

"The Day Hondo Found That Rare Bottle of Wine at Sullivan's Tap &
Eating Establishment" (a/k/a "Sully's")

by
Mike Murphy

112 Lovering Street
Medway, MA 02053-2326
508-533-8310
mikeandzachary@gmail.com
WGA Registered

Sully's is a Boston-based pub with several tables clustered around a large central bar with many stools. Sully, the owner, wearing his trademark red vest, is behind the bar dispensing drinks.

From the audience's point of view, the front door is opened to the relative quiet of the bar. As the door opens, HANK, the greeter (a bear of a man with an Irish brogue), approaches the viewer, who is treated as the "customer" in all of Hank's scenes.

HANK

(approaching)

Welcome, friend, to Sullivan's Tap & Eatin' Establishment. The name's Hank, and I'm the host here. Are you a visitor to our fair city? . . . Well, have a seat. How's this one? One of our finest tables.

Hank pulls out a wooden chair for the "customer."

HANK

Be comfortable.

(beat)

May I guess that you want to hear *the story*?

(beat; chuckles)

I thought so. Yes, Sully got a lot of press on that. He's a shrewd businessman, that one. He played it for all it was worth. It brought in a lot of thirsty people.

(beat)

Name your poison.

(beat)

Not to worry: at Sully's, new customers always get a free first drink.

(beat)

Well, I *know* you're new here. I never forget a face. That's part of the reason I've had this job for almost twenty years. A lesser memory would cost Sully a fortune.

(beat)

A Guinness, huh? Good choice. I'll be right back with your brew.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

HANK (CONT'D)

Bein' a Tuesday night, it's kinda slow, so I can tell you the whole story. You're in for a treat cuz I've kissed the ever-lovin' Blarney Stone tonight.

DISSOLVE TO:

2 INT. SULLIVAN'S TAP & EATING ESTABLISHMENT - MOMENTS
LATER

2

HANK

(approaching)

Here you are: one Guinness, fresh from the tap.

He puts the glass down at the "customer's" table.

HANK

Do you mind if I sit with ya?. . . Thanks. These dogs of mine are gettin' old.

He sits.

HANK

Ah, much better.

(beat)

Now, where were we? Oh, yes. You wanted to hear about the big day. Well, fortunately for you, most of the main players are here tonight.

(beat)

The big guy behind the bar, the one in the vest - that's Sully himself. No doubt you saw his picture in the papers or on the idiot box. The guy with the curly red hair on the corner stool - that's Hondo. It was he who discovered the thing in the first place. And that skinny guy with the gray hair in the other corner, that's Patrick Muldoon.

(beat)

Where to begin? I've told this story so many times, but I'm always wonderin' if I can tell it better.

(longish beat)

Beer nuts?. . . No? OK.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HANK (CONT'D)

(sighs)

Well, it was back in February it was, not too long before good, old St. Patrick's Day. Sully had hired Hondo to get rid of some empty, crumblin', wooden wine racks down in the basement so he - Sully, that is - could use the space for storage in anticipation of the big holiday. Well, it was around 5:00 p.m. when Hondo, who was gettin' set to knock off for the day, came up carryin'. . . the bottle itself.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SULLIVAN'S TAP & EATING ESTABLISHMENT - FLASHBACK -
EVENING

SULLY is tending bar as HONDO comes up from the basement, closing the door behind him.

HONDO

It's quitting time, Sully.

SULLY

So it is. Where has the day gone?

(beat)

How about a pint for the road,
Hondo? On the house.

HONDO

I don't mind if I do. That's
thirsty work I'm doing down in
your basement.

Hondo sits down at the bar.

SULLY

I'm sure it is, and I'm grateful,
old friend.

HONDO

Let's see if you're still grateful
when you get my bill.

Sully places the glass of beer on the bar.

SULLY

(chuckles)

Here ya are.

(CONTINUED)

HONDO

Ah, come to papa!
(drinks and smacks
his lips)
Nectar of the gods, that is.

SULLY

Did you run into any trouble
downstairs?

HONDO

A few splinters maybe. Nothing I
can't handle.
(beat)
Will you be wanting the old wood
from those racks?

SULLY

No. I was gonna toss it out. Why?

HONDO

I was thinking I'd bring it home
for my wood stove. It should burn
nicely.

SULLY

It's all yours.

HONDO

How old are those wine racks down
there?

SULLY

I'm not sure. Pretty old. I don't
know how some of them are still
standing.

HONDO

A few of them are so old that they
fell apart when I *breathed* on
them.

SULLY

With your breath, I don't wonder.

HONDO

(chuckles)
Good one.
(beat)
How long has this place been a
pub?

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

No one really knows. Before it was Sully's, it was O'Brien's, and before that, it was Finnegan's. I know those wine racks were down there in Ian O'Brien's time because I used to work for him. In all my years tending bar for him, I don't think I ever got anything out of that wine cellar.

HONDO

Then this belongs to you.

Hondo places a dusty wine bottle on the bar.

SULLY

A bottle of wine? Where'd you find this?

HONDO

It was in one of the racks. It kind of flipped up in the air when I started pulling the wood apart. I caught it just before it hit the floor. Would have made quite a mess.

SULLY

Thanks. Let's see what we have here.

Sully blows some dust away from the bottle and rubs the label with his finger.

SULLY

(fumbling with the
pronunciation)
La Caprice Ordo. 1979.

HONDO

Put on your glasses.

SULLY

Alright.

Sully takes his reading glasses from his vest pocket and puts them on.

SULLY

Hmmm. 1779.

(CONTINUED)

HONDO

That wine is more than *two hundred* years old.

SULLY

Wow! You know some people have said that there's been a pub on this spot since the time of the American Revolution. I guess they're right.

(beat)

I wonder how this bottle went unnoticed for so long.

HONDO

It had kinda slipped down between the racks. I'd wager that no one has seen it for *years*.

(beat)

Well, it's found now, and she's all yours. A lucky catch, that was.

A tall, thin stranger, KAYE, approaches.

KAYE

(approaching)

Excuse me, Mr. Sullivan. Did you say that you have a bottle of wine that is over two hundred years old?

SULLY

That's right. Hondo found it down in the wine cellar.

KAYE

(eagerly)

You have a wine cellar?

SULLY

It's empty - has been for years. Hondo has been tearing down the racks for me.

KAYE

Is it suitably cool in this wine cellar, Mr. Hondo?

HONDO

(chuckles)

Hondo's the first name. The last name's MacGruder.

(CONTINUED)

KAYE

My apologies, sir.

(beat)

Is the wine cellar *cool*?

HONDO

Yeah. There's a little nip to it.
Why?

KAYE

Marvelous! Wine keeps much better
in suitable temperatures.

(beat)

Forgive me. I have forgotten my
manners: My name is Reginald Kaye.
Perhaps you've heard of me. I am a
noted oenophile.

SULLY

(longish beat)

You mean you don't believe in God?

KAYE

(chuckles)

Very witty, Mr. Sullivan. Very
witty indeed.

(beat)

No, an oenophile is a connoisseur
of fine wines. Might I see the
bottle please?

SULLY

Sure. Here you are.

Sully hands the bottle to Kaye.

KAYE

Thank you.

(longish beat)

Ah, yes. It is *quite* authentic.
What a rare find! Most genuine.

HONDO

That's good to know.

KAYE

Notice the crescent moon on the
label. That was the symbol of this
vineyard.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KAYE (CONT'D)

The bottle and the cork appear to be completely intact - even after two centuries. Marvelous!
Marvelous!

SULLY

Glad you like it.

KAYE

Point of fact: The ink used on the label is actually made from grape residue. The owners of this vineyard let nothing go to waste.

SULLY

Are they still around?

KAYE

Alas, no. They closed in the mid-1800s. Quite a loss to the wine world.

HONDO

The name sounds French.

KAYE

It is.

HONDO

How did it get here?

KAYE

I heard you mention the longevity of this building as a pub - perhaps all the way back to the American Revolution. The bottle dates from approximately that time. The French did assist the early Americans during our war with England. I can only assume this wine came over from France during that time.

(longish beat)

The contents of this bottle must be *ambrosia*!

SULLY

You're welcome to some, Mr. Kaye. I was going to chill it in the fridge for a day or so. Then Hondo and I were gonna have a snort.

(CONTINUED)

KAYE

(aghast)

Please no! One does not *snort* two hundred-year-old wine.

SULLY

One doesn't?

KAYE

No. It is meant to be savored. First, its bouquet must be inhaled through the nostrils and appreciated to heighten the senses.

HONDO

You ain't one of those wine lovers who goes around swishing the stuff in their mouths and then spitting it out, are ya?

KAYE

I *have* been known to do that on occasion.

HONDO

That always seemed like such a waste to me.

KAYE

Certainly not. The appreciation of a fine vintage is a skill that must be honed.

SULLY

Spitting is a skill?

KAYE

Mr. Sullivan, might I convince you to part with that bottle?

SULLY

You want it?

KAYE

Indeed I do. I'll give you a thousand dollars for it.

SULLY

(astonished)

A thousand bucks?! For one bottle?

(CONTINUED)

KAYE

If there are more down in the wine cellar, I will happily purchase them as well.

SULLY

Hondo?

HONDO

No. Just this one. I didn't see any others.

KAYE

What do you say, sir? I'll write you a check right here. If you prefer cash, my bank is down the street.

SULLY

Are you sure of this? A thousand bucks for one bottle of wine?

KAYE

Most certain.

SULLY

You've got a -

A rotund stranger, WILSON, approaches and interrupts Sully.

WILSON

Two thousand dollars!

HONDO

(astonished)

Two grand???

KAYE

(upset)

Wilson, I should have known you'd be here to try to squelch my moment of glory.

WILSON

And it's a good thing I am. To think that you were going to cheat this humble barkeep of such a rare bottle for a mere thousand dollars. Shame, Reginald!

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

Were you trying to cheat old
Sully?

KAYE

Certainly not!

WILSON

Lamont Wilson, at your service,
Mr. Sullivan.

SULLY

Hiya. This is Hondo. He found the
bottle.

HONDO

How ya doin'?

WILSON

Charmed.

(beat)

May I see the bottle?

SULLY

Sure.

Sully takes the bottle from a reluctant Kaye and hands it
to Wilson.

KAYE

I've already looked it over and
pronounced it sound, Wilson.

WILSON

And since when do I or anyone in
the Wine League of Boston trust
your judgment?

KAYE

(angrily)

You dirty -

WILSON

My offer stands, sir. Two thousand
dollars.

SULLY

For one -

KAYE

Three thousand.

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

Four thousand.

KAYE

Five thousand dollars!

SULLY

Whoa! Hold on here, gents. It's not that I don't appreciate the offers. I do! But this is getting out of hand.

WILSON

Six thousand dollars!

HONDO

What is up with you two? You obviously know each other. Aren't you friends?

KAYE

(chuckles)

Friends? Bah!

WILSON

Perhaps briefly in our boyhood years, but not now.

KAYE

(authoritatively)

There are no friendships in the world of wine.

SULLY

That's too bad.

WILSON

If you must know, Reginald and I have always been rivals in the field of wine appreciation. At one time, his reputation was stellar . . . unparalleled.

KAYE

(surprised)

At one time?

WILSON

But since the cabernet incident of 2013. . . well. . .

(chuckles)

. . . need I go on?

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

There are rival wine drinkers?

KAYE

We are not merely wine *drinkers*, Mr. Sullivan. We appreciate all things wine. The firm spring of some unpicked grapes ripening in the morning sun. The slow application of the label onto the bottle. The first whiff of the pleasure that awaits the palate once the cork is so delicately withdrawn from its bottle. All of these things and more make the senses sing out for joy in remembrance of that first day of creation when God Himself made the grape.

SULLY

That was on the first day?

KAYE

I believe so.

(beat)

My bid is now seven thousand dollars.

SULLY

Guys, I need you both to cool your jets for a minute.

WILSON

I beg your pardon?

SULLY

I need you two to calm down. Take a breather.

(beat)

Couldn't you two share this bottle?

WILSON

Absolutely not!

KAYE

Perish the thought!

WILSON

The very idea that I should lower myself to. . .

(CONTINUED)

KAYE

That is impossible.

SULLY

Being a gentleman, I just thought I'd ask.

(beat)

So this little bottle is a very important *objet d'art*, huh?

KAYE

Most assuredly so. Why would we be bidding such figures if it were not?

WILSON

Eight thousand dollars!

HONDO

(amazed)

Holy cow, Sully!

SULLY

Gentlemen, if this is such a rare thing, I need to promote it before I sell it.

KAYE

I don't understand.

SULLY

I'll bet that some of the local news people would love to hear the story of the two hundred-year-old bottle of wine that was found at Sully's Tap.

HONDO

Good thinking, Sul.

WILSON

(begging)

Please don't.

SULLY

Why not? It'll be good publicity for the joint. It's not every day something like this happens. It'll bring in thirsty mouths.

KAYE

But publicity will *also* bring out other, less-reputable bidders.

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

Precisely.

HONDO

He's got a point.

SULLY

I hadn't thought of that.

(beat)

Tell you what: I give you my word that I won't sell this bottle to anyone else if you two do what I say.

KAYE

You promise?

HONDO

Sully's word is his bond. You can take that to the bank.

WILSON

How long will you need for this publicity campaign?

SULLY

I would think a week, maybe two.

WILSON

Two weeks?

SULLY

I'll keep the bottle safe for you.

KAYE

Could it be put back in the wine cellar from whence it came?

SULLY

Sure.

WILSON

Under guard?

HONDO

(chuckles)

Guard? Are you kidding?

WILSON

The publicity campaign is bound to bring some undesired attention to the bottle.

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

Don't you get your feathers ruffled, Mr. Wilson. Aside from a few bar fights after some football games that didn't turn out the way some of my patrons wanted them to, Sully's has never had any problems, and we're not about to start. I can deal with anything the publicity sends my way.

WILSON

Very well. I trust your business acumen, of course.

KAYE

Likewise.

SULLY

There's only one problem I see.

WILSON

(upset; quickly)
Problem?

KAYE

(upset)
What. . . what problem?

SULLY

The way you two have been throwing around the bucks, it's clear to me that you're gonna keep one-upping each other so you can own this bottle.

WILSON

You can count on me for a thousand dollars more than whatever this *charlatan* bids.

KAYE

(upset)
Charlatan? I will always outbid Wilson, Mr. Sullivan. I urge you to choose me for this delightful vintage. I did approach you about it *first*, after all.

SULLY

See what I mean? You two used to be friends.

(CONTINUED)

KAYE

We were young and foolish. We're more mature now.

WILSON

Our palates are much more discriminating, as are our tastes with whom our time is spent.

SULLY

There's going to have to be some other component to this sale - more than just the money - so I can make my decision.

WILSON

What are you suggesting?

SULLY

I'm not sure yet. I'll let you know when I am.

DISSOLVE TO:

HANK

(still telling the
"customer" the
story)

And so, the publicity campaign began. I think Sully was a trifle overwhelmed by the attention. Everyone wanted to see the bottle, to *touch* the bottle. At least a half a dozen other people contacted Sully about buyin' the wine, but he had promised it to either Mr. Kaye or Mr. Wilson, and he stuck to his word, as was his habit.

(beat)

I remember one day when this pretty young reporter, I think her name was Shelby, came in to interview Sully about the bottle. Oh, the pub was in a commotion that night! Lights everywhere, people tryin' to lean into the camera shot so they could wave to their friends at home.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

4

HANK (CONT'D)

Sully even got a shave and a haircut for the event - somethin' he was not prone to do.

DISSOLVE TO:

5

INT. SULLIVAN'S TAP & EATING ESTABLISHMENT - FLASHBACK -
LATER

5

A news crew has set up and all the bar patrons are excited.

LAURA SHELBY, a blonde in a business suit, stands before a TV camera with Sully behind her, tending bar.

SHELBY

This is Laura Shelby reporting live from Sullivan's Tap & Eating Establishment on Boylston Street with news of the rare bottle of La Caprice Ordo, 1779, that was found in this pub's dilapidated wine cellar the other day. I'm here with the pub's proprietor, Mr. Eugene Sullivan. Good evening, sir.

SULLY

Good evening, Miss Shelby. You're looking lovely tonight.

