the deal. "Let's say I'll call you tomorrow around nine."

Astin agreed, but Parker felt Dixie stiffen up like starched underwear. Descending the stairs into the hot, muggy night, he knew he should go back and call off the deal totally.

Dixie was ominously silent. Finally, she said, "Sounds like you'll be working tomorrow morning."

"Not long. You could come with me." When Dixie didn't reply, he handed her the satin pouch containing the red dice. "Or we could let Lady Luck decide whether I call Astin and cancel."

She rubbed her fingers over the embroidered Chateau Lafitte logo, and Parker could see she wasn't going for it.

"Your friend has an eye for detail," she said. "Do you think his restaurant will make it once the novelty wears off?"

"Beats me. But his timing's good, with tourism finally picking up again after nine-eleven."

They'd reached Parker's Cadillac. He glanced around and spotted a taxicab, one he recognized from the strange collection in Dixie's garage.

"Let's take yours," she suggested.

Fine by him. She drove like a kamikaze.

All the way to Pier 23, where he shoehorned the Caddy into a space near the water, Dixie stayed quiet. But when he took her arm, and they picked their way over planks, ropes, five-inch cracks in the concrete shipping dock, she felt all warm and pliant again beside him. One thing he liked about this woman was she didn't pout.

Fishing boats creaked in the evening breeze, gulls roosting among them where they could find a perch. Farther along, in the industrial section, the cargo ships were anchored. Dixie studied each vessel as if memorizing the design, then glanced back at the parking areas.

"I don't see a white Ford Escort," she said. "If Gennae manipulated herself aboard one of those ships, she must've walked here."

Parker eyed the dark, forbidding vessels. "Do you really think a young woman could board one of those without being seen?"

"She'd be disguised as a man, I'm sure. But I'll admit it doesn't look easy."

The wind blew Dixie's hair, and the harbor lights caught her profile against the night sky. Parker encircled her waist again. Damn, he'd missed her. Every curve, every wisecrack. The spicy woman scent of her. The throaty voice. He slid his broad hand possessively over the curve of her hip, drawing her closer.

Every night they'd spent apart seemed a month long. He'd wanted this weekend free of work for both of them. Laze around the beach. Check out a few shops on the old Strand, coax her into buying a sexy bikini. Never seen her in a bikini. Maybe take a moonlight sail, if the water was calm enough to keep her from mutiny. For such a take-charge woman on shore, she turned green on a boat.

He nuzzled her hair, burying a grin before it could get him in trouble. Part of the reason he liked taking Dixie sailing was seeing a chink in that suit of iron she was born wearing. In most situations, Dixie Flannigan out-toughed any man, but she turned all female on the water.

And in bed.

He found that spot just above the swell of her bottom where she liked to be stroked, and his fingers began a slow massage.

Take her all the way to St. Thomas, maybe she'd shed her armor altogether, toss it overboard to rust.

Thinking about bed sparked a desire to bring the moonlight stroll to a swift end. He allowed his hand to drift lower until it cupped the curve of her very shapely butt. She turned in his arms to face him, snuggling against his neck, breath soft across his skin.

"The night's young," he whispered. Before leaving home he'd decanted a bottle of good South African merlot.

"Mmmhmm. And pleasantly cool for August."

"Cool enough to sleep on the porch." Cuddle up on a padded mat, millions of stars overhead. Sea music in their ears. He continued the sexy massage and gently nibbled the top of her ear.

"Perfect night for a moonlight drive," Dixie suggested.

"To go where?"

“Bird hunting. How many bars would you figure are between First and Eighty-third Streets?”

Too damn many. So much for making love on the porch. He blew a sigh across the top of her stubborn head. “Fifty, maybe fifty-five.”

“If you count the hotel pubs. But if my bird is like most visitors, she either exited at Sixty-first and headed for the seawall or drove straight through on Broadway and turned toward The Strand.”

Reluctantly, Parker stepped away from the tantalizing heat of her.

“Guess you’re suggesting we check out a few bars. See if anyone noticed your defeathered fowl.”

“The army fatigues she was wearing would eliminate all the ritzy places. Narrow down the numbers.”

“Sounds romantic as hell.” Damn, she was a hard woman to figure. In months past, he’d hinted they should partner up in the people-finding business. She always squirmed away from the idea, claimed he’d be overprotective. Which he would.

