

Untalented Actors Too
Go To Heaven

"Charon Calls"

By

Randy Nundlall

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BLACK

IN THE BLACK WE HEAR CLAPPING OF HANDS AND CHEERING OF A CURTAIN CALL...

TITLE CARD

OH! THESPIANS OF THIS WORLD...MAY YOU
REJOICE ALWAYS, YOU HAVE MOTIVATED, ENLIGHTENED AND
FASCINATED ME SINCE MY EARLIEST
AWAKENINGS. WHAT WOULD I BE IF YOU WERE NOT
THERE FOR ME?

FADE OUT

FADE UP

INT - A BEDROOM - DAY

In a shoddy little bedroom sparsely furnished lies a figure in the bed. We see the feet wearing white socks initially and the whole body is revealed gradually. A male in his late twenties is sleeping. This is OSCAR CRUIZ. Unshaven and visibly very ill, his pale waxy face reflects the existence of one unfortunate soul... he sleeps peacefully.

V.O

[1ST MALE]

He was so hard up... he could not afford to hire the graduation gown nor the photos. The first time I saw him I could not help feeling sorry for him... he was one of those men who existed in a world where luck is something equivalent to a passing shadow on the horizon...

Oscar moves slightly in his bed. We see sweat beads on his forehead...

V.O

[1ST MALE]

It was heart breaking to see him struggle with his lines. He could never remember them... however hard he tried...

V.O

[1ST FEMALE]

He was not that at all that type who would make it... that was my impression when I first met him.. he was determined though and invested his soul and heart. He worked night but was in class on time... always. While the rest of us missed a few classes, he made it a rule to attend each and every session.

Beat

(CONTIN'D)

He always looked tired, I am very surprised he managed to remain for three years to complete the degree.

He opens his eyes, with heavy eyelids, he blinks and focuses on the clock. Takes a deep breath and closes his eyes again.

V.O

[2ND MALE]

He did not fit in at all. His poverty was pathetically evident. Good attendance was not everything. His performance was simply mediocre... but perseverance was something deeply rooted in his heart. I look back at those days and... yes... now I give him his due.

We hear the phone ringing downstairs and somebody picks it up... Oscar keeps sleeping, a female voice starts a conversation on the phone which yields to...

V.O

[1ST MALE]

He graduated all right, he was happy... he was a formally trained actor... at long last. But then... there was the problem of employability. His prospect was quite bleak on this front... sadly.

Oscar stirs again in his bed. Opens his eyes and looks up at the ceiling. He makes an effort to get up but falls back and stays tucked in the bed. He closes his eyes...

V.O

[2ND FEMALE]

This won't do... not at all! Are you really a trained actor?... you've wasted three years of your life...

He coughs softly... We hear the door opening and closing softly downstairs.

V.O

[3RD MALE]

Don't ever waste my time again... I did a favour to someone auditioning you. Had I known...

FLASHBACK

INT - AUDITION HALL - DAY

Oscar is auditioning a speech from *Titanic*...

He blocks, cannot go any further, the frame freezes...

V.O

[3RD FEMALE]

I would like to offer you the part Oscar... you are employable. I... I

Pause

(CONTIN'D)

I have to... I need to talk to my Associates... I would advice you to do some further training...

We see a desperate Oscar... he speaks pleadingly...

OSCAR

But I am an actor, I have done three long years of training. I cannot afford to... I need to work, that's all I need... work... work! I am already trained. My father relies on me. He is old... I have not worked for four years now, I am an actor. That's what I can do! Please, please... give me a chance...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT - THE SAME BEDROOM - DAY

Oscar opens his eyes and manages to sit up in his bed.
Being very weak he drops back...

FADE OUT

FADE IN

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

The kitchen is quite tidy and clean. Near the sink there is an ashtray in which a cigarette that has been smoked but only a very few puffs then stubbed lies. The filter tips is reddened by the smoker's lipstick. On the fruit bowl on top of a bunch of bananas rests a note: "PLEASE DO NOT MAKE A MESS". Oscar sits at the table writing. He does not look any better, looks like he is desperately in need of blood transfusion. We hear him through voice over as he writes...

OSCAR

[V.O]

Dear father, I am doing very well.
I have recently signed a contract
with a major studio in Hollywood
and I have been paid in advance for
my role. A cheque is in the post as
I write. I am sorry I have not sent
the overcoat yet... can you give me
your measurement again? And also
which colour would you prefer? I will
be moving house soon, but please keep
sending mails to this address. It makes
my landlady happy to handle the mails
of a famous actor. By the way, my artist
name is ORLANDO CRUISE. That's how I
am known in Hollywood. I have recruited
a few professionals to find me a big
house, you are moving in with me in a
matter of weeks... father, your ship has
arrived. Dreams do come true... I will
be very busy but we will always dine
together. You will be by my side at
all time. A promise is a promise. I am
the happiest man and so should you be...

Outside the weather is bleak, the skies are dark...
A bang is heard... surreal noises are heard in the
corridor, Oscar looks up and see through the door frame,
a bright light in the corridor. This light grows whiter
as Oscar looks on, it becomes too bright and Oscar is

blinded and obliged to blink and close his eyes momentarily... the pencil drops from his hand. He opens his eyes finally and sees a silhouette in the door frame. As he tries to focus harder, we see the silhouette materialising into a MAN, of medium stature, silver suit, with a white shiny shirt and the tie is equally of the same material. Dusk complexioned, he is a very neat looking. He smiles, a broad smile. Oscar smiles back, as if his mouth is full of razor blades, yet a genuine, rather naïve smile... he stutters unintelligibly.

OSCAR

... how's... how you... who are you?

The man, very good natured, stands there looking at Oscar... smiling... then he opens his arms and speaks.

MAN

Your miseries are over Orlando!

Oscar smiles, a happy bright smile, despite his breathlessness...

OSCAR

(THROUGH THE SMILE)

How do you know...

Beat

I want to be called ORLANDO...

The man still smiling...

MAN

How do I know? You wrote it down there... didn't you?

As what the man said sinks in, the smile fades away from Oscar's face. The man reassures him...

MAN

I know everything... come now... I am here to take you...

Oscar looks lost... he starts to worry, he starts to sweat and he is willing to fight back, but this man is not here to attack him, he is the most friendly man Oscar has ever seen. With courage he speaks

OSCAR

Where to?

The man laughs...

MAN

Where?... Hollywood! That's where
you belong my good little fellow...
everything else is history!

Pause

OSCAR

I am too ill, bro...

MAN

Rubbish... come on... you are not
coming with me like that. A shower
at least, come on!

He moves towards Oscar who looks at him resigned...
The man does not smile anymore and he delivers the
following speech with the eloquence of a stage actor in a
dramatic role

MAN

Heaven, Mother Nature, even the
hardest, indifferent man with a
heart as tough as a stone, cannot
bear to see such injustice that
you have been subjected to. Life
has given you a raw deal, my chum.
Your waiting is over and your
carriage awaits. We need to leave
now.

Oscar looks stunned, he opens his mouth and utters
something... we do not hear anything...

(CONTIN'D)

You know who I am, don't you?... you
don't need a Danace not even an
Obolus to be placed underneath your
tongue. You cannot afford it according
to my knowledge. I would not accept it
from you anyways... nay, not from you.
Don't feel sorry, whatever you are
leaving behind is simply misery... misery...
misery...

{{{ECHO}}}

A smile materialises on his face...

FADE TO WHITE

FADE UP

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

Oscar still very ill, dressed in a dark suit, white shirt and a black tie. He also has had a shave and is sitting in the same chair as per the previous scene. The man is nearby. Oscar is very breathless...

OSCAR

I can hardly walk... I cannot come today... maybe...

MAN

[GRAVELY]

I will carry you. Here we go... and please don't be sad. Let's celebrate!

As he says this, like a robot he puts a cigar in Oscar's mouth, lights it and helps him to his feet. The he stands with his back against Oscar's, locks elbows with him and he bends gently. Oscar is lying on the man's back looking at the ceiling, he takes a long drag at the cigar and blows the smoke up to the ceiling. He looks at the ceiling and fixes at it. Tears drops from the corners of his eyes and flow towards his ears. His eyes start to glaze... There is the deafening sound of thunder outside...

FADE TO BLACK

FADE UP

INT - KITCHEN - DAY

Oscar is still looking at the ceiling, sitting in the chair and his head drawn back and hanging back over the back of the chair. Tears have flown from his eyes and followed the law of gravity, towards his ears. He has also vomited some milk which has poured out of the corners of his mouth... the lipstick stained cigarette from the ashtray burns away through the fingers of his left hand. His right hand is hanging on his side lifeless.

FADE TO BLACK

SUPERIMPOSITION

"AT THE TIME OF HIS DEATH OSCAR CRUIZ
HAD ONLY £1.24p IN HIS BANK ACCOUNT"

FADE OUT

FADE IN

CREDITS

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