

Disappearing Act

Written By

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1. EXT. PARKING GARAGE - MORNING

Chad is walking to his car. He pulls out his phone to check messages and sees one voicemail waiting on him. He pulls the phone to his ear and begins to listen.

PASTOR JIM (V.O.)

(with concern)

Chad, this is Pastor Jim. Listen, I hate to start this conversation over voicemail but we need to talk.

2. INT. PARTY/BAR ATMOSPHERE

Chad is having a good time, drinking, laughing, flirting, etc.

PASTOR JIM (V.O.)

I haven't seen you in six months. You were here every Sunday and Wednesday with your family. We were doing Bible studies together and talking on a regular basis and now, you've done a disappearing act. I'm worried about you Chad.

3. EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Chad and a woman walk out together heading to Chad's car. Chad opens the door as she is acting very seductive/provocative toward Chad. Her eyes follow him around the car, his eyes stay fixed on her. He gets in and she gently reaches over and caresses his face as he starts the car. He tilts his head as she almost forcefully initiates a kiss (shot cuts away right before the kiss)

PASTOR JIM (V.O.)

I know you've been working out of town a lot lately. I know you've been away from your kids and your wife and I'm concerned that sin might be crouching at your door. People don't just drop all their commitments unless they are chasing after something else.

4. EXT. PARKING GARAGE - MORNING

Chad walks to his car, using the key fob unlocks the doors and opens the trunk. Having the phone to his ear, he stops before he places the suitcase in the trunk and listens.

PASTOR JIM (V.O.)

Chad, look, you know what the Bible says, and about God's forgiveness. Remember the last parable we looked at together, The Prodigal Son? No matter where you are, its not too late to turn back. Just don't turn your back on your family, your friends, or on God.

5. INT. STRANGE BEDROOM - MORNING

Chad is getting dressed quietly, he turns around to see the woman from the previous scene still in bed, sound asleep. He very quietly opens the door and leaves.

PASTOR JIM (V.O.)

Emma called me last night in tears. She's worried that your marriage is falling apart. She told me she feels like you have already disappeared from her life and all she sees when you are in town is the ghost of the husband you were. (pauses) We are all worried about you, everyone can see you are slipping away.

6. EXT. PARKING GARAGE - MORNING

Chad shuts the trunk and walks to the door of his car

PASTOR JIM (V.O.)

Just, please, give me a call or come by and see me Chad. Before you lose everything.

Pastor Jim hangs up. Chad looks shocked and stoic as he slowly lowers the phone, still looking at it. His face hardens in anger as he deletes the message and gets into the car. He sits, looking angry. Picks up his phone and begins to text Emma,

CHAD (SUBTITLE)

I can't believe you went and talked to the pastor behind my back.

EMMA (SUBTITLE)

I'm sorry :(I was really upset last night. I tried texting and calling you all night long and you never answered. I'm just heartbroken and needed someone to

(MORE)

EMMA (SUBTITLE) (CONT'D)

talk to.

CHAD (SUBTITLE)

Well thanks, I just spent two weeks busting my butt at a conference trying to drum up more business so I can keep my family happy and as soon as I land, I have to get a judgmental call from the church.

EMMA (SUBTITLE)

I'm sorry, I was just really desperate for some encouragement... Are you on your way home?

CHAD (SUBTITLE)

Yes, I'm about to pull out of the parking garage - and I'm exhausted so please don't try to overwhelm me when I get to the house.

EMMA (SUBTITLE)

We won't, the kids and I are just excited that you are back :)

Chad cranks the car, puts it in reverse and begins to leave the garage. As he gets closer to the exit another text comes in.

EMMA (SUBTITLE)

I love you Chad

Chad reads the text, scoffs at it and without answering throws the phone in the passenger seat and speeds off.

7. EXT. DRIVING HOME - LATER

Chad is driving home from the airport. He still has an angry look on his face. He turns and flies into the church's parking lot, looking determined. When he puts the car in park, he pauses and his facial expression changes to one of worry. He breaths, swallows and then his phone rings. He looks at it and it's his boss from work. Chad answers and cranks the car and drives off.

CHAD

Hey boss! What's going on.

STEVE (V.O.)

Chad, my man, you are a god. After your presentation at the conference, we have been flooded with calls. You have lit this

(MORE)

STEVE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
place on fire.

CHAD
I do what I can.

STEVE (V.O.)
Do you remember talking with some
reps from Neptor Corp.?

CHAD
Sure.

STEVE
Well they have approached us with a
multi-million dollar proposal.
Which means big money for the
company and a big bonus for you.

CHAD
Fantastic, when do we sign the
contract.

STEVE (V.O.)
Whoa, whoa, whoa. Not so fast.
Before we sign anything, they want
to sit down and discuss the
details...

CHAD
Ok, great.

STEVE (V.O.)
...with you. Today, at 3pm at the
golf course. Now I know you just
got back into town, but we need to
make this happen Chad.

CHAD
You're killing me Steve. Tell me,
just how big is this bonus we're
talking about.

STEVE (V.O.)
C'mon Chad, are you going to treat
me like that?

CHAD
Well, I haven't seen my family in
over two weeks. I could just pass
on the meeting and head home to
spend time with them and get some
much deserved rest.

STEVE (V.O.)
 Fine, the bonus will be at least a
 six figure sum.

CHAD
 What time are we teeing off again?

STEVE (V.O.)
 I knew you'd come around. See you
 at 3.

Chad hangs up and continues his drive.

8. E/I. ARRIVING AT HOME - NOON

As he pulls up to the front of his house and gets out, grabs his suitcase from the trunk. He sees the kids peeking through the blinds as he approaches the house. When they recognize him, they take off running. Chad stops at the door and puts on his 'family' face. Chad opens the door.

CHILDREN
 Daddy!!!

The kids run through the now opened door and jump on Chad.

CHAD
 Hey guys, I'm glad to see you too.

LUKE
 Dad, you are not going to believe
 what happened at school
 yesterday...

HANNAH
 (interrupting) Daddy, you have to
 come and see what I made for you.

The children both pull on Chad and talk over each other, trying to convince him to pay attention. Finally Emma walks in.

EMMA
 Ok, ok, kids. That's enough for
 now. Daddy's tired from a long
 trip. Let him rest for a while and
 then he will come and see you both.

CHILDREN
 Ok mom.

The children leave, disappointed. Emma takes Chad's bag as they continue into the house. Chad begins to unbutton a few buttons and get comfortable as he sits down.

EMMA

Chad, I'm really sorry about Pastor Jim calling you. I...

CHAD

(interrupting) I don't want to talk about it now, Emma. I need some down time before I have to head out to a meeting at the golf course at 3.

EMMA

A meeting? Chad, you just got home from two weeks of work and now you're heading out again. The kids have been waiting for you all day. I've been waiting for you all day.

CHAD

What am I supposed to do Emma, the company wants to meet today to close a big deal that is going to get us paid.

EMMA

Hannah has been working on a painting for you all week and Luke has been having problems at school and I don't know what to you tell him to do.

CHAD

Are you so irresponsible that you can't handle raising our kids? I can't be here to do everything.

EMMA

(really frustrated and angry) You aren't here for anything! I can handle our kids Chad. But I need you too. Ever since you took this job its like you've ceased to exist in our lives. We don't even get phone calls from you anymore. If I hear your voicemail greeting one more time I'm going to scream.

CHAD

You know what, I kill myself to provide for this family. We finally have everything we ever dreamed of. We wanted this

(MORE)

CHAD (CONT'D)

opportunity Emma, you agreed that I should take the job.

EMMA

But I didn't know what it would cost us.

CHAD

(getting up in anger) That's it. I've had enough. I'm taking a shower and then I'm heading to the golf course. I'll be back later.

EMMA

But what about Luke and Hannah? They both wanted to see you.

CHAD

Tell Luke and Hannah that I don't have time for them right now. I'll look at whatever ridiculous arts and crafts they made when I get home.

Chad storms off. Emma collapses crying on the couch.

FADE TO BLACK.

9. EXT. DRIVING HOME - NIGHT

Chad is driving home, music is blaring, he has a smirk of confidence and satisfaction on his face. Then a text comes in.

STEVE (SUBTITLE)

I'm going to start calling you superman

Chad pulls over to text.

CHAD (SUBTITLE)

And why is that?

STEVE (SUBTITLE)

Because there is nothing you can't do. Neptor Corp is in love. Their lawyers are drawing up paperwork and we will have a signed deal and initial payment on Monday!

CHAD (SUBTITLE)

Did you ever doubt me? Because I didn't.

STEVE (SUBTITLE)

Wow, charming, savvy, & arrogant.
You're the total package.

CHAD (SUBTITLE)

I just want to know when my check
will be ready.

STEVE (SUBTITLE)

And you don't waste time. We'll
have something for you Monday. Now
go out and celebrate somewhere
nice. You can afford it!

Chad smiles really big, puts down his phone, turns up the
music and puts the car in gear and drives off.

10. INT. HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Chad walks in in a fabulous mood - energized by his success.

CHAD

(in a raised voice, calling out)
Emma? Luke? Hannah? Daddy's got
some exciting news!

Emma comes walking in from the other room.

EMMA

Daddy? (playfully) So is that what
you want me to start calling you?

CHAD

Don't be ridiculous. Where are the
kids?

EMMA

What kids?

CHAD

Our kids, Luke and Hannah.

EMMA

You must be thinking about your
other wife and family.

CHAD

(getting frustrated) Emma, stop
playing. I have something I need
to tell you guys.

EMMA

(a little weirded out) Um, Chad,
are you ok?

CHAD

Of course, I'd be better if you'd go get the kids though Emma. This really isn't funny.

EMMA

I think I'd remember having kids Chad.

Chad's demeanor changes. He begins to look at Emma suspiciously and backs away.

CHAD

Oh, I see what you're doing here. You're trying to get my attention. Was this Pastor Jim's idea?

EMMA

(responding in concern) Chad, You're really worrying me. I think you've been working too hard lately. You need to rest.

CHAD

I don't need to rest. Where are our kids?

EMMA

WE DON'T HAVE ANY KIDS! What's wrong with you?

CHAD

Yes we do, look here. (Chad anxiously grabs for his wallet) I have their pictures right here.

Chad pulls out his wallet, turns to where the pictures should have been and there's nothing there.

EMMA

Yup, that looks just like our kids. Non-existent.

CHAD

No, no. You did this. You did this. Emma, you have gone too far. This is ridiculous. I can't believe you. I'm leaving.

EMMA

Leaving? You just got home! You've been gone two weeks, then you run off to a meeting and now you come

(MORE)

EMMA (CONT'D)

in screaming about kids we don't
have and then get mad at me?

Chad runs around the house. Looking for signs of the kids,
looking into a room, that is decorated merely as a guest
bedroom.

CHAD

This is just macabre Emma. I know
we have problems, but to do
something like this...

EMMA

Oh wow, are you finally going to
admit that we have problems? Good,
lets sit down and talk about our
problems.

CHAD

Ok, fine Emma, you win. I'll sit
down and talk. We will work out
every problem in our marriage right
now if you tell me where the kids
are?

EMMA

Chad, for the last time we do not
have any children.

CHAD

That's it. I'm outta here.

Chad storms out of the house, Emma follows crying and
pleading.

EMMA

Chad wait.

Chad drives away quickly. He stops at the end of the block
and pulls out his phone to send a text.

11. EXT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

CHAD (SUBTITLE)

Guess who's back in town and free
tonight.

BRITTANY (SUBTITLE)

Finally :P I've been so lonely
without you :(

CHAD

I've had a really bad night. I
need to blow off some steam. Where

(MORE)

CHAD (CONT'D)

do you want to go?

BRITTANY

Anywhere as long as its with you,
baby ;)

CHAD

Be there shortly :)

Chad speeds off

FADE TO BLACK.

12. INT. HOME - THE NEXT DAY

Chad walks in, clothes disheveled and looking rough.

CHAD

(calling out) Emma? Emma, where
are you? We need to talk.

Chad moves from room to room in the house.

CHAD

Emma, I'm through with this. Stop
hiding and come out here RIGHT NOW!

Chad gets angry. He storms through the house looking and
discovers all of Emma's things are gone.

CHAD

(in disbelief) She left me? (in
anger) I can't believe she left me?
Oh I'm not letting this happen.

Chad picks up his phone and dials Emma's number.

EMMA

Hello?

CHAD

So where did you go? Are you at
your mom's?

EMMA

Um, who is this. I think you might
have the wrong number.

CHAD

Emma, don't play games with me.
This has gone far enough. You've
got me, I lose. Let's go sit down
and talk with Pastor Jim.

