

To Catch A Fallen Man

By

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INT - COMMUNITY CENTRE - EVENING

Darkness. Out of the darkness the sound of breaking pottery, maybe a vase, echoes. A woman's voice screams, the words indistinguishable.

OSKAR V.O

I can't say it- I won't say it. If
I say it then I have to feel it-

A dull thud of a fist striking hard against flesh over and over.

OSKAR V.O

I don't want to feel it- it's too-
too raw-

OSKAR (mid forties, looks older due to prolonged stress. Oskar is Danish, he speaks with a slight accent which he goes to great lengths to hide when he's at home) opens his eyes. Tears swell. Remains of faded bruises show on his face.

VINCE

Oskar whatever you need to say- you
can say it. We're here to support
you.

Oskar looks around at the group of men (varying ages and backgrounds) nodding in supportive agreement. VINCE (thirties, group facilitator) moves his chair next to Oskar's.

OSKAR

I just want to make it stop-

VINCE

Take your time, we have all the
time you need.

Oskar's hands rub together at a feverish pace as he looks down at the floor.

INT - POLICE CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Two days ago.

OPERATOR

Police, what's your emergency?

(CONTINUED)

JEN
(Frantic)
Help me- please help me.

OPERATOR
Madam try to stay calm. Tell me
what's happening.

JEN
My husband- he's- he's drunk- oh my
god no-

A loud crash sounds in the background. Jen screams.

JEN
Please help me- he's going to kill
me-

OPERATOR
Stay on the line-

Jen screams, she begs for her life. A man is heard in the background. Jen cries out. Suddenly the line goes quiet.

OPERATOR
Madam? Madam are you still there?

Silence.

EXT- STREET - DAY

Oskar hurries along a busy street. He crosses a road. A car beeps it's horn at him as it swerves around him. Oskar jumps. He blinks as he watches the car drive away. As he walks away he loses his balance slightly. Further down the street Oskar finds a bench. He sits a moment, taking deep breaths. He shakes his head, blinking repeatedly trying to clear his vision.

EXT - STREET - DAY

A small car hurtles down the street. It stops abruptly, the driver ditches it on the street. ANNE (fifties, not the brightest bulb on the Christmas tree) runs up the driveway of a modest sized detached house.

INT - OSKAR'S HOUSE- LIVING ROOM - DAY

JEN (forties, severe looking woman, Oskar's wife) watches through a gap in the net curtains as Anne runs up the drive.

INT - OSKAR'S HOUSE- HALLWAY - DAY

The front door slams open, it bounces off the wall almost taking Anne out as she races through it.

ANNE

(Shouting)

Jen? Jen where are you?

JEN

(Off screen)

I'm in the living room.

INT - OSKAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jen sits on the sofa. Hair and make-up in disarray she looks like she's been dragged through a hedge. Anne stops in the doorway. The room is a mess. Picture frames scattered, broken across the fire-place. The coffee table lies in pieces. An armchair tipped over, it's cushions ripped.

ANNE

What in God's name happened here? Are you ok? Are you hurt?

JEN

I'm still in one piece-

Jen bursts into tears. Anne hugs her.

EXT - SAND DUNES - DAY

Evening time. Halfway down a sand dune Oskar sits staring out to sea. He absently swigs a drink from a bottle of vodka.

PETER (Thirties, outwardly super confident inwardly not so much. Angry scars are prominent on both forearms. Peter draws no attention to them neither does he try to cover them up, they're just there) walks through the dunes. As he looks down from the top he spots a lonely figure. Peter carefully makes his way down to Oskar.

(CONTINUED)

PETER
You just couldn't leave it could
you.

Peter snatches the bottle from Oskar.

PETER
Think you've had enough of that.

OSKAR
Fuck off!

Oskar snatches the bottle back. He raises the bottle to his
lips. Peter grabs it.

PETER
Not a chance mate.

OSKAR
Fine.

Oskar stands up, or he tries to, he falls over rolling down
the dune.

PETER
Dude, seriously?

Peter makes his way down to Oskar. He looks down on Oskar
as he rolls around in the sand trying to stand.

PETER
What the actual fuck Oskar? Come
on let's get out of here before you
make a complete fool of yourself.

Peter pulls Oskar up off the floor.

OSKAR
I can manage you know.

Covered in sand Oskar stumbles back up the sand dune.

PETER
Give me strength!

INT - OSKAR'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jen sits wrapped in a blanket with Anne next to her armed
with a box of tissues. The mess in the living room has been
cleared and it looks more or less back to normal.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

Oh Jen I'm so sorry.

JEN

I really thought he'd changed.

ANNE

Men like Oskar don't change anymore
than a leopard changes his spots.

JEN

I know- I just- I wanted to fix
him.

ANNE

It's time to admit that you can't
fix him.

Jen cries.

INT - PETER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Peter holds the front door open for Oskar. Oskar absently
wanders through the door.

PETER

Man I'm starving. Do you want
anything?

OSKAR

No. I'm not hungry.

PETER

You need to eat-

OSKAR

Just don't.

Oskar kicks his shoes off. He pushes past Peter.

PETER

Can you not snail trail sand
everywhere-

Oskar walks off.

PETER

Oskar we can't keep this up
forever.

A bedroom door slams shut. Peter leans against a wall,
staring up at the ceiling.

