

Acceptance #1: Monsieur Bête

by

Conor O'Hagan

conor@conorohagan@gmail.com
(323) 504-0531

FADE IN:

EXT. PRISON GROUNDS - DAY

The SKY--

It is vast and BLUE, a picturesque vision of freedom and tranquillity. Clouds are scarce and light.

Birds SING, welcoming the sun-soaked summer's day. All else is quiet.

PAN DOWN, and the deep blue sky is pierced by large, harsh PRISON BUILDINGS in the distance.

HOLD on the front gate of the prison, in the distance, down a straight path. Movement...

A figure comes through the door and begins towards us.

As he approaches we see that he is a MAN, late-twenties, trim, thin-hipped, greasy-haired.

He moves towards us, his footing sure. His gaze is curious, interested; checking out this new experience. His shoes CLOP on the path.

He reaches the end of the path. He stops. Looks left, at a quiet street, some parked cars, nothing of note.

He looks right, at another quiet street, but this way there is a simple bus stop.

He proceeds to the bus stop, waits. He is calmly content.

A RUMBLE is heard (O.S.)

A bus approaches. It stops directly in front of him. The doors squeal open. He enters.

INT. BUS - DAY - CONTINUOUS

He steps up and stands inside the door.

The doors shut mechanically behind him. He looks to the driver, who offers him a friendly, playful wink. He puts the bus into gear, and the bus pulls off.

Man smiles and turns into the bus.

INT. BUS - DAY - CONTINUOUS - MAN'S POV

FACES

Various faces, all facing him. But none acknowledging him.

He sheepishly moves down the aisle.

Every seat on the bus seems to be taken. Nondescript people filling up every seat. Each nondescript person silent and facing forwards.

He continues on, unsure, trying not to look these people in the eye.

He finds himself almost at the end of the bus. Still no free seat visible. Finally, he makes it to the very last seat. There he finds an empty seat. The only one on the bus.

There, sitting in the next seat, is a GIRL of maybe eleven years old. She is pretty, with a cute button nose, and wears a RED summer dress.

He sits in beside her.

He glances over to see a toy on the girl's fingers. A hand-made folded paper fortune teller. She plays with it, manipulating it back and forth, showing all the possible options, playing it with herself.

She turns and the two make eye-contact. Both smile openly.

She holds out the game, offering for him to play.

He smiles, accepting the offer.

She holds it out. The options, written on the different sides of the game in colored pens;

1, 2, 3, 4

He considers, before lifting THREE FINGERS to her.

She smiles and moves the game comfortably; 1 - 2 - 3

Now, further options;

6, 8, 11, 15

He smiles and places an index finger firmly on the number 11. No hesitation this time.

Once again, she rhythmically manipulates the paper with her fingers. 1 - 2 - 3...

He looks over at her. Stares into her EYES. She smiles and carries on counting - 8 - 9 - 10 - 11

She looks at him now and offers him the final question. His options now;

RED, BLUE, GREEN, YELLOW

Each one scribbled on with colored pencils. The two smile at each other.

He doesn't react, as if daring her to guess his answer.

The two gaze into each other's eyes. She knows.

She slowly, gently, delicately lifts the RED flap.

Underneath is the message, the prize...

She reads it to herself and giggles, putting her hands up by her mouth; very cute.

She shares the information with Man who reads eagerly. In red colored pencil, reads:

"YOUR WILDEST DREAMS WILL COME TRUE, MY DEAR"

He looks back up now, the smile bigger than ever, uncontrollable.

She smiles back, somewhat embarrassed by the situation, but happily so. She shyly, playfully turns away from him, twirling her upper body back and forth.

She reaches down toward the floor. Lifts her handbag.

He watches, curious.

She fishes inside for something... He tries to get a better look, still cannot see what she searches for.

Finally she removes the item and displays it to him.

LIPSTICK

She twists the lipstick, revealing the color; a deep RED.

She takes a small mirror now too, and watching in her reflection, applies the lipstick methodically. She takes her time, ensuring perfection.

He watches, blissful.

Happy, she puckers up her lips and smacks them together.

She smiles at him, FOR him, with those red lips.

Not yet finished, she fishes in her bag once more. She removes a simple white napkin. She takes it, teasingly, and gives it a full kiss. She checks her handiwork; a BIG, FULL, RED KISS mark on the napkin.

Happy with the result, she takes his hand. She opens it, palm up, and places the napkin in it. She closes his fingers over it for him.

He is happy with his gift.

The bus shudders to a stop. The girl puts on a mock-sad face. He looks to the front of the bus. No one else moves.

He looks back to the girl, understanding.

She waves to him cheekily. He waves back to her. Taking his souvenir he stands up and moves down the bus. He takes a look back at this vision of a girl in a red dress in a sea of dreary faces and gives a final wave. She waves back. Both continue to smile.

HIS FEET on the footpath. The bus moves away.

PAN UP to his right hand, with the napkin securely held.

As he begins to move, PULL BACK, to reveal the same straight path as earlier. He walks up the path, back to the prison.

CONTINUE TO PULL BACK as he reaches the prison gate and moves inside.

ZOOM UP to the still-glorious SKY.

HOLD on the deep blue sky, and the chirping of birds.

FADE OUT.