

Paradise Party

By Steve Burton

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FADE IN

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

A few people wait.

JERRY, an intense young man reads from a small notebook.

FLASH on Jerry in a FANTASY image of isolation.

He walks slowly among people on a crowded street while he reads in VOICE OVER.

JERRY (OS)

"Walk, talk, feel, but am invisible.

Others surround in their events unaware.

An impact or impression is illusive.

Should this be a concern?

Or welcomed?

Perhaps, there is no answer except to continue in the shadows,
with the one who is invincible."

Back to Bus Stop.

ALAN, a casually well dressed middle aged man approaches with a CAMERA.

He subtly notices Jerry with interest a short distance away.

He aims the camera up towards the sky to snap a picture.

FLASH on an image of dynamic clouds.

He quickly aims the camera down at eye level to snap a picture.

FLASH on Jerry in the distance without notice from Jerry of the camera shot.

He puts the camera aside around his shoulder.

FLASHBACK - INTERIOR ROOM

A younger Alan with his young wife basks in the glory of a new born baby.

End of FLASHBACK.

Back to Bus stop.

A bus approaches as people line up.

Alan is last in line behind Jerry.

INT. BUS ENTRANCE - FOLLOWING

People climb the steps to pay the fare.

Jerry puts his pass in the fare machine when it flashes EMPTY.

DRIVER

Your card is empty.

JERRY

Damn! I thought there was something left on it. I was going to get it filled this afternoon.

DRIVER

Well, it's empty.

Jerry fumbles in his pocket for change and then in his wallet with Alan behind him.

ALAN

Don't worry about it. It's my treat.

Alan offers to pay his fare.

JERRY

Oh wow, thanks! I'll pay you back. I just need to go to the bank.

ALAN

Please just accept it. My pleasure. I've been helped out before in a jam. We help each other.

JERRY

Ok, thanks again.

ALAN

You're welcome.

He puts money into the machine.

INT. BUS AISLE - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan walk towards the back in a crowded bus.

INT. BUS - FOLLOWING

Jerry moves into an aisle seat next to an empty seat by the window.

Alan approaches to point towards the empty seat.

ALAN

Do you mind if I sit there?

JERRY

No, not at all.

Jerry stands for Alan to move into the seat.

ALAN

Good seat to see the sights. I'm here for the first time to Seattle.

JERRY

Welcome. You should enjoy it. A beautiful city on a clear day.

ALAN

Yes.

Alan looks out the window as the bus begins to move.

FLASH on various scenes from the window as the bus travels.

A conversation between Jerry and Alan continues in VOICE OVER as the scenes continue.

JERRY (OS)

Where are you from?

ALAN (OS)

New York.

JERRY (OS)

Oh, a long way. Are you visiting?

ALAN (OS)

Yes, with family, but I'm on my own today for some adventure. My name is Alan.

JERRY (OS)

I'm Jerry, nice to meet you.

ALAN (OS)

Yes, likewise.

JERRY (OS)

I hope you find adventure today.

ALAN (OS)

Thanks.

INT. BUS - LATER

Jerry reads and writes in his note book.

Alan turns from the window to notice Jerry.

Jerry pauses to show Alan something from the notebook.

Alan reads in VOICE OVER.

FLASH on the images of a distant SUNSET through a train window.

ALAN (OS)

"The late afternoon sun shows off from a moving train window.

Orange vibration fills the horizon, with hills, water reflection, and introspection.

With gentle seduction, could not look away.

A need to read, rest, or speak could not plead away these vistas.

This distant glow kept transfixed attention.

Slowly falls as the normal routine, but resists complete darkness.

No desire to go away, but stay for more play.

No pen to record this wow, but vowed to remember just like today."

Back to bus.

ALAN

Very good! The emotion and description are all there.

JERRY

Thanks. Poetry helps me feel complete.

ALAN

That's important and you seem to love doing it.

JERRY

Yes, and I'm also a student at UW. What do you do?

ALAN

A headshot and landscape photographer which makes me feel complete as a love too. Interesting faces and nature turn me on.

JERRY

It's good to have those loves, isn't it?

ALAN

Yes, and they can't be taken away from you.

JERRY

Thanks.

ALAN

For what?

JERRY

What you just said.

ALAN

You're welcome.

Alan pulls his camera around to show Jerry.

He clicks on a photograph.

FLASH on the recent photograph of Jerry at the bus stop.

JERRY

When did you...?

ALAN

At the bus stop. I told you I like interesting faces and you have one.

JERRY

But, I didn't see you.

ALAN

Just call me sneaky.

JERRY

I like it.

ALAN

So do I. And I would like to take more of you if that's ok.

JERRY

Well, I'll think about it.

ALAN

You might be at your prime physical shape and you should have a record of that. I have a theory that everyone has that prime period and should visually record it if possible. Because the physical look will change as time goes on.

JERRY

Interesting. I have not thought about that before.

