

Brian's Path, Episode 12

by Alan Holman

newlegend2005@yahoo.ca

BRIAN'S PATH

Episode 12: "The Final Fantasy"

INT. JAZZ CLUB - NIGHT

BRIAN and ANTON talk while listening to a jazz band.

BRIAN

I saw Cara today.

ANTON

How's she doing?

BRIAN

I don't know. I didn't even say hello.

ANTON

Why not?

BRIAN

I can't. I can't even approach her.

ANTON

Why not?

BRIAN

Because I can't bring myself to talk to her until I know the reason why she hasn't answered any of the e-mails I've sent to her in the last ... long time. Please find her, and ask her, for me, why she hasn't answered any of my e-mails.

ANTON

Maybe you sent them to the wrong address, or maybe your e-mails to her went straight into her spam filter.

BRIAN

Just find out, okay?

ANTON

Don't worry, I'll talk to her.

BRIAN

Thanks. One more thing: please don't fall in love with her.

ANTON

(laughs)

Okay, buddy.

Pause.

ANTON

When did you see her last?

BRIAN

I saw her this afternoon. I was at a picnic, with some friends in a park, when she walked by. I couldn't go to her, so I just looked at her, and kept watching as she walked past.

ANTON

Did she see you?

BRIAN

Yes. She looked right at me. In fact, she watched me watching her. Do you think she thinks I'm weird?

ANTON

I have it on good authority that she's always found you strange.

BRIAN

Is that a bad thing?

ANTON

Everyone's strange.

BRIAN

Please talk to her for me.

ANTON

You should ask Cap to do it. He's better at this sort of thing.

BRIAN

She was wearing orange pants -- the same color of her hair. It was an amazing sight. And she had on one of her trademark gray sweaters.

ANTON

Now, you're freaking me out.

BRIAN

Every time I see her, I'm inspired to write completely unrelated stories.

ANTON

Why?

BRIAN

I think it's because I've always wanted my writings to make me famous enough to impress chicks, and so simply seeing a chick I like is motivation for me to develop those skills with which I'll eventually attract my permanent mate.

ANTON

That's very interesting. And you know what: Cara's a friend, and this gives me a reason to talk to her. I'll ask her why she hasn't replied to your e-mails.

BRIAN

Thanks. And tell me her answer -- verbatim -- okay?

ANTON

I'll try.

ALAN enters, and joins BRIAN and ANTON.

ALAN
Hi, Brian. I over-heard your entire conversation.

BRIAN
Any suggestions?

ALAN
I was about to ask you the same thing.

They laugh.

ANTON
I'm leavin'. Bye!

ANTON exits.

BRIAN
Don't mind Anton; he's an asshole.

ALAN
Yeah. In my universe, there's a guy named Jay; he's a bit like Anton.

BRIAN
I know. I've met him. Remember? He's designing the web-site!

ALAN
Yeah. Anyway, Jay wrote a book called The Jackals when we were in High School; it was about a band that we were all in. That entire group of friends that I was in with him, were in a band together. The story took place when we were all quite older than we were in high school. He doesn't know it, but I cling to the mythology of his book, in hopes that someday I can actually be in a band with that group.

BRIAN
Grow up, Alan.

ALAN

My favorite memories are of things that happened when I was in high school.

BRIAN

Make new memories.

ALAN

I keep making plenty new memories. But the people never have the same vibe as the people from back then.

BRIAN

Do you hate them?

ALAN

No. I love everyone; it's part of my personal religion to love everyone. And for so long, I've kept specific people from back then on a pedestal in my mind and heart. A pedestal above everyone else. But they keep on proving over and over that it's over, and that they don't deserve to be any more special than anyone else.

Pause.

ALAN

You're keeping me interested in your universe, when I should instead be spending time doing something.

BRIAN

You are doing something. Writing us is important, whether you understand why, or not.

INT. HALLWAY, NEW YORK OFFICES OF A.A.P. - DAY

BRIAN closes a door behind him as he enters the hallway.

He notices CAP standing in front of a COCA-COLA machine.