Now here she was inviting him.

Okay. So tonight he’d tag along, show he could be a helpful, dedicated, non-protective gumshoe. He didn’t mind visiting a few smoky bars, if that’s what it took to show her a fine weekend.

Later, she’d owe him. And for payment, he’d get her aboard that boat.

## CHAPTER 8

Twenty-nine of Galveston's fifty-odd bars cluster in a hundred-block area near The Old Strand, a refurbished shopping strip just a few quick steps from the harbor. Dixie suggested they toss their jackets in the Cadillac and leave it parked at the 23rd Street pier. Even on a hot August night, she enjoyed walking past the finely restored Victorian and Greek architecture, listening to the *clop, clop* of carriage horse hooves on cobblestones, and imagining a slower, more romantic era.

Starting near the dock, they stopped at four bars on The Strand, backtracked the next street over, then moved the car south to Post Office Street, formerly Galveston's infamous red-light district. Nearly three hours later they arrived at Slice's Sports Tavern and Deli, barely ten blocks from where they'd started. It was fun, Dixie decided, mixing a little work with their pleasure. Maybe Parker had the right take on that, after all. As they entered Slice's, she considered going along on his sailing jaunt the next day.

She ordered a Shiner Bock draft to replace the thirteen scarcely touched Shiner Bock drafts she'd left sitting on as many counters. In each place they stopped she'd described Gennae, with and without her skinhead disguise. This time they got a hit.

"Camouflage fatigues? Yeah, she was in here." The bartender, a thirty-something female, stood barely tall enough to reach across the counter and scoop up the bills Dixie dropped. The woman had introduced herself as "April," but had a bleak, wintry manner. She wore a denim skirt, a pink tank that ended at her trim midriff, and a somber expression. "What she wants, see, is to be a he. Fine. We get all types coming in here. This strip of Post Office is an art center, galleries on both sides "

A whiff of barbecue sauce drifted by as a younger woman carried platters heaped with sandwiches to a table of men wearing baseball uniforms. Slice's logo emblazoned the backs of their sweat-stained shirts.

The tavern was crammed, people talking, playing pool and video games, watching big-screen TV. But at the bar sat only a solitary elderly man. He eyed Dixie and Parker with obvious curiosity.

"Skull earring?" Dixie asked, skeptical after hearing "no" all evening. "Lightning tattoo?" When the bartender nodded, Dixie had the urge to leap up and hallelujah the crowd. This was their first confirmation that Gennae was indeed on the island. Instead, she swallowed a third of the Shiner Bock, so cold that ice crystals tripped over her tongue.

April's close-set gray eyes flicked past and settled on Parker.

"What she did here was hustle a game from another stranger, beat him out of a few bucks. No harm done." She waved her bar towel toward a corner pool table, where two men stood chalking up for a break.

"One of those guys?" Parker asked.

April eyed Parker again and shook her head. "The stranger hightailed it after losing a couple games."

“When did the skinhead leave?” Dixie asked. If Gennae was still be knocking around the area, they might catch up with her.

“Late sports news was on, so more than three hours ago.”

“Mention where she was headed?”

April straightened a stack of coasters. “Maybe I should wonder why you’re so interested.”

“If it’s the person we’re searching for,” Parker said, “she’s a fugitive.”

“Cops, huh?” Her gray gaze raked Parker appraisingly.

Dixie laid a card on the bar that read: D.A. DIXIE FLANNIGAN, ATTORNEY AT LAW. The words “non-practicing” did not appear, but probably should.

April glanced at it. “Lawyers!” Spitting the word out like a mouthful of bug spray.

Probably suffered a recent and devastating divorce, Dixie figured, which could also explain the woman’s gloomy demeanor. “It will be a lot better for this girl if we find her before the cops.”

“Didn’t cause any trouble here. Except for the pool games, mostly sat in that corner drinking coffee. Quiet like.”

“Did she ask directions? Ask about a place to stay the night, maybe?”

The bartender scowled at Dixie, then looked back at Parker before speaking.

“What’s this *fugitive* supposed to’ve done?”

“Stole a load of merchandise,” Parker told her.

“Artichokes!” said the elderly man at the bar.

“Hush, Farley.” April shot an irritated glare at him, then slid her gaze back at Parker. “Was hours ago. Place was packed. How am I supposed to remember what one person or another talked about?”

