

BARTENDER is cleaning up the bar. ZACH enters looking young and suspicious. He sits at the bar.

ZACH

Excuse me, my fine man, I would like to purchase a beer, please.

BARTENDER

I.D.?

ZACH

Sorry, what?

BARTENDER

I need to see your I.D. Make sure you're 21.

ZACH

I assure you, sir, you are speaking to a man of 21. At least! I'm at least 21 years of age.

BARTENDER

Then you won't mind me seeing your I.D. proving that.

ZACH

You doubt my word, sir? You besmirch my voracity?

BARTENDER

I don't... what? Besmirch, your what now? Look, I don't want any trouble, just... I.D. or get the hell out.

ZACH

Well. I've never been so offended in all my life. (getting up) I can assure you sir, that I will no longer be patronizing this establishment, as you have done me a disservice and have offended my honor. Good day to you, sir. (exits in a huff)

BARTENDER

(muttering) Besmirch... ha.

BARTENDER goes back to cleaning the bar, there's a moment or two of silent cleaning.
ZACH enters wearing a Clone Trooper helmet with a Nerf gun holstered in his belt.

ZACH

Mark, it's me, I hope that I'm not too late.

BARTENDER

What? (turns and immediately recognizes ZACH) Hey, look, buddy, I told you before no I.D. no service.

ZACH

What? I have no idea what you're talking about.

BARTENDER

You were just in here, what do you think I am, stupid?

ZACH

I was just in here, you say?

BARTENDER

(pause) Yes. Now get out.

ZACH

Perhaps I was just in here, or will have been just in here. Mark, I'm breaking major protocol here, but you need to know the truth so you don't make disastrous life changing mistakes.

BARTENDER

Yeah?

ZACH

(sincerely) Mark. I'm you... from the future.

BARTENDER

(takes in ZACH, they look nothing alike.) Yeah, I don't think so, hit the road, buddy.

He goes to make ZACH leave the bar, ZACH flinches away.

ZACH

No, you fool! Don't touch me! You can't touch me, we'll create a paradox and possibly destroy the universe. It's the number one rule of time travel.

BARTENDER

Destroy the universe? How do you know?

ZACH

It's a theory, but that kind of theory only has to be proven right once, so how about we just play it cool, Mark, and don't touch me.

BARTENDER

Okay. Wait, how do you know my name?

ZACH

I’m you from the future.

BARTENDER

Right, right, of course.

ZACH

That’s how I know your name. (keeps flinching away from BARTENDER as he keeps trying to lead him out of the bar.) I also, know that your first wife’s name is Margaret! You’re first pet was an English Bulldog named Max! The first girl you kissed was Julie Wentworth and you kissed her under the bridge by the Keeneenee River near the sewer pipe and now every time you smell methane she comes up in the back of your mind.

BARTENDER

That’s an awful lot of “firsts” you got memorized.

ZACH

They seemed relevant, and specific to us.

BARTENDER

And all totally wrong. I’ve never owned a dog, I’m more of a cat guy, and that wasn’t my first kiss.

ZACH

Wasn’t it?

BARTENDER

(pause) Get out of here.

ZACH

I’m right, I know I’m right,... YOU know I’m right.

In an effort to get away from being touched by BARTENDER, ZACH has pulled out his Nerf gun and made his way around to the back of the bar.

BARTENDER

And, I’ve never been married and don’t even know anyone named Margaret.

ZACH

Oh... (breaths in through clenched teeth) That’s right... that’s later... sorry about that. Oh, and I said “first” wife too... yeah, these are going to be a rough couple of years for us.

BARTENDER

Will you get out of here.

ZACH

No! Mark, I’ve risked too much! I need to tell you why I’ve come back. It will save our lives.

BARTENDER

You’ve got exactly 3 seconds and that’s only because you somehow knew about Julie Wentworth.

ZACH

I *told* you that was your first kiss.

BARTENDER

Three seconds.

ZACH

Okay. It is vital for our survival that you buy me a drink.

BARTENDER

I knew it. I knew you were that kid who was just in here.

ZACH

I don’t know what you’re talking about.

BARTENDER

Okay, smart guy, if you’re me from the future, how come you a.) look nothing like me, and b.) look exactly like the underage kid I just kicked out of here a minute ago only now you’re wearing a stupid Star Wars Storm Trooper helmet.