(CONTINUED)

PETER
I can't do this forever.

INT - JEN'S PARENTS HOUSE- BEDROOM - NIGHT

Curled up in bed DAVID (seventies, Jen's father) reads LILLY (seven, Oskar and Jen's daughter) a bedtime story.

DAVID
-the young mice had a wonderful day
at the circus. They couldn't wait
to tell everyone about it- are you
ok Lilly?

LILLY
When can I go home Grandad?

DAVID
I don't know sweetheart. I think
it's best you stay here for a
while.

LILLY
But I really want to see Daddy.

DAVID
Daddy's really not very well at the
moment.

LILLY
Maybe I can help him feel
better. He always feels better
when I give him a special cuddle.

DAVID
I think we should wait until he's
better.

LILLY
I really miss him Grandad.

DAVID
Shall we finish this story?

INT - PETER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Peter sits at his kitchen table picking over a plate of food. The bedroom door opens. Footsteps echo down the hallway. Peter leaves the table. In the hallway Oskar shoves his shoes on. A backpack stands on the floor next to him.

(CONTINUED)

PETER

Where are you going?

Oskar shrugs his shoulders.

PETER

Can we talk about this?

OSKAR

What is there to talk about?

Oskar grabs the bag and leaves.

INT - OSKAR'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Bin bags sit by the back door. Anne finishes loading dirty dishes into the dishwasher. At the table Jen is busy texting on her phone. She sends the message and puts the phone on the table screen down. Anne slams the dishwasher door shut.

ANNE

Right that's everything cleaned and loaded in the dishwasher. Is there anything else you need me to do?

JEN

No thank you Anne. Honestly you've been a godsend today. I don't know what I would have done without you.

ANNE

Are you sure you don't want me to stay with you.

A notification sounds on Jen's phone. She goes to look but doesn't.

JEN

Oh no it's fine, honestly I'll be ok.

ANNE

You know where I am if you need me. My phone will be on so you can call anytime.

JEN

Thank you.

Anne hugs Jen.

(CONTINUED)

ANNE

I'll pop by tomorrow morning and see how you are.

JEN

You don't need to do that-

ANNE

It's no bother.

JEN

See you tomorrow.

Anne leaves. Jen waits for the front door to close before picking up her phone. Jen reads the message. She smiles to herself as she takes a sip of wine.

EXT - BEACHCOMBER HOTEL - NIGHT

Oskar slowly walks to the front door of The Beachcomber Hotel- a B&B located on the seafront of a seaside town (think Skegness for example). Oskar hesitates before ringing the doorbell. Music is playing inside mixed with laughter. He waits. Eventually the door opens. The formidable figure of IDA (Fifties, Oskar's older sister. Unlike Oskar she still has a strong accent) is lit up in the doorway. She glares at him. Oskar can't meet her gaze.

IDA

Remembered I exist have you?

OSKAR

Ida, it's not like that-

IDA

Look at the state of you. What do you want?

Oskar looks away. Ida clocks the bag by Oskar's feet.

IDA

Forget it.

OSKAR

It's only a few days- please?

IDA

Oskar, it's too late. That ship has sailed.

(CONTINUED)

OSKAR
But we're family-

Ida slaps him.

IDA
You will do well to remember that!

Ida slams the door on him. Oskar goes to ring the doorbell again. He thinks twice about it. Oskar walks away, he looks over his shoulder as laughter and music sound from inside the hotel.

EXT - CARPARK - DAY

Early morning. Peter walks across a quiet carpark. It's still early, there's not many cars parked. Peter spots Oskar's car. He peers in through the windows. Oskar isn't there.

EXT - CLIFF TOP - DAY

Eyes closed, Oskar stands at the cliff edge. Tears streak across his face. He takes a deep breath before opening his eyes.

Peter approaches Oskar. Oskar doesn't appear to notice him. Seeing how close Oskar is to the edge, Peter stops dead.

OSKAR
Do you ever wonder what it would be
like to just close your eyes and-

PETER
Fly?

OSKAR
How did it come to this?

PETER
No idea.

Oskar shivers uncontrollably.

OSKAR
All I ever wanted to be was a good
husband and a good father- I
couldn't even get those right-

(CONTINUED)

PETER

I'm not convinced Lilly would agree with you.

OSKAR

She is far better off without me-

Oskar takes a step forward. Peter moves towards him but stops.

PETER

Oskar this is not the answer.

OSKAR

You all wish it- Jen, Ida, you- all the people I ever loved- two more steps- problem solved.

PETER

Please don't. We can talk through this- I can help you, I want to help-

OSKAR

The world will be a better place without me in it.

PETER

No, no it won't.

OSKAR

You don't understand- I think it's best if I-

PETER

Oskar I understand more than you think.

Oskar inches closer to the edge.

PETER

(Frantic)

No Oskar- please don't-

OSKAR

The pain- it'll all be gone-

PETER

Oskar listen to me- it doesn't last forever-

(CONTINUED)

OSKAR
Like you know-

PETER
I do know-

OSKAR
(Laughing)
How? How can you possibly know?

Oskar takes another step.

PETER
I've been there Oskar. I've been
through what you're going through.

Silence. Oskar stops. He turns to look at Peter. They stare at each other in silence. Oskar breaks down crying. He steps towards Peter. Peter holds him close as he cries.