“This woman was memorable, April.” Dixie wondered if a fifty-dollar bill would quicken the bartender’s memory. Occasionally that backfired, though, and a witness clammed up. “Did she inquire about a room or a motel?”

“Asked for coffee. Poured lots of cream in it. Asked how long I’d owned this place. Told her I don’t own it, my friend Bill owns it. I’m just hired help. Bill went home early tonight with a sneezing fit. Coming down with a summer cold, I told him.”

“Nice place,” Parker commented, watching her mix a fancy pink drink. “You handle yourself impressively behind the bar. How long have you worked here?”

Dixie could see by the way April’s face lit up that Parker had hit the right note—make small talk, show an interest. Okay. Seemed to be working. Dixie’s impatience was more hindrance at times than a third foot.

“Three years,” April told Parker. “Your skinhead asked if I was an artist.”

When she paused expectantly, Parker asked, “Are you?”

“Dabble a little. Asked if I’d painted the front window announcements.”

Another expectant pause.

“Did you?” Dixie asked obligingly.

“What I do is I hire *sign painters* to paint signs. Artists paint pictures.”

“Olive oil!”

“Hush, Farley.”

“The skinhead,” Dixie prompted. “Did she give *any* indication of where she was headed?”

When April started to move down the bar without answering, Parker pushed his empty mug forward. “Refill?”

April dropped the mug in a sink under the counter and took a fresh one from the cooler for Parker’s draft.

Before she could walk away, Parker said, “April, we’ve tracked this woman all the way from Arkansas, before that from Georgia. She rips off business owners. Wins their confidence, then leaves them holding an empty sack. If she sticks around Galveston, she’ll do it again. Maybe this time the loser will be your friend Bill. Or someone else you know. This is a small town.”

April gazed at him thoughtfully. “But you’re not cops.”

“We’ll get them involved when it’s time to take the woman back,” Dixie said. “Our part is to find her.”

April glanced at Dixie’s card still lying on the bar. “Who’d you say you work for?”

“The last merchant she ripped off.” In a manner of speaking.

“Guava juice. Artichokes, olive oil, guava juice.”

April aimed an exaggerated sigh down the counter. “No more drinks for you tonight, Farley.” Then her gaze softened when she looked back at Parker. “She asked about an artist used to hang around here. Sheldon Evercamp, another Georgia Cracker. Watercolors, not much talent. What I told her is I haven’t seen Sheldon in weeks.”

So Gennae knew someone on the island. Maybe they’d lived in the same town—friends, lovers, accomplices. At least that answered the question about why she’d headed for Galveston.

“If not here at Slice’s,” Dixie said, “where else might this artist hang out?”

“No idea.”

“But you think he’s still in town?”

April sighed again, audibly and with a weary stare at Dixie.

“What I see is Sheldon’s work still around. Could be the pictures just haven’t sold.” A customer carried an empty pretzel bowl to the bar and waved it. Grabbing a can of party mix from under the counter, April moved off to fill the bowl.

Parker jiggled his eyebrows at Dixie before following the bartender. He straddled a stool across from her after the customer returned to his table. Parker said something Dixie couldn’t hear, and April smiled—first time all night—broad teeth gleaming in the multicolored light from a dozen beer signs.

Dixie felt an inexplicable barb of irritation. Parker definitely had a gift when it came to schmoozing, but would he ask the right questions? He handed April one of his own business cards, yacht broker extraordinaire. The woman studied it, fingers busy on the surface and smile still beaming.

Needing every whisper of information the bartender could give them, Dixie decided to be glad Parker was along. If Sheldon Evercamp was the reason Gennae had come to Galveston, and if he indeed had left town, Gennae would likely split, too, as soon as she rested awhile. Knowing where she’d gone, sooner rather than later, could save a lot of gasoline and shoe leather.

“No wine,” Farley said, taking Parker’s vacated stool. The elderly man wore an expensive suit, rumpled and outdated but good quality. His gray moustache was neatly trimmed. His sparse hair sprigged away from his head at odd angles. “Little smoked

oysters in flat cans. No wine, no cheese.” He leaned close, his whiskey-scented breath mere inches from Dixie’s nose, and whispered, “No refrigeration.”

His gentle faded blue eyes peered intently at Dixie, as if he needed her to understand.

