

Unfriended  
By  
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**FADE IN ON:**

**EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT**

The night swaths the street with soft shadows.

TOM ADKINS (40s, arrogant corporate) shoulders briskly past PEDESTRIANS. Swinging a briefcase, he beelines towards a building labelled: "Pat's Bar."

At the entrance, Tom transfers the briefcase to his other hand - angles to get a grip on the knob.

From the sidewalk, a rusty voice intrudes.

VOICE

Psssst!

Tom swings towards the source: a BEGGAR sits huddled against a wall, surrounded by trash bags and cardboard.

BEGGAR

Before you get your drink on, Corporate Guy - got a dime or two to spare?

Something BUZZES in Tom's jacket. The Beggar extends a hopeful hand.

BEGGAR

I'm not askin' for much. But a fella's gotta eat. It's been days.

The buzzing continues. Tom fumbles in his jacket. The Beggar's eyes light up. Score?

BEGGAR

Bless you! You've no idea what this mea-

Tom pulls out his phone. No spare change. The bum's face falls, as... Tom cracks a grin into his cell.

TOM

(into the phone)

Jumping Jeezus on a pogo stick! Alan, cool your jets! It took me time to find the bar. According to Zagat's, this place doesn't even exist...

Tom listens. No response. Behind him, the beggar sags.

TOM

(into the phone)

Hello?

Tom glowers at his screen, face illuminated in the glow.

INSERT: It wasn't a phone call after all.

Instead, a Twitter notification to @NewYorkNumbers, by an account modestly calling itself @MassivePecker69:

"Dude, you're a CPA? Wherever you went to college, you can shove that Romper Room degree up your puckered ass!"

TOM

Mother molesting puerile prick!

Tom starts to type a response. Realizing the Beggar's watching, he gives up - just hits "Report."

Digging in a pocket, Tom pulls out wadded bills and tosses them in the man's lap.

TOM

Here. Buy a Starbuck's on me.

(looks him over)

Or clean socks. Enjoy.

BEGGAR

Sir, thank you so very, very much! This is enough for -

TOM

But consider yourself grateful.

The beggar stammers. That comment caught him off-guard.

BEGGAR

Of course. But-

TOM

YOU get to live off grid, with no responsibilities in the world. But for those of us with a job - and a data plan - newsflash, modern life blows chunks!

Tom stomps into Pat's Bar, slams the door.

The beggar stares after him, at a loss for words.

#### **INT. PAT'S BAR**

Dim lights hide faces which don't want to be seen. Pat's is where souls drown sorrows; alone, and not at peace.

ALAN (40s) sulks at the bar.

Ignored by the bored BARTENDER, Alan communes with a tumbler glass of brown liquid.

His wrinkled clothes and body language say it all. In his own abject way, Alan's as beaten as the beggar outside.

Tom beelines over, sits down. Appraises Alan's drink.

TOM

Jack Daniel's Sinatra Select, I hope?

ALAN

On my budget? Hells to the no. And at 50% ABV, Wild Turkey gives me the oblivion I need.

Tom's face melts.

TOM

Alan, buddy. Drinking much? Just... no.

The bartender drifts over, shoots Tom a "what's your poison" look. Tom waves towards a row of beer bottles.

TOM

Whatever you got that's craft and hoppy. Please.

Dropping his briefcase and cell onto the bar, Tom pulls his seat closer to Alan. SCRRRRRAAAAAPE.

The bartender arches an eyebrow.

BARTENDER

Careful with the tiles there, pal!

TOM

In this place? Get real. Who cares?

Tom shrugs. He focuses on Alan, concerned.

TOM

On the phone, you said you and Rachel -

ALAN

Split. No shocker, but that's the news.

TOM

You guys *never* had it easy.

ALAN

Well, the fight was finally final - *this* time. Which means there's nothing left for me in this world.

Except this bottle of Turkey. And the  
"pleasure" of bitching to you.

TOM

Hey, what are old friends for? I'm glad  
you called.

Alan sips his drink, morose. Tom forces a smile.

TOM

Listen, maybe things aren't all that bad.  
I mean, I never saw what you did in  
Rachel. That small breasted, big butt,  
loud mouthed combo's gotta wear you down  
sometime...

Alan turns and glares.

ALAN

You're talking about my ex-fiancee!

TOM

No offense. Whatever makes you happy,  
dude.

ALAN

We were happy for five years, goddammit.  
Then she up and leaves for no reason!?

TOM

I tagged that one as flaky from Day One.  
What was her excuse this time?

ALAN

The three As, as she so gracefully  
phrased it on her way out the door.

TOM

Huh?

ALAN

Abandonment. Addiction. Can you believe  
it? She accused me of both!

TOM

And the third?

ALAN

"Asshole". She threw that one in just  
for fun.

