



Faith-Based Thriller
Short Film, Screenplay

Logline

A mysterious stranger in a wheelchair helps a construction worker overcome an unusual phobia when he's forced to live through a terrifying phenomenon.

SHORTFALL

Written by

MoriEl Randolph

9506 Silver Fox Turn
Clinton, Maryland 20735
240 302-0700
Familyfilms@morielrandolph.com

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

STEPHEN JARES (32) Caucasian, wears his hard hat and safety vest on his day off. He answers his cell, while leaving the front of his apartment building. It's a CO-WORKER from Stephen's job-site.

STEPHEN

Whatever it is I don't wanna hear about it. You should be talking to James.

CO-WORKER (V.O.)

Ah come on now, you know you love it when we call, and show you how important you are around here.

STEPHEN

What is it this time?

INTERCUT. CITY STREET/CONSTRUCTION SITE. DAY

CO-WORKER

James left for the day. He had some kind of an emergency. Nobody's got the key to the supply closet. --

STEPHEN

Did you ask Carol?

CO-WORKER

She's at lunch. A long lunch.

STEPHEN

Carol's got duplicates of all the keys.

CO-WORKER

Where are you man? I thought you never took off.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

STEPHEN

Contrary to what you guys may think I don't sleep on site. I have a life.

CO-WORKER (V.O.)

I hear you. So, I guess we have to wait for Carol.

Stephen notices a WOMAN IN A WHEELCHAIR (60) Asian. He jaywalks to avoid passing her.

STEPHEN

Call me back if you need me. Did you catch the operative word?

CO-WORKER (V.O.)

We always need you man.

STEPHEN

Yeah, yeah, talk to Carol.

Stephen ends his call. He looks behind him. The woman in the wheelchair crosses the street and heads his way.

Stephen makes haste to stay ahead of her. He speed walks, but the woman gains on him. He ducks beside a building. He leans against a wall to wait for the woman to pass. She pulls up in front of him and stops. Stephen moves forward to take off. The woman traps him by the wall with her chair.

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Why would a big, strong, young man like yourself, flee from an old woman you've never met?

Stephen looks for a way to get away from the woman without touching her chair.

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR (CONT'D)

Soon, you'll know the answer, but not before you're free of the fear you refuse to face.

STEPHEN

What are you crazy or something?

The woman backs away. She heads back in the same direction from which she came.

Stephen takes off in the opposite direction. In his haste, he brushes the shoulder of a man passing on forearm crutches. MOS immediately after passing the disabled man Stephen slowly loses his ability to walk. He falls to the ground. A few PASSERSBY stop to help, a WOMAN calls 911.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE IN:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Stephen stares at the ceiling when his sister GWEN (49) Caucasian, enters the room.

GWEN
Stephen, what happened? -- I just saw you this morning. What did the doctor say?

Stephen slowly turns his head toward his sister while she throws questions at him. He then goes back to staring at the ceiling. Gwen pulls up a chair close to the side of Stephen's bed. She notices the tears falling down the sides of her brother's face.

GWEN (CONT'D)
Stephen, talk to me. Are you in pain?

DOCTOR HEATON (52) enters the room.

DOCTOR HEATON
Good evening.

Gwen stands up to shake the doctor's hand.

GWEN
Hi, I'm Gwen, what's wrong with my brother?

DOCTOR HEATON
That's what we're going to find out.

Doctor Heaton walks to the opposite side of Stephen's bed. He examines him.

DOCTOR HEATON (CONT'D)
We just need a little time to run a few test. Have you ever experienced anything like this before?

Stephen elevates into a panic attach. The doctor and Gwen try to calm him down.

STEPHEN
No, no, no. This can't be. It just can't. I, I, I can't live like this. No, not this.

DOCTOR HEATON
We're going to do all we can to figure out what caused this.
(MORE)

DOCTOR HEATON (CONT'D)

Right now, we just need you to try to stay calm.

GWEN

Stephen, they don't know anything yet.

STEPHEN

I can't Gwen, I can't do this.

HOSPITAL ROOM - NEXT DAY

Stephen wakes up. He moves around in the bed before fully realizing that he can move his legs. He slowly attempts to get out of bed. Once on his feet, he touches his legs and body. Doctor Heaton enters the room just as Stephen puts on his pants.

DOCTOR HEATON

Mr. Jares... are you going somewhere?

Stephen continues to put his clothes on.

STEPHEN

I feel... I feel like me, Doc. I feel normal. Maybe it was something I ate yesterday. I don't know.

DOCTOR HEATON

We can't make that assumption Mr. Jares. I don't think leaving before we see the test results is wise, do you?

STEPHEN

Doc, whether it's wise or not, I gotta get out of here.

