

SØREN VEJBY



THE TRUE VICTORY

mellemgaard

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The True Victory

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To Trine

For bringing grace to my life

"Things don't change; we change."

Henry David Thoreau

LOST



CHAPTER 1

*"If the present world has gone astray, the
cause is in you, in you it is to be sought."*

Dante Alighieri

was at an all time low.

My hands were steady on the wheel. Ten to two. My gaze was glued to the road. It was in the middle of the night and I was driving home on E4 from Umeå in the northwest of Sweden to our apartment in Copenhagen. Fast. The headlights shone on the blackness in front of me, a desolate landscape flew by on both sides of the car, dark and hostile. The highway cut through it like a knife. The surroundings mirrored my state of mind.

But why on Earth was I feeling so bad?

I was in my prime, a thirty-three year old actor, worked all over Europe and in the States, on the cover of magazines. I was a celebrity, a role model, and married to a beautiful and intelligent young woman, an architect by the name of Grace. She was pregnant with our first child. I was wealthy, successful, good-looking, soon to become a father and with a wife to die for.

And I was on the verge of a meltdown.

Grace and I had had a fight on the phone a couple of hours ago. I had called her to let her know that I was off one day early. But I never got around to telling her that.

Phone calls. We were never good at those. But I missed her, sometimes every second of the hour when I was away. She was the one. I had known that from the moment I had laid eyes on her.

It was a Friday night. Two years ago. Summer in the city. Grace had been in Australia for three years, studying and working. She had absolutely no idea who I was. All the other women at the bar did. When she left I went after her. Stopped her on the street, looked into her blue eyes and persuaded her to have coffee with me.

At the café, she looked right through me.

“You are a player,” she said. “But I can’t be played. With me it’s all in or nothing at all.”

I had already fallen in love.

I deleted most of the contacts on my phone. I cancelled a handful of dates. For the next two weeks Grace and I spent every hour of the day together. I moved in with her and we started looking for a more permanent place. Three months later, we found a beautiful apartment on Frederiksberg, opposite the Betty Nansen Theatre.

I signed my name next to hers on the contract and went off to Croatia to shoot a WWII epic. When I came home a month later I proposed to her in Tivoli. She said yes. She looked gorgeous and I was the luckiest guy on the planet. Happy and almost delirious, I felt like jumping around singing and dancing.

I was clean. I had been since the night I had met her and I thought that was going to last forever. I couldn't have been more wrong. When I went back to do some extra shooting, I relapsed.

A guy on the set was selling. He had connections. And I obviously still had a nose for it. Once a thief... We sat on a balcony in Dubrovnik and looked over the city. The moon was full, the night was humid and the drinks were cold. We got high. The cocaine was pure. It was like coming home.

I then started to throw in some time for my secret habit.

"Just once in a while," I said to myself. "Just to blow off some steam."

I did coke when I needed it, never at work, sometimes partying, but mostly alone. Whenever I was abroad, I got a hold of a local dealer, either through somebody on the set or simply by tracking it down by finding a guy on the street or preferably in a club and buy it directly from him.

In Copenhagen, I sometimes rented a room in a hotel. Told Grace I was working. I would just sit there. Listen to music. Getting higher and higher and eventually smoke hash to come back down again.

A decade ago, when I was in my early twenties, cocaine had been a social event and most of the time, girls were involved. I had never had any problem getting girls. And when I got famous,