

Don't Look Back

By

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Creative liberties taken from:
The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice

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Cast of Characters

<u>Orpheus:</u>	Male, early 20s. Must sing and play guitar. Musician in a rundown bar since he lost the love of his life. Functioning alcoholic.
<u>Sotiria:</u>	Female, early 20s. A stranger to Chiron's Rest. She is impulsive with a hard exterior, but has a caring heart.
<u>Kyrie:</u>	Any gender, over 30. Bartender of Chiron's Rest. Patience of a saint.

Scene

Chiron's Rest - Kyrie's Bar. It is deserted save for the three characters in the play.

Time

Everyone should be in vaguely modern clothing, but nothing to indicate a specific period in time.

ACT I

Scene 1

Scattered empty chairs and tables. SOTIRIA is sitting on a barstool, drinking whiskey on ice at the bar. ORPHEUS is playing a sad song on his guitar. KYRIE is behind the bar, listening to ORPHEUS play.

ORPHEUS

(Note: These are the lyrics to the song. The actor has free reign as to how the chords and melodies should go, but should sound as though ORPHEUS is filled with deep longing and regret)

Looking through the haze and fog of my memories
I see thousands upon thousands of fallacies
All committed by me
Only one haunts me like a ghost that cannot sleep
Nightmares at night of a promise I didn't keep
A bet I couldn't reap

Sometimes I turn around to see if she's still there
I relive her being taken from me
Sometimes I wonder what would happen if I weren't scared
I close my eyes, her face is all I see

I can't look back
I must look back
I can't look back
Let me go back

ORPHEUS continues to play his guitar, underscoring the following:

SOTIRIA

Is it always so lonely in here?

KYRIE

Hm?

SOTIRIA

Is it always so lonely in here?

KYRIE

Pretty much.

SOTIRIA

Are there ever more people?

KYRIE

Since you showed up, this is the most people in my bar in ages.

SOTIRIA

I see. He come here often?

KYRIE

Practically lives here.

SOTIRIA

Is he always so...?

KYRIE

Angsty?

SOTIRIA

Yeah.

KYRIE

Yeah.

SOTIRIA

Beautiful though.

KYRIE

This song is new. Still about the same sad stuff as all his other songs.

SOTIRIA

Such as?

KYRIE

His dead wife.

SOTIRIA

Oh.

KYRIE

Best not to talk to him about it.

SOTIRIA

No kidding.

Silence as the song continues in the background.

SOTIRIA

I'm going to talk to him.

KYRIE

Godspeed.

SOTIRIA begins to walk up to ORPHEUS. Before she reaches him, however, he glares at her, stopping her in her tracks. She turns around going back to the bar and downing her whiskey.

SOTIRIA
(holding up her glass)
I'm going to need a lot more of this.

KYRIE
(Producing a bottle)
Yes, miss.

KYRIE pours. ORPHEUS stops playing his music. Silence for several seconds.

Kyrie.
ORPHEUS

Mm?
KYRIE

Another.
ORPHEUS

You gonna pay yet?
KYRIE

Put it on my tab.
ORPHEUS

They stare at each other for several tense moments. Finally, KYRIE simply shakes their head and pours ORPHEUS a glass of red wine. KYRIE gives it to him and jots something down on a slip of paper.

SOTIRIA
Wouldn't have pegged you for a wine drinker.

ORPHEUS
Alcohol is as alcohol does.

SOTIRIA
Quicker ways to get drunk than wine.

ORPHEUS shrugs and takes a long drink of wine.

I liked the song. SOTIRIA

Thanks. ORPHEUS

It was beautiful. SOTIRIA

Well, yeah. ORPHEUS

'Course it was. KYRIE

Narcissus, is that you? SOTIRIA

He's Orpheus, Miss. KYRIE

Wait, really? SOTIRIA

The one and only. ORPHEUS

Oh shit. I'm so sorry, I didn't - SOTIRIA

It's... it's whatever. ORPHEUS

No, it's not. God, I feel so... what are you doing in a place like this. SOTIRIA
(to KYRIE)

No offense.

You've seen the place. None taken. KYRIE

Everyone thinks you're dead. SOTIRIA

Yes, and...? ORPHEUS

And... well, you just - you disappeared. People were worried. SOTIRIA

ORPHEUS

Happens when you disappear.

SOTIRIA

The crowds that congregated to hear you play wept and held
funerals

The trees you used to write songs among are withering and
dropping their leaves

The critters of the trees are hiding

There are more snakes than there used to be

Why did you leave?

ORPHEUS

Does it matter?

SOTIRIA

Yes! There is so much less beauty than before.

ORPHEUS

I'm not leaving here.

KYRIE

Not until you pay.

ORPHEUS

I'm not leaving here

My crowd of three is all I need

The indestructible Chiron's Rest

The immovable bartender, Kyrie

(holding up his wine)

And the blood of the fallen

(he takes a drink)

You are not my usual audience these days

You should leave

You don't belong here

SOTIRIA

I belong here as much as you.

ORPHEUS

Which is to say, entirely and not at all.

SOTIRIA

You don't seem to care for my presence.

ORPHEUS

I'm not in the business of caring.

SOTIRIA

You don't seem to be in the business of anything.

ORPHEUS
Not true. I am in this one's business
(re: KYRIE)
and happen to be making music and drinking sour wine within
it.

KYRIE
You don't like the wine?

ORPHEUS
No, no. It's perfect.

KYRIE
Good. Got it from a guy from very far away. Just for you.

ORPHEUS
I'll pay you as soon as you can, Kyrie.

KYRIE
Sure will.

SOTIRIA
Why are you here?

ORPHEUS
Better question: why are you?

SOTIRIA
I asked first you juvenile dick.