DOCTOR HEATON

At least let us take your vitals. You have to sign discharge papers anyway, so just wait here. Let me get the nurse. I'll be right back.

Doctor Heaton leaves Stephen's room in haste. Stephen grabs his hard hat and heads for the door. A patient with a paralyzed arm passes the hospital room just as Stephen tries to exit. He accidentally bumps into the man's paralyzed arm. Immediately after contact, Stephen loses the use of his right arm.

He tries to move his arm as he stumbles backwards. Stephen falls onto his hospital bed in a panic while grabbing his now paralyzed arm. Doctor Heaton returns to the room with a NURSE. They see Stephen in distress.

DOCTOR HEATON (CONT'D)
Mr. Jars? Nurse help him with his
legs. --

STEPHEN
It's not my legs. It's my arm, I
can't feel -- I can't move my arm.

MOS, Both the nurse and doctor assist Stephen and try to calm
him down.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Gwen sits beside Stephen's bed playing a game on her cell
phone, while Stephen lies staring at the ceiling again.

STEPHEN
Seems like I've been trying to
avoid this my entire life.

Gwen puts her phone down.

GWEN
How could you anticipate something
like this?

STEPHEN
I knew I would end up either losing
a limb like dad, or with a
disabling disease like mom.

GWEN
Stephen dad had an accident and mom
had a stroke, why would you
think? --

STEPHEN
All I remember is that they were
okay one day, then they were
broken, and then they were dead.

GWEN
That's crazy. Oh my word Stephen
that's not what happened.

STEPHEN
You wanna hear something really
crazy? I'm afraid of disabled
people. When I see them I get away,
or I run.

GWEN
Why are you? --

STEPHEN

Cause I don't want to end up like
mom and dad! I didn't wanna end up
like this.

HOSPITAL ROOM - FOLLOWING DAY

Stephen wakes up and immediately checks to see if he can move his arm. He reaches for it, then lifts both arms in front of him. He sits up on the side of the bed and stares at the wall in front of him.

FLASHBACK - EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Stephen is baked up against a wall. He looks for a way to get away from the woman in the wheelchair without touching her or her transport.

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Soon, you'll know the answer, but
not before you're free of the fear
you run from.

END FLASHBACK

Stephen continues to sit on the side of his hospital bed staring at the wall.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Stephen walks up to the front door of his apartment building. He's about to put his key in the lock when he spots the woman in the wheelchair. He starts to walk towards her waving his arms to get her attention.

STEPHEN

Hey, hey lady. Hey.

She sees Stephen and starts to roll away. Stephen runs after her.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Hey, wait, wait a minute. I need to
talk to you.

He catches up with her. Stephen stands over the woman panting and catching his breath. They're now in the same spot where they had their first encounter.

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Well look at you, running to me
instead of away from me.

STEPHEN

What are you a psychic?

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Oh, no dear, far from it.

STEPHEN

A witch?

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Why would you think that I'm a --

STEPHEN

Well, you're not the crazy lady I
thought you were. But, you know my
name, and you did something to me.

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Long ago people with my gift were
called prophets. I don't think they
know what to call us today. What I
shared with you didn't come from
me. It was from the most high.

STEPHEN

Who GOD?

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

It was the only way to help you
face your fear. For your sister's
sake.

STEPHEN

What does this have to do with
Gwen?

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Your sister and the Almighty have a
pretty solid relationship. You
could learn a lot from Gwen.

STEPHEN

What about Gwen, and what did you
do to me? --

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

I didn't do anything to you
Stephen. I only prophesied. God did
the rest. HE enabled you to face
your fear. Sadly, Gwen will soon
have to face hers, and she's going
to need you when she does.

STEPHEN

What fear?

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Before the year's end... your
sister will be diagnosed with
Multiple Sclerosis.

Stephen sinks to the ground, lowering his head between his
knees. He leans beside a wheel of the woman's chair.

STEPHEN

If she's tight with GOD, why can't
HE stop it or heal her?

WOMAN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Stephen it's going to be okay. Just
stand by your sister. Just as she
did for you and your parents.

Stephen stands up while wiping away tears.

STEPHEN

I don't understand any of this, but
I won't let my sister down.

WOMEN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

I know you wont, so does HE.

Stephen walks away from the woman. He then stops to look
back.

STEPHEN

The crazy things that happened to
me, that's over?

WOMEN IN THE WHEELCHAIR

Yes Stephen, it's over.

Stephen heads home. Once he's out of sight a car drives up
and stops in front of the woman. The driver gets out and
opens the back door. The woman gets out of the chair, walks
to the car, and gets in the backseat. The car drives off, and
the chair is left alone on the sidewalk.

FADE TO BLACK.