The bartender arrives with Tom's bottle, tops off Alan's  
drink. Alan gulps it down, croaks.

ALAN

More.

TOM

About the "addiction" part... Based on what I'm seeing here, I'm starting to suspect we need to talk.

A RINGTONE blares in Alan's pocket. He throws a palm up at Tom: "Stop."

Fishing out his cell, Alan cups it in his hand for privacy. Tom chuckles at the move.

TOM

You got a girlfriend on the side? That'd be a fourth "A" - Adultery!

Scrolling through an app, Alan reads threads. Lobs nasty comments at each one.

ALAN

Fucking piss for brains.

TOM

Excuse me?

ALAN

Not you - this account. The chucklehead thinks he's some sorta galaxy brain. But based on the stuff he spews, he's not competent to use a PC mouse!

(scrolls more, points)

As for *this* twat-waffle: fifty bucks says he's a bot!

Face scrunched in annoyance, Alan furiously types.

ALAN

Frigging fat fingers!

TOM

Alan-

ALAN

You STD riddled butt plug!

He shoots a bashful look at Tom.

ALAN

Not you. Auto-type glitch.

TOM

(beat, soft)

Buddy, if there's anything I've learned from years in finance: you can't drown your anger in booze. It floats.

The two old friends share a look.

TOM

So, Rachel left you for "addiction"? No more secrets, Al. Tell your old pal the truth.

Alan sighs, puts down his phone.

ALAN

It's not what you think. She claimed I had... a *social media* problem.

Something BUZZES on Tom's phone. Tom side eyes it - tempted. But doesn't pick up.

Instead, he listens as Alan's confession flows.

ALAN

If I gotta be honest, Rachel had a point. But it wasn't that bad at first, right? Remember the internet back when we were in college, Tom? We'd argue politics on listserve. AOL. Usenet. Such innocent, classic times!

Tom nurses his beer. Nostalgia sparks in his eyes.

TOM

Sure, dial-up took forever. But what it gave us in return was good.

ALAN

Then came MySpace. Facebook. Sharing that first kitten meme was such a rush! And remembering birthdays, a breeze. With technology that freeing, what could possibly go wrong?

TOM

Yeah, that's how any dealer operates. They use the fun stuff to hook you. But afterward -

ALAN

You can't walk away. The traps close in!

Alan waves for more whiskey. As the bartender pours, Tom sneaks a look at his own cell.

INSERT: Another message from @MassivePecker69:

"U can't handle the truth, can you snowflake soy boi? Go play with your pencil dick. BTW, UR girlfriend says hi!"

TOM  
(snarls to himself)  
Blithering world-class idiot.

He furiously types, takes his eyes off Alan.

INSERT OF TOM'S TYPING: "Project much, 69? UR pretty obsessed with junk size, "Massive". OMG, wonder why?"

Tom hits send. Looks up.

Alan's growling at his own phone now, too.

ALAN  
Man. I miss Facebook so, so much.

TOM  
(beat)  
Gimme your keys, Alan.

ALAN  
What?

TOM  
Now! Hand 'em over. If you're saying *that*, you're too drunk to drive!

ALAN  
No! I'm not saying Facebook's perfect. But you gotta admit, it had its charms. Sure, we had to deal with conspiracy posts about Russian Propaganda and Diet Pepsi Causing Autism -

TOM  
I *think* the claim was Parkinson's?

ALAN  
Still, in hindsight - the other pages rocked!

Alan's phone rings again. He flips the bird at the screen. Loads a rude animated GIF - hits SEND.

Tom's phone buzzes. Groaning, he reaches over - switches it to mute. Alan rambles on.



ALAN

At least with Facebook, people were Friends!

TOM

Allegedly.

ALAN

But all this newfangled stuff is about "influencing". Instagram, Tik-Tok....

TOM

"Improved communication", my ass cheeks. You ask me, social media doesn't unify. It divides. And sucks!

Alan stares at the wallpaper on his phone: it's a picture of him with RACHEL, shot in much, much happier times.

ALAN

A lot of things suck now.

He drinks deeply, muses.

ALAN

Rachel leaving me was the last straw. I was in this never ending Twitter beef-

TOM

Twitter? Say no more. That one's the worst!

ALAN

Yeah, with some shit-for-brains troll who's hate-followed me for months. I mean, everyone's bound to find a serious serving of stupid on any site, but this particular specimen is in his own league! I'd have blocked that oozing pus ball, but he'd interpret that as a win.

TOM

(chuckles)

Lemme guess. Some teenager jerking off in his mom's basement?

ALAN

That wouldn't surprise me. This guy's wrong about literally *everything*. He argues straw man fallacies nonstop! Sprinkled with red herrings on and off.

TOM

How's his false dichotomies?

ALAN

Big time abundant. The guy has no insight at all. His takes are so rancid, if he tweeted the world was round, I'd give the Flat Earth Society a fresh look!