SHELBY

Thank you. You. . . you flatter me.

SULLY

I might have the gift of gab, young lady, but I always speak the truth.

SHELBY

(uneasily; hurriedly)
Unfortunately, our time is limited. Can we please get to the odd discovery here the other day?

SULLY

It was Hondo here who found it. I hired him to take apart some old wine racks down in the cellar so I could have more storage.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SULLY (CONT'D)

By the way, Hondo's a great guy. .
. and *single*.

HONDO

(seductively)
I certainly am. . . and pretty
well off.

SHELBY

(uneasily)
That's. . . uhm. . . nice to
know.

SULLY

Hondo's Demolition and Takeaway.
He's in the phone book.

(beat)
Anyway, the bottle turned out to
be a two hundred-plus-year-old
French wine.

SHELBY

How did it get here?

SULLY

Speculation is that it came over
from France while they were
helping us in our war against
England.

SHELBY

I understand the bottle is well
preserved.

SULLY

Oh yeah! Nothing but the best here
at Sully's. I brought it out to
show you. Here.

Sully hands the bottle to Shelby. She looks at it
admiringly.

SHELBY

(beat)
My! To hold something so old in my
hands. Living history.

HONDO

That's what it is.

(CONTINUED)

SHELBY

(uneasily)

Please take it back. I'm. . . I'm
afraid I'll drop it.

Sully retrieves the bottle.

SULLY

I've got it, little lady. Safe and
sound.

SHELBY

I understand you've received some
impressive offers for the bottle.

SULLY

I have. Modesty prevents me from
mentioning the figures, but they'd
make a pretty young thing like you
blush.

SHELBY

And the wine is *drinkable* after
all these years?

SULLY

So I'm told. Two of Boston's most
noted wine guys have looked over
the bottle and pronounced it
sound.

SHELBY

Will you be selling the bottle to
one of them?

SULLY

I will be.

SHELBY

Even with the other wine lovers
who have contacted you with their
own offers?

SULLY

I gave those two gentlemen my
word, and I'm a man of my word.

SHELBY

When will the sale take place?

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

In a week or so. . . after I'm done with all the publicity. I'm still working out the details.

SHELBY

Perhaps we could get the full story once the sale takes place?

SULLY

I don't see why not. I'd be pleased to have you grace my pub again.

SHELBY

For Eyewitness News, this is Laura Sh-

SULLY

Just a moment, miss.

SHELBY

Yes?

SULLY

I only wanted to add that Sullivan's Tap & Eating Establishment at 254 Tremont Street is open every day from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. New customers get a free first drink - their choice.

SHELBY

That's very kind of you.

SULLY

It's the way we do business here. We're always looking for new friends. Come one, come all. Don't be shy.

SHELBY

For Eyewitness News, this is Laura Shelby reporting from Sullivan's Tap & Eating Establishment on Tremont Street in downtown Boston. Back to you, Nick and Susan, at the anchor desk.

DISSOLVE TO:

6

INT. SULLIVAN'S TAP & EATING ESTABLISHMENT - LATER

6

HANK

(speaking to the
"customer")

Are you good with your drink?. . .
OK.

(beat)

Anyway, the publicity brought in a lot of new customers. Things have, of course, quieted down some now. On weekend nights, this joint is hoppin'! You can hardly muscle your way to the bar. Sully was very pleased with all the good press one little bottle of wine had brought him. But, as the day neared for the sale to either Mr. Kaye or Mr. Wilson, I noticed Sully growin'. . . *agitated*. If the sale was strictly for money, those two would one-up each other until the cows came home. No, Sully had to have some other ingredient to the sale. . . somethin' that would help him make a definite decision in favor of one of those two guys.

(longish beat)

The last piece of the puzzle came to him one night when Patrick Muldoon - that very same man sittin' right over there sippin' his Guinness - came in and sat down on a stool. He was lookin' a little down in the mouth.

DISSOLVE TO:

7

INT. SULLIVAN'S TAP & EATING ESTABLISHMENT - FLASHBACK -
LATER

7

MULDOON is sitting morosely at the bar. Sully approaches him.

SULLY

What's up, Pat?

MULDOON

(depressed)

Oh, you don't want to know.

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

Sure I do. Why would I have asked?

MULDOON

(beat)

Well. . .

SULLY

It's part of the creed.

MULDOON

What creed?

SULLY

The bartenders' creed. We're supposed to serve drinks and lend an ear. We're kind of like psychiatrists with liquor licenses.

MULDOON

They're the best kind.

SULLY

If I didn't listen to customers' problems - especially *loyal* customers like you - they'd throw me out of the union.

Sully pulls Muldoon a beer and places it on the bar.

SULLY

Now what's up?

MULDOON

(longish beat; sighs)

I got canned today.

SULLY

Geez, I'm sorry to hear that. You've been working there for a long time.

MULDOON

Fifteen years.

SULLY

That drink's on the house.

MULDOON

Thanks, Sully.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MULDOON (CONT'D)

I'm gonna have to find something soon. My girl's college expenses aren't gonna wait. I can't pay for that school with my good looks, that's for darn sure.

SULLY

You know, old friend - in case I haven't told you lately - I've always admired the way you picked yourself up after your dear wife passed on. Strength! That's what it is.

MULDOON

Thanks you, but I didn't have much of a choice, what with my girl. Did I want to curl up into a ball and cry for a long, long time? Sure I did, but my Joanie was depending on me. I couldn't let her down.

SULLY

She's lucky to have a dad who's so devoted. I don't know if I could do what you've done if my Cheryl passed on.

MULDOON

It's not like I had a choice. You'd be surprised what you can do if you have to.

DISSOLVE TO:

HANK

(talking to the
"customer")

And so, with that conversation, Sully seized on the second half of the sale. He knew what the two wine lovers would need to do in addition to forkin' over the greenbacks.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HANK (CONT'D)

At the end of the two-week publicity campaign, he called Mr. Kaye and Mr. Wilson to his office at the bar and laid out the conditions.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SULLY'S OFFICE AT THE BAR - FLASHBACK - EVENING

Sully, Kaye, and Wilson are in Sully's office.

KAYE

That doesn't seem reasonable, Mr. Sullivan.

WILSON

I find myself forced to agree with Mr. Kaye. Shouldn't we just be able to bid and bid until one of us drops out?

SULLY

No. This bottle of wine the two of you want so badly is *my* possession. I can set any price on it I please. If I told you that the bottle would go to whoever did the best chicken imitation, you'd be obliged to do that.

KAYE

Of course we would.

SULLY

Well, what I'm asking is much simpler.

WILSON

I don't know about this.

SULLY

You're free to drop out, Mr. Wilson. Both of you are. I'm ignoring better offers because of the promise I made to the two of you two weeks back. If I choose to, I'll pour the wine down the drain right in front of your eyes. That should get rid of that pesky clog.

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

(urgently)
Don't do that!

KAYE

(upset)
Sacrilege! You wouldn't?

SULLY

Wouldn't I?

KAYE

He'd do it.

WILSON

Agreed.

SULLY

Well?

WILSON

But I don't even know who Patrick
Muldoon *is*.

SULLY

That's part of the plan. I don't
want him to know who you two are.
I don't want him to know I've sent
you.

KAYE

This is a rather *bizarre*
condition. You have to admit that.

SULLY

(taunting)
Mr. Wine, meet Mr. Drain.

WILSON

(very upset)
Don't anger him, Kaye, you idiot!

KAYE

(quickly)
I'm sorry. Very sorry.

SULLY

(longish beat)
Apology accepted. So you agree to
the terms of sale?

DISSOLVE TO:

10

INT. SULLIVAN'S TAP & EATING ESTABLISHMENT - LATER

10

HANK

And so it was agreed: the wine would be sold to the man who offered the better bid *and* did the best thing to improve the life of sorrowful Patrick Muldoon. . . Yes, that's him right there. . . How's that?. . . He's doin' better now. You still OK with that drink?. . . Peanuts?. . . OK. They're right there, if you want them.

(beat)

Alrighty then. Let's be gettin' back to the story.

(beat)

It was a few days later that a very confused Patrick Muldoon bellied up to the bar.

