



Burning Man Conversation

Labor Day: American holiday; the first Monday in September

Burning Man: an American festival that takes place in the desert

fell through: to not happen

that sucks: it's unfortunate

quite a few: a lot

saving grace: something you like about something although you do not like anything else about it

can't stand: do not like

in over their heads: to be involved with something that is too difficult to do

to know what you're getting into: to know what to expect

can't believe your eyes: what you see is not believable

something to behold: amazing

anything goes: you can do anything you wish to do

express yourself: show something about yourself

outfits: clothes or a costume

Joe: Hey, Terence, so how'd you spend your **Labor Day** weekend?

Terence: Um, I spent my Labor Day weekend not doing anything except wishing I was at **Burning Man**. I had, uh, plans to go but they **fell through**.

Joe: Oh, man, **that sucks**, because I know that, uh, you've really enjoyed it in the past.

Terence: Yeah, I've, I've... As you know, I've gone **quite a few** years in a row. But this year I couldn't make it. Um, y'know, but I guess that the, the **saving grace** about it is that I'm not in the heat. And I really **can't stand** the dust.

Joe: Oh yeah? I know. I hear that the heat and the dust can be overwhelming. I've had some friends who have gone in the past years and they didn't prepare enough. And they said they were **in over their heads**.

Terence: Oh yeah, yeah, it's definitely the kind of thing that, um, it helps **to know what you're getting into** with the conditions and just what to expect. Because no amount of description can really, really help with what you're gonna experience.

Joe: Yeah. I was talking with a friend of mine who lives in Canada and I mentioned Burning Man and he'd never heard it. And he was like, "Well, y'know, what's it about?" And he wanted me to describe it. And I realized that, y'know, I wasn't really... I'm not really able to describe it to him because I've never been.

Terence: Yeah, um, it's, it's one of those things, it's kind of hard to describe. I mean the first time you go you really can't... you really **can't believe your eyes**. What you see, I mean just all the people and all the effort they put into it, all the creativity. It's really **something to behold**.

Joe: So, um, how would you describe it though, like...

Terence: I would describe it just as a, just really large festival where basically **anything goes**. Anything you wanna do is accepted. Um, any way you wanna **express yourself**, it's okay, whether it's how you dress, what you say, um, the kind of music you wanna play, anything.

Joe: Yeah, I've heard there's some pretty wild **outfits**. People just dress up as, uh, crazy as they possibly can.



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never cease to be amazed: *not surprised*

Terence: Yeah, you never kn-, you never know what people are gonna do, um, I'm, I, I **never cease to be amazed** with what's gonna, I'm gonna see there.

Joe: [laugh] Nice, that's great. How long...

Terence: But...

Joe: ...is it, uh, oh, I'm sorry, go ahead.

get a little old: *no longer fun*

blown away: *pleased and very surprised*

Terence: Y'know, but, y'know, like I said, it's, it's, I've gone five years and the, the process of going does **get a little old**. I mean the first time I went, y'know, I definitely was, um, had that first time **blown away** feeling...

Joe: Yeah.

creature comforts: *things that are comfortable and familiar*

out of hand: *very bad*

Terence: ...but, y'know, then after a while, you, subsequent years, y'know, it's not quite as, as exciting and fresh. So you start to maybe focus a little more on some of the, um, discomforts. Y'know, you, you have no **creature comforts** when you're there.

Joe: Yeah, and the traffic's **out of hand**, too. I hear you end up sitting in like traffic jams for hours.

Terence: You can. You can. Especially, y'know, towards the end of the week when everybody's in a rush to get there, it, it's absolutely can be that way...

Joe: What were...

Terence: ...but then, y'know...go ahead.

Joe: When do people start getting there?

Terence: Um, some people go as early as a week before. I mean they really wanna, they really wanna get there and maximize their time.

Joe: Yeah.

Terence: You, you can be up there basically, um, for, uh, nine days, if you...

Joe: Is that like people who wanna build like structures and stuff?



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Terence: Yeah, definitely, there's some people who can actually go even before it starts and you can, y'know, if you're building a special art project, you could get there as early as a month beforehand. But the maj-, y'know, people that are there setting up big camps they, they tend to get there, um, probably like nine days beforehand.

Joe: It sounds like it's just like a really art-, uh, artistic event, like where everyone just trying to express themselves and their artistic sides and **showing off** their art and stuff and just acting a little crazy.

Terence: Absolutely, absolutely. It's definitely an environment where, it's, and the fact that it's in the desert, um, you, it just adds to the just **surreal** atmosphere of it. I mean you're there and you **might as well** be on the moon, with a...

Joe: [laugh]

Terence: ...with the costumes and people just totally **trick out** their cars.

Joe: Yeah. And then, eh, what do they do at the end? Like, I know they burn something. But I'm not even sure what it is. Because, like I said, I've never been there.

Terence: Yeah, it's kind of this... It's kind of the **culmination** of the event, um. It's why it's called Burning man. They, there's this giant man that's basically burned. I mean he, y'know, it's kind of this tribal festival that, um, reaches a **fever pitch**. Lots of fire dancers, uh, people just basically going crazy.

Joe: What's the man made out of?

Terence: Made of wood.

Joe: Oh, okay.

Terence: He's made of wood. And there's, and then there's definitely some neon light on him 'coz when you... The event is kind of surrounding a middle area and the man is in the middle. And that Saturday night, which is on Labor Day weekend, pretty much the entire place kind of just surrounds it and that's when it all starts. And then it's, finishes with him getting burned down. And the place just reaches a fever pitch at that point.

showing off: doing something to bring attention to yourself

surreal: unreal

might as well: could be; the same as

trick out: decorate

culmination: the last thing

fever pitch: a lot of excitement



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Nevada: a state in
America

**you never know what
can come up:** not sure
what will happen

see how it goes: to see
what happens

Joe: Yeah, I hear that, uh, it becomes like, with the number of people there, it becomes one of the largest, uh, towns in all of, uh, **Nevada**...

Terence: Yeah, I know it's...

Joe: ...for that weekend.

Terence: Yeah, I know it's top ten, yeah, definitely. It's a, it's a real good experience.

Joe: Yeah, you know what, I'd, I'd really like to go next year but, uh, y'know I'm, I'm gonna plan for it but **you never know what can come up**, y'know, so I'll just have to **see how it goes**.

Terence: Maybe I'll see you out there.

Joe: [laugh] Yeah, well if I go, you'll definitely be one of the first ones to know.

Terence: Awesome.