

Look Beyond

By Steve Burton

FADE IN

INT. TABLE TOP

A light colored MAT FRAME with a cut out is laid flat.

On the lower left side, "Look Beyond" is written.

On the lower right side "John Stacy" is written.

The mat turns over.

The back of an 8X10 print is placed over the frame opening.

Strips of white adhesive tape attach the print at various places.

The mat with print inserts into the back of a frame over glass.

A piece of thin cardboard inserts behind.

A plate with wall attachments inserts on it, and then clipped down with frame fasteners to secure it.

It turns over to reveal a photograph of vivid sunset from an ocean beach.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FOLLOWING

JOHN STACY, a casually well dressed middle aged man, looks at "Look Beyond" with pride.

In a neat, clean, sparsely furnished open space, a few framed pictures are on the walls.

A professional camera lies on a table.

In another area, a single stool sits with lighting equipment and a tripod, along with a drape backdrop.

FLASH on a vivid sunset and then a beach scene which have the signature of "John Stacy".

FLASH on a framed copy of Matisse's "Blue Nude" and a framed "Chagall" copy.

John puts "Look Beyond" on the table.

He moves to the nearby telephone to make a call.

JOHN

Hi, how is retirement going?

Pause.

I've been working on a little project.

Pause.

Yes, it's finished. Are you busy right now?

Pause.

Do you mind if I come over?

Pause.

Ok. I'll be right over.

INT. BEDROOM - FOLLOWING

At a dresser, John looks in the mirror to comb his hair.

Over his shoulder, the reflection of a vague image from a wall is seen next to a closet door in a dark corner.

He walks away.

By a closet door, he quickly looks at an unframed, crude, amateurish painting of a cat.

INT. HALLWAY - FOLLOWING

John walks by various headshot pictures on the wall.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FOLLOWING

John picks up "Look Beyond" off the table and then moves towards the door.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR - FOLLOWING

John walks directly across to another door where he hits the buzzer.

TED SNEAD, a sloppily dressed sixty something man answers the door and then gestures him in.

TED

Long journey. How did you get here so fast?

JOHN

I took the Concorde.

TED

I thought it was grounded.

JOHN

Not for me.

TED

Yeah, I forget how special you are.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FOLLOWING

It is messy with crammed furniture and objects.

A cat stands nearby and there is a large fish aquarium.

A paint easel is in the background.

JOHN

Here, I want you to have this.

He presents "Look Beyond" to him.

TED

Wow! Why?

JOHN

Remember, I showed you a small shot of
it and you liked it.

TED

Yeah, I sure did, but didn't expect this.

JOHN

One of life's surprises and you have been a very helpful friend and neighbor. Especially, when I was in the hospital with that mystery clot.

TED

Did they ever find out what caused it?

JOHN

No, like I said mystery which is weird.

TED

Well, you would have done the same for me.

JOHN

Yes, I know but anyway enjoy.

He leans "Look Beyond" up against a chair, and then they quickly hug.

TED

Thanks. Now, where to put it?

They look around at crowded walls with various crude, amateurish paintings of mostly animals and other wall hangings.

JOHN

Well, you'll figure it out.

TED

Do you want to sit down for a little bit?

John quickly looks around the messy room.

JOHN

No, I've got to get going.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT

CLOSEUP on the face of a pretty YOUNG GIRL.

GIRL

How's this?

A CAMERA CLICKS with a FLASH behind her.

JOHN (OS)

Very good. Let's try one more.

Just turn to the right, look back
at the camera, I'll say you look very nice
and then you say thanks.

The girl turns and then looks at the camera.

JOHN

You look very nice. (OS)

GIRL

Thanks.

A CAMERA CLICKS with a FLASH behind her.

JOHN (OS)

I think we got it.

Later, John looks at the computer screen images of the girl as she looks over his shoulder with reactions.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR

John in a light jacket with camera over the shoulder shuts and then locks his front door.

Ted in a light jacket walks towards his door.

They greet each other with a brief conversation and then Ted unlocks his door followed in by John.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - FOLLOWING

Ted points to "Look Beyond" on the wall above the door.

John is pleased.

EXT. OCEAN BEACH - AFTERNOON

John wears a light jacket as he walks with a camera around his neck with a few people in the background.

FLASH on two shots over the horizon.

FLASH on different angles of beach area.

He continues to walk when he looks down to notice objects on the sand.

FLASH on a pair of sun glasses captured in the shadow of his legs.

FLASH on an empty bottle in a pool of water.

FLASH on a torn cap on the sand.

FLASH on tractor tracks next to a foot print.

He continues to walk as dusk approaches over the horizon.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT

Ted sits at an easel as he paints on a small canvas while he looks at a picture of an alligator nearby.

The painting is crude with bright colors and a childlike quality.

Ted puts down the brushes and then gets up.

He steps back to look at the painting with pride.

He moves back to the easel, picks up the painting to look around for a place to put it on the crowded walls.

He focuses on "Look Beyond" on the wall above the door.

He puts the painting down and then walks away.

INT. SIDEWALK - DAY

John walks with a woman as they hold hands to window shop.

SEVERAL WEEKS LATER

INT. TED'S APARTMENT

Ted slowly climbs a ladder over the front door.

At the top, he takes "Look Beyond" with the nail out from the wall and then carefully backs down the ladder as he holds the picture to the side.

He puts the picture on the floor next to the "Aligator" painting and the ladder.

He climbs back up the ladder with a hammer and nail to place on edge of the fold out ladder shelf just below the top step of the ladder.

He climbs down the ladder, and then picks up the "Aligator" painting.

