

The Businessman

By

Kate Weyant

1 IN BLACK 1

We hear the sound of a plane taking off.

FADE IN

2 INT. AIRPORT HALLWAY - DAY 2

A BUSINESSMAN in his 20's walks briskly through an airport hallway. He pulls expensive looking luggage behind him, and sports a crisp dark suit and gelled back locks - not a hair out of place.

He rolls back his sleeve, and the camera cuts to his wristwatch - expensive, gold, and glimmering with a crimson 'H' for Harvard embedded into the glass.

As he checks the time, he ignores his surroundings, and people have to move out of his way to avoid a collision. A mother with her daughter shoots him a dirty look as they pass.

The businessman shakes his sleeve back down, and takes a deep breath as he starts walking more quickly - a sense of purpose in his step.

3 INT. AIRPORT GATE 12 - DAY 3

The businessman stands in front of a gate that reads "12" on the sign. He looks up, studying the sign, before glancing back down at his ticket in hand. He seems to hesitate before he approaches a section of seats.

4 INT. AIRPORT GATE 12 SECTION OF SEATS - DAY 4

He sits, placing his jacket on top of the seat to his left, and his luggage on the seat to his right. An ELDERLY COUPLE across from him stare, sharing a perplexed glance with each other as they watch the young man take up three whole seats by himself.

A phone starts vibrating. The businessman slips his phone out of his jacket pocket and answers.

BUSINESSMAN

Yes?

We cannot hear the other voice on the line, but the businessman's eyes scrunch up in annoyance.

BUSINESSMAN

Of course I'm here. Where else would I be?

(CONTINUED)

A beat.

BUSINESSMAN  
I'm fine. Worry about yourself.

He hangs up the phone. The elderly couple is still staring. The businessman turns to retrieve his laptop from his luggage and starts typing. As he does so, the couple moves closer to whisper to each other.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Well... he sure looks important,  
doesn't he?

ELDERLY MAN  
Or he just thinks that. Really, who  
needs to take up three seats to  
themselves?

ELDERLY WOMAN  
He could just be saving them.

A YOUNG MAN approaches their section of the gate, looks at the two seats on either side of the businessman, and taps him on the shoulder to get his attention. The businessman startles, jumping back in his seat, nearly dropping his computer and glaring up at the man.

BUSINESSMAN  
*What?*

YOUNG MAN  
Uh... I was just wondering if  
either of those are taken.

BUSINESSMAN  
Well, what does it look like?

YOUNG MAN  
Uh...

BUSINESSMAN  
They're taken.

An awkward moment of silence passes between them before the young man, looking both confused and annoyed, backs away and crosses over to the other section, where the elderly couple sits.

YOUNG MAN  
Mind if I...?

(CONTINUED)

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Oh, certainly, sweetie.

He sits in the seat next to the couple.

YOUNG MAN  
You guys are probably better  
company anyways.

The elderly couple chuckles at his comment. They continue to watch the businessman, who is now back on his phone, seemingly arguing with somebody in a panicked voice.

BUSINESSMAN  
I did what you said, and it didn't  
work.

A pause. You still can't hear the other line.

BUSINESSMAN  
You said this wouldn't happen! I  
have to get on this plane in half  
an hour, do you understand that?

Another pause. The businessman looks furious.

BUSINESSMAN  
Whatever. Bye.

He hangs up the phone, taking deep breaths as his hands shake. His forehead gleams slightly with sweat.

YOUNG MAN  
Uh-oh. Crisis mode. Someone at work  
is fired.

ELDERLY MAN  
What do you suppose he does for a  
living, anyways?

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Male model.

Her husband whacks her on the arm.

YOUNG MAN  
Something obnoxious where he can  
flaunt his wealth, probably. A CEO.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
Oh, you suppose he's rich?

YOUNG MAN

Look at his luggage, and then look  
at mine.

The couple glances across the aisle at the shiny, silver luggage the businessman has on the seat beside him, and then to the beat up, dirty luggage at the man's feet.

