

Splendour

by
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EXT. CATALINA ISLAND, CALIFORNIA.

Dusk.

An Orange and blue horizon lingers above calm, deep waters of a harbor. The Sun takes one last jab at the darkness before retreating below the blanket of the now clear horizon that glimmers with the shyness of a few dimly lit stars.

The moon is beaming with full magic. It's soft white glow illuminates the boats as they sit like swans on top of gently rolling waves.

OS: A grumbling, low revving inboard motor is heard

A beautiful yacht slowly cruises into view. It's white colored siding is reflected in the water, as its bilge pump ejects a steam of water from a small hole into a glowing, ghostly white image of itself as it plies along the otherwise black water.

The yacht belongs to Robert Wagner and his wife Natalie Wood, on board with them is Christopher Walken, Natalie's co-star in a movie she's filming and the yacht's Captain Dennis Davern, a good friend of Natalie and Robert.

(On bottom of screen, white, type written words appear:)

NOVEMBER, 1981. THANKSGIVING WEEKEND.

Robert stands at the bow and looks over his shoulder and sees his wife, Natalie approaching, he then looks up at the pilot house, placing both his hands on the side of his mouth as a makeshift megaphone.

ROBERT

looks good! Let's anchor here tonight!

Natalie is seen approaching Robert on the bow. The moonlight places emphasis on her short, white robe. She holds a drink and tipsily walks toward him, as she takes a sip from her martini glass.

NATALIE

Why are you not inside with our guest?

ROBERT

He's your guest, not mine.

Natalie stares at Robert as she takes another sip from her glass, then stumbles into the railing, her body bends at her waist, her glass falls into to the water, Robert grabs her robe by the collar. He takes a deep breath as he stands behind her, his arm is straight, rigid, in control.

ROBERT(SOFT, MENACING VOICE)

You're damn lucky I was here.

Natalie's eyes shift to something behind Robert.

Robert maintains his grip.

OS: FOOT STEPS, SOMEONE IS
APPROACHING.

A SILOUHETTED FIGURE SPEAKS.

SILHOUETE: (CHRISTOPHER'S VOICE)
Everything alright?

ROBERT MAINTAINS (SOFTLY SPEAKS)
Yeah. We're good.

Cautiously, Christopher walks up to Natalie and Robert-
Natalie's arms are tightly folded across her chest as she
stares at Robert, she dangles a martini Glass in one hand.

CHRISTOPHER
You two alright?

Natalie looks back at Christopher, a tempting, flirtatious
smile appears, Robert glares at Natalie. His voice, a low,
vicious growl, is peppered with jealousy.

ROBERT
She's drunk. As usual.

Like a bull ready to charge, Robert emits a non verbal
warning, he huffs through his nose one time, as he fixates
his eyes on Christopher.

Natalie slaps Robert on his face, and readies for another
slap, but Robert grabs her wrist before she can strike him.

ROBERT (CONDESCENDING TONE)
Go to bed. Sleep it off, Honey.

NATALIE
Okay, Father. Maybe I will!

Natalie stammers as she walks away, Taunting Robert by
brushing into him like a bar fighter looking to ignite a
spark that will turn into fire, but she bounces off Robert's
tall, rigid, sturdy frame and falls into Christopher,
clutching his waist. Her head is pressed midway between his
stomach and groin, She looks up at Christopher and smiles
with girlish delight, and teasingly glances at Robert.

ROBERT (UNDER HIS BREATH)
Yeah. Go to bed, but this time, not
with your co-star.

NATALIE
Jealous. Again.

Robert stares at Natalie, his eyes widen, Christopher pulls
Natalie places his hands under Natalie's arms and lifts her

up, nervously checking Robert as he begins to walk toward his wife and a man that innocently is holding her in his arms.

CHRISTOPHER

I think we should go inside. Settle down for the night.

NATALIE (SLURRED SPEECH)

I think, MY GUEST, has a great idea!

Natalie taps Christopher on his mouth with a finger. Anger builds inside of Robert, his chest expands as he restrains huge cloud of anger inside of himself that is ready to burst. A long, heavy sigh is released as Robert speaks through his gritted teeth.