BRIAN
I thought Alan wrote you out.

CAP
The real me came over without phoning first again.

DARLA enters.

DARLA
Hi Cap. I gotta borrow Brian for a minute.

DARLA grabs BRIAN's arm, starts walking through the hall with BRIAN.

They pass an open door to CARA's office; in which, she's crying into a mirror.

DARLA
I wonder why Cara's crying.

BRIAN
I don't know -- I just found her, and re-hired her.

DARLA
Anyway, Brian: I got a job offer. And I'm taking it. This is our farewell.

They reach the elevator.

BRIAN
What kind of work?

DARLA
Fetish, upstate. I don't know. Brian, I'm being written out.

BRIAN
NO! JUST BECAUSE WE'RE NOT THE TITLE CHARACTER,
DOESN'T MEAN WE'RE LESS IMPORTANT, OR A LOWER CLASS!
(enraged)
ALAN WON'T GET AWAY WITH SPLITTING US APART!

BLANK SCREEN

YEAR ON SCREEN: 2005

CUT TO:

INT. NEW YORK OFFICES OF A.A.P. - DAY

BRIAN addresses many employees, everyone except ANTON.

BRIAN

Good news, everyone! We've filmed the first two episodes of our live-action project! And they were written by Alan, who wrote us!

SOME GUY

But what about my research on non-surgical methods of pig- castration? -- was it for not?

BRIAN

Your research dollars have been wasted.

SOME GUY

Those were YOUR research dollars, heh heh.

BRIAN

Actually, they were Anton's, heh heh.

ANTON enters, and sits down.

ANTON

Did I miss anything?

BRIAN

No.

SOME OTHER GUY

Gone to waste is my vast amount of studies on the effects of ovariectomy plus different combinations of halothane anesthesia and butorphanol

analgesia on behavior in the bitch.

BRIAN

Umm...you're fired.

SOME OTHER GUY

Why?

BRIAN

Life's a bitch. Heh.

ANTON's the only one who laughs at BRIAN's joke.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK CITY - MIDNIGHT

BRIAN, ALAN, and CAP, walk through central park.

ALAN

Brian. I've got a secret, and it involves you, so listen.

BRIAN

Does it involve Cap?

ALAN

No.

BRIAN beats CAP to death.

ALAN

(disturbed)

JESUS CHRIST, BRIAN! YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO BEAT HIM TO DEATH!

BRIAN

You can't give me orders -- I fired you!

ALAN

(laughs)

I hate to say this about another guy, but you're so cute!

CUT TO:

EXT. 7-11 CONVENIENCE STORE - MIDNIGHT

ALAN and BRIAN stand outside a 7-11, drinking Slurpees.

BRIAN

I killed Cap. And I got away with it.

ALAN

Brian. You're an angry, rebellious man, who forces everyone, including himself, to meet his high standards. You're an outside-the-box thinker, and you have the power to change the world, if you could only get over your anger.

BRIAN

The world's not perfect.

ALAN

I'll drink to that.

BRIAN

This series ...

ALAN

... is perfect.

BRIAN

No, it's not. Cap keeps dying. Where's the continuity?

ALAN

Shut up. It doesn't need continuity when I'm confident about it!

BRIAN

You're confident about it?

ALAN

Yeah. Someone gave me a hug.

BRIAN

Who?

ALAN

It never matters. Apparently, the healthiest people get six hugs a day.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM, ALAN HOLMAN'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

ALAN answers the ringing phone.

ALAN

Hello.

MRS. ROCK

Hello, Mr. Holman. I'm Mrs. Rock, calling from ...

ALAN

Hey, sorry for interrupting, but where's the small-talk?

MRS. ROCK

I'm calling from Metropolitan Credit Adjusters, on behalf of ...

ALAN

(interrupting)

Whoah! I'm just waking up here. Talk slower.

MRS. ROCK

I'm calling on behalf of Canadian International Bank of Commerce, in regards to your ...

ALAN

Did you say your name was Mrs. Rock?

MRS. ROCK

Yes. This is in regards to your outstanding ...