“No refrigeration,” she parroted. Was he trying to tell her something? Or just rambling in a drunken muddle? She’d learned the trick of repeating key words after her birth mother suffered head injuries in a road accident. “My name’s Dixie.”

He blinked slowly and stretched out a hand. “Farley.”

“Hi, Farley.”

The hand was cool, dry, and as gentle as his eyes.

He nodded, as if to himself. “On the dock. Stacked up in boxes. Move ‘em. Move those boxes. Big load coming in.”

“Did you see the young man in army fatigues playing pool earlier?”

Farley nodded again. “Import business, forty-six years.” He patted his pockets as if searching for a wallet, then reached inside his coat and retrieved a leather card case, crackled with age and use. The card he handed her was yellowed at the edges.

FARLEY SHORT  
IMPORT/EXPORT

It bore a local address and phone number.

“Thanks.” Dixie slipped the card into her pocket. Farley’s speech had the soft slur of inebriation, but the pale eyes gave an impression of intelligence. She glanced at Parker, trying to gauge his progress.

“Do you know Sheldon Evercamp?”

“Come latelies.” He shook his head and tucked the card wallet back inside his jacket. “James Carver’s artichokes. Get ‘em off my dock.”

“The dock.” Dixie glanced at the address on his card. “Did you see that young pool player at the dock, maybe?”

Farley’s gaze seemed to go distant. “Never saw ‘im again.”

He blinked slowly at Dixie, wobbled off the stool and out the door. She followed to watch through the window, refusing to believe he was sober enough to drive. And she couldn’t shake the notion that he’d given her a piece of information she wasn’t sharp enough—okay, drunk enough—to decipher. When he crossed the street and continued walking, not getting into a car, Dixie abandoned the window and scanned the room’s other occupants.

*Gennae sat right here in this bar. Drank coffee, played pool, scored a few traveling bucks. Asked about a watercolor artist. Was she expecting to meet him here?*

The waitress serving sandwiches came to the bar and ordered a round of drinks. As April poured and mixed, Parker kept up a steady conversation. Mr. Personality in action.

Eyeing the pair of pool players, one fortyish and intent on his shot, the other snapping his fingers to the juke box, Dixie ambled over. She asked if they’d noticed the skinhead playing earlier.

“Nope. Didn’t see anybody like that,” the older player answer.

“Sure, we did, Jerry. You remember, he wanted to know what we had riding, wanted to play the winner.” The younger man wore tight jeans, a T-shirt with the sleeves

cut out, and a wickedly suggestive grin. “Why you want to know, lady? You like guys with no hair? Thought about shaving mine.”

He swiped a freckled hand through short curly brown locks.

Dixie smiled back. “He’s just someone I need to find. Did he say anything else? Ask about a place to stay, maybe?”

Jerry shot a five ball into a corner pocket—*pop!* “C’mon, Rocko, you gonna play, man? Or flap your gums?”

“I’m trying to help the lady, here. Do you mind?” Rocko’s stone brown eyes did a quick tour of Dixie’s curves as he slowly rubbed chalk over the end of his cue stick. “Didn’t ask nothing about no room. Wanted to know if we’d seen this kid who comes in—”

Jerry popped a six ball—and missed.

“What’s the kid’s name?”

“Shell something. Ain’t seen that dude in months.” Rocko tossed the chalk down and lined up on the nine ball. “Right side pocket.”

He hit the cue ball too hard. The nine dropped. With a wink and a grin at Dixie, he repositioned on the twelve but had left himself a lousy follow-up shot.

“Was it Sheldon Evercamp he asked about?” Dixie said.

“Woman, can’t you see he’s jerking your chain?” Jerry snatched the chalk off the table rail and moved between Dixie and his friend. A head taller than Rocko, he scowled and, in a low voice, hurled the words at her like darts. “We don’t know no Evercamp. Rocko didn’t even talk to the skinhead.”

Rocko winked again and made a pass at the twelve ball. When Jerry returned to the table, with only two solids left, Rocko racked his cue stick and sidled over to Dixie. She glanced at the bar, where Parker and April were chatting like old friends.

“What d’ya say we forget my grouchy pal,” Rocko said. “And your skinhead, and that bozo who followed you in. Let me buy you a drink.”

She looked up at him through her lashes, hoping she looked less ridiculous than she felt. “Oh, Rocko, if I didn’t have to find this guy, I sure might take you up on that offer. But...” She sighed and shrugged.

