

# ***Embers That Remain***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

<u>DALLAS</u> :	45
<u>ADAM</u> :	27
<u>SMITTY GREEN</u> :	60's
<u>ELEANOR</u> :	75+

Place  
The Dallas Bar

Time  
Morning

2.

Setting: The play takes place inside a real broken down, seedy, dimly lit bar that's almost a complete throwback to a western era. Everything's wooden, the bar, the tables, chairs, the floor and walls as well.

At Rise: The play opens up with Adam (bartender) cleaning down the bar counter when Smitty Green enters the bar.

SMITTY: Where's Dallas?

ADAM: I ain't seen her all mornin' Smitty.

SMITTY: She ain't come downstairs yet?

ADAM: I knocked on her door, no answer.

SMITTY: You go inside?

ADAM: I peaked through, she was gone, no note, no nothin'.

SMITTY: She knew I was comin'.

ADAM: Can I fix you a drink?

SMITTY: Just my regular scotch or maybe something smoother if you've got it.

ADAM makes drink.

SMITTY strolls around the bar.

This place has been rotting from the inside for years, hasn't it?

ADAM: Oh now, it needs some repair but you know, it gets the job done.

SMITTY: Those drunken bastards don't know the difference between this place or staying at the Ritz.

ADAM: Yeah. Dallas likes us to keep the lights dim.

SMITTY touches a table.

SMITTY: Golly, she still using the same furniture she took over from the last guy, and the fella 'fore him. This table here...(bends over to read inscription on wooden table) G.W. Griswald. Still there. Know who he was? That there was a Jesse James type. He was just startin' to grow in fame when they shot him down sleeping inside a cargo train for theft. This table's probably worth more than this whole building.

ADAM: Had no idea.

SMITTY: Course you didn't...there's too many hidden secrets 'round here, no one will ever know about.

ADAM hands SMITTY his drink.

ADAM: Here, this will go down well...

SMITTY: What you gonna do?

ADAM: About what?

SMITTY: Leaving this here place?

ADAM: Haven't really thought that all through.

SMITTY: Ah well, better get thinking. This place ain't gonna stand much longer. I'm throwing Dallas out.

ADAM: When?

SMITTY: Today.

ADAM: Times have been rough.

SMITTY: Don't I know it.

SMITTY downs his drink.

ADAM: There ain't nothin' you could do to---

SMITTY: Nope! She already had half a year.

Enter DALLAS.

SMITTY turns around.

SMITTY: There she is!

DALLAS: Okay, Smitty.

SMITTY: You got my money?

DALLAS: What do you think?

SMITTY: I think I'm about to put locks on your doors.

DALLAS: So be it.

SMITTY: Alright, then. No fighting, no cursing, straight up facing the truth. I like that.

DALLAS: Hurry up and get it over with.

SMITTY puts locks on front doors.

SMITTY: I'll go out the back. No hard feelings?

DALLAS: How long have I got in my living quarters?

SMITTY: Today.

DALLAS: You put locks on the goddamn doors, Smitty, at least give me some time to pack my things.

SMITTY: No.

DALLAS: You're a real bastard.

SMITTY: And here I thought you were a lady.

DALLAS: Fuck off.

SMITTY: (laughs) I've been told worse.

DALLAS: I'm sure you have.

SMITTY: I'll be goin' now. You have until midnight. I'll be circling back this way and I'll expect you to be gone. No fussing cause I don't wanna have to call in the authorities and make a stink. Nothin' worse than the stench of gossip. I like things done quiet, simple like...right??

DALLAS: Do I have a choice?

SMITTY: (laughs)

SMITTY strolls out the place.

ADAM: What you gonna do, Dal?

DALLAS: Nothin' I can do.

ADAM: I never thought he'd really lock us down.

DALLAS: You don't know Smitty Green.

ADAM: No, I guess I don't.

DALLAS: That son'a bitch has ruled this tiny town since I was a little girl. Always creepin' up on people from the shadows. He's a sleazy man, no character in him...always gettin' over on desperate people. Always taken advantage of those that don't have much...never liked him one bit. Only reason why I decided to take on this shabby den, was on account that he gave me a shady good deal. Know what a shady good deal is? It's a deal you can't get anywhere else in order to get up and runnin', but in the long run you get shafted because the consequences of it are so outlandish, you have no way of ever making any real money in return. It all goes to the person who got you started. I was screwed from day one but I hoped on it, I thought I'd be different, I'd be the one to beat him at his own game...boy was I wrong. Should have known better than to deal with Smitty Green. Reputation doesn't lie. I was warned, I didn't listen...I wanted to beat him so damn bad, I could taste it.

DALLAS (cont'd): Cut every corner, every which way I could...waste of all them precious years. I shoulda known better. It's the damndest thing to put your heart and soul into something you believe in, with all your might, to then see it fail miserably by greed.