ALAN

Thanks!

MRS. ROCK

... your outstanding...

ALAN

Thanks!

MRS. ROCK

Very funny.

ALAN

I try.

MRS. ROCK

This is in regards to your balance of \$543.

ALAN

Awesome!

MRS. ROCK

This is serious, Mr. Holman.

ALAN

(happy)

I'll say! Hey, Mrs. Rock. I'm sorry for interrupting again, but you need to know that if I laugh and make jokes, it's because I'm not used to being called "Mister".

MRS. ROCK

(interrupting)

You're \$543 in debt, Mr. Holman, with interest accruing daily.

ALAN

(laughs)
You're wrong, because I have no interest in that.

MRS. ROCK
You signed a contract!

ALAN
Mail me a copy. After I finally give that
motherfucker a read, I'll ...

MRS. ROCK
Don't swear at me, Mr. Holman.

ALAN
Call me Alan, and I never agreed to this
conversation, so I'll swear in it whenever the fuck
I choose!

MRS. ROCK
Mr. Holman.

ALAN
Mrs. Rock, my first name is Alan. Your discomfort
with a first name basis makes you highly suspect.
What's your first name?

MRS. ROCK
Chris.

ALAN
(laughs)
Like the comedian?

MRS. ROCK
Exactly.

ALAN
I've known one other female Chris.

MRS. ROCK
It's common.

ALAN

Where are you calling from?

MRS. ROCK

Metropolitan Credit Adjusters. Listen, Mr. Holman.
Litigation in this matter is ...

ALAN

Metropolitan Credit Adjusters?

MRS. ROCK

Yes.

ALAN

Where's that outfit?

MRS. ROCK

Outfit?

ALAN

Yeah, "outfit." You think it's local?

MRS. ROCK

I assure you it's not.

ALAN

No, I'm pretty sure, in the context employed,
"outfit" is a local colloquialism.

MRS. ROCK

What?

ALAN

Where are you?

MRS. ROCK

Metropolitan Credit Adjusters.

ALAN

(slowly)

WHERE ... IS ... METROPOLITAN ... CREDIT ...
ADJUSTERS?

MRS. ROCK

Listen, Mr. Holman, this matter's imminent
litigation is impending.

ALAN

Impending implies doom because of its common use, so
your intentional sentence structure is meant to
intimidate. Such subliminal terrorism is a very
manipulative scare-tactic which I refuse to endorse
or encourage. Either communicate normally, or
co-write a play with me -- the choice is yours.

Click.

ALAN

Why'd she hang up on me? And how'd she find the
number for this hotel room? I'm here under an
assumed name, yet she knew exactly where to find
me? What's the deal?

COMMERCIAL BREAK

INT. BRIAN'S OFFICE, AGARTHA ANIMATED PRODUCTIONS -
MIDNIGHT

ALAN and BRIAN recline on chairs, on either sides of
Brian's desk, upon which they rest their legs.

ALAN

I've gotta end this story.

BRIAN

DO NOT SAY THAT, ALAN!!! I LOVE MY LIFE, AND I
DON'T KNOW WHAT I'D DO WITHOUT IT!!!

ALAN

Guess where Cara is.

BRIAN
I don't know, where?

ALAN
She's investigating the ruins of a certain commune
in northern Canada.

BRIAN
So what?

ALAN
It's going to lead her to Japan. And some time
between now, and the time she gets to Japan, you --
Brian -- are going to die.

BRIAN
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!?! I CAN'T DIE!!! I'M
IMMORTAL!!! I'M A GOD!!!

ALAN
You're not immortal, Brian. Just as you have the
"series bible" for BANANA CHAN, I have equal control
over this show. And you're just Brian, a character
I wrote, who will die in a pre-set circumstance
between now and when Cara gets to Japan.

BRIAN
So that's your big secret, huh? -- that I'm gonna
die!?!

ALAN
Yup.

BRIAN
YOU'RE A SICK JERK!!!

ALAN
Learn to be a better person, so I can end this
story and feel like all the time I spent writing
it wasn't wasted.

