

SOCIALIZED

by

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BLACK SCREEN

SUPER:

"In the not too distant future, new technology will promise a greater human connection... however, it will only isolate us further... but one fateful night everything changed...

for a couple minutes..."

FADE IN:

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

A small, unassuming building on a quiet street.

A BARTENDER smokes a cigarette.

Crickets sing near the sidewalk.

The bartender goes inside.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

It's dark and moody. Edison Bulbs, Bubinga, and a fireplace. Music plays overhead.

Patrons sprinkled throughout, faces lit up by the glow of their phones. No one talks. They're transfixed.

The Bartender stands behind the bar and cleans a glass.

He scans the room for signs of life.

BARTOP LEFT

A WOMAN sits by herself. Her head rests in her hand as she stares longingly into her phone.

BEHIND HER

A HUSBAND and WIFE sit at a small table against the wall, not paying attention to their food... or each other.

BARTOP CENTER

A SUIT furiously texts on his phone. No doubt explaining to someone how he's 'crushing it'. He wears a bluetooth ear piece.

A PUNK slowly takes a large gulp of his beer, careful not to spill any. He never takes his eyes off his screen.

BEHIND HIM

A LONER leans against the fireplace. The glow from his phone reflects off the sunglasses he's still wearing.

BARTOP RIGHT

A MAN with bad posture hunches over his phone and grips it like a buoy.

ALL OF A SUDDEN...

Each and every phone inexplicably shuts down. The tiny spotlights on everyone's faces blink out of existence, leaving confused stares.

Slowly, everyone in the bar resigns to putting their phones down.

The light in the room gets brighter, as if a fog has lifted.

Everyone starts to notice the world around them.

THE BARTENDER BEARS WITNESS:

BARTOP CENTER

Punk and Suit measure each other up, innately disliking what the other represents.

BEHIND THEM

The Loner notices the books on top of the fireplace, and reaches out for one, cautiously, as if it were an asp ready to strike.

AGAINST THE WALL

Husband looks down at his food, confused, just now realizing what he ordered.

Wife looks across at her husband, confused, just now realizing who she married.

BARTOP LEFT

The Woman at the end of the bar perks up a little and looks around.

BARTOP RIGHT

The Man at the opposite end of the bar corrects his posture and looks around.

BACK IN THE CENTER

Suit and Punk both stand up, goading each other.

Punk sticks his finger in suit's face, who slaps it away. This happens repeatedly.

Suit sticks his finger in punk's chest who, mistakenly, looks down at it, only to have the finger slide up his chest and collide with the tip of his nose.

Suit's finger keeps raising toward the ceiling, an exaggerated but proper follow through a la Three Stooges.

MATCH CUT:

The Bartender raises an eyebrow.

Punk slaps Suit in the face. Lashing out at establishment, both physically and figuratively.

Suit slaps Punk back, defending his paradigm and wardrobe.

They wrestle each other away from the bar top, creating a clear line of sight between...

The Man, who looks to his right and sees Woman at the other end of the bar for the first time...

And the Woman, who looks to her left and sees Man for the first time...

They lock onto each other like a tractor beam.

Time slows down. No one else in the bar matters.

AT THE FIREPLACE

Loner flips the book over in his hands a couple times before remembering how to read it. He pushes his sunglasses onto his forehead for clarity.

AT THE TABLE

The Husband moves his food around on his plate with the tip of his fork. He looks unsure and a little disgusted.

His Wife eyes him up and down. Sadness creeps across her face. She chugs her wine, drowning her feelings in a crimson waterfall.

CENTER OF THE ROOM

Suit has Punk in a headlock, the early bird getting the worm.

Man and Woman smile at each other sheepishly from across the bar.

The Bartender pours himself a beer, enjoying the show.

FIREPLACE

The Loner chuckles at the book he's reading.

BARTOP

Man and Woman get up from their seats and slowly start to move toward each other, in a trance.

CENTER OF THE ROOM

Punk has the upper hand now. He strangles Suit from behind with his own tie, the trappings of success.

AT THE TABLE

Husband holds his fork up to his face, inspecting the food on it very closely.

Wife holds her empty glass upside down, searching for any dregs.

CENTER

Suit, struggling for air, takes his bluetooth earpiece off and jabs it into punk's hand like a knife.

Punk releases his stranglehold and pushes Suit hard in the back.

Suit's inertia carries him past the lovestruck Woman...

AND TO THE TABLE

Where Husband and Wife are.

Suit grabs the fork out of Husband's hand and turns back toward his enemy.

CENTER

Punk looks around frantically and then grabs something off a nearby table.

A much larger catering fork!

He holds it up at the ready.

The Bartender shoves a handful of popcorn in his mouth.

Man and Woman stand face to face in the center of the bar like zombies in love, unaware of the chaos around them.

THE TABLE

Husband is dry heaving over his plate of food.

Wife is sobbing heavily and hugging her wine bottle.

FIREPLACE

Loner is laughing hysterically, almost to tears.

CENTER

Man and Woman lean in to kiss each other.

Suit and Punk rush toward each other, forks high, both hoping to inflict the final blow of this class warfare.

Man and Woman, eyes closed and lips puckered, are inches from a human connection destined to last through the ages--

-- BEEP! WRRR! DING-DING! BEEP! DU-DU! --

PUSH NOTIFICATIONS SOUND OFF ALL OVER THE BAR!

Everyone freezes.

They look around nervously.

BEAT

Suit and Punk lower their weapons.

Loner lowers his book, and his sunglasses back over his eyes.

Husband and Wife compose themselves.

Man and Woman Separate.

The Bartender slouches against the bar, disappointed.

Everyone moves back to the exact positions they were in before.

No one says a thing.

The lights dim back down. Small screens glow throughout. The fog of technology sets in again.

The Bartender goes outside.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

He steps onto the sidewalk and pulls out a cigarette.

A STRANGER walks toward him, staring down at their phone.

The Bartender watches the stranger walk right for him, completely oblivious.

He dodges so he doesn't get run over.

The stranger keeps walking; zero acknowledgement.

The bartender raises his fist, starts to yell something, but stops... and just shakes his head instead.

He smokes his cigarette.

The crickets laugh at him.

FADE TO BLACK.