

Greta Rainbow

My favorite bartenders:

~ Natalie: my best friend, a burlesque ballerina, a drag king, a clown, and a two-night-a-week barmaid at Sully's Snowgoose. Sully's is a neighborhood pub that looks like it's trying to imitate a Bavarian ski lodge. Beer and cider on tap, one kind of red wine and one kind of hard seltzer. It is a fixture of old Seattle. I remember being a kid, like 12 years old, when my dad's tight knit rec football team named the Bride of Frankenbean would go there sometimes after games. One of the wives asked one day, "*What is it about Sully's of all places?*" And after some prodding a husband admitted, "*The bartenders are unusually attractive.*" Natalie is!

~ The gay bartenders at Rialto Grande who didn't mind at all when we brought huge balloons onto the back patio for Will's 30th birthday, on a night when everyone else seemed to be having their birthday parties, too. But I had called ahead and they had reserved two tables; we were also the only ones with balloons.

~ Will, making concoctions in Connecticut: Mount Gay and soda, strawberry-infused Lillet, the perfect martini with a twist—perfect even though normally I prefer dirty.

~ My ex-boyfriend when he worked at The Fly and I could drink natty wine and eat a half chicken and fries for free. Not my ex-boyfriend when I ran into him bartending at The Marksman, across an ocean and years since we'd broken up. He made a stupid joke about spitting in our drinks that I know wasn't laced with any actual malice but still, it made me grimace into my murky red-brown cocktail.

~ Wright at Left Hand Path, no pun intended.

~ The punks at Tjili Pop.

~ The hippies on the island of Ikaria.

~ The Bad Luck Bar boys, but not because I know them well, just because they take good care of my girl Geneva.

~ The old couple at Gottscheer Hall who will get to you whenever they feel like. I must have waited half an hour once. It gets so loud in there, at the community center repurposed for yuppies who've just moved to Queens—you have to be laser-focused, you can't talk to whoever's jammed in next to you, so you stand boring holes with your eyes into the pyramid of little Underbergs thinking, *"That'll do."*

~ That one awesome guy at Casetta, the bar that we have dubbed the room of requirement, who told me my trench coat was a good purchase.

~ Metrograph Matt. He is pure of heart.

~ Maddie with a bottle of winter wine that she'll be extraordinarily generous with, then put back in our fridge with just a drop left.

~ Eric at Gordo's Cantina. RIP. (He is fine! He just doesn't work there anymore.)

~ The other bartender at The Dresden, not the one that did nothing to save Mira and me from the weird old man. He did try a little, I guess. *"I won't serve you until you drink this glass of water,"* the bartender told the man, sliding a clear pint glass over to him at his spot so obviously chosen to best invade our space at the corner of the bar. The man chugged so violently, and looked so disappointed when the bartender took his spray gun of water and filled the glass back up, it kept us laughing all night.