He eyed Parker at the bar. “Looks like bozo might be taking somebody else home.”

“Looks like.” She squelched the urge to jab a thumb in his solar plexus. Instead, she lazily stroked imaginary lint off his shoulder. “I can find my own way home.”

Jerry had sunk both remaining solids and left himself a gimme on the eight ball. Rocko sidled a glance at him, then turned so that Jerry couldn’t see him take Dixie’s hand from his shoulder and bring it lightly to his lips.

Dixie gritted her teeth.

“Shel’s a junk dealer,” Rocko told her, moving close and keeping his voice low. “Works this area, the Seawall, 61st Street.”

“Junk?” Lots of artists needed part-time jobs to keep themselves in paint and canvas. “As in scrap? Or dope?”

Rocko shrugged. “You need something, he’ll find it. Got something to sell, he’ll find a buyer.”

“Does Shel Evercamp have a shop somewhere?”

He shrugged again, shaking his head.

“But he hangs out in here?”

Lazy brown eyes taking her in, Rocko smiled suggestively. “Nobody’s hanging out much longer tonight, babe. It’s last call.”

Sure enough, the young waitress was making her final round. Rocko held up three fingers, then pointed at Dixie, himself, and Jerry, who was racking another game.

“Where does Evercamp hang out when he’s not here?”

“Anywhere, everywhere. What’d you say your name is?”

“Flannigan. Does he have a regular place of business—a corner, an alley? A home address?”

“Back off, fluff!” Jerry’s cue stick jabbed Dixie’s side.

In a reflex instant, she deflected the stick, snatched it, and drew it back for a disabling jab to his sternum—

“Holy shit!” Jerry squeaked, backing into a chair. Panic inflamed his eyes and a tiny spot dampened his crotch.

Dixie checked the blow, slowly relaxing her hand around the pool cue. He was harmless. The jab had been little more than a tap. Playing girlie games to get information had made her angry with herself. She propped the stick against the table, away from Jerry. No need to tempt him.

“Holy damn!” Rocko said. “What was that, Charlie Fucking Kung Fu Angel?”

She shook her head, willing the adrenaline to ease off. She knew a smidgen of all the martial arts, but was proficient only in Krav Maga, Israeli street fighting, which she’d found highly practical on more occasions than she could count. At various gyms, she taught the defense tactics to women and kids.

A quick glance told her no one else in the room had witnessed the incident, which meant Parker’s chivalry gene wouldn’t flare up. Keeping her eye on Jerry, she moved away from the pool table. Rocko followed her.

“Rocko!” Jerry called. “Your wife is gonna ream you a new asshole if you mess around again. And I’m gonna stand by and laugh.”

The grin on Rocko’s handsome face turned sheepish. “He’s my wife’s brother.”

Dixie nodded. Jerry’s hostility made more sense now.

“Catch you some other night?” Rocko asked, pitching his voice low.

“Sure. After your divorce.” Dixie couldn’t help grinning at the man’s audacity. “About Evercamp, were you really jerking my chain?”

“He’s the dude your skinhead was looking for, but I can’t tell you any more than I told him. Haven’t seen the guy.” With yet another wink, he returned to the pool table.

Dixie scanned the room, which had nearly cleared out. Gennae had sat in that corner as recently as three hours ago. Had played pool on this table. *Picked up a few needed bucks, but no sign of Sheldon...maybe he’s...*

Where? Where would Gennae look next? The galleries were all closed. Would she cruise Broadway or Seawall Boulevard in that highly conspicuous white Escort with its Arkansas plates?

*Maybe Shel’s tucked away tight for the night. Better luck tomorrow?*

Seeing no one else she wanted to question, Dixie sauntered to the bar and took a stool beside Parker.

April’s smile dimmed a watt.

Parker leaned confidentially across the bar, as if to exclude Dixie from their conversation.

“April, you’re a very observant woman,” he said. “Isn’t there anything else you can tell us?”

The bartender shook her head, hungry eyes glued to Parker’s, then stopped and glanced back at the table where Gennae had sat.

“Well...she was barefoot. Could’ve thrown her out for that, but what the hey? Looked like the kid needed that coffee. As long as she didn’t put her feet on the table.” April shrugged.

Gennae had worn work boots at Gulf Greyhound Park. Why take them off? Why go barefoot into a bar?

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