ALAN

Also, your look inspires me.

JERRY

Well, this seems ok. Besides, I've been wanting to get into photography myself. I could learn and get inspired from you.

ALAN

Yes, see there! A great thing for both of us.

EXT. BUS STOP - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan exit on to the street.

EXT. SIDEWALK - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan walk among others.

Jerry points things out as Alan looks around at the scenery.

Alan takes various PICTURES some of which include Jerry with mutual enjoyment.

Alan pauses with a THOUGHT as he looks at Jerry.

FLASH on a younger Alan as he walks in enjoyment with a young man the same age as Jerry.

ALAN

I'm hungry. Please join me and it's my treat. Do you have any suggestions?

JERRY

Yes, but you've done too much already.

ALAN

Look, I'm on vacation and this fun. So it
is my pleasure.

INT. SMALL RESTAURANT - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan sit with glasses of wine and menus.

ALAN

Get whatever you want.

JERRY

Thanks.

ALAN

Let's have a paradise party!

JERRY

What?

ALAN

Oh, my niece and nephew came up with that.

FLASHBACK - BACKYARD - DAY

A young boy with a young girl guides Alan towards a TENT.

BOY

Come inside Uncle Alan we're going to have
a Paradise Party inside!

GIRL

We have snacks and everything!

ALAN

OK, let's go!

Alan crouches to go inside.

Later, Alan is on the lawn led by the boy with girl in a conga line kicking up in unison.

YOUNG BOY

Come on! Everybody conga! It's Paradise
Party time!

Later, Alan and the two kids enjoy throwing a large beach ball back and forth on the lawn. Alan enjoys the play with youthful vigor.

End of FLASHBACK

Back to restaurant.

JERRY

Sounds like a fun time.

ALAN

Yes, it's been wonderful with family. I plan to be here awhile longer to see them more. The stress from New York was getting to me. I haven't been feeling well lately. Not sure what it is, but the blood pressure is high. This might be a good place to take a break while I wait for the test results.

JERRY

Hopefully the results will be positive.

Ok, let's paradise party here!

They toast with wine glasses.

EXT. SEATTLE CENTER - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan walk towards the Space Needle.

EXT. SPACE NEEDLE ELEVATOR - FOLLOWING

It moves up the side of the needle.

INT. SPACE NEEDLE ELEVATOR - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan ride up with the scenery to view.

EXT. SPACE NEEDLE OBSERVATION DECK - FOLLOWING

They enjoy a spectacular clear view.

Alan takes several close-ups of Jerry.

EXT. SIDEWALK - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan walk with more pictures and conversation.

EXT. WATERFRONT DOCK - FOLLOWING

Alan takes a picture of Jerry with the PUGET SOUND in the background.

Alan steps back with a compelling THOUGHT.

Alan shows the image from the camera to Jerry.

EXT. BENCH - FOLLOWING

Alan and Jerry sit.

ALAN

You remind me of someone.

JERRY

Who?

ALAN

Someone important from the past. He's been gone awhile.

JERRY

A lover?

ALAN

No, but why do you ask that?

JERRY

Just a vibe. You are very nice, but I don't go that way. I have a girl friend.

ALAN

Look, I don't expect you to go anyway or anywhere. We are just looking at scenery and taking pictures of you without any expectation. Ok?

JERRY

Yes, how long has he been gone?

ALAN

My son Beau was killed in a car accident a few years ago. He was a victim of somebody else's mistake.

JERRY

I'm so sorry for jumping to conclusions. That's too bad. Sorry for your loss.

ALAN

Thank you.

JERRY

Was he my age?

ALAN

Yes, your attitude and personality are similar. He was also a good writer. We were very close with much love. I understand you being cautious about an older man being friendly. You are charming, talented, and handsome. I was there once and have the pictures to prove it. Hopefully, you won't make the many mistakes I did by succumbing to the theory that all I needed was my good looks to get by. They passed as does life.

JERRY

Again, I'm sorry.

ALAN

You don't have to be. No need to be afraid of this gay man.

JERRY

So you are...

ALAN

Yes, I am that among other things and your instinct was right. I got married to a woman, had a son who is gone, recognized my true self and then married a man who is now gone with many other things in-between.

JERRY

Well, you must have many stories to tell.

ALAN

Yes, but maybe enough for now. Later could be possible.

JERRY

Sure, so let's continue.

ALAN

That's fine with me. I'm not here to make you uncomfortable. I just want you to enjoy.

EXT. FERRIS WHEEL - FOLLOWING

Alan and Jerry get on board.

FLASH on various images of them as they take the ride with picture taking fun.

EXT. PIONEER SQUARE MARKET - FOLLOWING

Alan and Jerry take in the sights with more pictures.

Alan takes a picture of Jerry.

He offers the camera to Jerry, shows him how to use it, and then Jerry takes a picture of Alan.

EXT. BENCH - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan sit together to look at pictures from the camera.

