

WHEN I FALL

Written by
Simon K. Parker

simonkyleparker@hotmail.co.uk
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FADE IN:

EXT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

A sprawling five bedroom family home, large front and back gardens. Picturesque, like it belongs in a children's story book.

A taxi pulls up outside the main gates. From the back of it, JAMES, (22) in a wheelchair is lowered down to the ground.

Out from the back passenger door, SARAH (25) exits. She's beautiful. A large engagement ring on her finger.

Waiting for them is RYAN (50's) and Andrew (30's) both smiling eagerly at James.

Once his wheelchair is on the ground Ryan rushes over, trying to grab a hold of the back of the chair and move James around.

JAMES
(a little annoyed)
Dad!

RYAN
Let me help you for goodness sake.

JAMES
I'm fine.

Andrew chuckles to himself.

ANDREW
(to James)
When has dad ever listened to any
of us?

James looks across at Sarah who's standing with her hands held together in front of her, clearly nervous.

JAMES
(gesturing)
This is my Dad. And my brother
Andrew.

Ryan offers her his arm.

RYAN
Call me Ryan.

SARAH
Hi Ryan, call me Sarah.

She takes Ryan's arm and he guides her towards the family home.

ANDREW

Don't worry Sarah, none of us bite.

The taxi pulls away. The four of them move up towards the house all together.

SARAH

Did our things get here OK?

ANDREW

Your bags got here an hour before you did.

RYAN

They're all up at the house waiting to be unpacked.

SARAH

Wonderful.

JAMES

There's going to be a lot of changes to the house that I'm going to need.

RYAN

(checking)
Need?

JAMES

Alright. That I want.

SARAH

Just to make his life that little bit easier. Nothing crazy.

ANDREW

Like what?

JAMES

(snapping back)
Stuff.

ANDREW

Well you better start fucking naming them.

RYAN

Don't swear.

ANDREW
(to James)
I don't want you changing too much.

SARAH
Sometimes change is good.

ANDREW
(muttering)
I'm not so sure.

James reaches out towards Andrew.

JAMES
I just want to change enough to get
by. I'm not going to go fucking
crazy, so relax.

Andrew snaps his hand away from him.

ANDREW
It's not just your fucking house.
Make sure you fucking remember
that.

James and Sarah share a look. James rolls his eyes.

INT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

SAM, (30's) holds open the front door. Smiling at everyone
gathered in front of him.

SAM
(to James)
Well, well, well. Aren't you a
sight for sore eyes.
(a deep breath)
Are you coming in?

James tries to get his wheelchair up and over the door frame
to get himself inside. But it's proving to be almost
impossible.

Sam has seen enough.

SAM (CONT'D)
Alright, alright.

Sam reaches down and lifts James up out of the wheelchair
with ease.

JAMES
(embarrassed)
What are you doing?

SAM
Relax.
(to Sarah)
Do me a favour, you can bring the
chair in?

Sam then turns and carries James inside.

JAMES
(to Sam)
This is the first and last fucking
time that I'm ever going to let you
do this.

INT. FAMILY HOME - JAMES'S BEDROOM - DAY

James and Sarah see several suitcases on the bed. Sarah opens them up and busies herself with unpacking both of their clothes.

JAMES
(to Sarah)
I hope you won't regret coming here
with me.

She turns to face him.

SARAH
Of course not.

JAMES
Are you sure?

SARAH
You asked me to marry you.

JAMES
(beaming)
And you said yes.

She nods. She leans down and they share a kiss.

EXT. FAMILY HOME - BACK GARDEN - DAY

Sarah inspects the flower beds. The garden is huge and well looked after.

Andrew comes out from the back of the house and heads over to her.

ANDREW

Sarah!

She turns to face him. He hurries over.

ANDREW (CONT'D)

Are you hungry, thirsty?

She shakes her head.

SARAH

I'm OK. It's a beautiful home you have here.

ANDREW

Try sharing it with all four of us and you very well might change your mind.

SARAH

The gardens are amazing. It must take a lot of work to keep them like this?

ANDREW

Well, that's my fathers passion. And was my mothers too. Right up until her death, she was out here tending to the flowers.

SARAH

Well, I just love it out here.

Andrew then takes down a long deep breath. Steadies himself. Composed.

ANDREW

I also need to say something to you.

SARAH

Oh?

ANDREW

I'm grateful.

She can't help but laugh.

SARAH

What do you mean?

ANDREW

For making my brother so happy.

SARAH

Don't be silly.

ANDREW

No. I mean it. After the accident.
James was...

(stops himself)

Well, never mind. But I still need
to say it. I'm grateful.

SARAH

He's a good man. And he's lucky to
have a family like the one he's
got.

INT. FAMILY HOME - DINING ROOM - DAY

A large table in the centre of the room. Family pictures
littering the four walls. Everyone is gathered around. Ryan
is sitting at the head of the table with the others on either
side, facing each other.

Dinner is served. For Sarah's first meal they've got the good
plates and cutlery out.

