

At the Unity Arms

A Christmas story



At the Unity Arms



On East Colfax, down by the Zanzibar. An old man was wandering, lost in the autumn dusk.

He was there too, the kid from the sticks. Looking for some good music and a drink.

He just wanted to stave off the boredom of that long, dry stretch of the plains.



With harvest in, and cows gone to slaughter, he drove the old Pontiac into town.

Bright lights, flashing neon, and girls in red shorts and fishnets up to here.



And they saw each other,
outside of some two-bit
dive, the old man and the
kid on Colfax.

Cop cars were there and
an officer with a woman,
over by the wall,

Telling her to move along.



“Help me son, I’m lost”, the oldster asked him.

And the lad, a bit scared and out of his element,

turned to look at Leroy Rattley.

Sad, alone, lost indeed.



The older man had stubble on his face

and drooping slacks, his tee shirt read Denver Bears, with a smiling bear beneath.

“I’ll ask that cop, just a second”,

He told the man.



"I'm busy now", the cop told the kid,

"Handle it yourself"

And so, he turned back to Leroy and said,

"I'm Matt, what do you need?"



"Well, Matt, I can't find my way home, and

I'm cold and hungry"

Matt asked him, "Where do you live",

All he got back was a vacant stare

But he held up his hand and there on his wrist,

A bracelet, inscribed as follows:



Leroy Rattley,
Unity Arms, 1410 E. 13th
Denver, CO.

"Well, hello Mr. Rattley

Let's get you home, my car's over there."

Leroy smiled, and said, "I'm a bit cold".

"Yeah, it is a bit chilly tonight".



Matt took off his sweater,
his dad's sweater,

the one with the black
and white print he wore

As a remembrance of that
old farmer, gone for years.

"Here, you need this more
than me", Matt told him.



And they drove to the Unity Arms.

“Yes!”, Leroy exclaimed as he remembered the door.

On the steps, he told Matt,

“Thanks, Junior, it’s just like Christmas!”

In they went, and a woman in white met them,



"Oh Mr. Rattley, you're home."

She turned to Matt and thanked him and

He told her the tale, and then he left

Leroy Rattley and his sweater at the Unity Arms.



“Here, you need this more than me”, Matt told him.

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