He climbs up the ladder with the painting.

At the top, he puts the painting up against the wall to size up the space to find that it fits.

He places the painting on the top step of the ladder.

He blindly fumbles for the hammer and nail on the shelf underneath.

He KNOCKS the hammer off the shelf edge to a crash below.

TED

Damn!

He is upset, but takes a deep breath, and then picks up the nail off the ladder shelf.

He puts the nail back in the hole in the wall from before, and then hangs the edge of the painting over it. It seems secure.

He slowly backs down the ladder.

At the bottom, he discovers the hammer on "Look Beyond" with shattered glass and a gash on the frame.

He takes the hammer off, and then picks it up carefully.

He moves away with "Look Beyond".

INT. HALLWAY - FOLLOWING

Ted walks down the narrow space with things piled up in disarray on one side.

INT. BEDROOM - FOLLOWING

The room is cluttered and unkempt with an unmade bed.

He passes by a dresser with a framed PICTURE of a younger Ted posed affectionately with a woman and a young boy.

Ted walks towards a closet.

INT. CLOSET - FOLLOWING

Ted puts "Look Beyond" on a pile of stuff on the floor.

He closes the door.

A FLASH time progression shows things as they pile up on top of "Look Beyond".

INT. TED'S LIVING ROOM

Ted sits at the easel with paint brushes while he looks at the picture of an elephant.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT

A man sits on the stool ready to pose while John adjusts the camera.

INT. COMMERCIAL BUILDING CORRIDOR

A sign reads, "Arts Anonymous, meeting in room 405".

INT. MEETING ROOM - FOLLOWING

A small group of women and men sit in chairs as Ted addresses them in front.

TED

Good to see you all. I'll be the first to
share and hope you all have things as well.

He displays a crude, unfinished elephant painting to the group
with an explanation for a brief period of time.

The audience applauds with enthusiasm and then Ted thanks them.

INT. TED'S LIVING ROOM

Ted paints at the easel when the doorbell rings.

He puts down the brushes and then moves to the door.

He opens the door to John with mail.

JOHN

Hi, again I got some of your mail mixed in.

TED

Oh thanks.

Ted takes the mail.

JOHN

How have you been?

TED

I was just doing some painting.

JOHN

Sorry to disturb you.

TED

No, I needed to take a break anyway.

Come on in. Take a look.

John follows him towards the easel.

It is an unfinished painting of a dog from a nearby photograph.

TED

It's almost done.

JOHN

It's a good likeness. I'd like to see it when it's finished.

TED

Sure.

JOHN

Well, I've got to get going. Keep up the good work and hope I didn't bring you too many bills.

TED

It doesn't matter. They never seem to get lost.

JOHN

That's for sure.

John offers a quick hug to Fred as he notices something over Ted's shoulder towards the door.

FLASH on Ted's Alligator painting over the door.

JOHN

Where is Look Beyond?

This takes Ted by surprise, but scrambles to regroup.

TED

Oh sorry to say, but somehow it fell off the wall and shattered on the floor. Then, I put one of my latest in its place.

Come on, takes a closer look. An Alligator..

JOHN

No, I can see it from here!

Where is Look Beyond?

TED

Well, it's in the bedroom. I've been
enjoying it in there. I'll go get it.

Ted walks out as John stands in a quandary.

A rummaging SOUND comes from the other room.

INT. BEDROOM CLOSET - FOLLOWING

Ted scrambles to throw off the stuff that has piled up on top of
"Look Beyond.", which is in the same condition as before. He
lifts it carefully.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FOLLOWING

Ted approaches John with "Look Beyond" to show him.

John looks at it with contained shock.

FLASH on a gash in the frame, broken pieces of jagged glass
still on the edges, and damage to the print.

JOHN

This is a mess! How did it happen?

TED

I told you. Somehow it just fell off
the wall.

JOHN

But, it looks like it was intentionally
hit by something. Were you mad and taking

something out on it?

TED

No, No, No. Please don't think that.

I just wouldn't do that. I swear.

JOHN

Well, the glass needs to be replaced. It protects the print.

TED

No, I'd like it better without the glass.

I don't have to keep it clean and shiny.

JOHN

Are you kidding?

TED

No.....it's too bad what happened because it's so beautiful.

With disbelief, John moves towards the door.

A confused Ted looks on.

INT. JOHN'S BEDROOM

A clothed John lies on his back on the bed with eyes closed.

He opens his eyes and then looks around the room.

He focuses on something which gives him an idea.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FOLLOWING

John puts on a jacket, and then puts the camera over his shoulder.

He walks into the other room.

INT. BEDROOM - FOLLOWING

John walks towards the wall by the closet.

He takes the painting of the cat off the wall and then leaves with it under his arm.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING CORRIDOR - FOLLOWING

With his camera and the painting, John shuts and then locks the door.

He walks across the hall to ring Ted's Buzzer.

Ted opens the door.

TED

Hi. How are you doing?

JOHN

Fine. Here.

He hands the painting to Ted.

TED

But, I gave this to you.

JOHN

I don't have a place for it anymore.

TED

Remodeling?

JOHN

No, I just don't want it. Take care.

John walks away down the hallway to leave behind a stunned Ted.

TED

But...see you later.

Ted walks inside.

INT. TED'S APARTMENT - FOLLOWING

A numb Ted walks in to look around at the over-crowded walls.

INT. TED'S BEDROOM - FOLLOWING

Ted walks to the closet.

INT. CLOSET - FOLLOWING

He puts his painting inside among the other stuff along with the damaged "Look Beyond" in the background.

The door shuts into darkness.

FADE OUT