

BUS STOP PREACHER

Written by

Simon K. Parker

Based on, If Any

INT. BUS - DAY

A Preacher, a handsome man in his early 30's sits at the back of the city bus. He's smiling happily to himself, clutching his expensive looking leather briefcase tightly to his chest.

The bus stops and the preacher gets off. He nods at the driver as he exits.

PREACHER

Thank you.

The driver nods back. The doors close and the bus continues on its route.

EXT. RUNDOWN PROPERTY - DAY

Smashed out windows, its front door wide open and barely hanging onto its hinges. Lots of for sale signs are plastered all over it.

The Preacher looks at the building with a curious smirk. The salesman beside him, 40, tired looking with greasy combed back hair gestures to it with a limp hand.

SALESMAN

I told you it was a dump.

PREACHER

Well, I still wanted to take a look for myself.

SALESMAN

Well go ahead, look.

The Preacher takes a couple of forward steps. Peers inside.

PREACHER

What did it used to be?

The salesman shrugs, he's going to have to guess.

SALESMAN

The last I heard it was a corner shop. It got robbed and it's been gutted and left in this sorry state for I'd say about a year or so.

PREACHER

And the price?

SALESMAN

The building is yours for ten thousand pounds.

PREACHER

Then I'll take it.

The salesman shakes his head.

SALESMAN

And do what with it?

PREACHER

I'm going to turn it into a church.

The salesman is stunned.

SALESMAN

A church!

PREACHER

Yes, that's right.

SALESMAN

You must be crazy. You want my advice.

PREACHER

Not particularly, but I have a feeling you're going to give it to me anyway.

SALESMAN

Don't waste your money on this.

PREACHER

I don't consider spreading the word of god to be a waste of money.

The salesman laughs at him.

SALESMAN

Around here it sure is. No religion in this part of town. You'll find plenty of whores and drug addicts though, not much else.

PREACHER

You think we can sign the deeds today?

SALESMAN

You really are going to buy it aren't you?

PREACHER

Well, I didn't come all the way out here just to look at it.

The salesman lets out another good hard laugh at the preacher.

SALESMAN

Plain crazy son of a bitch. I've been waiting for this place to burn down, fall down, whatever. Never thought I'd find anyone stupid enough to buy it, but here you are. I'll be damned.

The Preachers feelings clearly hurt. His smile completely gone, blushing a little from the insults.

PREACHER

What do you say we just get this over with a save the name calling for another time?

SALESMAN

Whatever you want. Say, I saw a burned out car left abandoned a couple of streets away, you want to buy that too.

PREACHER

No. Just this.

The Preacher, annoyed, enters the building. Needing to get away from the sneering salesman.

EXT. TRAIN STATION - DAY

The Preacher stands close to the busy stations main entrance. He's holding onto a stack of printed out leaflets. He must have hundreds of them.

The leaflets are advertising a new soon to be opened modern church. The Preacher attempts to hand them out.

PREACHER

Just take one, tell your friends.

He's not getting many takers.

A couple of school kids, still dressed in their uniforms take a leaflet from him.

SCHOOL KID
What's this?

PREACHER
I'm opening up a new church and I'd
like to get...

The school kids throw the leaflets back at him, laughing as they walk away.

The Preacher is hurt, but pushes himself to carry on. He spots an old man with a walking stick.

PREACHER (CONT'D)
Could I bother you to take one of
these?

The old man takes a quick look at it then shakes his head.

The Preacher looks around, he sees a Diogo, 36, approaching him. Making a beeline right for him.

PREACHER (CONT'D)
Could I interest you...

Diogo punches the Preacher in the face, knocking him down to the ground.

DIOGO
Take your Jesus freak shit
someplace else.

Diogo then kicks the leaflets, sending them scattering through the air.

The Diogo laughs as he stumbles away, clearly he's drunk.

The Preacher is left to gather up the leaflets alone. Passers by just walk past, no one bothers to stop and help him.

The Preacher gathers them up, stands, composes himself then continues to try and hand them out.

No one stops to take one, he doesn't manage to hand a single one out. Giving up, he puts the leaflets away in his briefcase, zips it closed and walks away.

He looks crushed.

INT. LIZ'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

The Preacher sits at the table and watches as LIZ, 21, places down a plate of food down in front of him.

He smells it, looks up at her smiling.

PREACHER
It looks delicious thank you.

She leans against the kitchen countertop, crosses her arms and stares back at him. Letting out a long deep breath.

LIZ
I need to say something to you now,
not because I want to hurt you but
because I feel like it's just got
to be said.

PREACHER
Alright.

LIZ
I love you.

PREACHER
I love you too.

LIZ
Mum and Dad aren't here anymore.

PREACHER
No.

LIZ
So I've got to be the one to knock
some sense into you.

PREACHER
Will you just say it already, I
don't want the food to get cold.

LIZ
You need to go back.

PREACHER
Go back?

LIZ
Back to the countryside. Back to
your village. Back to your peaceful
life. This city doesn't need you.

PREACHER
Well I feel it does.

LIZ
It's going to chew you up and spit
you out.

PREACHER

Do you know why I became a preacher?

LIZ

Because you love Jesus.

He laughs.

PREACHER

Yes. But it's more than that.

LIZ

You need to go back.

PREACHER

I chose this life to save lives. To save souls to be more matter of fact. And I came here to save a soul or two. And until that happens I'm not going anywhere.

LIZ

And there's nothing I can say?

He shakes his head.

They both fall silent, both look a little frustrated. After a pause the Preacher tucks into the fresh hot food. He takes a couple of big mouthfuls.

EXT. BUS STOP - DAY

The Preacher takes his place amongst a large cue of all different kinds of people waiting for the bus to arrive.

Once again dressed in his preachers outfit with his briefcase clutched tightly to his side.

As they wait, the sound of young teenage boys shouting and laughing fills the air.

The crowd of people waiting for the bus all seem on edge and nervous.

Three teenage boys, all dressed in expensive designer clothes walk up towards the bus stop.

Instantly they start throwing fake punches at the people in front of them. Giving them angry looks, stamping on the floor, squaring up to them, all around threatening behaviour.

Very quickly this large cue of people quickly dissipate, leaving only the three boys and the preacher.

Dominic, Oliver and Sean look at the preacher, they laugh. Then huddling together they have a discussion amongst themselves before returning to him.

DOMINIC
(to preacher)
You a priest?

The Preacher smiles politely.

PREACHER
Of sorts, yes.

DOMINIC
Well priest this is ours.

PREACHER
This?

DOMINIC
All of this.

PREACHER
The bus stop?

DOMINIC
How much money have you got on you?

PREACHER
Just enough for a return bus ticket into the city centre and back. I hope they haven't raised the ticket prices since yesterday.

SEAN
I think this guy might be a bit dumb in the head.

OLIVER
You need to be careful what you say OK? You need to think.

PREACHER
Oh I do, I always choice my words carefully.

Dominic pulls out a knife. He holds it to the Preacher's neck.

DOMINIC
How about you empty your pockets.

PREACHER

No, I don't think I'll be doing that.

The three boys share a look, confusion.

DOMINIC

Do you not see this blade to your fucking throat?

PREACHER

I do.

Dominic turns to his two friends.

DOMINIC

Well that's alright. These two can empty your pockets for you.

PREACHER

Alright.

Oliver and Sean dig through the preachers pockets. They remove a pair of rosary beads, a small pocket bible and a small leather coin purse that only has a small amount of change in it.

They show it to Dominic. Dominic can't help but laugh.

DOMINIC

What the fuck is this?

PREACHER

You can keep it if you like. I'm sure I can walk into the city centre from here.

Dominic looks the preacher up and down. Eyes the briefcase still clutched tightly to the Preacher's chest.

DOMINIC

Hand that over.

PREACHER

I can't.

DOMINIC

I said hand it over.

PREACHER

It doesn't belong to me.

DOMINIC

Yeah, it's going to belong to me in about two fucking seconds.

PREACHER

I can't let you have it.

Dominic gives a stern look to his two friends.

DOMINIC

Take it off of him.

Oliver and Sean try and rip the briefcase out of the Preacher's hands. But he holds on.

PREACHER

It belongs to the church that I'm opening soon. You should come. It's a church you should join.

Dominic snaps, a rage taking over him.

DOMINIC

Give it me now!

PREACHER

All sinners are welcome. Even you and your friends.

Dominic cuts the blade across the Preacher's neck, blood oozes down his chest.

Oliver lets go of the briefcase. Fears takes over him. He looks across at Dominic.

OLIVER

We can't do this.

Sean is still trying to snatch the briefcase from the preacher, but the preacher continues to hold on.

Dominic still has his eyes locked on the Preacher.

DOMINIC

I said let go off it.

The Preacher shakes his head.

Dominic snaps his arm forwards, stabbing the Preacher in the chest.

The Preacher instantly falls to the floor. Blood still oozes from the cut on his neck, but it gushes out from the stab wound in his chest.

Finally Sean is able to rip the briefcase from him. He hands it over to Dominic.

Oliver stands over the Preacher, looking down at him, gripped with shock.

Dominic opens up the briefcase, only to find that it's filled with those leaflets that preacher was unable to hand out. Nothing else in it.

Dominic throws the briefcase down to the floor.

DOMINIC (CONT'D)
(to the Preacher)
What the fuck is this?

The Preacher looks up at him, struggling to breathe.

PREACHER
I told you, it belongs to my church.

Several people exit a pub across the road, watching what is going on.

Diogo is one of them, he rushes over.

DIOGO
What the fuck are you bastard kids doing?

Liz now appears at the top of the street. Carrying several bags of shopping. She too watches what is going on. When she works out it's the Preacher on the ground she drops her bag and rushes over to him.

LIZ
Oh god no!

Dominic makes a run for it. Sean hurries out after him.

Oliver drop down to his knees next to the Preacher.

OLIVER
I get you an ambulance. Alright. You're going to be ok. I never wanted to be apart of anything like this.

PREACHER
(to Oliver)
I need you to help me.

Diogo and Liz now join Oliver.

PREACHER (CONT'D)

Help me.

Oliver grabs one of the Preacher's arms. Tries to lift him up from the ground, but he's too heavy.

Liz grabs onto the Preacher's face, she's sobbing.

LIZ

What the fuck happened to you. Why didn't you listen to me. Why didn't you just go back home.

She kisses the side of his face.

Diogo grabs a hold of Oliver's neck.

DIOGO

You and your fucking no good friends did this to him didn't you?

Oliver snaps back at him.

OLIVER

He's asking for help so fucking help him. Both of you.

Liz and Diogo now join Oliver, lifting the Preacher up to his feet.

PREACHER

I'll guide you, all you need to do is take me.

OLIVER

Alright, lets go.

EXT. RUNDOWN PROPERTY - DAY

Liz, Oliver and Diogo continues to carry the Preacher, they reach the front of the rundown property.

PREACHER

We're here.

Liz, Oliver and Diogo all share a look of confusion between each other.

OLIVER

(to the Preacher)
What do you mean we're here?

PREACHER

This is going to be my church.

They all place the Preacher down to the floor.

LIZ

No, no, no. I'm not letting you die. Not here. Not like this.

Liz takes out her phone, she paces up and down distressed. Calls for an ambulance.

Diogo backs away.

DIOGO

I can't believe I'm going to watch a man die. This is too much.

As Diogo and Liz move away Oliver keeps a hold of the Preacher.

OLIVER

Why did you bring us here?

PREACHER

I want you to confess.

OLIVER

Confess?

The Preacher nods.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

You brought us here so I could confess? Are you fucking crazy? You're fucking bleeding out.

The Preacher shakes his head.

PREACHER

I want to save your soul.

OLIVER

Shit.

PREACHER

I want to save your soul.

The Preacher's eyes start to close, he's lost too much blood.

OLIVER

Shit. Fuck. This isn't right. I won't let him get away with doing this to you.

PREACHER
(whispering)
I needed to save a soul.

His eyes close. His breathing stops. Oliver continues to hold onto him.

Liz cries into her phone as she pleads for the ambulance to hurry.

Diogo just walks away, it's all too much for him.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END