

CONTROL (INSPIRED BY KENDRICK LAMAR)

Written by

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EXT. FRENCH CEMETERY - ANDRÉ BAZIN'S GRAVE - NIGHT

TITLE AND CREDITS appear in a music-video-esque style. From the sky we see ORSON WELLES (43) in front of a GRAVESTONE adorned by fresh flowers. Behind him, rows of seats and scattered funeral programs. He stares at the gravestone. Above Welles, gray clouds cover every inch of the sky. From a distance, a young PRIEST (25), white with a heavy Spanish accent, observes Welles. CLOSE on gravestone: "A. Bazin. 18 Apr 1918 - 11 Nov 1958." Welles lays a hand on the gravestone, releases a shaky sigh. He trudges away from the grave. The Priest approaches Welles.

PRIEST

You must have been quite close.

WELLES

No. I only had the pleasure of being interviewed by him the month before he was hospitalized. He quite admired my work- wouldn't shut up about my continuous take in Touch of Evil.

Welles pauses. He dabs a kerchief under his nose.

WELLES (CONT'D)

Say, you wouldn't mind walking me to my car, would you? A man could use a friend on a night like this.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

The Priest follows Welles down a sidewalk.

PRIEST

I imagine you must have meant a lot to him Señor Welles.

WELLES

The man devised some funny ideas about moving images because of me... Because. Isn't that a funny word.

The priest strokes his chin. He chuckles.

PRIEST

Because David carried a sling, the Philistines were defeated... Because Jochebed laid Moses in a basket, Israel was delivered...

(MORE)

PRIEST (CONT'D)

Because God made the world, we  
enjoy the earth in all its beauty.

WELLES

Because of Adam, every man is born  
into sin.

PRIEST

But because a babe is baptized, a  
man can rise from sin. Were you  
baptized, Mr. Welles?

WELLES

Fascism rose, despite the fuhrer's  
baptism.

PRIEST

There must be evil in the world.

WELLES

Because?

The Priest pauses. He searches his pockets for a Bible until -

WELLES (CONT'D)

Because of Leni Riefenstahl, Hitler  
amassed the support of his nation.  
Because of Muybridge, Edis, the  
Lumieres, Riefenstahl empowered the  
fascists. Because of Griffith the  
white man hasn't been a greater  
bane on the negro since the Civil  
War.

Welles stops walking. His eyes water.

WELLES (CONT'D)

Tell me, is cinema a sin?

The Priest approaches Welles, offers him a BIBLE.

PRIEST

Because of God, all can be made  
right for man. But only if you  
follow Him and confess. Welles  
shoves the Priest's hand away.

WELLES

What have I to confess? Am I all of  
cinema then?

PRIEST

You're all of one man. Yet... there may be times when one man must answer for the wrongs of another.

WELLES

Were we made only to atone for sins? Were we made only to call upon God? Must we always mind higher forces lest we suffer their wrath?

PRIEST

Señor Welles, I would mind my words. God strikes those who blaspheme.

Welles lifts an open palm to the sky.

WELLES

And I strike those who claim...

The Priest crosses himself, ready to take the hit. Welles lowers his hand. A tear rolls down his eye.

WELLES (CONT'D)

I was a fool to lay such burdens on a man as young as you.

Welles lifts the Priest's chin.

WELLES (CONT'D)

Father, give me one reason why I must continue in my work. Why should I make cinema?

PRIEST

Because.

WELLES

Because of what?

The Priest looks down.

PRIEST

Be careful of God, Mr. Welles.

The Priest offers Welles his Bible, Welles accepts it. The Priest walks away.

Welles pockets the Bible. He looks around at the empty street, sighs. He opens the Bible, reads: "Touch of Evil—Written by Orson Welles—Based on Badge of Evil by Whit Masterson." Welles blinks, confused.

He turns the page, reads: "EXT. U.S. MEXICO BORDER - PARKING LOT - NIGHT. BEGIN CONTINUOUS TAKE."

THUNDER rumbles faintly. Welles looks up at the sky. The clouds have cleared, exposing a BLACK SKY void of moon and stars, its texture identical to ink on paper. JOI LANSING's (28) arm slips around Welles'. Welles turns to her. His eyes widen in horror. She is dressed exactly as Zita in Touch of Evil.

EXT. U.S. MEXICO BORDER - PARKING LOT - NIGHT BEGIN LONG TRACKING SHOT

The AUTHOR (25), a Southeast Asian man in an orange Spillage Village hoodie, winds the timer of a PIPE BOMB, which begins to TICK. He runs to a CONVERTIBLE in the parking lot, places it in the trunk, and sprints away. Unable to control himself, Welles enters the parking lot with Zita. They enter the ticking convertible and drive off

CUT TO BLACK.