EMMA

Who is this?

CHAD

(yelling into the phone) It's CHAD!
Your HUSBAND!

EMMA

I think you have the wrong Emma. I
don't know a Chad and I'm not
married.

CHAD

Emma just stop this charade.

EMMA

I'm hanging up.

The phone clicks as Emma hangs up. Chad, enraged dials
again.

CHAD

(yelling into the phone) That is
enough. You and the kids come home
right now! Lets work this out like
adults and stop playing stupid
little games.

EMMA

I don't know who you are, but I'm
hanging up. Do not call me again
or I'm calling the police!

The phone clicks again as Emma hangs up. Chad is furious
and confused. Looking at his phone he sees "Pastor Jim" on
his missed call list.

CHAD

I know who's behind this.

Chad straightens his clothes a little and heads back out to
the car determined that he is going to get some answers

13. EXT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

Chad walks towards the church as Pastor Jim walks out.

CHAD

Pastor, we need to talk right now.

PASTOR JIM

Well ok. I was just about to head
to lunch but we can talk.

CHAD

What are you thinking hiding my wife and kids from me, what are you trying to accomplish?

PASTOR JIM

Hiding your wife and kids. I don't understand.

CHAD

So you're playing stupid too. You called me and left me a message that you wanted me to come and sit down and talk because I haven't been coming to church.

PASTOR JIM

Uh, are you at the right church? I'm Jim Richards, I think you might have me confused with someone else.

CHAD

This is ridiculous. I've been a member of this church for 10 years. We did weekly Bible studies together and now you are going to pretend you don't know me.

PASTOR JIM

I can honestly tell you I have no idea who you are. But that doesn't mean that I can't help you. Did you say someone is hiding your wife and kids from you?

CHAD

YES! You are! This is all your idea to force me to deal with the sin in my life.

PASTOR JIM

Look, I don't know you, I have never seen you before and as far as I know you have never been to this church. You seem to be disoriented or confused, your clothes are a mess. Is there someone we can call to come and get you and take you back home?

CHAD

Ok, ok, fine. You are going to play it that way. Fine. I'm going

(MORE)

CHAD (CONT'D)

home, and I'm calling the police
and you can explain to them why you
have kidnapped my family.

Chad storms off, the pastor stands at the door, very
confused, watching Chad walk away.

14. EXT. ARRIVING AT HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Chad arrives home, jumps out of his car and runs to the door
where his key does not work. He continues to fight the lock
until someone opens the door.

HOME OWNER

(in a very defensive stance) Can I
help you?

CHAD

Who are you? What are you doing in
my house?

HOME OWNER

Your house? I think you might be
mistaken.

CHAD

No, THIS is MY HOUSE!

HOME OWNER

Uh, I don't think so. We have
lived here for ten years.

CHAD

No, No, (he begins to back away)
NO! This isn't happening.

Chad runs away, back to his car, which isn't there. He
falls into the grass screaming.

CHAD

This isn't happening! This can't
be happening! (rolling around and
looking skyward) I know, I know,
I'm sorry God. I can see how
disgusting I have been. I'm just
sorry.

The light becomes brighter and Chad is feeling overwhelmed.
Emma's voice calls distantly and softly.

EMMA (O.S.)

Chad, do you want to have a life
with us?

CHAD

Yes, Emma, yes more than anything.
I'm sorry, I'm so sorry. I'll do
anything to make it up to you.

EMMA

You have hurt me and hurt Luke and
Hannah so much.

CHAD

I know. I can't believe the things
I have done. I can change. I can
turn away from my sin. I know what
God wants me to do. I want to lay
these filthy rags down at the foot
of the cross and run back into the
arms of my Savior.

EMMA

Chad, are you even listening to me.

CHAD

Yes, Yes of course

EMMA

Chad? Chad? I'm trying to talk to
you.

CHAD

I'm listening Emma, I'm listening
now!

EMMA

Chad, wake up...

The light brightens and scene builds with intensity. Chad
closes his eyes as Emma says "Chad, wake up..."

15. INT. HOME

Chad awakens startled and disoriented, looking around he
discovers that he was still sitting on the couch and that he
had fallen asleep. He looks around as he hears Emma

EMMA

We need to talk...

FADE OUT