ROBERT

Can't keep your hands off him, can you? Can't keep your hands off anyone.

NATALIE (WHISPY VOICE)

Fuck you.

Robert coldly glances at Christopher. We see Robert's right hand suddenly tighten, a fist is made, Christopher notices.

CHRISTOPHER

Rob, We're good. We're good. Nothing's going on.

ROBERT

There's always something going on.

CHRISTOPHER

C'mon, Robert. Natalie and I just work together. There isn't anything going on between us. Nothing.

ROBERT

Yeah. Sure. Nothing.

Christopher and Natalie look at one another, their expressions are clearly nervous and worried. Robert grabs Natalie by her arm, and leads her away. She looks back at Christopher, like a princess wanting to be rescued before she is taken away and locked in a dungeon.

Christopher watches as Natalie gives in to her captors strength as he takes her into a side door and out of sight.

Christopher walks to the bow of the yacht, resting his arms on the railing. He sighs and looks down at the moon's reflection in the water as it bobs along surface of the water.

O.S.

Robert and Natalie are heard arguing. The words are unintelligible, their voices get louder as they attempt to shout over one another.

The Captain of the Splendour, Dennis Davern, has walked down from the pilot house and stands next to Christopher. They both stand and look at the water, waiting for the arguing to stop. The arguing continues in the background, and some slaps are heard followed by Natalie crying, a door slams shut and something crashes into it.

OS: Natalie's voice is heard:

NATALIE

You bastard!

Christopher shakes his head.

CHRISTOPHER

Do they fight like that a lot?

CAPTAIN DAVERN

It seems to happen more times than not when they are on this boat.

CHRISTOPHER

I think he's kind of a jealous guy, and it's not the alcohol.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

He has his moments, but we all do, right? And besides, look at her. She's an extremely attractive woman. You'd have to be a strong man to accept all the attention she gets from men.

CHRISTOPHER

That might be true, but I wasn't, I mean, her and I weren't-We haven't done anything. We're just working together on a movie. That's all.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Well, maybe you are, and she is who she is, and then there's Robert. I think he believes Natalie is cheating on him.

Christopher looks at Captain Davern.

CHRISTOPHER

Well, I don't believe that she would.

O.S. Robert and Natalie begin arguing again.

Christopher stares at Dennis, waiting for a reply.

CHRISTOPHER

Well?

Dennis looks at Christopher, directly in his eyes.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

To be honest, they're always men.

Dennis and Christopher stand facing each-other for a moment, Dennis places his hands on Christopher's shoulders as he speaks to him in a fatherly tone.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Whatever you see, and what ever you hear while on this yacht?

(Beat)

OS: Robert and Natalie are heard yelling, but it suddenly stops. A door is slammed shut.

CHRISTOPHER

Yes?

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Nothing is taken to shore. Understand?

CHRISTOPHER

Understood. I promise.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Good.

Dennis lets his hands drop from Christopher's shoulders as thumping sounds are heard from inside one of the cabins.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

I better get in there and get those two to cool off.

CHRISTOPHER

If you need help let me know.

Christopher watches Dennis walk along side of the yacht, and can hear him pounding on the door as he tries to get Robert and Natalie's attention. He hears Dennis shout loudly, and the arguing stops.

CAPTAIN DAVERN (V.O.)

Alright! Alright! Let me in there!

Christopher slowly walks on the main deck toward the windows that give him a brief view of what's happening inside. He stands momentarily and can see Natalie, she's struggling to stand upright as she tries to twist her robe's belt into a secure knot around her waist, her speech is slurred, she loses her balance and falls backward onto a built in sofa, but manages to point a shaky finger at Robert.

NATALIE

He's jealous. Again! And maybe
should be! Ha-ha!

Robert lunges at Natalie, but Dennis pushes him back with
enough force that he slams against the wall.

ROBERT

You little slut!

Natalie giggles with pride as she looks at Robert.

Dennis looks out the window and sees Christopher standing
there and nods for him to walk away. Christopher obliges and
takes a couple of steps backward, kicking an empty beer can
as does. Robert and Natalie look the direction, of the tin
can being kicked, but quickly return to their jousting.