ORPHEUS
Whoa, calm down miss - what's your name?

SOTIRIA
What's it matter?

ORPHEUS
Okay, you're right it doesn't.

SOTIRIA
Wow, shit.

ORPHEUS
What?

SOTIRIA
You're more of a dick in real life than I thought.

ORPHEUS
I - okay. Yes, and sorry. People change.

SOTIRIA

I'd hope you didn't always act like this.

ORPHEUS

Maybe, but probably not.

SOTIRIA

You were right, Kyrie, shouldn't have even tried talking to this asshole.

ORPHEUS

I said sorry!

SOTIRIA

(making her way to her whiskey)

You need to practice your sincere tone of voice more.

ORPHEUS

Give me a break, you made it to Chiron's Rest; this isn't a place for saints! Aside from Kyrie.

SOTIRIA

Go back to your shitty wine.

ORPHEUS

It's - I - You... gah!

(he finishes the wine)

Another!

KYRIE

Sir...

ORPHEUS

Kyrie.

KYRIE

Sure.

KYRIE pours ORPHEUS more wine. KYRIE jots down something on the same slip of paper. He takes a drink.

ORPHEUS

(after a time, staring at the glass)

This was her favorite.

SOTIRIA

What?

ORPHEUS

This was her favorite wine. I can barely stand the stuff, but I can't seem to stop drinking it.

(he takes another)

SOTIRIA

Who's?

ORPHEUS

My wife. Her favorite.

SOTIRIA

Oh. She died?

ORPHEUS nods

SOTIRIA

How?

ORPHEUS

(still staring at the glass)

It was my fault.

SOTIRIA

What was?

ORPHEUS

Her... being taken from me. Twice. Goddammit, twice. I could've stopped it.

SOTIRIA

I'm sorry.

ORPHEUS

Me too. And that's why I'm here.

(he takes another drink, then continues to stare at the glass, transported to another world)

Eurydice

Oh... your name is beautiful

I knew it was to be us when I heard it

Your name

Dancing musical notes on the leaves as I played

The most beautiful song

I wrote for you

I can't play it anymore

I can't hear it anymore

It's fading from my memories

The only thing that won't fade

Is your face when I turned to look at you

Eurydice.

Silence. ORPHEUS contemplates the glass, then sets it down. He runs his fingers over the strings of his guitar.

Sotiria. SOTIRIA

Hm? ORPHEUS

Sotiria. My name. SOTIRIA

Oh. Sotiria. Also a beautiful name. ORPHEUS

Thank you. SOTIRIA

Welcome. ORPHEUS

How long ago was it? SOTIRIA

I don't remember. ORPHEUS

Two years, four months, twelve days. KYRIE
(beat)
I have a good memory.

Makes sense. Disappeared about two years ago. SOTIRIA

Yep. ORPHEUS

Is this really where you've been for all this time? SOTIRIA

Yep. ORPHEUS

Come on, really? SOTIRIA

Yep. ORPHEUS

No one can spend two years straight in a rundown bar SOTIRIA
(to Kyrie)
-no offense-
(to Orpheus)
feeling sorry for themselves.

I have. ORPHEUS

He has. KYRIE

Are you kidding me? SOTIRIA

What's there to kid about? ORPHEUS

SOTIRIA
 It's just
 I can't believe this
 You've been spending the last two and a half years
 Forever mourning your beloved Eurydice
 Meanwhile in the outside world
 There is no music half so heartfelt
 Half so beautiful anymore
 It's been an endless winter
 Because the trees have lost their wills to live
 The cloud are making tantrums from lack of music
 And there are so many snakes these days
 Serpents around every street corner
 Because your music hasn't left these walls
 For so
 So long.

ORPHEUS
 The world doesn't need me.

SOTIRIA
 Oh, yes it does! You're a selfish bastard, Orpheus. If
 your self-pity is so goddamn important to you, go masturbate
 on a patch of soil for the rest of your life. You'll do
 more good that way.

ORPHEUS
 You have no idea.

SOTIRIA
 Oh, yes I do. How do you think I ended up at Chiron's
 fucking Rest; armpit of all the armpit bars of the
 world? But I'm leaving. I don't want to be like you.

ORPHEUS
 Fuck off.

SOTIRIA
 (downs her drink, throws down some cash
 on the bar, then begins to exit)
 Way ahead of you.

(she stops)

If you do ever decide to get out, you can find me where the lake becomes the sea.

ORPHEUS

And why would I want to talk to you?

SOTIRIA

I don't know. Say thank you?

SOTIRIA exits. ORPHEUS watches her go. He is about to take a drink when he stops himself. He stares at the wine in the glass.

ORPHEUS

Kyrie?

KYRIE

Mm?

ORPHEUS

If I can't stand the way the wine tastes, why do I keep drinking it?

KYRIE

I've been wondering the same thing for two years, four months, twelve days.

ORPHEUS

Why didn't you say anything?

KYRIE

What kind of barkeep would turn down their most frequent customer?

Silence. ORPHEUS sets down the wine glass and goes over to the bar.

ORPHEUS

How much do I owe you?

KYRIE shows ORPHEUS the slip of paper.

ORPHEUS

I suppose you don't take IOU's.

KYRIE shakes their head.

ORPHEUS

Would you trust me if I said I need to run to a bank and come right back?

KYRIE shakes their head.

ORPHEUS

Are you going to stop me from leaving?

Pause. KYRIE shakes their head.

ORPHEUS

Alright. Well, in that case, I owe you.

(exitiing with his guitar)

I'll be back. With the money, that is, not to stay.

KYRIE shrugs. ORPHEUS

leaves. KYRIE begins to clean up the bar, humming the tune ORPHEUS sang at the beginning of the play.

THE END