The Lights of Yaquina Head

It was a cold November morning when Morgan Peters stepped off the train in Newport Oregon, rain coming down, almost horizontal in the wind, lashing against him. He was not prepared for this rain, stepping onto the platform, pulling his trench coat collar up and his fedora down he stalked off in the direction of the lone building with a light in the window. The bell jingled as he opened the door and stepped in. He stood for a moment dripping water on the floor surveying the small train depot until he spied the man behind the ticket window and walking toward him said.

“Nice weather.”

The ticket taker looked up from his magazine but said nothing. He had a flat look in his eyes like he’d heard that a million times and this was one time too many. Peters stepped up to the bared ticket window and cleared his throat.

“Can I help you sir?” the ticket taker said lazily.

“Hotel?” Peters jerked his head toward the door.

“It’s a block that way.” grumbled the ticket taker pointing out the window.

“How often, do the trains run?”

“Where to?”

“Anywhere?”

“We got a train that pulls out at noon, heading fer Portland. Then another going down south at two, but that’s it. “ Lifting the magazine and looking down to begin reading he added, “You want a ticket?”

“Not at the moment, I’ll be back.” Peters turned around and headed back out into the rain. By the time he walked the block and a half to the hotel his clothes were soaked and his shoes were making a audible sloshing sound with each step. When I find Alan I’m gonna have him buy me some new shoes he thought as the red glare of the motel sign revealed itself through the sheets of rain. Crossing the street to the motel he looked first left then right, nothing, this town is dead, why did Alan want to come here, he thought.

The warm air of the Motel front office hit him as the door opened, he couldn’t wait to get these wet clothes off and have a hot shower. The woman behind the desk smiled when she saw him enter, she moved over to the desk and opened a leather bound book, flipping a few pages to find an empty line.

“You need a room stranger?” she said in a soft slow voice.

She was pretty, not overly so and not worth the distraction. “Yeah, something with hot water.”

“I think we can find you something, you passin through?”

“I’m looking for my brother, I’ll be here as long as it takes to find him. “ Peters was not in the mood for small talk.

“Family man with two kids and a wife?” she raised her eyebrows as she began writing in the book.

“Yeah, you seen em?” his eyes lite up as he pulled out his wallet and liberated a few dollars.

“They stayed here doll, not sure where they went, they left their things in the room three days ago, haven’t been back since. That’ll be three dollars for the night.” She replied flatly reaching her hand out.

Peters handed her two ten dollar bills, “keep it, not sure how long I’m gonna be here. You still have their stuff?”

“Yeah, we have it in lost and found but Mr. Brewer has the key, he’ll be in tomorrow morning if you want take a look.” Grabbing the money she pulled out a lock box and stuffed the bills into a slot in the metal lid.