ZACH

Clone Trooper.

BARTENDER

Whatever.

ZACH

Look, a lot is going to happen to you in the next 20 years, I can't get into the details, that would be the 2nd rule of time travel, but I can tell you this, we have ways of reversing aging which is why I don't look 20 years older than you, and Earth's gravity is much lower after the Moon... er... after the Moon has some “trouble”, can't really get into that one either. That's why I appear larger to you, but I can assure you that I'm of quite average stature in the future, in fact, I'm quite svelte, comparatively.

BARTENDER

You should know that I hate science fiction, and I hate punk kids who try to sneak into a bar when they are clearly underage.

BARTENDER grabs ZACH by the shoulders they both freeze, if lighting and or sound effect is possible, it goes here, otherwise maybe they do their own sound effect. They rotate and switch places with each other.

BARTENDER

What the hell was that all about?

ZACH

Well, we either made the universe explode, or implode... or... (goes and looks out the door.)
Nope, just a simple time switch jump.

BARTENDER

(looking at his hands) I feel like that creamy filling from a Twinkee.

ZACH

You're in your future... my present day. We jumped back to my “now”.

BARTENDER goes and looks out the door.

BARTENDER

Well, what do you know? Flying cars... but you still have doors?

ZACH

Yeah, science pretty much nailed it with doors the first time around.

BARTENDER

Really? You guys don't have sliding doors, or some sort of force field thing.

ZACH

Nope. Just regular doors have worked pretty well for us.

BARTENDER

(awed) I’m in the future.

ZACH

I remember thinking that this was cool when I was you, but now it just seems, you know, like just another day for me, you know?

BARTENDER

So, if you’re me from the future, then you remember me doing all this because my current experiences are just memories of what you’ve done to you?

ZACH

Uh, yeah.

BARTENDER

What do I say next?

ZACH

I don’t know, this happened like 20 years ago.

BARTENDER

It seems like a pretty big deal, like something you’d remember pretty clearly. I know I’m going to remember all of this.

ZACH

I know you tell yourself that, but this isn’t the first time we’ve time traveled, and I’m guessing based on the fact that you say I was in your bar earlier, it’s not the last time we time travel. Anyway, do you remember the details of a conversation you had 20 years ago? Wait, don’t tell me, because I know the answer. It’s “no” the answer is “no I don’t remember a conversation that I had 20 years ago, because clearly, I don’t remember.”

BARTENDER

Is this why you’re not allowed to touch yourself?

ZACH

I was taught if you touch yourself, you’d go blind.... Ha! A little time travel humor. No? Okay then.

BARTENDER

So what’s this all about? Why come back 20 years to warn me about something, insist that I buy you a drink then “accidentally” bring me 20 years into the future?

ZACH

I asked myself that same question 20 years ago. I think I finally figured it out, but now that I know, I can’t tell you... because then you’ll know and I didn’t figure it out until just now, and while I don’t remember this conversation exactly, I do recall that I got pretty upset with my future self because I wouldn’t explain what the hell was going on.

BARTENDER

You got that right, buddy.

BARTENDER goes to grab ZACH who pulls away.

ZACH

Let’s not start that again, I have no idea where we’d go if you touch me here.

BARTENDER

(calming self down) Okay. How about some basics. How does this time travel work?

ZACH

Mostly it’s willpower, then this sort of thing, you know once you get somewhere and you bump into yourself you’ll launch somewhere else, but usually you don’t travel with you, so...

BARTENDER

So the helmet has nothing to do--?

ZACH

This? No, we just really got into retro stuff in the last couple years, Margaret actually introduced us to this. Retro, vintage, antique, some of it ironic kitch, other stuff can actually be quite valuable.

BARTENDER

Margaret.

ZACH

Yeah, our ex-wife.

BARTENDER

Yeah, you said.

ZACH

(sitting down, starting to break down a little) It’s just that, I miss her so much, and I thought that maybe I’d want to, this sounds weird I know. (BARTENDER goes to give a comforting pat on ZACH’s shoulder, ZACH twists away from him, and says in a sad/upset, but also in the warning of “don’t touch me remember the rules” kind of way.) Don’t. (he collects himself a little but remains on the edge of losing it.) It’s just that, I wanted to remember how I was before I met her, you know? How happy I was, maybe, or maybe how miserable I was. Just to put some perspective on all of this, you know? So tell me, are we happy back then?

