

# Nice Night For It

By Jeff Wincek

(CAL enters. He passes JAKOB, pauses, then returns. He stands at the rail a short distance from JAKOB and looks out towards the city.)

CAL Nice night for it.

JAKOB What?

CAL I said, "Nice night for it".

JAKOB Whatever, man.

(CAL turns and looks back at the skyline, JAKOB resumes looking down into the water. After a moment.)

CAL Something interesting down there?

JAKOB What?

CAL I saw a whale once. Right down there.

JAKOB Look, pal. I'm not really interested. And if it's a hand- out you want, here.  
(Pulls out some cash.)

CAL Whoa, dude. Keep it. I only look like a street person.

JAKOB Sorry. I thought... y'know.

CAL S'OK.

(CAL looks at the view. JAKOB looks at the dark water.)

CAL (Continued) So what's the big secret?

JAKOB What?

CAL You've got this look. Like you've got a big secret.

JAKOB If you're trying to pick me up, I'm straight.

CAL Fwhew, man. I'm just talking, OK?

JAKOB Sorry. Again.

CAL Jeeze.

(Pause)

JAKOB I've been told you shouldn't tell secrets. They won't come true.

CAL I know your secret.

JAKOB I doubt it.

CAL Sure. I know the look. I've worn it myself.

(JAKOB looks CAL over.)

JAKOB I'm just... thinking, I guess.

CAL Mmm hmmm.

(CAL looks past the San Francisco skyline towards the Oakland hills.)

CAL (Continued) Too bad...

JAKOB Too bad?

CAL Too bad there's not a full moon. New moon tonight. It'll rise right over the Trans America pyramid. Blood colored, if it shows at all.

(JAKOB looks out towards the buildings.)

CAL (Continued) Funny thing about the moon...

JAKOB Here we go...

CAL There's only a dark side and a light side. Black or white. Light or dark. Day or night.

JAKOB I don't follow.

CAL Waxing gibbous, waning gibbous, first quarter, last quarter. They only exist according to your point of view. What do you think about that, Bob?

JAKOB I think that it's mildly interesting and my name's not Bob.

CAL It would have been a large coincidence if your name had been.

(CAL moves a half step closer. He holds out his hand, a bit awkwardly with the crutch attached. JAKOB shakes CAL's hand.)

JAKOB Well you're persistent. My name's Jakob. "Jakob", not "Jake".

CAL I'm Cal, Jakob.

(CAL leans with his back against the rail. He looks across the evening bridge traffic towards the Pacific.)

CAL (Continued) Most people jump from the city side of the bridge.

JAKOB I never said anything about...

(CAL looks JAKOB coolly in the eye. JAKOB falls silent, then answers.)

JAKOB (Continued) Something about a last act of defiance?

CAL Nah. We know better, don't we?

(JAKOB is silent for a moment. When he answers it's in a small voice.)

JAKOB Yes.

CAL And?

(JAKOB laughs.)

JAKOB You could get killed trying to cross the highway.

(CAL does not laugh.)

CAL So what brings you here, Jakob?

JAKOB BMW Z-4.

(CAL turns back towards the city. He now looks into the water.)

CAL You hit the water at 75 EM PEE AITCH. Pretty much fucks you up. If you live.

JAKOB I thought the plan was to not live.

CAL That's the plan. You know how to make God laugh? Tell him your plans. I'm twenty-six...

JAKOB You look younger.

CAL Jumpers. Jumpers who've lived. Twenty-six have lived. I'm twenty-six... Out of a little over... one person a week someone estimates. Over 68 years. How many's that?

JAKOB 3,536.

(Pause)

JAKOB (Continued) If this is your idea of being the good Samaritan or something, engaging me, scaring me, trying to save me from myself... Look at you, look at me. You couldn't stop me and if you tried, I'd drag you with me.

CAL We're just talking, Jakob.

JAKOB Well, I'm fucking tired of talk. I have a right to do what I want with my life.

CAL I agree. Free will. It's God's gift, if you believe in God. Even if you don't believe. We'd be wind-up toys otherwise. So, then what's this about?