ELDERLY WOMAN

Ohhh, I see it now.

YOUNG MAN

People like him don't give a crap  
about anyone but themselves.

ELDERLY MAN

It's a generational thing - I see  
it more and more each year. Glad to  
see you're a bit different.

YOUNG MAN

Thanks. I try not to judge people,  
that's all.

A bit of time passes. The gate has filled up considerably, and now the only two seats left in the gate are the ones the businessman is taking up. He's turned away a few more people already. Some of them sit on the floor nearby, glaring.

The businessman has switched from his laptop to his iPhone, where he is now listening to music with his headphones in. His eyes are closed, but his leg is shaking and his hands are tightly clasped in his lap. The elderly couple and the young man are still transfixed on him.

ELDERLY WOMAN

He looks nervous.

ELDERLY MAN

Or impatient. He's probably not  
used to waiting for anything.

YOUNG MAN

Or he just hates being here. Do you  
think he flies first class?

ELDERLY MAN

I would assume so.

YOUNG MAN

It's pretty obvious that I fly  
economy, huh?

(CONTINUED)

ELDERLY WOMAN

We do too, sweetie. Nothing to be  
ashamed of.

Suddenly, someone is screaming. Everyone in the gate turns,  
startled. The businessman jolts, taking out one earbud at  
the disturbance.

CUT TO

5

INT. AIRPORT FRONT OF GATE 12 - DAY

5

A MOTHER is dragging her screaming CHILD to the gate where  
everyone sits. The little boy is only 5 or 6, and he's  
wearing a Red Sox hat. He is fighting her, trying to break  
free from her grip.

MOTHER

Travis, you're making a scene,  
*please* -

TRAVIS

I don't want to go on, I don't want  
to!

MOTHER

*Please*, Travis -

The mother is kneeling on the ground now, holding her son  
and trying not to cry. Everyone is still staring. The  
businessman has taken out his earbuds completely now,  
watching.

MOTHER

This is just the way it is now,  
okay? Your dad wants to see you -  
he *loves you* - so please, do this  
for him.

TRAVIS

Why can't he just come back home,  
though? Why do *I* have to get on a  
plane to see him?

MOTHER

Honey, that's just the way it is  
now.

TRAVIS

I-I don't want to get on!

The gates STEWARDESS is quick to intervene. She makes her  
way over to the pair to speak to the mother in a hushed  
voice.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO

6 INT. AIRPORT GATE 12 SECTION OF SEATS - DAY 6

ELDERLY WOMAN

Oh my, that poor boy...

YOUNG MAN

Do you think it's a divorce?

ELDERLY MAN

Sounds like it. The father must have moved.

ELDERLY WOMAN

It's a shame that couples can't seem to stay together anymore.

7 INT. AIRPORT FRONT OF GATE 12 - DAY 7

The mother hugs the stewardess, crying. She then leans down to hug her son tight before kissing him on the forehead and standing to leave. The stewardess takes the crying Travis by the hand and leads him to the gate.

8 INT. AIRPORT GATE 12 SECTION OF SEATS - DAY 8

STEWARDESS

(to Travis) We'll be boarding in a little bit, sweetie. You'll be sitting up front with the other flight attendants. I have some work to before then, so we'll just -

She walks over next to the businessman, Travis still holding her hand behind her.

STEWARDESS

Excuse me -

She's already grabbing the businessman's jacket and handing it to him. Before the businessman can react, the stewardess is lifting Travis up into the seat beside him.

STEWARDESS

Can you just watch him for a few minutes? Thanks!

She's gone before the businessman can even say anything. Travis is still crying, glancing up at the businessman occasionally but not saying anything. The businessman stares straight ahead, stone faced. He's clutching his jacket so tightly that his knuckles turn white.

(CONTINUED)

YOUNG MAN

Oh god.

ELDERLY WOMAN

That was the worst possible place  
to put the boy!

ELDERLY MAN

What else was she supposed to do?  
He was taking up the only open  
seats here.

YOUNG MAN

Look at him. Oh my god, he's gonna  
snap at that kid.

