

Two Dollar Wine
a collection of short stories
by Alex Battles & The Whisky Rebellion

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Chapter 1: Raining In Brooklyn

It's raining hard in Brooklyn on the day you're leaving town. I watch the planes flying out of JFK while the rain keeps coming down.

I quit smoking three days ago and I don't think I'll last the night. So I'll fish my smokes out of the garbage can and use the gas range for a light.

I'll walk back to the window, looking out there through the rain. Must be you're far away by now. But are you coming back again?

I thought if I could write this song for you it might help me close the door. But I keep hoping maybe one day, you'll come on back for more.

It's raining hard in Brooklyn on the day you're leaving town. I did not get a chance to say goodbye to you. I guess I'll say it now.



Chapter 2: Oh George!

Let me tell you the story of Marlena and the man who coveted her bed. They were on a moonlight drive. They pulled off route 105. And this is what Marlena said:

“Oh George, let's not park here.

“Oh George, let's not park.

“Oh George, let's not.

“Oh George, let's...

“Oh George!

“Oh!”

A few days later, she said “George, go buy me a ring. I've been feeling mighty queasy ever since we took it easy on the night you made me sing:

“Oh George, let's not park here.

“Oh George, let's not park.

“Oh George, let's not.

“Oh George, let's...

“Oh George!

“Oh!”

Now they live on a hilltop, with a long and winding driveway. Every time they reach the top, before the headlights pop, you can hear Marlena say:

“Oh George, let's not park here.

“Oh George, let's not park.

“Oh George, let's not.

“Oh George, let's...

“Oh George!

“Oh!”



Chapter 3: Telenovelas In a Mexican Bar

Now that I've found you, the girl of my dreams, to a hopeless romantic, it's funny. It seems that two can be happy as you and I are watching telenovelas in a Mexican bar.

I'm the devil to your hottie, the ugly to your cute. My Sabado is gigante. Can I share it with you drinking cheap margaritas in old Mason jars, watching telenovelas in a Mexican bar?

So I'll tell you I love you over sangria wine, by the light of a blinking Corona beer sign. Alone I'm not famous. With you I'm a star watching telenovelas in a Mexican bar.



Chapter 4: Two Dollar Wine

It was up around a year ago. We were doing shots of old Crow and trying to learn how to tango along with Elvis on the stereo. Then a man came in the bar chewing on an unlit cigar. He said "I didn't have to travel far. I live next door and they towed my car."

I said "You know you look just like a friend of mine. He's always drinking two dollar wine because he can't afford the moonshine. Two dollar wine suits him just fine. He's always listening to John Prine and standing on the unemployment line. Forget your money, buddy I am buying. You know you look just like a friend of mine."

We bought that old man a drink and we asked him what does he think. We were gonna bet the kitchen sink on a horse named Rinky Dink. He said "I've been in three wars before I ever walked through those doors. I missed out on a lot of scores. Here's a fiver, put it on that horse!"



Chapter 5: Wednesdays & Fridays

I went in this bar to meet my Friday date and that girl had stood me up, she was way too late. But the cute, little bartender, looking all tattooed and slender, had me thinking that she and I might consummate.

She told me that her name was Mary-Cate. My ego she proceeded to re-inflate. She set my heart a-perkin'. I said "Darling, when are you working?"

She said, "I'm here Wednesdays and Fridays at eight."

On Wednesdays and Fridays at eight, I'll be sitting in that bar in a semi-sober state. That cute little barkeeper, off of her feet I'm gonna sweep her on one of these Wednesdays and Fridays at eight.

As I got drunker, myself I did berate for leaving the whole thing up to fate. I said Boy you know that girl she wants you. Just look at the way she taunts you. It's high time that you asked her for a date. So I said to that girl:

"On Wednesdays and Fridays at eight, I'll be sitting in this bar in a semi-sober state. You cute little barkeeper, off of your feet I'm gonna sweep you on one of these Wednesdays or Fridays at eight."

