DEATH WAS AFRAID OF HIM.

A short film

Written by

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BLACK SCREEN

SOLDIER (V.O.)
(Gentle tones)
The trick is not to close your eyes. Know what I mean?
(More urgent)
Look at me! Look at my eyes!
(Fading)
Don’t you dare go to sleep!

The soldier’s voice fades to be replaced with a distant female voice that increases in volume.

CARRIE (V.O.)
Wake up sleepy head.
(Beat)
We haven’t got all day, come on big man, wake up.

RONNIE (V.O.)
(Tired)
Let me see the sky, I just want to see the sky.

CARRIE (V.O.)
Come on soldier. Wakey! wakey!
Hands off cocks and on with socks!

INT. RONNIE AND CARRIE’S BEDROOM – MORNING

RONNIE [30’s] opens his eyes to see the smiling face of his wife, CARRIE [30]. A slim woman, efficient in casual wear with polo shirt and jeans.

RONNIE
Since when did you come out with barrack room talk like that?

CARRIE
There you go, big boy is back with us.

Ronnie stretches his arms in the comfort of his own bed.

RONNIE
It’s good to be home.

Ronnie has an infantry soldier’s body. Tanned with tattoos – his unit emblem – his blood type – his wife’s name.

His body shows mementoes of combat. A bullet wound scar on his chest takes up Carrie’s attention.

He sees her looking.
RONNIE
Does it bother you?

CARRIE
A new one. How come I wasn’t
informed? I should’ve been told,
I’m your wife, goddamn it!

RONNIE
(Calming, assuring)
It was only a flesh wound.
Nothing to write home about. Just
stupid scars we carry.

CARRIE
Wives carry scars too you know.
The scars of love in our hearts
for men like you. I married a
soldier and we have the same
worries and fears as our men. We
share the same burdens and deal
with the traumas.

He has no answer.

Screams of delight as two daughters [7] and [8] run in and
throw themselves on to their dad.

CARRIE
Come on you two, time to get
ready for some ‘Daddy time.’

Whoops of joy as the girls run from the room.

CARRIE
It’s good to have you home.

Ronnie saunters to the window with a smile at the sounds of
his family’s routine.

The smile fades to a frown as he looks out to see – a
TALIBAN FIGHTER.

The man in Taliban clothing, casually holds a Kalashnikov
rifle across his shoulders as he stares up at Ronnie.

Ronnie turns to his wife.

RONNIE
Come and see this.

CARRIE
What?

Carrie goes to the window, affectionately putting her arm
around her husband’s waist.

They look out the window – an empty road.
CARRIE
You trying to tell me you miss
the view of the road?

A puzzled Ronnie brushes off an unease that he feels. He turns to Carrie.

RONNIE
I miss everything about home, and
you. I need my ‘Daddy time.’

Ronnie looks back out the window – uncertain.

EXT. SMALL PLAY PARK – LATER

The top of a swing frame with two sets of chair swings hanging from it.

The chains move slightly in the wind to cause squeaking sounds – the sounds of running feet.

SOLDIER (V.O.)
(Urgent)
You’re going to be all right!
Your good pal! Your good!

RONNIE (V.O.)
Let me see the sky, I just want
to see the sky.

SOLDIER (V.O.)
You’re going to be all right,
you’re okay...

The soldier’s voice is replaced by another.

MAN (V.O.)
You all right, pal? You okay?

Ronnie, standing behind the swings sees his daughters run to him then get on the swings.

He turns to a man who looks concerned.

MAN
You okay?

Ronnie nods then turns to his daughters who look up at him, waiting to be pushed. To their delight he does so.

He turns to the man who has gone.

His smile fades as he sees – a young BOY sitting on another swing, dressed in Afghan costume – he holds a handgun.

Ronnie is alarmed then realises his daughters are oblivious to this figure – they cannot see him.
The Boy nods for Ronnie to look over his shoulder.