INT. THE SPLENDOUR - MAIN CABIN - HAZY - YELLOW ROOM LIGHT

The interior cabin is messy, a broken lamp is seen, a torn
pillow and beside it, an empty bottle of vodka.

We see Dennis from the back, he stands between Natalie and
Robert, his arms stretched out completely as Robert and
Natalie take turns testing his ability to keep them
separated. His arms buckle with each charge they take at one
another, they're chest's heaving from anger and adrenalin,
punctuated with very heavy breaths.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

You two are paying me to be the
Captain, not a referee! So, I'm
going to take up the anchor and
head back to Marina Del Ray. I
don't want to be responsible for
anyone going overboard.

ROBERT POINTS AT NATALIE

ROBERT

Girl overboard!

Robert laughs at his own joke.

NATALIE

You're pathetic. And insecure.

ROBERT

Huh.yeah? Why is it you only invite
men onto our yacht?

NATALIE

Because I'm nice, and I want them to
meet you!

ROBERT

I doubt that honey.

NATALIE

You're an Ass!

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Okay! Okay! That's enough. You both need to rest. Robert, why don't you stay here in the main cabin tonight, and Natalie, I'll walk you back to one of the guest cabins.

Robert and Natalie exchange evil glares.

ROBERT (UNDER HIS BREATH)

She'll be in a guest cabin alright.

NATALIE

Like you haven't been.

Natalie gives Robert the middle finger as she teeters back and forth while she walks out of the main cabin with Dennis holding her upright as best he can while grabbing the door handle, closing it as he and Natalie leave.

We see Robert standing, with clenched fists at his side, he looks down at the broken lamp, once the door is completely shut, and then:

"THUMP"

Something heavy was thrown, smashing up against the door from the inside, the hard pieces crashing together in pieces onto the floor.

Dennis stops for a moment, looks back at the door and closes his eyes.

CAPTAIN DAVERN (SOFTLY)

Lord. Let us make through this night. It's going to be a rough one.

He does a quick hail Mary and exhales and continues to guide Natalie's half rigid body into a guest cabin.

INT. GUEST CABIN - DIM LIGHT

The cabin very clean, the bed is neatly made with hospital corners. Two oversized pillows lay at the head of the bed, between them is a brown and white teddy bear. Natalie looks at it and smiles. Her voice is clear, unpolluted from alcohol as she speaks.

NATALIE

Aww. My son's teddy bear. Dennis, hand it to me please.

Dennis guides Natalie to the side of the bed, he lets go of Natalie and reaches for the bear, Natalie's only upright for a couple of seconds before she flops backward onto the bed, her head bounces one time then turns to one side, her eyes

close.

Dennis lifts up her feet and swings her body around and places the Teddy Bear up next one her shoulder's, he folds her arm over the Teddy Bear and turns off the light as he exits the room.

INT: THE SPLENDOUR - OUTSIDE NATALIE'S ROOM

Dennis stands up against the door, he closes his eyes as he deeply inhales and exhales three times to calm himself.

CAPTAIN DAVERN
Finally. Peace, and quiet.

O.S. Footsteps are heard as someone approaches Dennis.

CAPTAIN DAVERN
God dammit.

The footsteps have stopped, Dennis opens his eyes and sees Christopher standing in front of him.

CHRISTOPHER
Everything alright?

Dennis nods his head up and down as he replies.

CAPTAIN DAVERN
Yes.

CHRISTOPHER
Seperate rooms?

CAPTAIN DAVERN
Yes.Nothing unusual about that.

CHRISTOPHER
We're heading back tomorrow, right?

Dennis nods his head up and down as he steps away from the door, he walks up to Christopher, places his hands on Christopher's shoulders while looking back at Natalie's cabin, then toward Robert's.

CAPTAIN DAVERN
Unless-

(Beat)

Christopher looks to his left and right, then stares at Dennis. Dennis's eyes are bloodshot, his eyelids close as he speaks to Christopher in a somber tone.

CAPTAIN DAVERN
Unless. They start drinking again.

CHRISTOPHER
You want me to stay down here?

CAPTAIN DAVERN

No. Just go back to your cabin. Go to bed, and hope for the best.