DISSOLVE TO:

11

INT. SULLIVAN'S TAP & EATING ESTABLISHMENT - FLASHBACK -
LATER

11

A confused Muldoon is sitting at the bar. Sully approaches him.

SULLY

Guinness, Pat?

MULDOON

(distracted)

Please.

SULLY

If you don't mind my asking, friend, are you feeling well?

MULDOON

I'm fine, Sully. Thanks. Just. . . confused.

Sully draws the beer from the tap and places it on the bar.

SULLY

Here ya are. That should be good for whatever ails ya.

(CONTINUED)

MULDOON

Thank you.

SULLY

What's confusing you? Tell me.

MULDOON

(after a sip)

I've had some. . . *mysterious*
things happen lately.

SULLY

Bad things?

MULDOON

Oh no. Very good things, as a
matter of fact.

SULLY

Then that's OK.

MULDOON

Good, but confusing: Someone paid
Joanie's tuition for me. Just
stepped off the elevator at her
college, pulled out a wad of bills
that could choke a horse, and paid
every dime. Didn't give his name;
just paid and left. The lady at
the financial office called me.
She couldn't believe it!

SULLY

You don't say?

MULDOON

And somebody sent me a mess of
groceries. Good stuff, not the
store brands I'd get. I won't need
to go near the market for months.
Then yesterday, a guy plowed my
driveway. He said someone had paid
for it.

SULLY

It sounds like you have a secret
admirer. Can't you just be
grateful and accept what's
happened?

(CONTINUED)

MULDOON

Don't get me wrong. I *am* grateful
and accepting. It's just my. . .
my pride.

SULLY

I had forgotten what a prideful
man you are.

MULDOON

It's always been tough for me to
accept charity from anyone - even
a pal like you. You remember back
when my dear wife passed? Do you
recall what you wanted to do for
me?

SULLY

I wanted to loan you some dough
until you got back on your feet.

MULDOON

That's right, and I turned you
down.

SULLY

That you did.

MULDOON

And that was as low as I've ever
been. I'm low now, but not so
much.

Kaye and Wilson slowly approach Sully and Muldoon.

SULLY

(sotto voce)
I didn't think of that.

MULDOON

What was that?

KAYE

Good evening, Mr. Sullivan.

WILSON

It's the big day, isn't it?

MULDOON

What are they talking about?

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

Pat, I'd like you to meet Mr. Kaye
and Mr. Wilson - your benefactors.

KAYE

Pleased to finally meet you, Mr.
Muldoon.

WILSON

Charmed, sir.

MULDOON

You paid for Joanie at the
college?

WILSON

Guilty as charged.

MULDOON

And the groceries?

KAYE

That was my doing.

MULDOON

The snowplow?

WILSON

Me again. I have always abhorred
manual labor, and I understand
that your back is rather delicate.

KAYE

Have you received the fruit
baskets yet?

MULDOON

Baskets?

KAYE

Maybe when you get home?

MULDOON

(confused)

Wh. . . why?

KAYE

Mr. Sullivan?

SULLY

(sighs)

I'm afraid it's my doing, Pat. My
. . . fault.

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

I'd hardly call this a fault.

MULDOON

You, Sully? Why?

SULLY

You heard about the bottle of wine?

MULDOON

Of course. Who hasn't?

SULLY

Well, both of these guys want to buy it, and the offers were flying fast and furious. I knew they'd just keep one-upping each other unless I added an extra condition to the sale. When you came in after being canned, I figured that doing something good for you should be the other half of the equation.

MULDOON

So, gentlemen, all these good things you did for me: the tuition, the groceries, the snowplow. . .

KAYE

Don't forget the fruit baskets!

MULDOON

All of this was so you could buy that bottle of wine?

KAYE

Precisely.

WILSON

Very true.

SULLY

(meekly)

I'm sorry, Pat. I forgot about your pride. I. . . I thought I was doing a good thing.

(CONTINUED)

MULDOON

(sighs)
Don't worry about it, old friend.
Your heart was in the right place.

WILSON

So, Mr. Sullivan, is this ordeal
now at an end?

SULLY

It is.

WILSON

Then I bid ten thousand dollars
for the bottle of La Caprice Ordo.