RYAN

(to Sarah)

So, what do you think of the food?

SARAH

(mouthful)

It's delicious.

James glances across at his father.

JAMES

There's a new experimental
operation that has allowed people
to walk again. I think...

RYAN

(cutting him off)

Yes, I've heard about it. You've
told me about it before. AS have
your two brothers.

JAMES

(disappointed)

And you're against it?

RYAN

Doctors will only speak of the positives. The happy outcomes. They are far more reluctant to speak of the bad side. The side effects. The negatives. They don't have to live with their failures.

SAM

(to Sarah)

Father doesn't trust doctors.

RYAN

(losing his temper)

You're God damn right I don't!

Ryan catches himself. Trying to calm down.

RYAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

SARAH

But if there's a chance for James to walk again?

JAMES

And I'm willing to risk it.

RYAN

And it could make you even worse.

SARAH

We haven't made a decision yet. We would just like to talk about it. We...

JAMES

(cutting Sarah off)

I'm willing to risk it.

RYAN

You're fine the way you are.

JAMES

Father...

RYAN

(shouting)

Let me eat.

The room falls silent.

Ryan then quickly shovels in as much food as he can straight into his mouth.

Everyone else around the table, tense. Not sure where to look. Like Ryan, they too shove food in their mouths.

EXT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

The three brothers are gathered together outside the front door, studying the 'step' up into the house. Pondering.

SAM

So, a ramp for the wheelchair?

The other two nod.

ANDREW

Needs to be big enough to get your chair up and over.

JAMES

And I'll be using it a lot.

SAM

Big and strong.

ANDREW

Up and then down again.

JAMES

Anyone built anything like this before?

ANDREW

You think we should draw it out first?

Sarah, standing off and away from them has been listening and has heard enough.

SARAH

Alright. Enough.

She heads inside then a couple of seconds later comes back out holding a plank of wood, hammer, nails and a saw.

She just gets on with it and starts building a 'ramp' for the chair.

Both Andrew and Sam burst out laughing.

SAM

Well, alright. That's the spirit.

JAMES

(to Sarah)

You've never done anything like this before.

SARAH

Well, the point is it needs to get done. And the only way to get it done is to do it.

SAM

Wise words Sarah. I think I read something similar on one of those inspiration posters you see in gift shops.

ANDREW

Well, what do you want the rest of us to do?

SLICE! BLOOD SPRAYS FROM HER HAND!

SARAH

Shit!

Sarah leaps up onto her feet, holding onto her thumb she's cut it open. And it's bleeding. A surprising amount too.

JAMES

Are you OK?

With her other hand she holds her finger tight, trying to stop the bleeding.

SARAH

It's just a cut.

ANDREW

Well, keep your finger away from me. I hate blood. I'm serious.

JAMES

Is it deep?

SARAH

I think so.

JAMES

Then we need to go to the hospital.

Sam rolls his eyes. Stepping forwards he takes Sarah by the wrist and leads her inside the house.

SAM
I've seen little kids with worse
injuries than this.

They both disappear inside. James tries to follow them but the step leading into the house is still too high for his wheelchair.

JAMES
(to Andrew)
Go in there and see how badly she's
hurt herself.

ANDREW
(frowning)
She'll live.

INT. FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Sam pulls Sarah over to the counter. From a cupboard he finds a first aid kit. He quickly dresses her cut. Makes it look easy.

SARAH
You've done this before?

He nods.

SAM
I've seen a lot worse. You'll be
fine.

SARAH
(smiling)
Won't I lose my finger?

He laughs.

SAM
Relax, it's not going anywhere.
Would you like a sticker for being
so brave?

Sarah holds her wrapped up finger out in front of her.

SARAH
(impressed)
Looks good.

EXT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

The ramp leading up to the front door is almost finished, Sarah and Andrew, both on the ground are busy painting it.

James sits off out of the way with Sam kneeling down beside him. Both watching Sarah as she paints. Whispering to each other.

JAMES
(to Sam)
I really love her.

Sam laughs.

SAM
That's good.

JAMES
What do you think of her?

SAM
Why don't you just say what you want to say to me? Just fucking get to it.

James takes down a deep breath, steadies himself.

JAMES
(blurting it out)
We still haven't had sex yet.

SAM
Wow, are you blind. She's beautiful. I would have fucked her after the first date.

James reaches over and hits Sam on the arm, playful.

JAMES
(grinning)
What your fucking mouth. That woman is going to be my wife. And you sister in law.

SAM
I'm just saying. She's got a great ass on her.

JAMES
Your sister in law.

SAM

Alright. So what's stopping you from jumping all over her. Ripping off her clothes and doing the dirty?

JAMES

(confessing)
I'm worried.

SAM

(pushing)
About?

JAMES

What do you think? My fucking legs.

SAM

And your cock?

JAMES

Jesus.

SAM

Tell me about your cock?

JAMES

Everything else works fine.