JAKOB Nothing...

CAL You have cancer? AIDS?

JAKOB Jesus!

CAL Money woes?

JAKOB Look. Just fuck you.

(JAKOB reaches into his suit pocket, pulls out some car keys.)

JAKOB (Continued) Here. Go to the parking lot. Look for a blue Beemer Z-4. Title's in the glove box. It's signed. It's yours.

(JAKOB roughly shoves the keys into CAL's shirt pocket.)

CAL Thought of everything, have you?

JAKOB I though I had. There's always some obstacle though, isn't there?

CAL If we're lucky.

(JAKOB slouches to the sidewalk, his back towards the abyss. CAL slides to the sidewalk next to JAKOB. It's much harder for him. JAKOB does not help.)

CAL (Continued) No... That's fine, really. I can manage.

JAKOB Is this where you give me the answer to all my problems?

CAL I have nothing to give.

JAKOB No sage advice?

CAL I wish I had sage advice. I can't help you there. In the end we're on our own.

Jakob, listen. Whatever happened. It's bad, I'm sure. But...

JAKOB Don't tell me it'll all work out. God, please! And don't tell me something better will come along or one door closes and another opens. That doesn't help! I get that from

all my friends. People I barely know say the same thing. And I don't believe it. I don't see it from where I stand.

CAL Or they ask "How ya doin".

JAKOB But if I tell them "How I'm doin". Their eyes roll back into their heads. Nobody really wants to hear.

CAL And why is that?

JAKOB Because there's nothing they can do and they feel bad.

CAL And they don't want to feel bad.

JAKOB And I don't want them to feel bad. But I DO want them to feel bad. Sometimes. Sometimes I want them to hurt as much as I do.

But I hide what I hold in my heart. All the dark thoughts in my head go unspoken. I don't want to drive my friends away because sometimes all I want is to feel body heat coming from someone else, share a breath with another human being. But I'm in a bubble on the dark side of the moon. Where I'm at it's airless, it's always dark and it's cold, Cal. It's so cold. And there are things out there. They're hungry and getting closer. And I'm afraid. I am deathly afraid.

I hide what I feel and people tell me I'm holding up so well. "I don't know how you do it." They seem relieved at that and that they can go on with their lives undisturbed and I'm dying inside.

(JAKOB stands.)

JAKOB (Continued) Say something, Number 26.

CAL I have no answer for you. I told you.

JAKOB But you decided to live. You're here now. You haven't tried again?

CAL No.

JAKOB But you found a reason. What! I want to know what.

(CAL tries to get on his feet. He stumbles, drops his crutch. JAKOB catches him.)

JAKOB (Continued) Whoa! I got you.

(Picks up the crutch.)

JAKOB (Continued) Here.

CAL Thanks.

JAKOB What did you find?

CAL I didn't find anything. I had a change of heart. In transit, so to speak. You have less than five seconds to think. A short eternity. Count it out... one one-thousand...

JAKOB One one-thousand, two one-thousand...

CAL Slower.

JAKOB One one-thousand, two one-thousand, three one-thousand, four one-thousand, fi...

CAL Stop.

(Pause)

Five seconds is a long time. My epiphany came at second point 05. I realized I wanted to live more than I wanted to die. I didn't find a purpose or new meaning to my life or to Life with a capital 'L'. Wanting to live was enough. I had to look for the answer someplace I hadn't looked yet. But to do that you have to be able to draw a breath. It's icy cold, Jakob. The world... Your heart. My butt... I'm going now. We can go have coffee, talk some more. Maybe move ahead? Can I give you a lift?

JAKOB I have a car.

(CAL pats his shirt pocket.)

CAL Not any more, you don't.

(CAL exits. JAKOB watches as CAL walks off into the distance. JAKOB is alone on the bridge. There is a very long pause as he looks over the rail, down at the icy bay water. He turns towards the direction where CAL was headed.)

JAKOB Wait!

(One last glance into the depths. Exit JAKOB.)

BLACKOUT: