

THE CALL  
(Short Film)

by

Kevin Li

Email: [Li\\_mentality@hotmail.com](mailto:Li_mentality@hotmail.com)

© Kevin Li, 2009

FADE IN:

1. EXT. Hotel - NIGHT - ESTABLISHING

Tall expensive Hotel next to some smaller hotels. The hotel has approximately 40 levels of apartments.

2. INT. HOTEL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Inside, there is a small kitchen area with one bedroom and a study desk with a chair. There is a view from the bedroom window that overlooks the bright lights of the city. Throwing his clothes on the bed is the tall, dark and handsome man, CARTER JAMES, 21. He puts on a silver necklace with the symbol C.J on it then grabs his mobile phone and sends a text to confirm the details for the night with his friends. He puts down his phone and then receives a call from a private number. He answers the phone.

CARTER  
Hello, who's this?

He starts to change his clothes while talking on the phone.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
(Shocked)  
April? Oh my god, It's been years since we spoke. How have you been?

There is a sign of disbelief on Carter's face.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
Don't tell me that you're still mad at me for what I said to you years ago when we were still together? I just can't believe it's really you.

Carter stands by his window as he watches the cars drive by in the city.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
Well, how sick are you?  
(Worried)  
I don't understand how you could have gotten this sick. Is there a chance that I might also get this as well? I don't want my life to end anytime soon.

He goes through his drawls and finds a picture of them two together at a party years ago.

CARTER (CONT'D)

(Concerned)

I don't know what to say. You only have a few more days left? This is just ludicrous. Never, have I known anyone who's been in your situation. Why did you leave me out of the blue?

Carter has now finished dressing. He is wearing jeans and a nice formal top.

I loved you so much and it seemed to take an eternity to get over you. All my dreams have come true but it never felt right without you here with me.

CARTER (CONT'D)

(Surprised/Angry)

No, no, tell me this can't be true. There is no way that is true. How could this happen and you never told me? Fuck, fuck, I can't believe this. So that's why you left? How could you keep this from me?

(Furious)

I would've been too young to deal with it in my life? Damn right I was and I still am. I can't have this budding into everything that I've worked so hard to get. You leave me, then call up years after and tell me about this? I just cannot have this big distraction in my life. What do you want me to say? This isn't fair at all.

Carter walks around the room furious and kicks a chair out of frustration.

CARTER (CONT'D)

(Looks up at the ceiling)

Kill me, this cannot be happening to me right now. Do you even have the decency to tell me his name and his age?

(Angry)

Bryce? Are you fucking kidding me?  
(MORE)

CARTER (CONT'D)

How dare you name him after my grandfather? What gives you the right after what you did to me? He's 4 years old. And you wait until the last minute to tell me about him? What do you mean it's either me or a foster home? How am I supposed to react to this huh? I just cannot take care of him, please understand.

(Surprised)

What? Why would you even send him here? I don't want to break the little guy's heart. You know when I was a kid, my dad treated me like shit. I don't want to do that to him as well.

(Now calm)

The responsibility is just too much for me, April just tell him to head back. Plea-

Before Carter could say please, April hangs up the phone. Carter lies down on his bed trying to congest all the information.

3. INT. HOTEL FRONT RECEPTION - NIGHT

In Reception there is a counter with a chair and some plants in the background. Sitting at reception is CLAUDE, 18 years old, watching a show on a small television.

4. EXT/INT. HOTEL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Little boy BRYCE, 4 years old, gets out of a taxi and walks into the hotel.

5. INT. HOTEL FRONT RECEPTION - NIGHT

Claude leans over the counter as Bryce approaches.

CLAUDE

Hey lil guy, can I help you? Are you lost?

BRYCE

(Shy)

I'm here to see my daddy. Mummy told me his name was Carter.

CLAUDE  
                  (Shocked)  
Carter?  
                  (Laughing)  
Oh kid, get out of here, I got no  
time for these stupid pranks.  
Who sent you? Was it George?  
Oh he's soooo dead. Go on now, get  
going.

EXTREME CLOSE UP - On Bryce's face.

Bryce starts to cry.

Claude tries to calm Bryce down before someone hears.

                          CLAUDE (CONT'D)  
Oh come on kid, you can't seriously  
be for real? Alright relax, I will  
call him to see if he knows  
anything about this.  
What is your name lil man?

Claude picks up the phone and dials Carters number. Bryce  
wipes away his tears.

                          BRYCE  
My name is Bryce

Claude calls Carter's home phone while Bryce stands still.

6. INT. HOTEL APARTMENT - NIGHT

Carter gets up from the bed and walks towards the kitchen  
where the home phone is. He picks it up.

7. INT. HOTEL FRONT RECEPTION - NIGHT

                          CLAUDE  
Hello Carter, its Claude from  
reception.  
                  (Laughing)  
We seem to have a little boy called  
Bryce here who says you're his  
father.

INTERCUT BETWEEN CLAUDE and CARTER

                          CARTER  
                  (Long pause)  
Shit, that must be him.

Claude moves further inside the reception area, so Bryce cannot hear the conversation.

CLAUDE  
(Surprised)  
No way! He can't possibly be yours  
Carter, could he?

CARTER  
It looks like it, Claude.  
I seriously don't know what I  
am going to do.

CLAUDE  
(Aggressive)  
You can't do this to yourself  
Carter. You're living it up right  
now and if you go through with  
this, one day when your old, you  
will regret this decision.  
You've worked so hard to get to  
where you are right now.  
For God's sakes, I look up to you.

CARTER  
I know what you're saying Claude  
and it's not fair that I only heard  
about Bryce today but his mum is  
going to die soon and he will be  
alone and after all, he is my son.

Carter picks up a photograph of him and his mother.

CARTER (CONT'D)  
It's just that I know what it's  
like to go through life not having  
a father that cared for you.

CLAUDE  
Now come on, Carter, pull yourself  
together. Don't you remember what  
you told me on my first day?

CARTER  
(Reminiscing)  
I saw you with your girlfriend and  
I asked you if you were using  
condoms. You said sometimes, I  
told you that you're best to use  
them all the time because...

CARTER/CLAUDE  
once you get a kid your whole life  
is over.

CLAUDE

Exactly sir. You see, your life would be over, no more going out every night. There would be a strict no drinking policy because there's a kid with you and you just won't be able to do all the exciting things you normally do because you have to baby sit. Do you really want that life at such a young age?

CARTER

(Convinced)

You're right, Claude. I've been through too much shit for it to be all in vain. Thank you, Claude for knocking me back into the real world. I'm just way too young to have the pressure of a child in my busy life schedule.

CLAUDE

Plus you don't even know the kid, could not even be yours. So you want me to tell the kid to fuck off?

CARTER

No that won't be necessary. I will come down and tell him myself. Just tell him to keep tight and I'll be there soon.

8. INT. HOTEL FRONT RECEPTION - NIGHT

CLAUDE

As you wish, sir.

Claude leans over the counter once more to talk to Bryce

CLAUDE (CONT'D)

Alright he's going to be here but let me just warn you right now.

(Angrily)

You better not try anything stupid or else, okay?

Bryce stands there scared and doesn't say a word.

9. INT. LOBBY ELEVATOR/HOTEL FRONT RECEPTION - NIGHT

Carter enters from the elevator. As Carter passes, Claude gives him a fist pump to his chest.

CLAUDE  
(Proudly)  
Stay strong

Carter walks by and gives Claude a fist pump back. Carter now stands face-to-face with Bryce.

CARTER  
So you must be, Bryce? I'm Carter.  
(Calm)  
Sooooooo apparently you're my son.

BRYCE  
Mummy said you would be taller

CARTER  
Haha, well maybe I've shrunk a little.  
(Condescending)  
I'm sorry to break the bad news to you in this way buddy, but I can't take care of you. At least not right now. It's just... It's just I can't.

Bryce starts to cry.

BRYCE  
You don't want to be my daddy?

Carter kneels down.

BRYCE (CONT'D)  
(Upset)  
Please don't leave me, I don't want to be alone anymore. Mummy told me that you would take care of me. I don't want to be alone.

CARTER  
(Carter stands)  
Hey look buddy, life is hard and is an eternal struggle. You're best to learn it right now then later on in your life when not everything is going as planned. Now go on, someday you will thank me for this.

Carter walks away while Bryce stands there crying. Bryce runs to Carter and clings onto him.

BRYCE

No, don't go daddy. You're the only thing I have left in this world.

CARTER'S POV- Freeze frame at Carter turning around and looking at Bryce.

CARTER (V.O.)

Daddy? That's me? I'm a dad?

(Smiling)

I'm a dad. Haha, listen to myself, why do I suddenly feel weird. I know why, it's because I'm a dad.

(Serious)

Look at him. I'm a daddy. I'm his daddy. I'm a dad.

(Curious)

Only thing I have left in this world? It couldn't be that April still remembers, could it?

Carter looks down at his necklace.