SAM

Then just do it and get it over with. You don't fuck with your legs.

JAMES

I shouldn't have told you any of this shit.

SAM

Yes you should. Because unlike everyone else I'll tell you what you want to hear. Get both of you naked and fuck her brains out. Forget your legs. Tell her to get on top and ride you like the dirty fucking donkey that you are.

James throws his head back, bursts out laughing.

JAMES

Jesus fucking Christ.

SAM

You know I'm right.

INT. FAMILY HOME - RYAN'S STUDY - DAY

Ryan sits behind his small desk, reading through a large newspaper. His glasses resting on the edge of his nose.

James on the other side of the study stares at him hard. His face scrunched up.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK. The door to the study opens and Andrew enters carrying a tray with three cups of freshly made coffee. He places it down onto Ryan's desk.

JAMES

(to Ryan)

What would it mean to you if I walked through that door? On my own two legs?

RYAN

(annoyed)

It wouldn't mean anything.

JAMES

Fucks sake dad.

RYAN

Pure fantasy.

JAMES

It's not.

RYAN

Bullshit and lies. And you're just another gullible idiot falling for it.

JAMES

One operation. And it could allow me to walk again.

RYAN

There's a billion bald men around the world paying god knows what for lotions, creams and other notions because someone told them it would make their hair grow again. And what do they get? Nothing. Just poorer for it.

JAMES

You're honestly not comparing my fucking legs not working to people losing their fucking hair.

RYAN

Watch your mouth James. I won't have my children swearing at me in my house!

James to Andrew, angry.

JAMES

Why don't you say something, instead of just standing there.

ANDREW

What do you want me to say?

RYAN

(to Andrew, ordering)
Tell him he's a fool.

ANDREW

Well, actually. I'm on James's side.

RYAN

Side? There is no fucking side.

ANDREW

If I were him, I'd want to try.

RYAN

Well it's not happening. And that's the end of it. I won't allow it.

JAMES

Well, I've already made my mind up. I'm going.

INT. FAMILY HOME - JAMES'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sarah sits on the end of the bed, head in her hands. And she's been crying.

James wheels himself in front of her.

JAMES

Sarah.

She keeps her head down.

SARAH

You didn't even discuss it with me first.

JAMES

I'm sorry.

She lifts her head up to face him.

SARAH

(hurt)

You brought me out here and then do this?

JAMES

Well, what would you have wanted?

SARAH

To ask me if it was OK?

JAMES

But it's my body.

SARAH

But it's our LIFE!

She stands up from the bed and storms out of the room.

INT. FAMILY HOME - KITCHEN - DAY

Sarah pours herself a glass of wine, her hands shaking. Sam follows her inside.

SAM

You can't let him go.

She looks over at him. Opens her mouth to reply but he cuts her off.

SAM (CONT'D)

(repeating)

You CAN'T let him go.

He is now standing right over the top of her. Toe to toe.

SARAH

James has already made his mind up.

SAM

Then change it.

SARAH

I can't.

SAM

Try.

SARAH
You don't want him to go?

SAM
I don't want him to turn himself
into a fucking vegetable.

SARAH
(emotional)
There's nothing I can do.

SAM
Yes you can. You're smart,
beautiful and you've captured his
heart like no one has ever even
come close to before. You're
special Sarah. One in a million
doesn't even come close to cutting
it. More like one in a billion.

She breaks down crying.

SARAH
If your dad is right, and the
operation fails. And he paralyzes
himself. I don't know what I'll do.

SAM
No tears.

SARAH
I don't even know what I'm doing
here.

He hugs her. Wrapping his arms around her.

SAM
But you are here. And that's all
that matters.

She hugs him back. They squeeze each other. They enjoy the connection. Sam reaches down to her chin, lifting her face up to kiss her. She kisses him back.

Suddenly Andrew appears in the doorway. He sees them in this passionate embrace. He's shocked, horrified.

Sam and Sarah pull away from each other. They both then see Andrew staring at them.

Sam pulls away from her and hurries past Andrew and out of the kitchen.

Andrew marches into the kitchen and right up to Sarah. She clears her throat, wipes the back of her hand across her mouth. But before she has a chance to speak, to explain herself Andrew SNAPS out a hand and grabs a tight hold of her throat.

BANG!

Andrew slams her up against the cupboards behind her. His eyes burning with a furious rage.

ANDREW

(a beat)

If you break James's heart. I'll
kill you.

He stares deeply into her eyes. He wants her to understand that he means every word. Gripped with fear, she knows that what he says is no bluff.

EXT. FAMILY HOME - DAY

Sarah and Ryan stand in the doorway of the front door. Both watching on, helpless and hopeless as Andrew and Sam help James into the back of the taxi.

RYAN

(defeated)

There they go.

Sarah holds a hand in front of her mouth, emotional.

RYAN (CONT'D)

I just pray that whatever this
experimental treatment is, that it
works for James.

(puts a hand onto Sarah)

And I suggest you do the same.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END