

Falling

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Title: Falling
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INT. KITCHEN - DAY

A box of cereal sits centre-frame on a high shelf. We hear a banterous argument coming from elsewhere in the house and the thud of careless footsteps coming down the stairs.

HOLDEN (o.s.)
What's even the point of low-sugar cereal? You might as well be eating soggy cardboard.

SUNNY (o.s.)
Who lets their cereal get soggy?

HOLDEN (o.s.)
People with a happy childhood, that's who.

SUNNY (o.s.)
I guess some of us had parents who cared about our health!

HOLDEN and SUNNY walk in (casually dressed, maybe late 20s).

HOLDEN
Well, as your friend I can want the best for you whilst not giving a toss about your health.

She playfully punches his shoulder. He stares up at the cereal box, pointing at it.

HOLDEN (cont'd)
Is that what you eat?

SUNNY
What? It's healthy.

HOLDEN
Tragic, more like. Look at that and tell me it wouldn't be at least... eight times better with a toy inside!

SUNNY
It would not be... why eight times better?

HOLDEN
You wait, as soon as--

They both look up at it.

HOLDEN (cont'd)
Go on, then. Get it down.

She studies him for a moment. Her eyes light up.

SUNNY
You're afraid of heights!

HOLDEN
I am not afraid of heights! I
just dislike the idea of falling.

SUNNY
Ha!

HOLDEN (cont'd)
I consider myself above it.

SUNNY
Right, you're not afraid of
heights like you're not afraid to
be vulnerable.

HOLDEN
Fuck off, I am.

SUNNY
Okay, prove it. Do a trust fall.
Right now.

HOLDEN
A what?

Sunny spontaneously demonstrates by spinning on the spot and throwing herself backwards. He catches her, but only just. She seems at ease, but he's more tense than ever.

SUNNY
That! Now you do it. But let me
get behind you first.

She runs around him, then stands with her hands ready to catch him.

HOLDEN
I don't know about this.

SUNNY
First, close your eyes.

Holden peers over his shoulder.

SUNNY
No looking! Just trust me on
this, I'll catch you.

Eyes scrunched tight shut, Holden lets gravity take over. She catches him. He opens his eyes and lets out a sigh.

SUNNY

See? I got you. Now get up that chair and get over yourself!

Holden readies himself on the chair, taking deep breaths. Sunny holds him by the shoulder and forearm.

SUNNY

You got this. Baby steps.

Holden climbs shakily up on the chair. Sunny's hands rearrange to support him, steadying his upper thigh and calf.

Holden grabs the cereal box. But then stops.

SUNNY

The trick is not to be up there too long. And don't look down.

Holden looks down. His grip tightens, hands white-knuckle on the shelf.

HOLDEN

Oh, fuck.

SUNNY

What did I tell you?

HOLDEN

I think I'm stuck.

SUNNY

Just think of it as climbing in reverse.

HOLDEN

I'm-a die up here.

SUNNY

You've already done the steps, just in the wrong order.

HOLDEN

Tell my family I love 'em. Tell my friends I'll miss 'em. And tell my ex she's a bitch.

SUNNY

Which ex?

HOLDEN

Any; all of them if you have time.

SUNNY

Tell them yourself. Just get down!

HOLDEN

No, this is my life now. I am one with the cobwebs and light bulbs. I will learn their language and they will make their king, or else I'll raise the castle to the ground.

SUNNY

If you come back down, what's the worst-case scenario?

HOLDEN

I fall and break my neck.

SUNNY

Okay, now what's the most likely scenario?

HOLDEN

Nothing... and I'll feel slightly stupid.

SUNNY

Now which would you prefer?

HOLDEN

My neck breaking. That way I was right to be afraid.

She laughs.

HOLDEN

Okay. I'm coming down. But if I die, you have to eat fun cereal for the rest of your life.

SUNNY

No dice. If you die I sprinkle your grave with Bran Flakes, and I tell your family it's what you wanted.

He lets go of the shelf, semi-stumbling as he climbs down. Thankfully, she's got his hand. She takes the cereal box from him as his legs crumble beneath him. He ends up on the floor, fall cushioned by Sunny taking his weight.

SUNNY

Welcome back to Earth, spaceman. How do you feel? Still afraid of falling?

He looks up at her, ever so slightly smitten.

HOLDEN

Not so much...

He tries to pick himself up using her weight, but she lets go and he falls on his arse.

HOLDEN

Oof!

SUNNY

Now what kind of toy do you need?
I got something in my sock
drawer...