

LONG WAY DOWN

Written by
Dan Haberfield
SHOOTING SCRIPT
January 5th February 2014.

Barking Tiger Films
E dan@danhaberfield.com
W www.danhaberfield.com
M 0437 427 778

FADE IN

EXT. MELBOURNE CITYSCAPE - NIGHT
CAMERA on tall buildings sparkling with illuminated office space and neon lights.

RONNIE (O.C.)
(singing under the influence)
You are my sunshine, my only
sunshine...

EXT. MELBOURNE CITYSCAPE - CONTINUOUS

Camera moves back to reveal the back of RONNIE (M, 33).

RONNIE
...you make me happy when skies
are...

EXT. - SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

RONNIE
...grey. Please don't take, my
sunshine away...

Ronnie, closing his eyes falls backwards before a gust of wind pushes him backwards off the ledge to safety.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE SCREEN
Long Way Down.

FADE IN

EXT. - SKYSCRAPER ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER
The glow of a cigarette pierces the surrounding blackness as a figure dressed in a dark jacket steps from the shadows. He draws heavily on the cigarette once again whilst remaining intently focussed on his subject. ANGEL (M, 63), a rogue Irish type, walks towards Ronnie, who lays on the ground.

Angel bends to inspect Ronnie closer.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
So, what's your story then? Just
some banged up homeless fellow who
drinks too much and tries to knock
himself off for the betterment of
humankind. Well, aren't you a
martyr then.

Growing increasingly impatient.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Would you hurry up I haven't got
all night.

He awaits, agitated.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Oh, fuck this.

Angel kicks Ronnie in the ribs. His foot pushes through Ronnie's body.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Wake up. I'm on a tight schedule,
here.

Experiencing a unfamiliar pain, Ronnie stirs abruptly and stares at Angel.

A clap of thunder roars aloud.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
(looking to the skies)
All right, all right. No need for
that. Moody prick.
(beat)

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Well let's get this over and done
with. What's your story then?
Etcetera, etcetera?

RONNIE
Who the hell are you?

ANGEL
I'm your fairy fucken god-mother,
what does it look like?
(pause)
I'm an angel - I'm your angel. And
you're wasting my time, so get on
with it.

Ronnie slowly stands before bursting into laughter.

RONNIE
An Angel? Yeah whatever.

ANGEL
You listen here son. I don't have
time to be joking around, there's
far too many dickheads trying to
knock themselves off tonight.

Suddenly, Angel disappears. Ronnie stares into thin air.

ANGEL (O.C) (CONT'D)
Hope you've got some ID on you.

Ronnie turns to see Angel standing on the edge.

EXT. SKYSCRAPER ROOF EDGE - CONTINUOUS

ANGEL

That will make a real mess of you.

RONNIE

Yeah, ID, that will tell everybody
who I was... what I did...

ANGEL

Don't go feeling sorry for
yourself, boy.

RONNIE

Get stuffed will you.

Another clap of thunder occurs. Angel glances to the heavens
and moans to himself before pulling a smartphone from his
pocket and scrolls.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

There's nothing here in your file
that's terribly incriminating.

RONNIE

Then your files are full of shit.
(beat)
Just piss off will ya!

Ronnie climbs back on the edge. He looks over.

ANGEL (O.C.)

It says in here you were a
barrister... a top notch one.

Angel glances at Ronnie and then his mobile phone.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

Didn't mind a drink, liked a girl
or two. Well I can certainly relate
to that. Got a wife and a child...

RONNIE

Had! Had a wife and... daughter.

Angel looks Ronnie over.

ANGEL

Well I can only wonder why you
don't have them no more.

Ronnie looks at Angel.

RONNIE

You think I was always like this?
You think I want to be standing on
this ledge about... well, you know.

ANGEL

Which coincidentally brings us back to my opening question. Now obviously I'm supposed to talk ya out of this, but the way I see it, if you've fucked up enough you might as well just go ahead and do it. Save us all a bit of time, eh?

RONNIE

That's easy for you to say... that's a bloody long way down there.

ANGEL

Well ya didn't come up here to break a fucken toe nail now, did you?

RONNIE

No, of course not, but --

ANGEL

But what? It's easy, you just go ahead and jump...

Angel jumps off the edge. Ronnie looks over.

ANGEL (O.C.) (CONT'D)

... If you've got the balls, that is?

Ronnie turns around to see Angel standing below on the roof top smoking a cigarette.

RONNIE

If it was that easy wise guy, then I wouldn't be standing here now would I?

Angel coughs on his cigarette. Ronnie's face brightens up as he climbs from the edge. He wants a drag.

ANGEL

Well what? You think I'm gonna waste a bloody expensive cigarette on a fellow whose about to jump to his death? You obviously don't know what I had to go through to get hold of these. It's not easy getting contraband up there you know. The mad bastard has his eye on everything.

Angel inhales.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

I'm on my last warning up there as well.

RONNIE

No shit... that sounds pretty serious?

ANGEL

It's not like it was in the old days. Boy, we had some good times back then.

RONNIE

Like what singing hymns and shit?

ANGEL

Boo haa haa very fucken funny lawyer boy.

RONNIE

I'm a barrister.

*

ANGEL

Who cares! Ya fucken nothin at the moment.

