

THE DERELICT WHO SAW THE FUTURE

By

Harvey Pitlik

(c) 2020

FADE IN:

INT. ABANDONED WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A school bus parked inside.

INT. BUS

On the dash is a photo of a WOMAN, 40. Holes poked through the eyes.

HARVEY, 40, moves through the tight space. Month-long beard growth, old clothes.

He goes to the back of the bus where there is a cooler. Opens the lid and takes out a box of frozen chicken wings.

Turns on the bus engine.

INT. WAREHOUSE

He defrosts the chicken wings on the hood of the bus.

Looks about his surroundings, and at the open front of the warehouse.

CROWD VOICES grow audible outside.

Harvey goes to the corner of the warehouse and starts a fire inside an old trash can.

EXT. CITY STREETS

PROTESTERS line a section of city block. Opposite them are a line of POLICE OFFICERS.

THE PROTESTERS wear face coverings -- rags, gas masks. They hold banners that say "JUSTICE FOR RICKY NG" and some hold a giant blown-up photo of A YOUNG ASIAN-AMERICAN MAN.

A male TV NEWS REPORTER, 35, stands off to the side between the protesters and the cops. A spotlight is turned on him.

TV NEWS REPORTER

It has been almost a month now since the death of twenty-one-year-old Ricky Ng. Ng was physically thrown off a city bus by the driver when he was unable to pay his fare.

Amid the crowd of people and police, but unnoticed by all present, A WILD AFRICAN BLACK PANTHER stalks briskly down the street. It stays close to the sides of buildings, sleek, avoiding the gazes of any people.

TV NEWS REPORTER

The bus took off down the street, crushing Ng under its tires.irate passengers and onlookers watched in horror as the driver ignored the screams and just drove on, dragging the young man under the bus.

On the street, some protesters and cops come face to face.

MALE PROTESTER

Whose side are you on? Don't you care that an innocent life was taken by a psychopath?

The cop turns his head.

TV NEWS REPORTER

Video of the tragic accident has surfaced and has been edited for this broadcast.

INSERT - CELL PHONE FOOTAGE

A double-wide city bus with a person (blurred) pinned under the tire at the midpoint. PEOPLE SCREAMING.

PHONE CAMERA ZOOMS IN THE THE DRIVER

Who gives the videographer the finger before shutting the bus door and driving off. The driver is Harvey, clean shaven, wearing a bus operators uniform. MORE SCREAMS as the tire rolls over the pinned individual (still blurred).

BACK TO SCENE

TV NEWS REPORTER

(looks grimly into camera)  
Truly a horrific sight. Officials from the city's public transportation say the driver had been complaining of domestic problems at home, but also said they never thought it could come to this.

INT. WAREHOUSE

Harvey cooks the chicken wings over the garbage can fire. He again looks nervously out the wide opening of the warehouse into the abandoned street outside.

He takes the chicken wings off the fire and puts them on a paper plate. Hurries back to the bus.

He stops as he hears the slapping of paws on the ground outside. The panther pokes its head into the opening of the warehouse. It takes off in a gallop as Harvey gets inside the bus and slams the door. The panther leaps up on the hood, growls, paws at the windshield.

HARVEY  
(eats a chicken wing)  
Not this time.

The panther's yellow eyes stare daggers at him.

PANTHER  
You look like shit.

HARVEY  
Bite me.

PANTHER  
Living and eating like an animal.

HARVEY  
Takes one to know one.

PANTHER  
(cranes it's neck)  
Listen to them. Out for you blood.

HARVEY  
Fuck them. Ricky Dicky should have gotten out of the way. You don't pay, you don't ride.

PANTHER  
Ah, but that's not really what made you snap.

Harvey looks down at the photo on the dash.

HARVEY  
Don't bring her up. Don't even talk about her.

PANTHER

(chuckles)

She would love to see you like  
this. Proof that you're a loser.  
Hiding out in the gutter.

HARVEY

Shut up, shut up, shut up.

PANTHER

Why don't you just finish it?  
There's a lot of them out there,  
but you have -- machinery.

HARVEY

No. One fucking life, that's  
enough.

PANTHER

You could crush them all under  
these wheels.

Harvey sticks his finger in his ears. Pulls them out in  
disgust as he realizes they are covered in chicken grease.

PANTHER

They'd do the same to you if they  
got the chance. When they get the  
chance.

Harvey looks at the keys in the ignition.

He turns them, the school bus roars to life. He turns on the  
high beams and blasts the horn.

The panther lets out a low growl, lazily slinks off the  
hood, and sits on the ground nearby.

The bus leaves the warehouse.

EXT. CITY STREETS

The protesters all but surround the cops. Neither side  
showing signs of backing off.

The school bus rounds the corner, heads straight for them.

COP

Get out of the way!

The bus makes a B-line and plows into the crowd. Cops and  
protesters scramble out of the way but some of each are hit.

The bus drives erratically, doing figure eights on the street, crossing lanes, and driving up on the sidewalk, taking out a fire hydrant and city mailbox.

The bus heads for another group of protesters. Cops open fire on the bus. One cop shoots through the windshield.

INT. BUS

Harvey slumps over the wheel and the bus comes to a halt.

BACK TO SCENE

In anger, the protesters attack the bus. They mob it from one side, tipping it over. Just as it falls, TWO PROTESTERS are behind it right in the path. One is injured, the other pulling him away from the tipping bus. A COP yanks them both out just in time as the bus keels over onto its side.

The protester and the cop make eye contact. Until now, at odds with each other.

PROTESTER

Thanks.

The cop nods, gets up slowly.

FADE OUT.