

# BUS STOP

BY

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**Characters**

BUM ..... Male, 30-70. Looks like he hasn't slept in two days or bathed/changed clothes in seven.

MAN1 ..... M, 30-50's. Serious, intelligent, alert.

VOICE ..... M, 20-30's. Sounds like he's from the ghetto.

MAN2 ..... M, 30's-60's. Eager, talkative, annoying.

WOMAN ... F, 20's. Seems sweet, although not terribly interested in talking to random strange men on a street corner at 2am.

**Setting**

A desolate street corner in Washington Heights, Manhattan. Still and quiet.

**Time**

1990's or early 2000's, when the neighborhood's safety was still iffy.

Two or three o'clock a.m. in mid-summer.

## BUS STOP

*Scene: Street light up, illuminating a large circle on the ground. M4 bus stop sign SL, bench to the Right of it. Garbage can DR with cardboard box overflowing with women's dress shoes, next to it. 5 seconds. Sound of a car going by. 5 seconds.*

BUM

*(Enter SL, shuffling. Disheveled, lost, confused. Doesn't walk straight. Calling lamely)*

Sandy?

*(Exit slowly, SR.*

*(5 seconds.)*

MAN1

*(Enter SL, stands at bus stop. Waits. Cell phone rings; he takes it out and opens it.)*

Hi... Yeah, hi.... Yep, that's taken care of... No, he ... he didn't make it. .... He's dead, Pat. ... Yep. ... Thanks. ... Sure ... About 20-25 minutes. Okay. Bye.

*(Puts phone away.)*

BUM

*(Enter SR during MAN1's conversation. Walks to garbage can, tentatively lifts lid.)*

Sandy?

*(Replaces lid. Paws half-heartedly through shoes in cardboard box.*

*(10 seconds.)*

MAN1

*(Cell phone rings again. Picks it up)*

Hey .... No, twenty minutes. I have to catch the bus. ... I don't know, Washington Heights somewhere.

BUM (*To MAN1*)

Sandy?

MAN1

*(Into cell phone, louder)*

Washington Heights somewhere. .... Listen, I didn't leave until past one, it was a stressful day –

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BUM (*To MANI*)

Are you Sandy?

MAN1

*(Into cell phone)*

-- so I didn't get out here 'til 1:30. ... I had to scrub and change. I can't go out onto the street looking like I've just -- .... No, I didn't have time.

BUM

*(To MANI)*

Are you Sandy?

MAN1

*(Finally notices BUM. To BUM)*

Uh ... what?

BUM

Are you Sandy?

MAN1

No.

*(Into cell phone.)*

Sorry. No, I didn't have time. I will when I get home. ... Yep. Okay. Bye.

*(Puts cell phone away.)*

BUM

*(Overlapping after MANI's "No." Speaks lazily, dropping consonants)*

Can you spare some change? A couple quarters so I can make a phone call ..

*(Trails off. Eventually sits by garbage can and closes eyes.*

*(Sound of door slamming.)*

MAN1

*(Looks offstage L. Shouting)*

Hey -- are you still open?

*(Pause. Enter WOMAN SR. Walks to bus stop, stands to R of bench. Checks watch. Waits. Begins pulling something out of her purse. Stops, startled, as she hears car offstage. Closes purse, stands still.)*

Are you still open over there?

*(Apparently someone offstage indicates "yes." MAN1 glances out to house L -- to see if bus is coming. Exit L quickly.)*

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VOICE

*(Presumably from invisible car that has pulled up on the street)*

Hey gorgeous, how you doin' tonight?

*(WOMAN does not react.)*

You waiting for someone?

*(WOMAN smiles.)*

Ah, you smilin'. What you doing later?

WOMAN

Working.

VOICE

Working – where you working?

*(WOMAN does not respond.)*

Where?

WOMAN

Not too far.

VOICE

You workin' here? On the street? You workin' the street, baby? 'Cause I'll save you a lot of time right now.

WOMAN

No, sorry.

VOICE

You single?

WOMAN

No.

VOICE

Boyfriend?

WOMAN

Yeah.

VOICE

Aw, man. Who is he? I'll kill him.

WOMAN

You sure know how to win a girl's heart, don't you.

VOICE

I ain't interested in your heart, baby.

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WOMAN

Well I respect a man who knows what he wants.

VOICE

I ain't interested in your respect either. Hey, I wanna give you something.

*(WOMAN ignores him.)*

Can I give you a present?

*(WOMAN ignores him.)*

'Cause I got somethin' for you. How 'bout I come out there and give it to you?

WOMAN

How 'bout I kick your fucking face in?

VOICE

Ow. *Oooow*. Shit, man. Hey, where you from?

*(WOMAN ignores him.)*

You grown up around here, ain't you? You not afraid to be standin' out here by yourself in the middle of the night. You got balls, baby. Where you from?

*(Enter MANI SL with banana and bag of peanuts, or whatever you'd find at some bootleg deli at 2am. Stands at bus stop, to L of bench.)*

WOMAN *(To VOICE)*

I'm from the Intergalactic Medium, same as you.

VOICE

The what?

*(WOMAN ignores him.)*

All right, you have a good night now, Sweetheart.

*(To MANI)*

You leave her alone now, man. She's a lady. Got a mouth like a sailor but she's a lady.

*(MANI ignores him but nods at WOMAN, who nods back.*

*To WOMAN)*

You gonna be okay, now?

WOMAN

Hope so.

VOICE

Just hope? You ain't sure?

