

Paradise Party

by Steven Burton

EXT. OCEAN BEACH - DAY

People are on the sand and in the surf.

ALAN, a fifty year old, walks with a camera.

He takes a few shots out towards the ocean.

EXT. BEACH

JERRY, a young man stands with a girl in an argument.

With mutual frustration they part to walk off in opposite directions.

EXT. BEACH SAND

Jerry sits down upset alone with intense thoughts.

Alan walks nearby to notice Jerry which strikes him as if recognizing someone familiar.

Alan strolls closer to Jerry and then sits on the sand near him.

He aims the camera towards the beach for a shot, and then quickly aims it towards Jerry for another shot.

FLASH on a close up of Jerry.

JERRY

What the hell! What's with the
picture?

ALAN

No I..

JERRY

I'm not stupid! You aimed it at
me!

ALAN

Oh, sorry. Your inspired look got me.

JERRY

Well, how about privacy? You
fuckin didn't ask!

ALAN

I apologize. All right?

JERRY

Ok, maybe I over reacted. I'm really
pissed off about something else.

ALAN

Well, it was a wrong thing and looks
sneaky.

JERRY

Ok, no problem.

ALAN

Hope your problem gets worked out.

Alan gets up to leave.

JERRY

Hey, what did you mean by inspired look?

ALAN

I'll show you.

Alan walks towards Jerry and then shows him the picture from the
camera.

JERRY

Yup that's me with the inspiration of
being pissed off.

ALAN

Well, maybe, but I saw a very interesting face. Look, I'm primarily a headshot photographer which is also why this. I'm Alan.

JERRY

Jerry. I've been known to like faces too. I'm an artist and have painted some portraits in a class exercise.

ALAN

Oh, a student. So am I.

JERRY

What are you studying?

ALAN

Life, and it will take a lifetime.

JERRY

Oh, right. Do you live here?

ALAN

No, in New York.

JERRY

Long way, are you visiting?

ALAN

Yes, with family, but I'm on my own today. My passion is headshot and landscape photography. Interesting faces and nature turn me on such as yours.

JERRY

My nature or face?

ALAN

Maybe both. I'd like to take more of you if that's ok?

JERRY

Sure, this is strange. I've been wanting to get into photography.

ALAN

All right, a good thing for both of us!

EXT. BEACH

Jerry walks with Alan as they speak in voice over.

ALAN (OS)

You might be at your prime physical shape. I have a theory that everyone has that prime period and should visually record it if possible. Because the physical look changes with time.

JERRY (OS)

Interesting.

EXT. BEACH

Jerry and Alan continue to walk together as Jerry points things out.

Alan takes various pictures some of which include Jerry.

Alan pauses with a thought as he looks at Jerry.

ALAN

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

JERRY

Yes, but you don't have to treat.

ALAN

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

INT. SMALL RESTAURANT

Jerry and Alan sit with glasses of wine and menus.

ALAN

Let's have a paradise party!

JERRY

What?

ALAN

Oh, my niece and nephew came up with that.

FLASHBACK - BACKYARD - DAY

OSCAR, a young boy, and CAROLINE, a young girl, guide Alan towards a tent.

OSCAR

Come inside! We're going to have
a paradise party inside!

CAROLINE

With snacks and everything!

ALAN

Ok, let's go!

Alan crouches to go inside.

INT. TENT

The three sit with snacks and festivity!

EXT. LAWN

Oscar leads Alan and Caroline in a conga line kicking up in
unison.

OSCAR

Come on! Everybody conga! It's paradise
party time!

EXT. LAWN

Alan and the two kids throw a large beach ball back and forth on
the lawn.

EXT. LAWN

Alan with the two kids make soap bubbles and then pop them when
they get larger.

Back to the present.

JERRY

Sounds like a fun time.

ALAN

Yes, it's been great with family. I am also recovering from a serious blood clot and heart trouble, but am feeling better here. An important transition is about to happen.

JERRY

Hopefully, you'll keep feeling better.
Ok, let's paradise party here!

They toast with wine glasses.

EXT. WATERFRONT DOCK

Alan takes a picture of Jerry and then Alan steps back with a compelling thought.

Alan shows the image from the camera to Jerry.

EXT. BENCH

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 girlfriend.

ALAN

Look, I don't expect you to go anyway or anywhere. We are just looking at scenery and taking pictures! Ok?

JERRY

Yes, how long has he been gone?

ALAN

My son Beau was killed in a car accident a few years ago.

JERRY

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

ALAN

Thank you. He died very young, but would be about your age now if still here. I understand you being cautious about an older man being friendly. Hopefully, you won't make the same mistakes as mine at your age. Like thinking 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, recognized my true self and then married a man, the love of my life who died a while ago.

JERRY

Well, you must have many stories to tell.

ALAN

Yes, but enough for now.

JERRY

Sure, so let's continue.

ALAN

Good, I'm not here to make you uncomfortable.

EXT. VILLAGE STREET

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

Jerry and Alan sit together to look at pictures from the camera. They look out at the scenery in conversation.

ALAN

Hopefully, you will work things out with her if it's meant to be.

JERRY

Yeah, hope so, but I am confused. Questioning a lot of things.

ALAN

That's great! Life is one big question that may never get answered. But, we're here for some reason. Right now being. You are searching.

JERRY

I suppose.

ALAN

So am I. Probably until the day I die. It's so beautiful here.

JERRY

Yes, so vast and possible.

ALAN

I should move out here. A great place to live and transition into the next life.

JERRY

Do you believe in an afterlife?

ALAN

Yes, but a mystery still at the same time. I don't know for sure yet.

EXT. BOARDWALK

Jerry and Alan continue to take pictures at sunset.

Later they stop to face each other.

ALAN

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

JERRY

Yes, 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 or help with the art.

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 and heart.

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 art work and take care.

JERRY

You too.

Alan extends his hand.

Jerry quickly wraps his arms around Alan in a warm hug. They part with mutual emotional surprise.

Alan walks to the end of the boardwalk where the beach sand begins.

EXT. BEACH

Alan walks onto the sand towards the ocean surf and then sits.

He looks out over the ocean, lays back to look up at the sky, and then closes his eyes.

ALAN

Beau, my son, a paradise party.

Later, in the dark Alan still lays motionless on the sand.

EXT. OCEAN SUNRISE

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

EXT. BEACH

Alan leads in a long joyous Conga line with Caroline, Oscar, Beau, Jerry, and others as the sun continues to rise.

FADE OUT