She said "Gee, you know I think you're really great. But the girl at the end of the bar, she is my mate. Still I'm really flattered, and I hope you're not too shattered." She did not want that gratuity to deflate.

It's then I remembered what I'd heard my dad relate on the day I was leaving the Buckeye State. He said "Son, there's no connection between good service and affection. Just pay your tab and head right out the gate."

On Wednesdays and Fridays at eight, I ain't going back to that bar there's no debate. I'd just be too embarrassed. I would want the girl to feel too harassed on one of these Wednesdays or Fridays at eight.

On Wednesdays and Fridays at eight, I'll be sitting at home in a semi-sober state. I tell ya, it's a lot cheaper. That floor, I'm gonna sweep her on one of these Wednesdays or Fridays at eight.



Chapter 6: The Road

She picked up her rental car this morning, just to get the hell out of town. She don't know where she's going yet as she puts on her shades, turns the key, and lays the pedal down. She rolls down the windows. Her scar whips in the wind. She sings along to the radio. She's thinking about the things she had and what she left behind that sent her out alone on this road.

The road will take you home, girl, even when you've forgotten which way to go. Don't worry, baby girl. The road remembers. The road will take you home.

She's tired of center fielders and cocktail party clowns loving her for what they want her to be. She's a pile of contradictions to everyone but herself. The distance burns her past in effigy. After 14 hours and three tanks of gas, she feels the ties that bind her start to break. So she stretches out on her motel bed, lights a Lucky Strike, and thinks about the next move she'll make.

The road will take you home, girl, even when you've forgotten which way to go. Don't worry, baby girl. The road remembers. The road will take you home.



Chapter 7: Loozyanna

It was love at first sight, that first night that Bayou Baby walked into the bar. Bobby bought her a round, looked her up and down, and took her home in his car. Wild Bobby got her, the sheriff's daughter with curves like a race car track. Then she caught him playing. Then he heard her saying "I'm gone and I ain't coming back."

She was down in Loozyanna in a red bandana and she wouldn't pick up the phone. It was Bobby who was ringing. Baby kept on singing. "Go ahead and weep and moan. Once you got her -- the Sheriff's daughter -- and you had to play around. Now you're regretting what you ain't getting and whistling 'Lonely Town.'"

She went back to Loozyanna.

Can't you, can't you, can't you hear that slammin' door?

Bobby's Baby went back to the bayou.

Saying "Don't you, don't you, don't you do that no more."



Chapter 8: It's The Cat

I just called to say hello. I know it's been a long, long time since that night that we broke up when you drank too much wine. You said if I didn't call no more, you would prefer that. Well, baby it ain't me that misses you. It's the cat.

The kitty cries at bedtime when she sees that you're not there. Sometimes she don't do nothing. She just sits around and stares. I thought if I called you up, she might stop being such a brat. Baby, it ain't me that misses you. It's the cat.

She says come back and rub my belly. Come back and treat me nice. Bring back your Tender Vittles, I'll take care of the mice. And don't you worry about that big old, mean old rat. He still loves you so. Just trust me, I'm the cat.

Well she's gone and lied down now. I guess that's all she had to say. You know, she needs the rest. She ain't slept in days. If you're ever in the neighborhood, you know where I'm at. Babe, just stop on by and see the cat.

Me and the cat.



Chapter 9: Come Home With Me! Marie! Marie!

The most entrancing dancer at the Kitty-Kat Saloon
is a broken-hearted beauty named Marie.
Her shake-dancing duty is to earthquake that booty.
What a heavenly sight to see!

Marie's been broken-hearted since Luigi departed.
She glowers as she makes men sigh.
She couldn't be forlorn as their happy mouths uncorner.
They beg her as she passes by.

*Come home with me! Marie! Marie!
Come home and be my girl!
How happy you'll be! Marie! Marie!
When you give up your honky tonk world!*

Many've tried to take her and they've cursed their very maker
at their insufficient powers of persuasion.
As long as her hips swivel, their lips will tend to drivel
Their desperate exhortations.