CHRISTOPHER

I don't have a problem staying here, or even watching Robert if you want me too.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

No. That might be a death wish tonight. Just go back to your cabin, get some sleep and we'll head back in the morning. They'll be sober, and everything will be alright.

CHRISTOPHER

Okay. You know them better than I do, but man, if you need any help, you better come and get me.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Yes. I will do that.

Christopher exhales and nods his head, he turns around and walks away from Dennis. Dennis watches Christopher enters his cabin that's situated about half way between Natalie and Robert.

CAPTAIN DAVERN (SPEAKING TO SELF)

Full time Captain. Part time referee.

Dennis looks at his watch, we can see 10:45 on the dial.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

I'd better get up to the bridge and check the charts.

EXT: MAIN DECK - NIGHT TIME- BRIGHT MOONLIGHT

Dennis stands on the main deck and looks up at the Moon, the silvery light shines down on him and creates an elongated shadow as he walks along the bow to check the side rails and head back toward the steps that lead up to the bridge.

INT: SPLENDOUR - THE PILOT'S HOUSE

Dennis sits down in the captain's chair and places his feet on the steering wheel. He leans back and places his hands behind his neck and closes his eyes.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

I need this moment.

The gentle rocking of the yacht lulls Dennis to sleep, the ships gentle sway is punctuated with soft taps from the ships bell as it touches the inside of it's brass housing.

The shoreline of Catalina Island is dappled with yellow and white lights from the businesses and houses that dot the shoreline, The Splendour, all 60 feet of it can be seen from the side, its long white hull reflecting in the rolling, rippled surface of the Pacific Ocean.

In one of the staterooms, a light is turned on, it's harshness beams through the small round window.

As the yacht follows the rhythm of the waves, it's bell begins to ring louder with each passing crest from a passing boat in the distance.

(Beat)

The bell rings twice.

INT. CHRISTOPHER'S ROOM-ROOM LIGHT

Christopher sits on the edge of his bed, his hands clasped together and resting on his knees.

CHRISTOPHER
I've got to do something. This
isn't a good situation.

O.S.

Robert and Natalie can be heard arguing, their voices and words are muffled from the walls of their yacht.

INT. SPLENDOUR'S WALKWAY-VERY DIM LIGHT

Christopher's door opens slightly, he steps outside his room, keeping his hand on the door knob as Natalie and Robert begin to walk toward his room. He focuses on Natalie, she doesn't look anything like the beautiful movie star the public sees, or knows her to be.

Natalie's dark brown hair is messy, her mascara has run down her face, there's dark circles under her eyes, her body is trembling, and the drink she holds is cusped between her hands as if she were holding something valuable.

Natalie looks at Christopher, but her glance is empty.

CHRISTOPHER
You two okay?

Natalie takes a sip from her glass and walks past Christopher. Robert looks at Christopher's hand as it rests on the door knob.

ROBERT
Yeah. We're good. Go back to bed.

Christopher watches as Robert and Natalie walk by, they stop at another room and Robert opens the door for Natalie, after she walks in Robert looks back at Christopher with a cold

stare then enters the room.

CHRISTOPHER
It's not my business.

Christopher waits for a moment.

(Beat)

O.S. The yacht's bell rings.

Christopher steps back inside his room, we see his door close from the outside, and hear it locked.

INT: CHRISTOPHER'S ROOM

Christopher lays on top of his bed, resting with his arms clasped behind his head, he stares up at the ceiling.

The yacht's bell can be heard once more.

CHRISTOPHER
That bell isn't going to be enough.

Next to his bed is a night stand with a radio on it, he turns on his side and turns the radio on, he dials through some stations and stops when he hears an Eagle's song.

CHRISTOPHER
Yeah.. That'll work.

As Christopher closes his eyes and wades into the melody of the song, he softly sings the lyrics.

CHRISTOPHER
The full moon is calling...the
fever is high..

The music fades as Christopher turns to one side and falls to sleep.

Screen fades to black.

O.S. Someone knocks on a door, the knocking is rapid, they stop only to turn the handle of the door wildly, jiggling it trying to get inside.