ALAN disappears in a puff of smoke.

BRIAN
WAIT!!! WHAT!?!

INT. BOARD ROOM, AGARTHA ANIMATED PRODUCTIONS - AFTERNOON

BRIAN, ANTON, DARLA, GABE, and CAP, sit in the board room.

BRIAN
I need to learn to be a better person.

GABE
You're decent enough.

CAP
I respect you.

BRIAN
But I killed you.

CAP
So what? I was being annoying! I deserved to die!

BRIAN
No, you didn't! Just because someone's annoying or troublesome never means that person must die!

DARLA
I love you too, Brian.

BRIAN
How can you love me? I've treated you like crap for years!

DARLA
I'm comfortable with being treated like crap.

BRIAN
That's gotta change.

DARLA

No, it doesn't. Everybody in the world wants to be treated differently. I'm someone who, for my own personal reason, sometimes - but only sometimes - wants to be treated badly, so don't judge me.

BRIAN

No one should be treated badly. You've been treated badly so much that you've surrendered to it. Everyone in this room has a lot of deep, psychological issues that must be sorted out.

ANTON

I agree!

BRIAN

Darla? Do you agree?

DARLA

Yeah, but I never thought I'd see the day when you'd figure this out.

INT. COFFEE-SHOP - AFTERNOON

DARLA talks with ALAN.

DARLA

You've been having a positive affect on Brian lately. You've put the fear of God into him, and anyone who can put the fear of God into that asshole, for even one moment, deserves every accolade in the universe.

ALAN

Thanks.

DARLA

You're welcome.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK, NEW YORK CITY - MIDNIGHT

BRIAN and ALAN take a walk.

ALAN

What If I'm a voice who talks to you when you're half-asleep at night?

BRIAN

It's a scary thought.

ALAN

I'm sorry about threatening you earlier. But I do need to end this story.

BRIAN

What about Cara?

ALAN

She forgot her passport, so she's coming back here to work for a while, and she'll re-plan the trip later. Y'know, I care about people's feelings.

INT. ANTON'S OFFICE, AGARTHA ANIMATED PRODUCTIONS -
AFTERNOON

ANTON sits at his desk.

ALAN enters.

ANTON

Alan. Am I within Brian's dream within your dream?

ALAN

That's a good way of putting it.

ALAN sits down.

ANTON

What do you want from us?

ALAN

Your existence is all thanks to my plot to create

scripts for "the perfect anime". The project is called BANANA CHAN, and it is nearing its final stage, which is really just another new beginning.

ANTON

So our "global pathology" storyline was a metaphor for helping you write good dialogue?

ALAN

It was a control in an experiment that affected those films.

ANTON

So my entire existence -- everything about who I am -- is just because of your Machiavellian scheme?

ALAN

Yeah.

ANTON

Brian said BANANA CHAN was inspired by a dream.

ALAN

That's one way of putting it.

ANTON

What was your purpose in writing Banana Chan?

ALAN

One day, I met a girl. When she smiled, I realized that I'd waited all my life to see that smile. Her smile was heaven, and it turns out that the wait for her was wasted time. She didn't even give kind words when my house burnt down.

CUT TO:

INT. BRIAN'S OFFICE, AGARTHA ANIMATED PRODUCTIONS -
AFTERNOON

BRIAN sits ON his desk, twiddling his thumbs.

CARA enters.

CARA

Brian. Your two o'clock is here.

BRIAN

Cara. Are you planning a trip to Japan?

CARA

Umm... look, Brian. Yes, I am. Of course I am. I've been putting it off for more than a decade -- ever since even before you first showed me a draft of your Cara's Ark story.

BRIAN

Alan told me that I'll die before you go.

CARA

(sigh)

Brian. Don't guilt-trip me like this. You know I have to go. Besides, Alan also said you'd save yourself by learning to be a better person, and you've shown a lot of improvement.

BRIAN

I know. And last week, Alan even assured me that I'll never die.

CARA

Really?