*Come home with me! Marie! Marie!
Come home and be my girl!
How happy you'll be! Marie! Marie!
When you give up your honky tonk world!*



Chapter 10: Last Night In Town

“Let me rub your back girl. You look a little tired. The party’s over, everyone’s asleep, and I’m just a little wired. Can we go in your bedroom? There’s something I just gotta say before tomorrow when that plane takes me away. It’s my last night in town. I was hoping we could get down. Baby, don’t frown. It’s my last night in town. It’s my last night in town. I was hoping we could get down. Baby, don’t frown. Why don’t you take off that gown? It’s my last night in town.

“Is this about your sister? Because, you know, me and her? Yeah, there’s that time that I kissed her when I was really sure I’d never be in your bedroom saying ‘Can we turn out the light?’ If we can be together, it’s gotta be tonight.

“It’s my last night in town. I was hoping we could get down. Baby, don’t frown. Why don’t you take off that gown? It’s my last night in town. Baby, we could just cuddle before I get on the shuttle. It’s my last night in town.”



Chapter 11: Pennsylvania

Smoking up behind the dumpster of a local Dairy Queen. Her parfait it was peanut, buster. She told me she was 17.

One little toke won’t hurt nobody. Just before she took that puff, her daddy came around the corner. That’s when shit started getting rough.

They kicked me out of Pennsylvania. I’m living on the road with my beat-up, old cigar box. Folks they call me Tommy Joad.

My cigar box says El Producto. Brother, that ain’t what’s inside. One little bag costs twenty bucks, though. I’ll trade it to you for a ride.

There’s a couch for me in Brooklyn at the home of my friend Joe. There’s plenty left in my cigar box. Joe’s got a lot of friends, you know.



Chapter 12: Hong Kong Collision

My maw looks at me with some derision
because I chose to become a musician.

It's a choice I made of my own volition.

My apartment's what I keep my fridge in.

Bert's favorite bird is a pigeon.

I always take my car to
Hong
Kong Collision.

Hong
Kong!
Hong
Kong
Collision!

Hong
Kong!
Hong
Kong
Collision!

For quality work
with computer precision.

Always take your car to
Hong
Kong Collision!

I like to take my meals in the kitchen.

Sometimes I eat pears.

sometimes persimmions.

I think about nuclear fission.

I work out long

division.

I scratch my leg whenever it is itching.

And I always take my car to

Hong
Kong Collision!

If you have a Camaro that is bitchin'.
And from G-d, you're on a mission.
There's a game on the radio and you don't know

who's pictching.

And your thumb is out for some hitching.

When the tow truck comes,

Tell 'em your decision

Just take my car to

Hong
Kong
Collision!



Chapter 13: Wonderful Hank's Saloon

Hank's Saloon! Hank's Saloon!
Even though soon it may go Ka-Boom!
We'll down one more round
And croon one more tune
For Wonderful Hank's Saloon!

Buy a beer! Have no fear!
There's a fine restroom in the rear.
Can't write on the wall?
(There's no more room!)
At Wonderful Hank's Saloon.

Hank's Saloon! Hank's Saloon!
Even though soon it may go Ka-Boom!
We'll down one more round
And croon one more tune
For Wonderful Hank's Saloon!

If you're down, pal don't frown!
Go where the ceiling is falling down.
Order a whisky
And howl at the moon!
At Wonderful Hank's Saloon.

Hank's Saloon! Hank's Saloon!
Even though soon it may go Ka-Boom!
We'll down one more round
And croon one more tune
For Wonderful Hank's Saloon!

Let's retreat, and take a seat!
Go to the place where good friends meet.
And sing along
To a honky-tonk tune
At Wonderful Hank's Saloon.



About the authors:



The Whisky Rebellion is (l to r)

Danny Mulligan (electric guitar), Shaky Dave Pollack (harmonica), Charlie Shaw (drums),
Alex Battles (banjo, acoustic guitar, vocals), Jason Hogue (bass guitar)
Sam Mastandrea (harmony & washboard)

All songs by Alex Battles (BMI) except
“Oh George!” by Alex Battles (BMI) & John Elroy Sanford