*Marl Borough (Marlboro)*

Marl Borough hails from the deep south of the US. His father was a Texan self-made millionaire, a true Southern gentleman. His mother was once the prettiest debutante in all of Georgia. Marl admired his father, despite his continued absence and fondness of physical disciplining. Marl adored his mother even more, who returned the adoration with unhealthy maternal worship. The family cherished traditional Christian values, never missing a Sunday mass.

Marl was captain of the football team, and he was the obvious choice for homecoming king. He took the head of the cheerleading team—who was also the homecoming queen, of course—to prom, and eventually married her. He went on to study at a prestigious state university in Texas, where he spent a socially spectacular and academically unspectacular four years. After his studies, and much to the delight to his parents, he joined the thriving family business that sold incense products originally used in Native American rituals. In truth, Marl probably had no other choice.

Marl grew up to be a man’s man, a real charmer, much like his father. When he entered a room, heads turned, either due to his commanding presence or the unmistakable clink of his cowboy boots. He was a social butterfly and a mysterious stranger, all in one. He spoke his mind, and, in his mind, was never wrong. You rarely saw him without a Scotch in hand, even at work.

Other men admired and even feared Marl. Women were intrigued by him, especially the types who were drawn to danger. Marl, for his part, loved women, and lavished them with his trademark winks, “ma’ams,” and firmly held gazes. If his wife was out of sight, as she often was, he’d grant women the special courtesy—in his mind, at least—of a double entendre, indecent proposal, or firm grab of derriere.

The changing times did not treat Marl kindly, a fact he first ignored, then rebelled against. The family business suffered under his watch, leading to his ouster. His wife, long tolerant of his obvious adultery, walked out on him with their two sons, with whom Marl already had a strained relationship. Marl’s fall from grace left him a sad caricature of today’s Caucasian, elderly, heterosexual man, and his sliding social status only accentuated his negative habits. He became loudly opinionated and lost whatever remained from his patience for tempered social interaction. His social circles started to diminish, with only the roguish types welcoming his presence. The rest merely tolerated him, if that.

His masculinity, once so brash and intoxicating, was now just toxic.

His life was now consumed by nostalgia, a yearning for a lost past that was partly real but mostly imagined. He desperately wants to regain his relevance, to be the coolest cat on the block again. What he needs is to move on and find dignity in his twilight years.