BRIAN

Yeah. His threat was simply a way to make certain scenes interesting enough to put them into the script. Send him in.

CARA exits.

After a short pause, ALAN enters.

ALAN
Cara's cute. She should go to Japan.

BRIAN
Shut up. I have a proposition to make.

ALAN
And I have a preposition to make: "in".

CARA enters.

CARA
Alan -- I overheard you said I should go to Japan,
right?

ALAN
Yeah. Go.

BRIAN performs the "sign of the cross."

ALAN
It's like talking to a brick wall.

CARA
Huh?

ALAN
Didn't Anton teach you anything, Brian?

CARA exits.

BRIAN
What ...? Oh, Anton's book.

ALAN
You've read "THERE IS NO HEAVEN" by Dr. Anton Lace,
therefore you know the futility of prayer, so why'd
you do the "sign of the cross"?

BRIAN
Despite the fact that Anton's book was very

convincing, I ...

ALAN

The story I wanted to tell required that you believe his book ... until I made the threat. You see, ever since I wrote that you read the book, I ...

(pause, suddenly happy)

HEY! I LIKE CARA! WOW! NOW THAT I'VE SEEN HER IN PERSON, WOW!

BRIAN

I don't care.

Pause.

BRIAN

You wrote Anton's book?

ALAN

No. It doesn't exist.

BRIAN

But I remember the theories.

ALAN

Only because you'd remember it. The truth is: Whatever you remember, I'll write.

ANTON enters.

ANTON

Brian. Those papers were too...

BRIAN

Anton -- never-mind that. About your book ...

ANTON

My favorite subject!

BRIAN

Alan says it doesn't exist.

ANTON

Neither does God.

ALAN

Anton. I feel guilty for writing that you wrote a book which contains a theory that might debunk God.

ANTON

Why? I won't go to hell. I'm a fictional character. When I die, I ... holy shit.

BRIAN

I know -- it's depressing.

ALAN

Guys. Umm ... don't think about that right now.

ANTON

I have to. It's depressing.

ALAN

(sigh)

I think we should debate Anton's theory. Maybe we can find a loop- hole.

ANTON

Doubtful.

ALAN

Brian, Anton. You two are familiar with the book THERE IS NO HEAVEN by Dr. Anton Lace, right?

BRIAN

Well, yeah, but THE BIGGEST SECRET by David Icke is a much better book.

ALAN

Is it? I actually have no idea what Anton wrote.

ANTON

There is no God.

ALAN

And why not?

ANTON

It's an unwelcome concept, I know, but at least it's not a pathological lie, such as the ones told by all sorts of religious individuals.

ALAN

It's a concept ... only a concept.

ANTON

Well, religion is boring. If there was a true religion, it wouldn't be boring.

ALAN

Hmm...

ANTON

Something so true that it's undeniable hasn't been found. If it were found, no one would deny it, and everyone would be part of it.

ALAN

No they wouldn't. An undeniable religion is impossible if you believe that God gave us free-will, because free-will would remove any existing undeniable fact from the reach of any sentient being.

ANTON

Yeah, but ... umm. I wrote a freaking book on this subject, so why the hell can't I come up with a retort?

ALAN

Because -- like I said -- the book doesn't exist.

ANTON

Woah. That's really trippy, man.

ANTON exits.

ALAN

Regardless, God does exist. And God is love. God exists, but Jesus is a fictional character created by a guy named Piso. But anyhow, Brian: You've got the job I've always wanted.

BRIAN

That's obvious. But would you be like me if you had my job?

ALAN

That used-to be a fear of mine, but no. And I've come a little closer to my dream job. And that's really all I could have asked from this experience, and I've come to that conclusion, so that means my shit's just a little closer to being in order, so let's party!

BRIAN

I don't understand. Alan, why'd you create me?

ALAN

You were a way to test theories, so I could figure out some things about the world.

BRIAN

What did you figure out?

ALAN

Following your heart, and never giving up hope, sounds good, but it can lead to troubles. In every circumstance, try to remain tranquil.

Everyone disappears in a puff of smoke.

END OF EPISODE.