*(WOMAN ignores him.)*

Okay, you have a good night.

*(Sound of car driving off.)*

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BUM

*(Hears car and struggles to sit up straight. Calling after the noise)*

Sandy?

*(Waits; leans back again and closes eyes.)*

*(WOMAN stares out around her; MAN1 eats snack.)*

*(10 seconds.)*

*(MAN1's cell phone rings. Does not pick up. Finally on the ~ 5<sup>th</sup> ring, he takes it out to silence it and put it back.)*

*(Enter MAN2 SR. Walks to R of WOMAN.)*

MAN1

*(Cell starts ringing again. He picks it up, irritated.)*

What?! ..

*(Walks UL to talk privately. Rest of conversation is lost to us.)*

MAN2 *(To WOMAN)*

You don't happen to have a light, do you?

WOMAN

Actually, I think I might.

*(Turns away from him and rummages in her purse. He watches her for a moment, then reaches into his pocket as he's watching her ... It is tense for a few moments, as audience may wonder whether he is about to brandish a weapon. He pulls out ... a cigarette.)*

You know .. I'm sorry, I guess I don't. *(Still looking.)*

MAN2

Oh, that's okay.

WOMAN *(Still looking)*

But I really thought I did.

MAN2

No, it's fine, I should quit anyway. *(Good-natured.)* Thanks anyway for looking.

WOMAN

All right, I'm sorry.

MAN2 *(To WOMAN)*

So what's a pretty lady like you hanging around these parts at night?

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WOMAN (*Smiles*)

I was just meeting friends. I don't live too far away, anyway.

MAN2

Where do you live? (*Pause*)

WOMAN

Not far.

MAN2

Oh, I gotcha.

(*Laughs as though they're sharing an inside joke.*)

You don't divulge your digits to random strangers on the street in the middle of the night. A little overly cautious there, don't you think?

(*WOMAN smiles.*)

MAN2

I live close to here, I'm just heading downtown to see friends.

WOMAN

Oh.

MAN2

Actually, they're not really friends, but they have weed.

WOMAN

I see.

MAN2

So, are you heading home?

WOMAN

Yes.

MAN2

Gonna make it an early night, then?

WOMAN

If this is early, then I guess I'm making it early.

(*Takes out a book, or something, to make him leave her alone.*)

MAN1

(*Walks back to bench. Into cell*)

Well I don't like talking like this, but the way he's going, I don't think he'll live to see the Open ... The man won't listen to reason.

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MAN2 (*To WOMAN*)

So whatcha got there?

WOMAN (*Getting curt*)

Just some reading.

MAN2

I should do more of that (*laughs.*)

MAN1 (*Into cell*)

The idiot hasn't exercised a day in his life, for chrissakes. If he thinks he's going to breeze through the OR tomorrow with a brand new heart and head off to the Hamptons or wherever and play 36 holes in a day, he's in for a sur— ... Well I don't think he was a good candidate to begin with. ... Of course I am, it's my responsibility, right? It falls back on me, regardless of what the guy decides.

*(Sound of bus. MAN1, MAN2, WOMAN look out to House L, to see bus approaching.)*

MAN2 (*Indicating bus*)

This you?

WOMAN

No.

MAN1 (*Into cell*)

Gotta let you go, Hon, the bus is here ...

MAN2 (*To WOMAN*)

No? The M4's the only thing that'll take you downtown. Are you going downtown?

MAN1

*(Overlapping. Into cell)*

Yep, about 20 minutes from now. ... Sure. .... I love you, too. Bye. *(Puts cell away.)*

*(Amid overlaps, it's important for audience to hear "I love you.")*

WOMAN

*(Overlapping. To MAN2)*

Don't worry, I'm fine.

MAN2

Okay, if you say so. You have a good night, then. Careful out here by yourself.

WOMAN

Thank you.

*(Exit MAN1 and MAN2 offstage through audience, to catch bus.)*  
*WOMAN alternates looking at book and out around her. Then*

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WOMAN (cont'd)

*stares ahead, out to House.)*

*(10 seconds of silence and stillness.)*

BUM

*(Stands groggily from where he was lying L. Looks around. Assumes a more erect, alert stance than before. Takes a few steps toward bus stop. His voice now is strong, controlled, and alert – but quiet. To WOMAN)*

Are you Sandy?

*(Pause.)*

WOMAN

*(Still looking ahead)*

Yes.

*(BUM walks to her; hands her something from inside his clothing.)*

WOMAN

*(Examines it.)*

This isn't exactly what we talked about.

BUM

I don't think we've –

WOMAN

Your friend. This isn't what your friend and I talked about.

BUM

Miss, I don't know much. I'm just going on orders from my end. *(Pause)*

WOMAN

Uh huh. *(Pause)*

BUM

I'm not sure what you want me to do. Do you want me to take it back? I don't have any say here, I'm the messenger.

WOMAN

Yes. You are.

*(Walks R briskly, toward Exit, taking what BUM has given her.)*

BUM

*(Following her)*

Woah, aren't you forgetting something? Where do you think you're going –

*(WOMAN turns back swiftly just as she is about to disappear)*

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**BUM (cont'd)**

*Offstage R – shoots him. It's a small gun with a silencer; audience doesn't have to see it. Just needs to hear muffled shot and BUM's small cry, and see him slump to ground. WOMAN shoots a second bullet into him; Exit.)*

*(10 seconds.*

*(Sound of car driving by.)*

**BLACKOUT**