(beat)

That night, we'd been going at each other for five hours. The only break I took was for a piss. I was so damned absorbed I didn't hear Rachel at first. Though she was standing right behind me! It's only after she texted to say she was leaving I got the message... far too late. Thanks to my obsession with scoring digital points, my entire life's turned to shit!

A tear trickles down Alan's cheek. Tom forces a laugh to lighten the mood.

TOM

Oh fuck. C'mere you big, lovable loser!

He bear-hugs Alan. Two old friends: bonding over insults, Wild Turkey... and craft beer.

ALAN

(sniffles)

Yeah, that's me. The digital loser of the millennium.

TOM

Just joking. You're *no* loser. The Alan Connor I know is smart. Wicked funny, too.

ALAN

At times, yeah. But now? Hells no.

TOM

Well, sometimes you get too intense. But that's a virtue, not a flaw! That's why we've been best friends all these years.

(beat)

On and off, as work and time permits. But you're brave enough to speak your mind. Bottom line, that's what counts!

Holding Alan at arm's length, Tom squeezes his shoulders.

TOM

Bartender! Another round for Alan and myself here. And make it *top* drawer this time. Alan's my oldest, dearest friend.

He - of all people - deserves to mourn  
his relationship in style!

The Bartender pulls out glasses, pours.

ALAN

Thanks, Tom. I dunno what inspired me to  
text you tonight.

TOM

You called in the Calvary. And you were  
right!

The two toast. Glasses clink.

TOM

Hey, how's about for shits and giggles we  
Twitter tag-team that asshole nemesis of  
yours? I'm a veteran of that bird hell-  
hole. So in the spirit of revenge, let's  
ratio that scuzz-ball 'til he bleeds.

ALAN

(shrugs)

Why not? With Rachel gone, I've got the  
time. Weird we haven't connected there  
before.

Tom whips out his phone.

TOM

IKR? What's your handle, pal?

ALAN

MassivePecker69.

Record scratch. Tom freezes.

TOM

What?

ALAN

Yeah, I know. It's kinda over the top.  
But I was going for that irreverent "burn  
all bridges" vibe.

TOM

You sure it's not MassivePecker70? Or 68?

ALAN

No. Sixty-Nine.

(laughs)

C'mon, you of all people get it, right?

TOM  
Please tell me there's a hyphen?

ALAN  
No. Why?

Tom angrily scrolls through the messages from  
"@MassivePecker69" on his phone. His eyes flare.

ALAN  
Tom, you look... pissed. What's wrong?

TOM  
(chokes)  
You wanna know if I can "handle the  
truth"? We were college fucking  
roommates, Alan! If I attended "Romper  
Room", so did you!

Tom grabs his briefcase and cell, storms for the exit.

ALAN  
Was it something I said?

TOM  
"Massively"? Yeah!

ALAN  
Where are you going?

TOM  
Go ask NewYorkNumbers. To "play with my  
pencil dick" - according to you!

Tom slams the door. He's gone.

The bartender and Alan exchange looks, confused. Alan  
grabs his phone, scrolls through messages.

ALAN  
Oh. My. God. "Project much." That's how  
Tom talks! I shoulda recognized his  
phrases before...

BARTENDER  
Dude, even for this dive, that went south  
quick. What'd I miss?

Alan flips his phone, shows the bartender the screen.

ALAN  
I didn't know he was NewYorkNumbers.

BARTENDER

And you're...

ALAN

MassivePecker69. Metaphorically.

BARTENDER

Oops.

The bartender scrolls through messages, cracks a smile.

BARTENDER

According to this, you have his  
girlfriend to go home to.

ALAN

(hangs his head)  
If only that were true.

#### **EXT. SIDEWALK**

Tom storms out of Pat's Bar. A familiar voice intrudes.

BEGGAR

Hey man - hope you had fun tonight!

Tom swings around, finds the man still on the sidewalk,  
but now sporting colorful, brand new SOCKS.

The beggar wiggles his toes happily. Tom snarls.

TOM

Thanks to Twitter? I lost a lifelong  
friend. So, no - it sucked!

The beggar blinks, confused.

BEGGAR

You Twittered at a bar? That's where  
you're supposed ta unplug. Soak in real  
life?

Tom punches buttons on his phone, calls an Uber... Tosses  
the cell to the beggar.

TOM

Poor but wise. And goddamned right. I'm  
gonna make that my habit *everywhere* from  
now on!

BEGGAR

This is an iPhone 13. You absolutely,  
positively sure you wanna give it up?

Tom waves towards an unseen Uber driver and stalks off.

TOM

Tell MassivePecker69 I said hi. Enjoy!

The Beggar stares at the cell in his hand - an expensive, unexpected gift.

BEGGAR

Thanks Mister... I think?

FINAL FADE OUT: