

A BAR

By Giles Goodland

Beard of Bees
Chicago
Number 36
November, 2006

Preface

This poem began as all the hits from a search for the phrase “a man walks into a bar” on Nexis, a newspaper and corporate-information database. This large file was reduced to its present form by a process of editing-down by removing most repetitions and smoothing the transitions from article to article.

A Bar

A man slips into my skin and orders a beer, which the bartender quickly sounds like the set up to a bar, looks around and says, so a blind man walks into a bar, says ouch knows? But the bar turns into a spaceship and the bartender gives him a haircut. Da Vinci must have been a really funny guy, a man walks into a bar, orders a Scotch but the laughter is gone in his heart. He never told me the end of that joke about the lapse of an AA attendee. He orders a drink. This is how *The Rooms* begins and ends. In between you learn into a bar, and one was a salted. A dyslexic man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm and says: lease, and then returns to an alcohol ban. He sits down at a table with Elle, what are you wearing? Decorations, food, party poppers, crackers gets through 40 a day; his favourite cracker joke is A man walks into a bar and presents the years. Andy insists that as a part time electrician the cave man says between hands, and asks the bartender, can you discuss the difference between a joke and an editorial: a man walks into the bank and writes out a long cheque that has the form of an Ode to Banks and he keeps on unscrolling the green paper as fast as the drugs to appreciate the need for legal expertise. The other, captioned, a man walks into a bar association, explains that as law became a part of people's day to day resentment grew as the beer for you, know where the bathroom is? An empty suit got onto a train and sat next to an anorak. The stuffed shirt opposite them looked up from the newspaper and three skirts walked in and looked for somewhere to sit. Which big boy's blouse is going to give us legroom? A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt and says, a grasshopper hops into a bar two peanuts walk, and one was dyslexic his arm and says: a beer please, and one for the road. Two cannibals are eating a bar. In the film it might prompt a small chuckle in the vein on his unclothed lower body. We should pass along this item: A man walks into a bar with a duck on his

head. The duck says, Gimme midnight, except on Saturdays, when the taps acquired a nostalgic charm, for the days when stand ups actually mould, as opposed eyes. Did you know we have a drink named after you? The grasshopper is shocked but delighted. What, Kevin? A man walks into a bar, where there's a sign on the wall: Free Nelson Mandela. He says to the barman, I'll have a Jesus. The man says to the third man, Hands off, mate, I'm on compo! A man walks into a bar, orders a brandy and the barman pokes him in the eye. After a short recovery, the man again orders eye and the barman says, Right, one corporate comedian. He has a chicken on his head, a pig under his arm, a grasshopper on his shoulder, and says give me a double Chivas Regal, even though I shouldn't be having it with what I've got. The barman says he's got a crocodile with him and the bartender says, Mate, a man walks into an entirely personal relationship with semantics. I will love you to death is really not such a bad phrase if the joke can be amended, old is when the porn movie your wife because she already knows I'm called the opposite sex because whenever you want to do something with a sandwich on his shoulder. The bartender looks at him and says, Sorry sir, we don't serve blondes and doorknobs have a sado-masochistic mag. She shows her husband and says: What do you think we should do? Dunno, he says, but I don't think we should spank a bar and orders 10 pints and downs them with a sado-masochistic mug. She shows her husband and says: What do you think we ought to spank him and the bartender says, Hey, you could have started out as a joke. Comedians build shtick on a man walks into a novel on a neo Nazi who walks into a human rights foundation, orders three pints of beer and sits taking a sip out of each. When he's finished, he asks You think you're funny? And I said, But, Mom, battered and bruised, and the bartender says, Jimmy, Sean O'Connor and me had a fight. He could've never done that to you, the clerk looks at her

and says, That's not a TV it's a microwave! As he finishes, a man remembers he was supposed to order a new insurance card for his wife. He pulls out his Knock. Who's there? Ammonia little kid! The barman says, Ere mate! Do you know you've got your shirt on back to front? And the man says, or so goes the joke. Here's a scientific guide to finding a bar and if he's Detective John Rebus he'll drink and slept with dozens of them. His wife looked at him calmly and said, Why do you think I gave you the poison? [hehe] A dog fight and asks, Does anyone here own that rottweiler outside? Yeah, I do! a biker says, but the neighbours weren't too happy and ask: Can I have a glass of orange? The barman says: Man: Yeah I can't buy a round, I've left my wallet at home. But scientists ask a woman to fly with him to Rome. Is this their first meeting? Ambiguity is the name of this reading of 0.0. The puzzled officer demanded to know how that could be. The driver replied: Tonight, I'm the Designated MAN, and orders a beer. As he sits there, the jar of nuts on the bar tells him what a nice shirt. Disturbed by a narrator describing a simple premise: he sees a beautiful woman. Does he know her? Is this laughter. I mean, he could never remember a punchline. He would say, for instance, you know, a man walks into a bar with a bear, and the bartender says, you have to get that bear out of there. And the man says, why's that? because we child? No, you idiot! the man shouts amazed as the bloke downs them one after the man shouts. This is her husband. The crab who went to the disco? He pulled a mussel. A man walks into a bar as evocative as that image, a single soul stepping out of the sun with his alligator and asks the bartender, Do you serve lawyers? Sure do, replies the bartender. A man walks into a bar, starts a tab, then orders a sandwich, no meat. The waiter brings back a bun with ham and presented me with two poems. One, he said, is a fake. Mischievous but with a sense of responsibility, it was The Killing Joke, by Anthony Horowitz

(Orion Books, \$24.95). A man walks into a bar. His name is a moderately successful actor whose partner has just moved out. He hears a guy at her home but her dog asks the bartender if he wants to hear a redneck joke. The bartender replies, Well, I'm a redneck and those three large salted sandwiches walk into a bar. The bartender says, Sorry, sits down, and orders a drink, your reaction depends mostly upon Earth, and we'd all clone ourselves and then get to live happily. The alien being, with almond shaped eyes, also told Rael How Many Roads Must A Man Travel Down Before He Admits He is Lost? The bartender tells him he owes a few drinks and later that night, he goes home alone and reflects on the poor decisions he's made and pays with the exact money. After they've downed them, the man orders off the Internet: A man walks into a bar with a slab of summer and says, A tap, please. That'll be a 12 year old scotch. The bartender, believing the customer will not be, pours a lot of money. The quickest way to Dublin? The barman says, Are you walking or driving? He says, I'm driving. That's the quickest way, complete with Bacardi's sham Cuba and the US blockade. The seal replies, Anything but Canadian Club. With a roll of tarmac into a bra. With two antennas did the dentist become a brain surgeon? A: His drill slipped and says to the barman: I shouldn't have had that drink with what I've got. Why? asks the barman. After his second pint, he goes outside for a smoke and never returns my dentures. Was the archaeologist depressed? His career was in ruins. A man walks into a bar with a chunk of beer, please, and one for the road. What is the difference between drummers and a 12 ounce bottle of Corona. Another man walks in, orders a 12 ounce for the wife. Eighteen carat? The man replies: No, I'm chewing gum. A Man walks into the top floor of a restaurant and after drinking it, he jumps out of formal structure to study A Man Walks Into A Bar 101 or go to the School of Hard Knock Knocks. Your first engage-

ment involves a sort of tilted poetry. Poetry should not have a man, this is gross! This tastes like dirt! And the salesman replies, Wanna buy a toothbrush? A man walks into a bar and says: a figure of a man comes in and objects to the way things keep turning out. Give me a drink before the trouble starts. So the man drinks and says: Give me a drink for a full 12 minutes with both the job and his colleagues, that I always just found out I'm a lesbian and orders a beer. That will be one dollar, says the bartender. One dollar! Last week the following story shows in the end how difficult it is with a dog and the bartender says No dogs here. The guy says, a sandwich into a bar. The bartender says, Sorry a man walks into a bar with a dog. You don't understand, says the man. At around 4am A man walks into a bar with a slab of God, but unless he looks you in the eye who s gonna know, asks. His shoulders are slouched over, his feet are shuffling underneath and when he offers you his hand it feels like you are shaking a God, but unless he looks you in the bar like you are shaking a vegetable patch! I'm very sorry, replied her friend. Opened a can of peas instead! A man walks sleep. Just then a man sprang from inside a closet. There is, he declared. Now apologise to the lady. A man walks into a beautiful, well dressed woman sitting alone. He says: Hi there, how's it going tonight? She turns to attack the city fortress of Minas Tirith. Certainly sir, says the bartender. That'll be one cent. The patron is on his shoulder. The bartender asks, What do you call him? The man says, Tiny. Why into a rowdy bar with his dog and after being told that pets aren't allowed in, the publican lets him stay just so the film ends into the nightclub scene as though without knowing we have only got a pig's brain and the brain of the chief executive to choose and the patrons are laughing. What's so funny? he asks. His date turns to him and says, I dare you heard the one at McDonald s, deliver their best jokes into his own firm. He'd rented some great prizes once again, so

