

Escape

by

Richard Neville

V1.0 - fit for human consumption

Copyright (c) Richard Neville. All rights reserved.

Richard Neville
+44(0)7500082338
richard@animl.co.uk

FADE IN:

EXT. DEEP FOREST, BY A FALLEN TREE - DARK AFTERNOON

Deep, damp forest of closely packed trees. Ferns, moss and lichen provide a rich palette of vibrant green. Broken trunks of orange wood crumble and rot into fertile spongy ground. Water drips from every leaf.

Charlotte - mid twenties, athletic and attractive with black hair - clambers over a FALLEN TREE in this pathless wilderness.

She is a little out of breath.

Catching her breath in a clearing, she pauses to admire the awesome scenery.

Look up - huge trees stretch above her. She relishes the cool air and the peaceful moment.

She remembers the voice of her father, which floats through the scenery.

FATHER (O.S.)

You've only got one life girl, and this is it...

She smiles, walks on. Almost trips on tangled undergrowth.

FATHER (CONT'D)

... Don't fuck it up.

CHARLOTTE

(recovering her footing)

Yeah thanks dad. Don't fuck it up.

She pushes deeper into the beautiful forest.

BIRDS and other WILDLIFE observe her passing.

From a distance, she is a speck. Hard to distinguish.

EXT. DEEP FOREST, FALLEN TREE - CONTINUOUS

A huffing and puffing man, SIMON, is pushing through the forest. He's mid thirties, chunky and at least six foot tall.

He has an intense look about him, and his eyes are searching.

He clambers over the FALLEN TREE too.

His hefty boot squelches past Charlotte's smaller footprint in the mud - though he didn't notice.

Onwards.

He spots Charlotte in the distance.

A little cautious at first... Trying not to be seen... But then he speeds up - in full blown pursuit.

EXT. DEEP FOREST, DOWNHILL - CONTINUOUS

A branch cracks in the distance. Charlotte hears it. She looks around, like an alerted animal.

Simon is a way off still, but she spies him crashing through the undergrowth towards her!

She sprints - in full flight.

CHASE SEQUENCE:

Cutting back and forth, we compare these two characters - the pursued and the pursuer.

- Charlotte runs skilfully around and over obstacles;
- Simon crashes through clumsily.
- Charlotte has a look of total focus and concentration as she moves;
- Simon blinks sweat out of his eyes, and his tongue lolls at the side of his mouth.
- Charlotte dodges an obstacle artfully;
- Simon snags his jacket and almost loses his balance.
- Charlotte's stride is small;
- Simon's stride is bigger and he's pummelling along.

Simon is catching up little by little!

Charlotte sees this as she looks over her shoulder.

EXT. DEEP FOREST, VALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Suddenly - unexpectedly - Charlotte runs over a cliff edge and falls - disappearing from view!

Crunching noises.

A beat. The forest is still.

Charlotte lies at the foot of a small drop into a valley with a babbling stream. Her body is still.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S HOME, BEDROOM - MORNING

YOUNG CHARLOTTE, a fourteen year old with black hair, is buried under her duvet. This is a cheaply furnished home.

FATHER, gruff and scruffy, enters her room. We don't see his face.

FATHER
Get up girl.

Charlotte moans sleepily.

FATHER
You've only got one life girl, and
this is it...

He pulls back the curtains.

FATHER (CONT'D)
... Don't fuck it up.

Father leaves, closes the door. Charlotte sits groggily up in bed.

INT. CHARLOTTE'S HOME, DINING ROOM - DAY

Charlotte and her father at the dining table.

Father is hidden behind his newspaper. Again we don't see his face.

Charlotte is eating soup.

FATHER
You take what you can get.

He picks up his mug of coffee. We still don't see his face.

FATHER (CONT'D)
Don't let the bastards get one
over, you hear.

INT. CHARLOTTE'S HOME, BEDROOM - DAY

Charlotte is crying. Father is gripping her left wrist and threatening her.

FATHER

Don't be a victim girl. Don't be a
victim all your life.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DEEP FOREST, VALLEY - CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS

Charlotte lying prone by the stream. Eyes closed.

FATHER (O.S.)

Don't be a victim girl.

Charlotte's eyes open.

She spots an ALCOVE in the valley side. Rolls and
scrambles over, hides herself as best she can.

Still as she can be. Listening. Vague noises from beyond.

A few metres upstream, Simon crosses the stream in the
valley. Charlotte dare not move.

Simon scrambles up the other side, and disappears from
view.

Charlotte notices some CRAWLING INSECTS sharing the
hiding place with her. She watches with simple curiosity
as one climbs over her hand.

After a moment, she creeps out and looks around.

Simon can't be seen. The forest is quiet.

She climbs back up the bank that she slipped down.

As she brushes herself down at the top of the valley
side, she turns...

And makes immediate eye contact with a second man,
ALASTAIR - at least as big as the first man - and not
more than a dozen metres away.

Alastair is as shocked as she is.

Charlotte starts sprint downhill, away from Alastair, in
full flight again.

ALASTAIR

Oyyyyyy!

Alastair in hot pursuit.

INT. DEEP FOREST, DOWNHILL - CONTINUOUS

Charlotte runs.

Alastair runs.

Simon runs.

The two men are converging behind her.

Charlotte is absolutely focused, running for her life.

Dodging under branches...

Leaping over logs...

Sliding dramatically down steeper slopes...

Bounding across uneven ground...

Disturbed BIRDS flap and scatter from the treetops...

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. CHARLOTTE'S HOME, BEDROOM - DAY

A brief but intense scene...

Father is gripping Charlotte's left wrist threateningly (as before). Charlotte is tearful, tousled hair in her face.

Something snaps into focus in her mind. With a sudden movement, she twists her wrist out of his grip, and grips his arm the same way she had her.

He looks shocked - and this is the first time we see his face. A rough looking man, doesn't look after himself.

She speaks, cold and calm.

CHARLOTTE
If you hit me, I shall hit you
back.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. DEEP FOREST, FOREST EDGE - CONTINUOUS WITH PREVIOUS

Charlotte runs across flatter ground.

There is a single lane forest road ahead, and she bursts onto it. Much faster running on road.

This road descends to meet a bigger road. A car whizzes past, headlights on as evening gathers.

Simon and Alastair burst out of the forest behind her continuing their pursuit...

... Charlotte runs straight across the road without looking.

A car passes behind her, horn blaring.

EXT. CAR PARK - CONTINUOUS

Charlotte emerges in a roadside carpark. There are a few cars still here. No people. Light dwindling to dusk.

She fumbles in her pocket as she runs. Finds a CAR KEY. Lifts it above her head, presses presses presses the remote unlock.

CHARLOTTE

Come on come on come on.

A CAR beeps and flashes in response, clunks unlocked. There are a few other cars nearby.

Charlotte runs over.

Her two pursuers are still at least a dozen or so metres behind. They have slowed, clearly exhausted.

Charlotte reaches the car, grabs the door handle...

A POLICEWOMAN appears beside her.

POLICEWOMAN

Not so fast missy.

Charlotte looks wildly around.

The two men are getting closer.

Another POLICEMAN is running over.

SIMON

(out of breath)

That's her... That's my car...
She's got my keys.

ALASTAIR

(panting, barely able to
speak)

... My wallet!

The Policeman arrives.

INT. POLICE CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Charlotte is locked in the back of a POLICE CAR.

Through the window, blurred into the background, the two men talk to the Policeman, explaining and gesturing.

Charlotte sinks into the car seat.

The engine starts, the car moves off.

Her eyes are steely and intense for a moment.
Inscrutable.

Then she closes them.

FADE OUT.

THE END.