SULLY

Sold!

WILSON

Splendid!

KAYE

I object! You didn't give me time
to counterbid. I offer -

SULLY

No more bidding! Ten thousand
bucks has been bid and accepted.

WILSON

(smugly)
Too bad, Reginald. I'll think of
you *momentarily* when I partake of
this excellent vintage.

KAYE

This is unfair!

WILSON

Enough of your bellyaching. Mr.
Sullivan has made his decision.
Bravo, sir.

(beat)

Will you accept a personal check
for ten thousand dollars?

SULLY

Five thousand.

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

(confused)

But *ten* thousand was my accepted bid.

SULLY

And that's what I'll get: Five thousand from you and five thousand from Mr. Kaye.

WILSON

What?

SULLY

I'm selling you each *half* of the bottle.

WILSON

But my bid was for the *entire* bottle.

SULLY

I know that, and half of your bid - which is what I'm accepting - will get you *half* the bottle.

KAYE

What's going on here?

SULLY

It was Pat who gave me the idea.

MULDOON

Me? What did I do?

SULLY

You called me "old friend." Then it hit me that these two wine lovers need to be friends again, and I can think of no better way for that to happen than over that old bottle.

WILSON

Unfair!

KAYE

I must protest!

WILSON

You doth protest too much, Kaye.

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

See, this is what I mean. You were friends once. Why be like this now?

WILSON

We've already explained that to you.

KAYE

I refuse to feign friendship with this troglodyte for half a bottle of that wine!

WILSON

Likewise.

SULLY

OK then. I've had other offers . . . and *higher* offers.

WILSON

You wouldn't?

SULLY

Watch me.

KAYE

But your promise to sell only to us. . .

SULLY

Was valid if you obeyed my terms - which you're not doing.

KAYE

This isn't fair!

SULLY

That's my offer, and it is my wine. Each of you can have half of the bottle for five thousand dollars. Take it or leave it.

KAYE

(quickly)
I'll take it.

WILSON

(eagerly)
Me too.

(CONTINUED)

SULLY

Good. Once your checks have cleared and you've proven to me that you're friends again, the wine is yours. You can work out a place to enjoy it together. Maybe right here?

WILSON

When will that be?

SULLY

You're both in here pretty often. I'll be watching you. I'll know when you're *really* friends and can share the bottle.

(beat)

Don't try any funny stuff. I have a very good B.S. detector.

KAYE

I'm. . . not sure I know how to be friends with. . . *him*.

MULDOON

You could take a page from Sully's and my book. We've been pals for years.

WILSON

I don't know if such a relationship is possible.

SULLY

If you want the wine, it'd better be.

KAYE

I suppose we could be. . . *civil*.

SULLY

That would be a start.

MULDOON

Why don't you do something friends do together?

KAYE

Like what?

MULDOON

Go to the game together. The Patriots are -

(CONTINUED)

WILSON

Sports? Perish the thought!

SULLY

The symphony?

KAYE

Now *that's* a possibility.

WILSON

But I choose the performance.

KAYE

We'll *both* choose.

(longish beat)

What will happen to the wine until
we're. . .

MULDOON

Pals?

KAYE

(gulps)

Precisely.

SULLY

I'll keep it down in the wine
cellar. It will be safe and well
chilled.

KAYE

(alarmed)

But with the work that Mr. Hondo
is doing down -

SULLY

I'll make sure he knows about it.
The bottle will come to no harm.

(beat)

Shouldn't you two friends be
going?

DISSOLVE TO:

HANK

(still talking to the
"customer")

And that brings us to the present
. . .

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HANK (CONT'D)

No, Kaye and Wilson are still tryin' to learn how to be friends. I guess some people take longer than others.

(beat)

How's that?. . . The bottle is safe and sound in what's left of the wine cellar, just waitin' to be drunk. Hondo's all finished down there, and Sully has moved in his stock in preparation for St. Patrick's Day. The wine will be ready for those two guys as soon as Sully deems them friends.

(beat)

So, that's the story.

(longish beat)

Would you like some fruit? Muldoon sent over those baskets Kaye sent him. You should see all the fruit! We're lousy with it!

FADE TO BLACK.