

The Simple Man:A Short story

by

Michael K. Snyder

We open on a dark screen, as the screen fades, we notice where we are...

EXT. TIMES SQUARE-SUNRISE

As the sun rises behind the large buildings, traffic has already started to congest the streets.

A man bumps into a woman carrying her purse. He knocks her purse out of her hands, and keeps on walking. The woman shrugs, rolls her eyes and picks her purse up.

We move over a large crowd, as if we were flying. ALEX ADAMS lies on his cardboard box. His dirty face absorbs the fresh sunlight.

A car drives by, splashing dirty water onto Alex, waking him. He rises from his bed, and opens his small backpack. As he unzips his bag, women, men, and children all walk by watching him. He pulls out a half-eaten apple.

ALEX

(vo)

Life. A twinkling of an eye.

The world goes on around him, as he savors a few bites of his apple.

ALEX

(vo)

People take so much for granted-their children for instance. A kid brings home a couple bad grades, and they are scolded. Not encouraged to make better marks...but scolded!

He locks eyes with a child, whose mother whisks him away in her arms.

ALEX

(vo)

Next thing they know...little Tommy is all grown-and the anger inside of him separates him from...well...from everyone he truly loves.

Alex swallows his final bite, and looks over to his right. A very skinny dog limps around, wagging his tail towards strangers.

(CONTINUED)

The dog is tired, weak, and obviously injured. Alex looks down at his half-eaten apple.

ALEX

(vo)

This apple...another thing people take for granted.For them this is just an APPLE...for me...this is a meal.

He tosses the apple to the dog, who chomps it down in seconds.

ALEX

(vo)

For him...it's the difference between life and death.

CUT TO

EXT.WALL STREET-MORNING

Alex walks down Wall Street, cars and people buzzing by him.

ALEX

(vo)

Everyone is so concerned with their jobs, with their money.So concerned that they forget all about what truly matters most.

He walks by a father, who is saying goodbye to his wife and daughter as he enters a taxi.

ALEX

(vo)

Family.You see I wasn't always alone.

He walks by a shop window-TVs for sale.The news is playing, a crowd watches.

ALEX

(vo)

I had a family-once.

FADE TO WHITE

INT.HOUSE-FLASHBACK-NIGHT

Alex, clean and well dressed, sits at his dining room table with his wife.They are holding hands over the table, as JESSICA (10) runs into the room and hugs Alex.

ALEX

Oh, my girls! How are you two doing?

JESSICA

Daddy! Are your bags all packed?

ALEX

Bags...what bags?

Jessica punches Alex in the arm.

JESSICA

What do you mean?Your suitcases!
THE TRIP!

Alex laughs.

ALEX

Of course their all packed, are yours?

JESSICA

Well...

ALEX

Well! Well!

Alex rises out of his seat and grabs Jessica, whisking her into the air.She screams in laughter as he carries her to her room, and throws her down onto her bed, kissing her face.He begins to tickle her.

JESSICA

MOMMY!

She cries in laughter as her mother runs into the room, and tackles Alex onto the bed next to Jessica-they all laugh.

Alex's cell phone begins to ring, he answers it.

ALEX

This is Alex.Yes.Well, I had this trip planned.No...no sir.Yes sir.Ok.

He hangs the phone up, and sits up in the bed.

(CONTINUED)

JESSICA
Who as that, daddy?

ALEX
It looks like I'm staying here for
New Years.

Jessica's face turns from joy to fear.

ALEX
The CEO is flying back early, and I
have to be there for his return.

Jessica sits eerily still, as a tear rolls down her cheek.

ALEX
I'm sorry babe...you and mommy will
have a fun time!Sometimes things
like this happen.

CUT TO

INT.AIRPORT-DAY

Alex gives Jessica a huge hug, and his wife a long kiss.

ALEX
Say hello to grandma for me!

He watches as they walk off into the distance.Jessica faces
Alex the entire way, until her smile fades into the crowd.

ALEX
(vo)
They loved me.They cherished me.

He walks out of view.

ALEX
(vo)
I adored them.

INT.ALEX'S OFFICE-DAY

Alex sits in his office, reading through some papers.The TV
in his office suddenly turns on-the news.

TV
The TWIN TOWERS have been hit
by...by two airliner planes.

Alex's face slowly turns towards the tv.He rushes out of his office.

INT.POLICE DEPARTMENT-DAY

Alex busts through the doors of the police department.

ALEX

Do they know which planes?

A female officer grabs his arms.

OFFICER

Sir, I need you to calm down.Calm down sir.

ALEX

Do they know which planes?Do they know which planes?Which planes?

OFFICER

We are trying to get that information right now.

A male officer runs to her side, carrying a paper.He hands it to her, and she reads it to Alex...

The scene becomes silent-except for Graham Nash-Simple Man, which plays.

As the officer reads the paper, Alex falls to his knees in tears.He cries as everyone in the room stairs.Alex crawls out of the police department.

FADE TO WHITE

EXT.WORLD TRADE CENTER-DAY-PRESENT DAY

Alex stands at the site that was once the World Trade Center.

ALEX

(vo)

People need to remember what matters most.

He reaches into his bag, and pulls out a notebook and a red rose.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

(vo)

I wrote down my story...I wrote
down what is most important in
life-what I learned.

He drops the rose onto the site, as well as the notebook.

ALEX

(vo)

Someone will find it, and it will
save them.It will save them.

He glances at the site, a tear rolls down his face, and he
walks out of view.

Some time passes.

The father who left his family that morning enters view.He
glances at the notebook, and picks it up.

FATHER

The Simple Man...?

He walks away flipping through pages of the book.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END