

UNCLE

(DRAFT 1.6)

Written by

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INT/EXT. TRAIN - DAY

FADE IN:

The view through the door of a moving local train- a single pair of unending railway tracks running parallel to the train - can be seen from the POV of...

...a MAN (in his mid 30s) standing near the door of a second class compartment, looking out fixedly. He's dressed in plain formal attire, with an office sling bag hanging from his shoulder.

After a beat, there's a sudden eruption of sound behind the man. He turns around to see a HAWKER delivering his rehearsed speech at the top of his voice, as he tries to sell 'Write & Erase' magic writing books for *children*. After having a good look of him and his wares, the man's gaze (POV) digresses (midway through the hawker's monologue) to the *men* who are seated - moving from the face of one man to the next. Having scanned the compartment in a slow sweeping motion, he turns around to look towards the opposite door where a couple is standing facing each other, partially blocking the entrance- the GUY's hands fencing the GIRL as she stands near the door with her back supported. They are listening to music using a single set of earphones. The GUY gently adjust the GIRL's hair. The GIRL smiles.

The man's gaze continues its motion, now to look over the compartment in front of him. It settles on a BOY (in his early/mid 20s) occupying the window seat diagonally opposite from the man. The boy is chatting animatedly with his friends- one guy sitting on the opposite seat and one girl sitting beside him. The man's gaze moves up gradually from the boy's arms, through his chest and neck to his face - to find the boy looking back at him. The man looks away immediately, wanting to avoid eye contact and keeps looking out the door.

He is poked on the elbow by the hawker who asks him to check out the book as it won't cost him anything. The man takes one of the books and starts trying it out. When he slowly looks up to look at the boy, his eyes meet the boy's head on- the boy is already looking at him. The man doesn't look away this time. The eye contact sustains. After a beat, the boy is drawn back in the conversation with his friends. A few beats later, their eyes meet again. The eye contact sustains longer. The man slowly becomes a bit conscious and looks away. When their eyes meet again, the boy's lips gradually part in a smile. The man's face however seems a bit taut and serious this time. He looks away. This puzzles the boy, who keeps looking at the man. The man keeps looking out the door or into the book and avoids looking back at the boy.

As he passes by, the hawker stops by the man gesturing him to return the book. The man removes his wallet instead. The hawker is pleased. As he pays the hawker, his eyes almost glance at the boy, who is looking at the transaction. The hawker leaves.

After a beat, the man reaches for the luggage rack behind him to grab a new school backpack and a white noisy plastic carry bag that prominently displays "Janata Dresses - specialises in school uniform..." He keeps the book inside the carry bag, and stands facing the door. The boy, who has been observing the man, smiles.

After a beat, the train enters the terminating station and gradually comes to a halt. The man alights.

EXT. PLATFORM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

As he starts walking (facing the same direction as in the beginning), he notices that the same boy is walking in the opposite direction (towards him) with his friends. The boy is looking at the man and suddenly, gives a look of recognition and comes forward...

BOY

Arrey... What a coincidence!

The boy forces the man into an awkward handshake and formal hug.

BOY (CONT'D)

Kaise hain uncle ? Rekha didi ki  
shaadi ke baad aap dikhe hi nahi!  
Aapne apna number change kiya hai  
kya?

The man looks puzzled and uncomfortable. He looks at the boy and his friends, baffled, lost for words.

BOY (CONT'D)

Arrey aapko yaad nahi? Reception ki  
raat humne Ravi bhaiya ke saath  
scotch pi thi terrace pe ?!

The boy waits expectantly for a reply. The man looks back and forth at the boy and his friends. They have no clue either. The man is about to say something...

BOY (CONT'D)

Oh My God! I'm such an idiot! I'm  
so sorry! Mujhe laga aap...you look  
so similar to...  
I'm really sorry. Have a good day  
uncle!

The boy and his friends leave. Excited murmurs can be heard from their direction.

The man is left startled, frozen. He slowly starts walking, with a raised heartbeat, pondering over what just happened. He stops in his tracks and turns around, looking at the boy and his friends. After a moment, the boy turns his head around, while still walking, and gives him a smile.

The man's face gently breaks into a smile. The eye contact sustains until the boy turns around to look ahead, continuing to walk with his friends.

The man slowly turns around and resumes walking. The smile on his face becomes wider. His eyes turn moist. He keeps walking with a smile.

Title. Credits.