Both figures stand toe-to-toe and stare fiercely at one another. Angel blows ANGEL DUST in Ronnie's face. Before walking away to lean against the edge wall.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

You know, when I was down here, I put up with some pretty heavy shit as well. Stood on a ledge just like this myself once. When you're standing there it looks an awful fucking long way down.

(beat)

But, sometimes you just gotta do what you gotta do.

RONNIE

I will, when I'm ready...

ANGEL

When you're ready? It's not a fucken wedding proposal, son! It will make no difference whether your ready or not once you've done it. The result will still be the same.

Angel hits his hand on the wall.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

Listen, I'm a busy fucken angel, I don't have time to be standing here talking to you all night.

(beat)

Are you gonna do it or not?

RONNIE

Of course I'm gonna do it! That's what I'm here for... but I just keep thinking.

ANGEL

It's not a thinking man's game, son. You either jump or you don't.

RONNIE

Not this... my daughter. I miss her so much.

Thunder can be heard yet again. Angel butts his cigarette, gives a bemused look to the heavens above and grabs his smartphone once more.

Angel continues to look and scroll over the smartphone. He looks slightly concerned.

ANGEL

She was a little cutie alright. Gorgeous little curls.

RONNIE

And blue eyes. Such a sweet little laugh. She changed my life.

(beat)

I became a better man when she arrived.

Angel continues to read his smartphone.

ANGEL

Holy shit, no one could have stopped it, Ronnie.

RONNIE

I could've!

ANGEL

(reasoning)

What are you talking about boy?

RONNIE

She was my little girl, I shouldn't have taken her there in the first place.

Ronnie climbs back on the edge, staring straight ahead. Thunder erupts. Angel senses danger.

ANGEL
(concerned)
Why don't you have one of these
after all.

Angel offers a cigarette. Ronnie ignores him and continues to stare ahead.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
Come on get away from that edge,
you could bloody-well fall.

RONNIE
I know. Isn't that why I'm here?
You're right, I should just jump.

ANGEL
Me, right? I'm just a fucking
whiskey drinking, cigarette smoking
angel - what the fuck would I know?
(beat)
Now you get back from that edge,
right now.

RONNIE
Not a chance. I'm gonna do it.

Ronnie closes his eyes peacefully. He stretches his arms out wide. Angel takes his smartphone once again and tries to obtain some information. The smartphone blacks out. Angel leaps up next to Ronnie.

ANGEL
It's a fucken long way down there
boy. I'm telling ya. It will hurt
more than whatever ya feeling right
now.
(beat)
The speed you fall at will feel
like it's ripping your face right
off and you're not even close to
death yet. Your eyes will be
drilling through the back of your
skull and the wind will be
screeching through your ears like
a raging fire until you hit the
ground.

*

Ronnie contemplates, eyes open.

RONNIE
Sounds about what I deserve.

ANGEL
No you don't, trust me.
(beat)
Why don't you come down here.
(MORE)

ANGEL (CONT'D)

We'll have a dart and a drink and a bit of a chat. Let's have a little bit of a think about this, Ronnie.

RONNIE

Thought it wasn't a thinking man's game, Angel? Besides, I've thought enough. I know what I need to do.

Ronnie closes his eyes once more and readies himself to jump. Angel tries to operate his smartphone but to no avail. This prompts Angel to look to the heavens above.

ANGEL

(almost panicking)
It wasn't your fault.

RONNIE

I shouldn't have taken her there in the first place.

Ronnie does a sign of the cross, then leans forward from the ledge. Angel launches to grab him but his hands merely pass through Ronnie's body. Ronnie gives a winners look and leans forward more. Angel holds both his hands up calling on the powers from above to assist. With all his mental strength, Angel uses God's power to prevent Ronnie from falling. Both men feel the strain.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

ANGEL

I'm giving you another chance.

RONNIE

Let me go!

ANGEL

It was an accident Ronnie. The good Lord sometimes has to make some bloody hard decisions. To take Daisy the way he did was one of the hardest.

Angel continues to use God's power to prevent Ronnie from falling. Ronnie fights.

ANGEL (CONT'D)

It was her unfortunate destiny, Ronnie. He's a power unto himself.

Ronnie peers skyward. Angel peers skyward, seeking assistance from the heavens. Thunder roars like no other!

RONNIE

He took away everything from me... everything.

(MORE)

RONNIE (CONT'D)
Everyone that matters... they've
all abandoned me.

ANGEL
(finally some answers)
You sure it wasn't you who
abandoned them, Ronnie?

Ronnie is still intent on jumping. Angel continues to use his powers to prevent him.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
You've got another chance here.
Your wife's had another baby,
Ronnie. You're a daddy again to a
beautiful little boy. She named him
after you.

Ronnie eases off as Angel ceases his powers. Ronnie stands and ponders. Both men are exhausted. Angel sits.

ANGEL (CONT'D)
She was gonna tell ya; but you
pissed off on her. You abandoned
her when she needed you the most.

Angel lights a cigarette as Ronnie sits.

RONNIE
A little Ronnie, eh?

ANGEL
That's right boy, a little
Ronnie... whose gonna need his
daddy.

Angel passes the cigarette to Ronnie. Ronnie takes a drag. A faint smile surfaces on Ronnie's face. The sun begins to rise.

FADE OUT.