

# The Man with Half a Face

By Cancer ([original post](#))

One guest is a war veteran, or at least everyone hopes so; otherwise the massive scarring that runs from the point of his chin, just right of his nose, beneath the eye socket, and up to where his ear ought to be is hard to understand. Large, muscular, slow-moving, quiet, he has an eternal bare-toothed grimace to the right third of his mouth. His black hair is kept slicked straight back. He wears a black overcoat and old-style fedora, and he seems to positively enjoy walking in the rain.

The only person who seems to know his name is the bartender, who calls him Siegmund, and provides him on sight with a cordial glass of a colorless liqueur. Siegmund (if that's really his name) answers in a low, growly voice with, perhaps, a German or Swiss accent. In the bar he sits quietly at a small table, smoking French cigarettes he keeps in a black leather case, making occasional notes in a small notebook that is returned to his inside jacket pocket. He makes it a point to be present when there is a violinist performing in the cabaret.

When he leaves the hotel, he carries a single large sample case that seems to be quite heavy. Once when the case fell off a bellhop's cart it popped open and a number of steel implements fell out ... perhaps various kinds of surgical instruments, perhaps something else. The case and spilled contents were recovered without any explanation.

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