Later, Jerry pulls out his notebook to read in VOICE OVER while IMAGES of birds in flight over an ocean beach FLASH in.

JERRY (OS)

"I'm "flying". I'm just looking to touch some kind of spirit. Something which may last beyond. Touching and feeling filled with passion and sensation is never forgotten. That is clear, has been recorded and will happen again. Now, it's time to go forward, not to be better, but to embrace. Oh, what I have said is here for now, but why does eternity come to mind."

Back to the bench as Alan listens intently.

ALAN

That's beautiful and deep. You are searching, as if an older soul.

JERRY

Yes, I suppose.

ALAN

So am I. Probably until the day I die.

EXT. DOWNTOWN SIDEWALK - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan continue to take pictures.

EXT. BUS STOP - FOLLOWING

Jerry and Alan stop among other people.

ALAN

Well, thank you for the tour. It was fun.

JERRY

Yes, will you get back Ok?

ALAN

I think so. Are you going to be here in the city for awhile? Maybe to see your girlfriend?

JERRY

Not tonight, but I'm going to see some other friends. Thanks, for the pictures and the photography lessons.

ALAN

You are welcome. Please take this.

Alan takes the camera off his shoulder to give to Jerry.

JERRY

What?

ALAN

I want you to have it.

JERRY

But it's yours. It's what you do.

ALAN

I have others and this might open up some other doors for you or help compliment your writing.

JERRY

How about the pictures you took?

Alan reaches into his pocket to pull out a business card.

ALAN

Here's my information. Email them to me.
If not, I also took pictures here.

Alan points to his head.

JERRY

Wow, this is great! I'll be sure to do
that. Thanks again.

ALAN

My pleasure. This isn't goodbye unless you
want it to be. Keep up the writing and
take care.

JERRY

You too.

Alan extends his hand and then Jerry offers his.

Jerry quickly wraps his arms around Alan in a warm hug.

They part with mutual emotional surprise.

The bus arrives.

INT. BUS - FOLLOWING

A friendly BUS DRIVER greets each passenger with a friendly
"hello" like on a tour bus.

INT. BUS AISLE - FOLLOWING

Alan makes his way towards the back in a crowded bus.

He sits in the center of the long bench seat in the back next to
others.

EXT. SIDEWALK - FOLLOWING

The bus pulls out as Jerry walks away.

INT. BUS - FOLLOWING

The bus driver makes an announcement.

DRIVER

Welcome to the Broadway express!

We'll be making all local stops to
to Miami beach!

FLASH on the passengers LAUGHING with Alan.

DRIVER

The next stop is whatever...!

The passengers continue to laugh.

DRIVER

Let's keep this party going!

The passengers continue to enjoy.

INT. BUS - LATER

FLASH on a progression of SCENES that show a gradual emptying of the bus which ends with Alan next to the window in the last seat by himself.

Alan looks out the window with satisfaction.

ALAN (Mumbles)

Beau, let's have a Paradise party.

He continues to look out the window.

FLASH on various scenes with kids at play with an ANGELIC tone.

FLASH on various beautiful scenes with nature and other scenery with an ANGELIC tone.

EXT. CITY STREET - FOLLOWING

The bus continues in a progression of SCENES as it stops to let off passengers as night approaches.

INT. BUS - FOLLOWING

An upset Alan rises out of the seat.

ALAN

Please help, something's wrong!

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

The bus stops quickly.

INT. BUS DRIVER CHAIR - FOLLOWING

The driver turns quickly around to look back towards the passengers.

INT. BUS AISLE - FOLLOWING

Alan falls down in the distant back section.

EXT. STREET - FOLLOWING

An AMBULANCE travels fast with sirens and lights flashing among traffic.

EXT. BUS - LATER

The ambulance is parked near the opened rear bus double doors as the concerned bus driver with a small crowd look on with POLICE OFFICERS.

Two PARAMEDICS carry a gurney with a vaguely conscious Alan through the doors.

They place it into the ambulance and then shut the doors.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The ambulance travels with lights flashing and sirens in traffic.

INT. AMBULANCE - FOLLOWING

The paramedics intensely attend to Alan.

Later, they pull away to share a concerned look with each other.

PARAMEDIC #1

This is done here.

PARAMEDIC #2

So, let's take him there.

PARAMEDIC #1

Amen, to be with the others.

EXT. AMBULANCE - FOLLOWING

It travels in the normal traffic flow without flashing lights and siren.

Sequences of SCENES show a progression out of the city into rural areas.

EXT. OCEAN BEACH - LATER

The ambulance stops.

EXT. OCEAN SUNRISE - FOLLOWING

A vibrant SUN rises in a clear sky across a beach.

EXT. BEACH - FOLLOWING

Alan leads in a long joyous Conga line with kids, Beau, Jerry, the Paramedics, the bus driver, and many others that extend into the far distance as the sun continues to rise.

FADE OUT