Travis snuffles loudly, wiping at his nose through his  
tears. He glances up curiously at the businessman again, but  
darts his eyes away when the businessman makes eye contact  
with him.

Abruptly, the businessman stands up, gathering his things as  
he starts to walk away. Travis, already looking sad and  
completely lost, crumples in on himself as the businessman  
begins to leave.

But then he stops in place. The elderly couple and the young  
man are staring at him. With a deep breath, the businessman  
turns back around, plops back into his seat, and turns to  
face Travis.

BUSINESSMAN

Hey.

Travis looks up, startled.

BUSINESSMAN

The Sox, huh?

Travis glances up, a hand going to his hat. He nods shyly.

TRAVIS

They're my favorite team.

BUSINESSMAN

They're my favorite team, too.

Travis, whose tears have slowed, gasps at this in delight.

BUSINESSMAN

In fact -

(CONTINUED)

The businessman is reaching for his luggage now, unzipping it and rummaging around inside. Travis peeks over his shoulder, curiously. The elderly couple and the young man are still staring from across the aisle.

He pulls out a red and blue tie - a Red Sox emblem is stitched into the bottom. Travis gasps again when he sees it.

BUSINESSMAN

This is my favorite tie. I never  
leave home without it.

He hands it to Travis, who holds it with a look of wonder.

TRAVIS

My dad never lets me touch his  
ties.

BUSINESSMAN

Are you visiting your dad?

Travis freezes at this question, gripping the tie in his hand as he tries not to cry again.

TRAVIS

Yeah. He moved away.

BUSINESSMAN

I'm sorry to hear that.

TRAVIS

I-I've never been on a plane  
before.

BUSINESSMAN

Are you scared?

Travis nods his head vigorously.

BUSINESSMAN

I am too.

TRAVIS

... You are?

BUSINESSMAN

I've always been scared of planes.  
I'm claustrophobic.

TRAVIS

Clausta-*what*?

BUSINESSMAN

It's when you have get  
uncomfortable in tight spaces, like  
airplanes.

The elderly couple and the young man are sharing glances  
with each other now, recognition dawning on their faces.

TRAVIS

But... you're still going to go on?

BUSINESSMAN

I have to. For my job.

Travis sits and thinks at that for a moment.

BUSINESSMAN

I'll tell you what - if I can get  
on this plane, so can you. Alright?

Travis looks up at him, nodding.

TRAVIS

Okay.

BUSINESSMAN

And if you get scared -

He's taking the tie from Travis's hands now, and is tying it  
around his neck.

Just think about how excited you're  
dad will be when you land and he  
sees your new tie.

TRAVIS

My new tie?

BUSINESSMAN

It's all yours.

Travis is looking up at him in amazement. The elderly couple  
and the young man are watching in disbelief.

TRAVIS

T-thank you!

His tears have dried completely. He's smiling - a big,  
toothy grin.

Thank you so much, Mister...

BUSINESSMAN

Sam.

(CONTINUED)

TRAVIS

Sam!

An intercom above the gate clicks to life, and the stewardess's voice cackles through.

STEWARDESS

*Now boarding First Class for  
JetBlue Flight 114 out of New York  
to Los Angeles. Now boarding for  
JetBlue Flight 114 out of New York  
to Los Angeles.*

BUSINESSMAN

That's me.

He stands, gathering his things. He looks pale, and his hands are still shaking, but he still musters a smile at Travis.

BUSINESSMAN

If you're still scared, tell them  
you want to talk to Sam in First  
Class, okay?

TRAVIS

Okay!

He starts to walk away.

ELDERLY MAN

Son -

The businessman looks back.

That was really nice. What you just  
did for him.

The businessman nods in acknowledgment before walking toward the boarding line.

9

INT. AIRPORT GATE 12 STEWARDESS DESK - DAY

9

When he gets to the front of the line, he hands the stewardess his ticket. She scans it, and before stepping through into the hallway, he looks back at Travis and gives him a thumbs up before walking forward.

FADE TO BLACK