

ONE STOP

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INT. CITY BUS — MORNING

Soft morning light filters through fogged, rain-specked windows. The hum of the morning bus, chatter and muffled city sounds blend together.

A YOUNG MAN, early 30s, sits by the window, half-lost in thought, as usual.

Reflections drift across his face as the city slides by. The same old route. The same destination.

A YOUNG WOMAN, late 20s, boards.

She brushes her damp morning hair from her face, moves down the aisle, sits a few rows away.

The man glances up, just long enough to notice her arrival. Nothing more.

She glances in his direction, just for a moment.

MONTAGE — DAYS IN PASSING

The same commute, different mornings.

Next morning: The woman steps on, coffee in hand, headphones in. The man looks up briefly, then down again.

Another morning: she looks out the window as he catches her reflection.

Another: their eyes meet, just for a second.

Over time, the glances linger.

INT. CITY BUS — DAY

The seventh morning. The woman steps on. The man looks up.

This time, she smiles. Soft, barely-there, but very real. He feels it instantly. He holds her gaze, the world narrowing around them.

The bus slows. She stands up, presses the stop button, moves by him anonymously.

Their eyes meet again, closer now, for a split-second. The bus door hisses open.

She looks down and away, almost disappointed, and STEPS OFF into the world, bright morning light and a new day.

The door stays open, waiting. He could try? Or stay put?

His eyes linger on her walking down the street, sunlight catching her hair.

The edges of the world blur. Time SLOWS to a crawl. The sounds of the city around him fade away.

The young man STANDS up straight and steps through the bus door, just before it slams shut behind him!

Through the bus window he can be seen jogging up to her.

She turns, surprised, smiling.

They keep walking.

MONTAGE — "WHAT IF"

A collection of imagined moments of their story together:

Walking through markets, hands brushing, avoiding the rain in doorways.

Drinks shared in sunlit corners, laughter reflected in window glass.

Her head on his shoulder as the city hums with life outside. Morning coffee together, waking up, comforting intimacy.

Rain on their shoulders as they run under a single umbrella, holding hands on their bus route, parting at the end with a kiss.

Rain streaks the window again, her reflection distant, unreachable. Her face falls a little.

She stares off, distant, during a conversation. He reaches out for her hand, and she pulls her own away.

Silence replaces laughter. Their hands clasp then slowly pull apart. Pinky fingers locked, then letting go for good.

INT. CITY BUS - DAY

Suddenly the CLANKING bus door closes! The young man STARTS, pulled back into grim reality.

He is still sitting on the bus in the same seat on his own.

Through that rain-specked window, the woman strides away down the street, alone, and vanishes.

Does she turn back to look, a final glance? A moment out of focus, almost imagined.

The noise of chatter, the city, and the bus engine returns, as it pulls away into traffic again, carrying the young man with it out of sight.

One stop. One moment.

Then it is gone.

THE END