INT: CHRISTOPHER'S ROOM

Christopher is laying in bed, but awakens at the sounds coming from his door. He gets out of bed and unlocks his door and sticks head out to see who's there. He looks left and right. Nobody is around, but he can hear Natalie and Robert arguing again, he shakes his head back and forth and sighs. He closes his door and steps back inside his cabin, he looks at the bright red numbers on his clock: we see a small brown clock radio, it's numbers separated by flashing colons.

3:48

CHRISTOPHER

Damn. This is some crazy shit.

Christopher sits on his bed, he can't help but notice the escalation of the of the quarreling husband and wife, as they get louder, he turns up his radio to distract himself from the volatile situation from a nearby room.

EXT: THE SPLENDOUR- PILOT HOUSE - OVERCAST - MOONLIGHT

Captain Davern is awake and has begun to walk down the steps to check on his passengers when he hears Natalie and Robert arguing on the aft of the yacht. He stops midway and walks back up the steps and watches them from inside his room.

The moon's light is diminished due to thin, wispy clouds, but he can see Natalie and Robert, their dark figures and animated gestures as they speak can be seen even without it's full glow.

Their voices are faint, and soon stop as they stop and walkaway from each other. Natalie's figure walks away first, she approaches the port side of the Splendour while Robert walks toward the starboard.

Captain Davern, his hands placed together, looks upward.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Thank God. They went separate ways.
Finally, peace.

Captain Davern lays on his bed and quickly falls to sleep. The instrument lighting pastes the captains room with a blue, haunting pastel color. His body and face are washed in dark and white lighting from a re-emerging moon as it attempts to give it's last appearance before the warming glow of he morning sun recaptures the day.

INT. SPLENDOUR - PILOT HOUSE

Following Morning, Captain Davern is being shaken awake by Robert.

ROBERT

She's gone! Dennis! She's gone!

Captain Davern is groggy, but he sits upright, rubs his eyes as he tries to shake off his sleepiness. He stands up and rushes over to the window and looks down toward the front of the Splendour. His arms are rigid, like bulldog, they're locked at his elbows, he turns his head to his right, and then left. We see his arms buckle as he exhales. He turns around, face is pale, his eyes filled with intensity.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

It's gone.

ROBERT (FRANTIC)

What do you mean it's gone?! She's gone!

Robert runs toward the window and looks to his left and right, but doesn't see anything out of place. He turns around at shrugs his shoulders in frustration, his voice cracks as he speaks.

ROBERT

What?! What's Gone?!

Captain Davern rushes toward the window, he raises his arm and points toward the port side.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

The life boat. It's gone!

Robert looks out the window and sees two ropes dangling from two posts where the life boat should be.

ROBERT

Shit.

Captain Davern begins to start the engines, Robert rushes over and turns the key. The engines stop.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

What the hell!?!

ROBERT

We can't leave!

Robert pulls the key out of the ignition and clutches it in his hand, and hides it behind his back. Captain Davern shakes his head, anxiety and anger fill his voice and he attempts to take the key from Robert, Robert pushes him back, he trips over the base of the chair, and falls backward into the wall, and sits there as Robert hulks over him. Robert yanks Captain Davern up by his shirt, and pulls him close to his face, as he menacingly barks out an order.

ROBERT

Keep quiet. Don't say a damn thing to anyone. Ever.

Robert pushes Captain Davern away and exits the Pilot house with the key in his hand. Captain Davern walks over to the Yacht's Radio while watching Robert walking to the aft and stand there, covering his face with his hands, then wiping them downward over it.

Close up: Captain Davern as he holds mic close to his mouth.

CAPTAIN DAVERN

Splendour to base, we have a missing person. Repeat, missing person. Copy?

The base operator's voice calmly replies.

BASE OPERATOR (FEMALE VOICE)
Roger that Splendour. Missing
person. Unit being dispatched.

Captain continues watching Robert as he begins to mill
around in tight circles before walking to the starboard side
of the yacht.

CAPTAIN DAVERN
10-4 base. Ship is idle.

BASE OPERATOR
Roger that. 10-4.

Captain Davern hangs the receiver on a small silver hook,
then walks out of the pilot house and down the metal stairs,
each step fades as he disappears from our view.

OS: We hear the Splendour's bell chime twice.

The End.