

## An excerpt from

### The Bar

by John E. Miller

“So, what’s on your mind, Alan?”

Alan looked a little surprised. “Well, if you don’t mind me asking, you took your time opening the door. I thought it was a little odd... Sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry. It’s another one of those Uncle John things. He warned me if I felt a bad vibe on the handle of the door not to open that day, just go home, it’s not a good day.... I should have listened to his advice earlier.”

Alan looks confused, but curious. “You know, I haven’t seen his door open and when I look in, nothing has been moved. The strangest thing is that there are what I believe to be dry dead flowers by the door. Loads of them.”

“Well, you would be right about that. Those are dead flowers. Uncle John has a lot of friends.”

“Your uncle seems like quite a colorful person.”

“You don’t know the half of it.”

*It was opening day. Jason got in early to make sure everything would be perfect. He was pleased with what he saw, but he still had butterflies in his stomach. He heard one of the double doors close, and turned quickly.*

*“Sorry, but we’re not open for awhile,” Jason spurted out automatically.*

*Jason saw that it was Uncle John. He was chuckling and carrying a sack.*

*“Sorry Uncle John, I didn’t notice it was you.”*

*“Don’t be sorry. Let me guess. You haven’t eaten a thing yet, have you?”*

*“No, I’ll grab me something a little later.”*

*“The hell you will. You won’t have time. Here, I brought you something to eat.”*

*Uncle John walked over to the first barstool to the left and sat down. Jason smiled and sat on the stool beside him.*

*“I brought you a burger and fries from the diner.”*

*“Thanks. Can I get you something?”*

*“Hmmm, I shouldn’t.”*

*“Like you said, never let your first customer leave, even if you have to give him your shirt.”*

*“I think your shirt’s a little too big for me. So I will just take a medicine.”*

*“A what?”*

*“Rum and coke. A Hanover’s Medicine. You best get your drinks down,” Uncle John laughed.*

*Jason walked behind the bar, realizing that Uncle John would always be his first customer of the day. Jason started pouring his drink.*

*“How did the handle feel?” Uncle John asked.*

*“Excuse me?”*

*“The handle to the door, when you first walked in.”*

*“Felt like a handle to me. Why, did you do something to it?”*

*“No,” Uncle John laughed, then turned serious. “If, for any reason, you feel a vibe from it, don’t open that day.”*

*Jason gave Uncle John a confused look, “You’re joking, right?”*

*“No, I’m dead serious. One day you will know that vibe.”*

*“I’ll keep that in mind.” Jason handed Uncle John the drink.*