

LOVE

by

Rob Burke

FADE IN:

EXT. BUS STOP - PICCADILLY CIRCUS - NIGHT

A MAN, 38, backpack, dark beard, darker demeanor...waits.

EXT. CAFE - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

Memories. The Man, 28. Snapshot glimpses. Outdoor table. A wife. Their baby boy. Smiling faces, laughter, happiness.

EXT. BUS STOP - PICCADILLY CIRCUS - NIGHT

A bus arrives. The Man checks. Half-empty. Not the one.

INT./EXT. CAFE - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

More remembered shards from that day. Empty water glass. Kiss for the boy. The Man heads inside to the bar.

EXT. BUS STOP - PICCADILLY CIRCUS - NIGHT

A SIREN.

The Man puts sunglasses on. At night? Takes them off.

Another bus arrives. This one full. Good.

The SIREN stops. Was nothing. He slips aboard the --

BUS

The Man spies, takes the only empty seat. Across the aisle a LITTLE GIRL, 7, stares right at him.

INT. CAFE - DAY - (FLASHBACK)

Scenes the Man can't erase. VIOLENT SHUDDER. Runs past FIRE, over GLASS. Towards his family. HIS FAMILY. Gone.

LITTLE GIRL (O.S.)
Happy Valentine's Day.

Her small voice melts the memory, draws the Man back to the present, back on the --

BUS - NOW

The Little Girl holds out a red paper heart. The Man says nothing. Looks at the MOTHER. She shrugs, apologetic smile.

LITTLE GIRL
Please?

The Man takes the paper heart from her small pale hands.
 Angry eyes read the large black crayon letters: "LOVE"
 The Little Girl giggles, squiggles. Mother kisses her head.
 Paper into pocket. A slight lurch forward. Bus stop.
 He stuffs the backpack under his seat, bolts off onto the --

SIDEWALK

The Little Girl. On her Mother's lap. At the window.
 Waving. The Man blinks. Bus pulls away.

Moves. Gait uneven. Fast. Faster. Fast.

Pulls out a cell phone. Wired. A DETONATOR. Fingers hover.

FINGERS SHAKE.

The red paper heart escapes his pocket. "LOVE" visible as
 it floats to the ground.

Eyes the phone, the heart, the phone, the heart. "LOVE"

The Man TEARS apart the phone, tosses it into a trash bin.
 Pulls another phone from his jacket. Makes a call.

URGENT words.

Scoops up the paper heart. Walks. Slower. Slower. Slow.

Minutes rapidly pass by, then a SIREN. Then, another. And
 another, another, another...the Man, still walking, until --

Attention diverts to a store window, multiple TV screens:

REPORTER

-- minutes ago, alerting officials
 to the location of four busses with
 bombs on board. I repeat, those
 busses were safely cleared. Three
 men have been taken into custody
 while a citywide search is underway
 for a fourth suspect, a man described
 as having a dark beard --

Scanning the sidewalk. The Man?

No longer there.

FADE OUT.