Maybe I've been greedy, too...maybe my dreams became delusion...at what point does hope become fiction? One time I'd like to see that man lose! But even then, I know he won't be humbled. Oh no, he'd be the type that would only grow worse from where he stands. Some of us go through the dirt and find humility, others become filthier than when they started and not for any good reason other than they don't give a rotten damn about anyone but themselves. Isn't that sickening? I'm to blame. And I've been humbled. Should have thought about what I coulda given rather than what I coulda taken...see? I failed myself. Ain't nothin' worse in life than failing yourself. Better to lose to someone else, ain't half as bad as losing to yourself. And I lost. I lost. I lost everything...and I wonder if it was all for nothin'...

ADAM: I do see where you're comin' from and all Dal but if it weren't for you I'd a been livin' on the street, you know, my, my daughter wouldn't have a roof over her head and that's all on account a you. The day I stepped foot in here and you put me on washing them dishes was the greatest day a my life cause I was able to provide. Provide for her. Not much, but provide to what mattered most, my baby girl and that's on account a you. So, ah, you can't forget me when you say them things, without you, I, I don't know what coulda happened to me and Mary Lou.

DALLAS: Yeah, well that's true. I can't argue with that.

ADAM: And you did more than that! What about all them people in town who come here, if not to have a drink but to have a laugh or share a story with you. You were all their mothers. Hell, you became a mother to all of us, Dallas.

DALLAS: No, no.

ADAM: You did. We depended on you because you always had our back. Whenever something went wrong, you were the one to help us pick up the pieces. If that ain't something special, if that ain't something that counts, I don't know what does. Here's a woman, always in the business of counting hearts, not money.

DALLAS: And that's why I'm dead broke.

ADAM: Yeah, but you have something far greater than that. Don't you think? You've mattered to so many people, you affected so many lives, Dallas. There ain't no amount a money that can ever make up that difference.

DALLAS: Well, thank you Adam, you've always been a sweet young man and I appreciate your words. Just hard to hear 'em right now is all. I knew I was losing this place but I didn't imagine how I'd feel and I feel pretty bad.

ADAM: Lemme fix you up.

DALLAS: No, no, don't feel like a---

ADAM: Just one drink is all. It'll do you some good.

DALLAS: Fine. One drink and I'll be off packing.

Enter ELEANOR, an elderly lady who wears what was once expensive clothing, reduced to a worn and faded appearance. She slowly moves her way in from the back entrance.

ELEANOR (hesitant): ...I was scared to come in.

DALLAS: Eleanor, what you doin' here love?

ELEANOR: I saw the padlocks on them front doors. We all knew it was time but then it finally happened. How you doin' dearie face?

DALLAS: As good as I can be.

ELEANOR: I won't stay long. I want to give this to you...it's a collection from all of us...you know who we are...it's a little somethin' to get you on your way, help you rise up the way you've always been to us...we love you.

DALLAS breaks down crying.

ELEANOR embraces her.

Oh dearie me, dear. I know, I know...shhh, shhh, it's all gonna come together for you, I promise...shhh...

DALLAS: Sorry, that's not like me...I'm always the strong one...

ELEANOR: You are the strongest one. Come on, take this envelope off my hands, it's been making me a nervous wreck. Take it, take it.

DALLAS grabs hold of the envelope.

DALLAS: What the hell is this Eleanor? This is way more than I could have asked for.

ELEANOR: I don't want to hear a word more about it. Get yourself started. You need that, Dallas and listen here, you deserve it!

DALLAS: I can't thank you enough, Eleanor. You're all my family...I don't know what I'd do without you all now. I should get packing.

ELEANOR: Need some help?

DALLAS: No, no. I only have so much time.

ELEANOR: Okay darling...

DALLAS downs the shot ADAM left on the bar counter.

DALLAS smiles warmly to ELEANOR and leaves upstairs.

ELEANOR (to ADAM): Poor thing. Think she'll be alright?

ADAM: Well Mrs. Kline, I sure hope so. She's taking things pretty hard.

ELEANOR: What an angel of a woman. I'd like to pop Smitty Green right in his big green face!

ADAM: I know it.

ELEANOR: I'd like to give him a piece of my mind! If I was a bit younger, I'd beat him in the street like a stray dog.

ADAM: It's okay, Mrs. Kline...don't let it hurt you more. Would you like a drink?

ELEANOR: And be the last one served? Never. I'll be on my way.

ADAM: Good seeing you.

ELEANOR: Ba-bye.

ELEANOR exits.

ADAM wipes down the bar and pours himself a drink. He wanders over to the wooden table with the G.W. Griswald inscription and bends over to see it...

LIGHTS SLOWLY FADE TO BLACK.

**END OF PLAY**