FLASHBACK- 5 years ago

10. EXT. PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

A beautiful young girl wearing a hooded jacket and tracksuit pants, APRIL, 16. She is sitting on top of a dark & handsome young, CARTER, 16. He is wearing a jumper and torn jeans. They sit on the playground swings and Carter is holding April tightly as they gently sway side-to-side on the swings. April looks up and notices a tall building far away.

APRIL (YOUNG)

Do you ever wonder how much money those people make in that building, a day?

CARTER (YOUNG)

Probably more then we make a year.

APRIL (YOUNG)

Oh that reminds me.

(Reaches into her pocket)

I got this for you.

April gives Carter a necklace that has the symbols C.J on it.

APRIL (YOUNG) (CONT'D)  
I know it isn't nothing special,  
but it's the best I could get with  
money I make.

CARTER  
You are the best you know that?  
Thank you so much.

April looks at the building again.

APRIL (YOUNG)  
I wonder if they ever notice people  
like us.

CARTER (YOUNG)  
What, low life's who live in the  
slums?

APRIL (YOUNG)  
(Punches Carter)  
No idiot, as in people who have got  
the talent to make it in the real  
world but don't have the money or  
publicity to be exposed.

CARTER (YOUNG)  
(Sarcastically)  
Yer, it's called Idol and So you  
think you can dance.

APRIL (YOUNG)  
Yer, but they've got a really good  
background story like "they've been  
diagnosed with a disease and  
survived it as a child". Stuff like  
that. What have we got? Grew up  
in an ordinary neighbourhood where  
nothing ever really happens.

CARTER (YOUNG)  
And you don't think that's a good  
enough background? Us being poor  
all our lives and having to wear  
the same clothes all the time?

APRIL (YOUNG)  
Probably, how would I know?

CARTER (YOUNG)  
Poverty is a joke to people who  
have never experienced it.  
(MORE)

CARTER (YOUNG) (CONT'D)  
Rich people just pretend like we don't exist because they don't want to know that one day they're all going to end up just like us. They know the inevitable is going to happen sooner or later. When I'm older, I'm going to be a millionaire and shower poor people with money. But right now you're the only thing I have left in this world and I'm with you, everything feels right. We'll just have to wait until our time comes. Nothing is going to hold us back from our dreams. Nothing.

Carter looks up at the building with a grin while April stares down faintly at her stomach.

APRIL (YOUNG)  
(Worried)  
Yerp, nothing...

END FLASHBACK

Carter turns to Bryce.

CARTER  
Bryce, who told you that?

BRYCE  
Mummy used to always say it to me before I went to sleep.

CARTER  
(Shocked)  
That's what I used to say to her. I can't believe this. She still remembers.

BRYCE  
Mummy said that I would meet my daddy today and everything would be alright because he would take care of me.

Claude is shown in the background crossing his arms. Carter puts his hands on Bryce's shoulders then hugs him. Carter notices that there is a note inside Bryce's pocket. He takes the note out.

CARTER  
(Opens the note)  
What's this?

APRIL (V.O.)

Dear Carter, I hope this all doesn't shock you too much. This was the reason I left you 4 years ago. I saw that you had so many dreams and I knew that if you were to take care of Bryce that it would destroy those dreams. Someday I was going to come back but the distractions of my illness prevented it. I'd been reading the newspaper and seen the type of person you've become. If you are reading this I just want to remind of the things you said you'd do when you became rich, you seemed to have lost your way somewhere along the track and forgot what you fought so hard for. Just remember that there is people who are lower then you and don't let poverty become a joke to you as well. You now have probably met Bryce. He looks just like you. He's also smarter then he looks, must have got it from you. Anyway I hope you take care of him because he should be with his father. I'm sorry to bring this up all of a sudden but he needs you. I will always love you, Take care Carter. Love April.

CARTER

Hey Bryce, I'm sorry that I haven't been part of your life. Truth is, I couldn't deal with being a parent back then and probably right now. But when I think of how I grew up with only my mum taking care of me, I remembered telling myself to never let that happen to my children. And if your mother was willing to trust and believe in me to parent you, then I might as well give it a try. I owe it to her.

CARTER (CONT'D)

(Hugs Bryce)

Come on buddy, I've waited way too long to miss out on this opportunity. Let's go find your mum.

Bryce and Carter start to walk outside. Claude stands there astonished.

                  CLAUDE  
          (Angrily)  
But sir, What happened to being  
strong?

                  CARTER  
          (looks back and laughs)  
Oh Claude, get a life

Claude looks in disbelief as Carter and Bryce walk out the door.

THE END