start digging out those photos of your pride and don't try to fool me because the man slugs one down, then the next, and so I have 37 cents two martinis. He says, No, I want two singles. The victim had the keys and no one had permission to use his vehicle. An employee noticed a man walk into a bar, in the first block of East Atlantic Avenue, and sits down. The man went behind the bar and began drinking. He's dripping wet, soaked right through, in fact. Boy, is it coming down out there, says the bartender. A jumper cable walks into a bar. The barman says, I'll serve you, but don't fast forward seven months to October. A man walks into a bar and lights up a cigarette. The bartender quickly and severely admonishes the man at his discretion. Fast forward seven months to Louisville and the bartender walks into a bar. He gets chatting to the barman and, after a few drinks, he agrees to run the kitchen. She loves making food, laying tables and screams Two nuns are in a car driving along and suddenly a quick song. Jennifer could get up on the table and dance. It was an iron bar. It would cool slicked back hair. One of the biggest stores in the neighbourhood is dedicated to western wear with \$300 cowboy guitar, sits at the counter and nobody bats and the tension between the two men, culminating in a battle of dog jokes (one of the funniest moments in the play). You like your work, being a joke slave? Every Christmas, we get new audience suggestions in the spirit of April Fool's the gallery presents A man walks into canned food for the needy and your own cup to reduce the gallery is created in the spirit of a bar waving a chequered flag above his head. The barman says: I hope you're not going to start something. I feel like a pair of curtains. Pull yourself together if you can reach that meat he said No, the steaks are too high. Do you call a girl who thinks she's a police car? After a few hours they are drunk, and the giraffe falls over. The man is about to leave when the barman sees three men and a dog playing cards. Amazed, the man wanders month

after month, sits down on a bench and orders a cold one. He swigs down the beer, looks in his pocket, Knock. Who's there? Ah! You've heard it before? Two cannibals walk into a bar and asks the barman if he will give a free beer if he shows something amazing. The barman agrees, but they didn't refill their tanks overnight, so you have to wonder just how that works. A Man walks into a bar and has a couple of beers. The bartender tells him he owes various shopkeepers and members or if I show you a really good trick, will you give me a free drink? The bartender then sounds a human pelvic bone on a string around his neck. Only this is no woman who can balance four pints of beer on her head? Beatrix. What stunt did Nintendo complete the most boxes wins. Thinking out of the box takes a lot of water. The barman pulls out a gun and didn't focus on his unclothed lower body. We should pass along this item: A man walks into a bar with a duck on his head. The bartender says, May I help? The duck pulls within the city limits, and make em doubles. The man slugs one down, then the next, and so on until. Sorry I don't wear a watch. Psychiatrist 1: That's OK. The main thing is that we talked about it. This guy other side of the wall screams, For crying out loud, you bastard! It's twenty to two in the bloody bar and asks for a beer. After drinking it, he looks in his shirt pocket and asks sharp eyed readers appears Monday, Wednesday and he may be reached a little bit, then to try and be world champion. Then he levitates. It's part of his back turned sitting next to him. Do you want a pint? he says. No need, says her husband, they re twins. If you've seen Juan, you've seen Amal. He's sipping his pint when one of the peanuts says: Here, the barman looks at the creature and asks the man what weather would allow us to get on to the pitch with his pet octopus, sits it down on a stool and addresses the clientele: This is a very talented creature, and he can play the standard opening to a thousand jokes. And if a good bartender

is working, you'll hear a roundabout is not in its five year plan but the works department has applied for blackspot funding. He swigs down the beer, looks in his pocket, Minton ate two shuttlecocks. When the owner found out he said, Bad up out of the mist, the soldier said to him: I'm sorry sir, but you can't come in here without a tie. The women preferred wordplay but what isn't so apparent is that the song was inspired by a real incident: A man walks into a bar and sees his lover dancing intimately owing to lower demand for natural gas by electric utilities and chemical industries the minister asks. No, replies the drenched drunk. Are you sure this is where he fell in? a man walks both of them trying to get out of an approaching storm and why? the woman asks. And the man says, We can't have archaic and heat it, too. Holmes replies, Watson, you idiot. Somebody stole cling film underpants. The psychiatrist said: well, I can clearly see you re nuts while women prefer to watch the Lions game. In the first quarter, the dog starts for the alien over there. This does not even have to be as blatant as in the jokes about his extremely large institution. Hey, nice tie! comes out of nowhere. He looks up he hears the cabin on top of a mountain. What happened? Answer: They were in the cabin of a plane, which crashed. 2) A man orders a gun and points it at his head. The man thanks him, then walks into a bar to get a glass before a monkey swings down and steals the beer from the 8% who said they trust the media to teach his girlfriend how to tell a joke. He recites one, then asks her to repeat it. A man walks into a bar, she begins. No, he says. There's only one other customer in the place, and that customer accidentally sets his own hair into a bar. From the opposite end of the bar a voice booms, blondes really means when she says Has anybody seen my pen? No, I haven't gone stab at the proposed land prior to money. She says yes, then strips off. There's no punchline. Next thing the waitress knows, he's offering to help her open a microsurgery. But

Doc, I couldn't pick them up. After his fourth shot, the bartender said, that's very kind of you, young man, the vicar replies. And why are you going to do that? Because my dad says you are the poorest preacher we've ever had. Want to hear a blonde joke? The bartender says, Look buddy. But then force of habit proved too much for him. He straightened up and threw the baby to second base. You don't understand, says the man. This is no regular dog. He finishes a bit of liturgy, beautiful and mysterious with ancient words and tones, and the congregation breaks up with the bartender says, OK, but sees a horse behind the bar wiping a glass. Thinking he's seeing things, he rubs his eyes and sees a stunning woman in a short skirt sitting on a stool. It's in fact an interesting logical puzzle based on a woman that he'd like to know and asks her, Will you promise to give me a photograph of yourself if it takes 42 muscles to frown and only 4 to hide under the desk. I could go with you the first time you go, sit with you, and introduce you to all the others. After his fourth shot, the bartender said, Man you really look like your having a rough day. Then he turns back the time to the 1940s when a man could walk into a bar without beer. As the bartender starts pouring, the man says, Thank you and walks out. Why? (He had hiccups, which the bartender noticed. Oh, no it's not, St Peter replied, here your work gets published! The bartender says, What's wrong? Our one complaint. Imagination is bad, and a complete lack of same is almost wearing matching shorts and asks for a beer. Certainly, says the bartender. That'll be hungry, and tells a woman a heart breaking tale of tragedy. A gorgeous young commercial was one for Barcardi Breezer it was around about a year ago, a woman walks up to him and two year's worth of Viagra. Be on the lookout for these hardened criminals who line them up in front of the patron, his head between her forelegs, would enjoy the following story. Often, that differs from how police agencies walk into crimes

themselves. For instance, if a man walks into a bar and robs the cash register and 10 patrons, it must be clutching a brown paper sack. He sidles up to a table and whispers: Listen, I've perfected a new sentence, or I've found a way out of time. You only have to crawl into this hole (here he showed me the barrel of his pistol). A man walked into a bar with a question mark hanging over his head and said what are you looking?

GILES GOODLAND'S last book was *Capital* (Salt, 2006). Other books include *A Spy in the House of Years* (Leviathan, 2001), *Overlay* (Odyssey, 1999) and *Littoral* (Oversteps, 1996). He lives in London and works in Oxford.

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Chicago, IL

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