

FEAR OF FALLING

A monologue by Rebecca Kane

Rebecca Kane
kane.rebecca.b@gmail.com
(561) 843-0969
31-11 12th St.
Astoria, NY 11106

Cast of Characters

ALICIA: Woman in her 30s-ish, any race, put-together and stylish.

Setting:

An ice skating rink

Time:

January 2021-ish

[We can only see the front of ALICIA as she comes into view – first just her unsteady foot, followed by an unsure hand, all outstretched, anticipating the worst. As soon as she’s fully into view, she nearly falls almost immediately, but catches herself at the last possible second on the wall.]

ALICIA:

No, I’m fine. Don’t bother helping.

[It takes a hot minute to steady herself upright on the ice.]

Seriously, no need to rush.

[Once she’s upright, she looks down at her outfit.]

No big deal, falling. I only wore Chanel.

[Once she starts creeping along the wall, pulling herself along at a snail’s pace, her sarcasm and stiffness fade just a bit.]

So to be fair, I know you’re probably wondering, why the hell would someone wear Chanel to an ice skating rink? Also, why the hell would someone who clearly has no balance spend her free time there? Also, how did she get her hair so shiny and healthy-looking even in the dead of winter? All amazing questions.

Answer number one: it’s never the wrong time for Chanel. Number two: why am I, a person with no balance here, on the ice? Actually, I can walk better in five inch heels than most New Yorkers can in Sketchers. So I didn’t initially think it would be a problem. It turns out it’s not quite the same when that heel is spread out in a blade form across the whole shoe. Also I take a lot of Ubers in the winter so I’m not used to the slippery ground.

And number three: keratin treatments.

For the record, this is going better than the last time I was here. Which was going better than the first time. It might not be saying much. But I’m saying something, at least. Instead of, you know, ghosting.

[She was moving a bit too fast along the wall and almost lost some grip. She steadies herself, catches her breath.]

I made a few New Year’s resolutions. I know, I know. Me and the rest of the world. I tried to be a little different about it. Like I didn’t just say I would exercise more, I said I would try new things instead of the same barre class Tuesdays and Thursdays with hot yoga on Saturdays and every other Wednesday.

I also said I would take fewer Ubers. That one didn’t really pan out. I guess neither is this.

And lastly, I said I would really try to connect with someone in New York City, outside of work. I thought I was like, really doing great in the city, and then I had a birthday party but only my

roommates came. And they just took cake and left. I can't blame them. It was from Milk Bar. So yeah, I got my own Milk Bar cake for my 30th birthday. To be fair, I'm used to it. I've been getting my own cake each year since I moved here. Which was eight years ago.

So one of the days I went to Sweetgreen for lunch, I sat and made a list of what I want in a friend. Or a boyfriend. Or anyone. I started out with this really long list, like, they had to want to get mani pedis, and they had to love pugs, and they couldn't be a Pisces rising because I just couldn't handle that. But then at the end, I also made a note that said it would be nice if someone smiled a lot. I don't know why, but I circled that one really quick before I went back to work. And I found someone who fit that one – the circled one – but not really anything else. But it was honestly okay. More than okay.

He was from my Saturday hot yoga class and he was the only person there I talked to. I stopped trying to make friends there after I heard some girls in the locker room saying I had resting bitch face. Which is true, but no need to say it after we all just told each other “Namaste” like ten minutes ago. It's not my fault this is my face and the natural arch of my eyebrow.

So he came up to me, with his man-bun, and I thought he was going to tell me something about needing to look harder for my inner peace, but instead he just said he liked my headband. Which had roses on it. I couldn't believe anyone was just being nice to me in there, so like a total idiot, I didn't say anything back, I just stared, and then he left. And I thought, There goes my one chance at a friend. But the next week, he complimented my thermos. And this time I was ready, I was like, I know, right? Nalgene! And he thought this was funny, and I was like, maybe I didn't lose my shot at a friend. I even thought about it all the next week. I spent my subway rides and the next whole hot yoga sesh trying to figure out what to do. I should compliment him next. Maybe on his man bun. Even though I didn't like it. Or his bike, which I also didn't like. But I didn't know anything else about him. Except his really big, expressive eyes, and this one dimple in his right cheek. But that sounded a little too forward, or so I thought, until he came up to me after class and complimented me on my *form*.

And before I could be all like, Yeah, your soldier's pose is sooo sturdy, he was like, Do you want to go out?

And OF COURSE I was like YES! Absolutely! I hadn't been out on a date since high school! I didn't even care if he had a man bun or what! I was going on a real date.

So we went out to dinner to some vegan place he found, but like a FANCY one! and you would never know that we didn't know each other that well before that because we sat down and we could not stop talking. I mean, we talked about everything. We kept having to turn the waiter away because we could barely even read the menu. We talked about work and college and annoying co-workers, and oat milk and stevia and adaptogens, and our childhood and our families and our friends—well, his friends—I said I didn't really have any. I just blurted it out, and I felt like a total loser, but then he said,

“I can help you find some. Actually, I have this great idea...”

Then he said he wanted to keep the date going and I was so happy I could have just burst. If those girls talking smack about my bitch face could see me now! So he brought me to this ice skating rink.

But I had never been ice skating. I didn't know if I was good at it. I started to get really freaked out, you know... different kind of feeling ready to burst. I knew I could do a downward facing dog, but I didn't know I could ice skate. But he seemed so ready and into it, he knew exactly where to go, and how much it cost—he bought my ticket and everything.

But I didn't know how. And I tried to Google it while he was in line for the skates, but that didn't really help because I didn't have time to watch a YouTube tutorial. So I just sort of figured, well, yeah, this tracks. It was going too well. Something was bound to fail soon. Right? I didn't want to be there when it would. So I excused myself to the bathroom. And then I left.

I didn't go to hot yoga last weekend. I haven't returned his texts.

But that's because when I do, I want to be the one who invites him out ice skating.

And that's why I came back a couple days ago, and I'm here today, and I'll be back again tomorrow, and I'll hire an instructor if I have to, because I am sticking to my New Year's resolution and making my life better even if I—

[Getting a little too excited while moving, she slips and falls on her butt onto the ice.]

For the record, it's totally the exercise resolution I'm sticking to. Not the connections one.

Though when I do finally text, I'll say I'm sorry. And compliment him on something. Maybe even his man-bun.

[Enjoying the thought, she's able to let go of the wall and skate on her own, even if she's shaky, even if it's just for a few seconds. When she almost falls again, it's not such a big deal, and she rights herself.]

End of monologue.]