

Bourne
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The Woman who Ignored her Fears

by James Stiffel

She shouldn't be doing this. WHY is she doing this? This is stupid. She is train station is stupid. Look at them all looking at her. They all know it. Oh god. She should've stayed home. Home is safe. Not like here. Here is scary. After so many years, she STILL can't do this. Why didn't her friends live HERE? Perhaps, she can remember what they would say if they were here.

They'd say, "hang on. Keep going. Get back up. You can do it."

Breathe. Breathe more. She CAN hold on. She CAN do it. She can... Oh god. Someone just looked at her funny. Did she twat them with her handbag? Does she need to say sorry? Shit. Just let this be over. WHEN...will this be over? Huh...who's this now?

"Are you...ok my love? You looked very deep in thought just then."

Sienna said to the old lady. The old lady looked visibly shaken.

"Oh its...very kind of you...to ask. I'm... I'm..." replied the old lady.

"Come over here and sit yourself down," continued Sienna pointing out a spare seat. They covered the short distance to an empty row, avoiding the odd crazed commuter.

"If I'm honest. You looked like you didn't want to be here at all," said Sienna.

The old lady lowered her head and leaned in closer to Sienna.

“Do you...ever wish, that the ground would swallow you up and transport you back home? So that you didn’t have to face...life?”

Sienna smiled and nodded.

“I um...think I know just what you mean,” she said, “let me show you a video that usually helps me.”

Sienna reached for her phone. Her face dropped slightly. No 4G signal. She looked around for a wifi password. Through the sea of multi-cultural train commuters, she saw something out of place. She swallowed hard. This is crazy.

“I might have...a-another idea,” she said out loud.

Sienna walked over to the piano. The nerves came. Time slowed to a crawl. A numbness confused her senses. Her body was not her own. The ability to be in control but not at the same time. She sat at the stool. The old lady stayed close. Will the words come? She raises her metric tonne arms. Fingers touched keys. “BLING” She’s playing. Oh shit. She’s playing. Just keep playing. The words are coming up.

“Todaaaaay
I don’t have to fall apart
I don’t have to be afraid
I don’t have to let my damage consume me
My shadows see through me.”

A quick look to the old lady. She seems entranced. Good. She’s listening. This is for her. Keep going.

“Now, feee-aaar in itself
Will reel you in and spit you out
Over and over again
Be-lieve in yourself
And you will waaaaalk.”

Such a powerful song. She bit the tears down. She played and sang until she came to the end. Her fingers stopped moving. No more notes to play. She did it. The world slowly coming back into high definition. Now what’s THAT noise? 300x people clapped, cheered, cried and whistled their appreciation and love for what they had just laid witness to. The tears came. Had she really done that? She wiped her moist face and looked at the old lady. She wasn’t there.

“Where did the old lady go?” she said to a woman close to her. The woman made a face. “You’ve been by yourself this whole time.”

Sienna sat mouth aghast. The crowd still cheered.

