

LOOKING FOR ROMEO

A FILM BY ARTHUR IAN



Documentary Film by Arthur Ian

Synopsis

The film explores the phenomenon of male prostitution by telling the stories of hustlers and their clients. From Nice to Prague and New York, from Montreal to Los Angeles and Paris, young escorts and “johns” share their experiences in a series of candid interviews. Challenging stereotypes and common beliefs, they tell shocking stories of love and hate, control and abuse, despair and hope. Without providing simple answers, the film invites the viewer to ponder human condition through the lives of its characters.

Stefan is an 18 year old hustler from Prague who lives with his mother and travels around Europe meeting 5-6 clients a day. Phil is a middle aged man from Los Angeles who went through a painful divorce and began a relationship with a young male escort. Larry is a successful businessman from Los Angeles who has been both an escort and a client. The characters and locations differ, but the stories have many common motives.

What drives these men to prostitution? Is it despair or hunger for money, solitude or low self-esteem, traumatic past or cold calculation? What do these characters think about themselves and their lives? How do they justify their actions, and how do they see their future?

The first part of the film examines the lives of escorts as seen through their own eyes. The viewer learns about some shocking “secrets of the trade,” the violence, fear and abuse that these young men endure while doing their “job.”

In the second part the viewer looks at the flip side of the coin. This time the story is told by those who pay these young men for their services. For some, it’s the only way to get the affection and companionship they are deprived of in their

lives, to escape from solitude and insecurity. Some have had devastating romantic experiences in the past and have never healed; some are just looking for instant gratification and “fun.”

We hear the particularly emotional stories of Richard (a “client”) and Stefan (a “hustler”) who were nearly driven to suicide by those who mattered most, and who did devastating and lasting damage. We hear about those who tried to help Matthew and Scott get out of hustling, with limited success. The characters discuss love and relationships and talk about their plans for the future. For some it involves having a family and children, some seem content with the status quo.

The film ends on a compassionate note, with some final words from the characters asking for viewer’s empathy, rather than a rush to judgment.

Credits

Director: Arthur Ian

Editor: Peter Hallinan

Camera: Abby Linne

Original music: Maia Ovsepián

Musical arrangement: Marconi de Moraes

Sound Editing: Damon Tedesco

Additional camera work: Alain Lemaire
Jeffrey Schneider

Art Direction and Web Design: Dahni B., <http://www.Bdahni.com>

Additional music

"Malyarka," "Shumen Romale"
Arranged by V. Grokhovsky
Performed by Black Pearl
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Video stills





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