

From This Side of Heaven

By Don Zolidis

CHASE, 17 (M) in a wheelchair.

FEVER, 17 (F) in a leg cast.

In the rehab room at a physical therapy center. At the opening of the scene CHASE and FEVER are both off-stage in wheelchairs.

CHASE (*off-stage from the right*)
You ready?

FEVER (*off-stage, from the left*)
Come at me, bro!

CHASE (*off-stage*)
One. Two. Three!
(*CHASE and FEVER, both in wheelchairs, wheel in as fast as they can, holding crutches like lances.*)

(*They charge.*)

FEVER
Don't hit my leg!
(*They hit each other. FEVER takes the worst of it.*)
Ow!

CHASE (*arms raised in triumph*)
Victory is mine!

FEVER
Am I thrown from my horse? No.

CHASE
Oh you want more. I see.
(*CHASE turns and chases her in his chair. FEVER tries to wheel away from him, but she's awkward and slow.*)

FEVER
Ah!
(*She jumps up from the chair as CHASE attacks. She stands awkwardly, puts too much weight on her bad leg, and falls over.*)
Arg! Dang it! Ow. Owwww.

CHASE

I win!

(FEVER is still on the ground.)

Did you hurt your leg?

FEVER

Yeah I broke it in like a million pieces. Oh you meant just now. It's hard to tell with the agonizing constant pain I'm in.

(CHASE gets out of his wheelchair and crawls towards her.)

What are you doing?

CHASE

I'm empathizing.

(He lays on the ground next to her, head-to-head.)

FEVER

You know Dr. Anna is going to come in here and she's gonna be like, they're both dead.

CHASE

It will make her day more interesting.

FEVER

That's nice.

CHASE

I'm always thinking of others.

(He lays next to her.)

Okay so here's something I was thinking. Death, right?

FEVER

Yes.

CHASE

How close were you to death?

FEVER

Like on a scale of one to ten, ten being almost certain –

CHASE

Yeah.

FEVER

I'd say I was a seven and a half. I fell off a third-story balcony.

CHASE

Whoah. How'd you do that?

FEVER

It's crazy. Okay – so – I have some friends in Omaha and they moved into this new place – on the third floor –

CHASE

Okay.

FEVER

And they had a balcony.

CHASE

I'm sensing danger.

FEVER

You think? So we were out on the balcony and I leaned against the railing – and it just gave way. Completely. Like I fell right off – I remember just seeing the sky and thinking... that's strange... and then I hit a tree branch – I remember getting like whipped from behind and then I hit the ground... when they built it, they had forgotten to attach the railing – like there were no screws, no nails, no nothing, it was just resting there and they put up the building so fast they didn't notice.

CHASE

You're kidding.

FEVER

Nope.

CHASE

Wow.

FEVER

So – seven and a half. I could've landed on my head. That would've been the end of me, or I could've missed the tree entirely – what about you?

CHASE

I think I'm probably a nine. You ever think – like – this is God's way of telling you something?

FEVER

Like what?

CHASE

I don't know – maybe – take it easy. Appreciate what you have.

FEVER

I was taking it easy. That's why I was leaning on the railing. If anything God is telling me to hyper-alert and never trust anything.

CHASE

You know what I mean.

FEVER

No – like why would He choose to do this? Why are you the person who deserves to have their legs taken away –

CHASE

And bladder function –

FEVER

I wasn't going there, but okay – that doesn't make sense. God doesn't punish you in life with hardship –

CHASE

God rewards you with hardship.

FEVER

I'm not buying that either.

CHASE

So get this – let's say I died and went to Heaven – and like in Heaven are all the people who got to Heaven before me – so I get there and it's full of all these dudes from the like the twelfth century or whatever – just chock full of medieval peasants and knights – and they've taken all the best real estate because they got there first, and – have you ever read about the Middle Ages? They basically spent all of their free time killing each other. So I'm Heaven with these total douchebags – and we don't really speak the same version of English, you know? So what am I gonna do?

FEVER

You know, I think that's probably the dumbest thought about Heaven anyone has ever had.

CHASE

But wouldn't that be crazy?

FEVER

Which is probably why God would like, foresee this problem, being that he is all-knowing and whatever, so there are probably different wings for medieval killers. Like – they're in the rough and tumble section of Heaven and you get to be in the idyllic pasture part of Heaven.

CHASE

Huh. I guess that makes sense. I think I would prefer to be in the wuss section.

FEVER

Any other questions about the afterlife you want me to answer?

CHASE

You figure I'll be able to walk?

FEVER

Probably.

CHASE

Just probably?

FEVER

If you've learned your lesson.

CHASE

What do you think my lesson is?

FEVER

What do *you* think your lesson is?

CHASE

Maybe there's no lesson.

FEVER

Don't fall asleep while driving might be a good one.

CHASE

Yeah... Now I know. Thank you life-altering injury.

FEVER

You're insane.

CHASE

Yes.

(CHASE reaches back and messes with FEVER's face.)

FEVER

Ah!

CHASE *(joking)*

So beautiful.

(FEVER starts stroking his face.)

FEVER

What's going on here? What is this? These are problem areas.

Hey – I've fallen, and I can't get up.

CHASE