Ronnie turns to see the Taliban Fighter from the front of his house - staring at him from across the road.

He quickly turns to the Boy who has disappeared - back to the Taliban Fighter who has also vanished.

He looks down to the two swaying swings - his daughters are gone.

EXT. RONNIE AND CARRIE’S BACK GARDEN – LATER

Swaying bedsheets on a washing line, as Carrie hangs her washing out.

She feels Ronnie’s arms around her and closes her eyes with a smile.

CARRIE
I’m a married woman. Besides, you’re only supposed to clean the windows.

RONNIE
You and the window cleaner got a thing going, huh?

Carrie turns with a suggestive smile to hold her husband close. They kiss.

RONNIE
The kids are at school.

CARRIE
There’s wine chilling in the fridge.

RONNIE
Fresh bread? Cheese? Cold meats?

CARRIE
All the ingredients for a picnic, and it is our anniversary.

RONNIE
Is been a long time.

CARRIE
Too long.

Carrie takes her husband’s hand and leads him into the house.

RONNIE
I love it when you seduce me.
CARRIE

The picnic can wait.

On the fluttering white sheets - the shadow of the Taliban Fighter.

A hesitant Ronnie turns to look back but sees only washing on the line. Carrie pulls his hand, accompanied with a throaty suggestive laugh.

CARRIE

Come on. I promise I’ll be gentle with you.

INT. RONNIE AND CARRIE’S BEDROOM - LATER

Carrie and Ronnie lie on the bed, he on his back looking at the ceiling, Carrie on her side facing him.

She feels around the bullet scar on his chest.

CARRIE

Does it hurt?

RONNIE

Do you remember the first time we met?

Carrie turns to look up at the ceiling.

CARRIE

The picnic. You were trying to look up my skirt.

RONNIE

I was admiring your legs.

CARRIE

And you said to yourself...

RONNIE

...That’s the girl I’m going to marry.

CARRIE

Every anniversary day we have a picnic...

RONNIE

...To look up at the sky and the clouds. Talk about our dreams...

CARRIE

...Make our plans...
RONNIE
...The sky, where we mapped out our
hopes, our future.

The bedroom morph’s to the back garden.

EXT. RONNIE AND CARRIE’S BACK GARDEN

In the same position as they gaze up at the sky.

CARRIE
You frighten me at times.

RONNIE
You’ve never told me that before.

CARRIE
It’s your fearlessness, your
willingness to always fight the
fight.

RONNIE
That’s who I am. I’ll always
protect my brothers, my country,
my family, you.

CARRIE
Will you always be with me? With
us?

RONNIE
I’ll always be with you.
(Beat. Voice fades)
Always....

Carrie wakens to the song of birds, she blinks up at the
blue sky. On the blanket - remnants of a picnic.

She looks at the empty space beside her - trying to
understand.

Was her husband by her side? Had she been dreaming because
it was their anniversary?

We follow her look up to the wide blue sky.

EXT. AFGHANISTAN. DESOLATE AREA

The blue sky fills the screen.

From the sky we come down to see the aftermath of a
military fire fight.

TWO SOLDIERS and an AFGHAN INTERPRETER, dressed in military
uniform stand in a forlorn manner.
A THIRD SOLDIER stands up, blood on his front.

We follow his gaze as he looks down.

The figure on the ground is Ronnie, on his back - dead.

A BLOODY WOUND ON HIS CHEST, his eyes are open looking up to the blue sky - a smile on his face - a weapon in his hand.

We see more of the scene - he is surrounded by dead Taliban, lying around him.

Among the dead is, from previous scenes - the Taliban Fighter with his Kalashnikov and the Young Boy with the hand gun.

The Soldiers and the Interpreter look down at Ronnie as the Interpreter indicates his body.

AFGHAN INTERPRETER
In my country there is a saying, and it applies to this man.
“Death was afraid of him, because he fought like a lion.”

From this tableau of figures we go back up to the blue sky that fills the screen.

FADE TO BLACK.