BARTENDER

I suddenly don’t remember myself. I guess I’m happy, or I guess I was up until about 10 minutes ago.

ZACH

20 years and 10 minutes.

BARTENDER

Yeah. Did she... when did she leave us? You seem pretty upset, did this just happen recently?

ZACH

Two years ago.

BARTENDER

That’s quite awhile ago.

ZACH

Yeah, well, it’s like this time travel, you know? When it hits you, the person you’re in love with, is just suddenly out of your life, it’s like “wham” you’re slapped across the face and the next thing you remember it’s two years later.

BARTENDER

I’m sorry... for us... You said earlier, “first ex-wife”.

ZACH

Yeah, I don’t know much about our next wife, I was pretty tight lipped when my future self met me, seems I learned from my mistakes of talking too much to my past self.

BARTENDER

Speaking of which, haven’t you already told me too much?

ZACH

Oh, no, here’s the thing, this is why it was imperative that you buy me a drink. You need to not fully remember this conversation.

BARTENDER

So I need to buy you a drink?

ZACH

Well I wasn’t going to get me drunk by yourself.

BARTENDER

(working out the phrasing and muttering) “get me drunk by yourself”.

ZACH

Yeah, exactly. Look who knows you better than you? No one, right, except me. Well, me kind of... I mean, you’re kind of how I remember me, but you’re not really, you’re a lot *meaner* if that makes sense. I don’t remember being that mean of a guy.

BARTENDER

Because I’m not a mean guy.

ZACH

But you kind of come across that way. We realize that in a couple years. After we meet Margaret, but before the Moon... thing... Boy, we used to love watching the moon, I remember the first night after she had her vision corrected, you know with that laser thing?

BARTENDER

Lasik, yeah. You haven’t improved on that yet?

ZACH

They got robot eyes now, but I think it’s just a fad. Anyway, she used to wear glasses, retro you know, but she finally gave in and got the surgery done and to celebrate I took her out to see the moon and she always complimented us on how that was a really romantic gesture on my part and really out of character for me. Which surprised me, because I thought I was romantic all the time. I guess it’s kind of the same with the meanness. How I project ourselves is different then what we’re thinking inside here.

ZACH taps his head then his chests/heart, then reaches over and taps BARTENDER’s chest, lighting effect and they rotate on stage switching back to the present again.

ZACH (cont.)

I just can't know that yet about myself. I need to learn it in the next 20 years and mess up a lot of things and really ruin a lot of friendships and relationships... boy the things I mess up.

BARTENDER

But, we don't have to. I could change it now. Now that I know.

ZACH

But I do have to, because it's who I am. Who I was, is who I am and who I will be, well, like I said, he was pretty tight lipped. Future me. I think we're back, by the way.

BARTENDER

Yeah? It didn't feel the same.

ZACH

I feel like Twinkie creamy filling.

BARTENDER checks out the door, looks up in the sky then down at street level.

BARTENDER

Well, they're either all parked or no flying cars yet.

ZACH

Oh, they park in the air.

BARTENDER

The flying cars do?

ZACH

Yeah.

BARTENDER

Really?

ZACH

No. How would you get out? (laughs)

BARTENDER

(Laughs too) You know what? I'm an alright guy to hang out with.

ZACH
I know it.

BARTENDER
You want that drink now?

ZACH
Not if I have to show I.D.

BARTENDER
Yeah, what’s the deal with that?

ZACH
I just don’t *have* one. I.D.s are all thumb micro implants.

BARTENDER
I gotta know more.

ZACH
Tell you what, for every future fact I tell you, we’ll take a shot. Then you won’t remember this night clearly enough to screw up my life.

BARTENDER
Does that work.

ZACH
It did.

BARTENDER
(Pouring some drinks) Did you get what you wanted, from coming back here.

ZACH
Yeah, yeah I did. Thanks me.

BARTENDER
You’re welcome, me.

ZACH and BARTENDER can banter about future stuff while the lights fade to black.