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Earthquakes in London

*This play could not have been written without Elyse Dodgson, Jonathan
Donahoe, Clare Lizzimore, Rachel Wiggstaff, Duncan Macmillan, the cast
and production team, and particularly Miriam Buttler, Rupert Gould and
Ben Power.*

*The typescript that follows was correct at time of publication but might have
changed during rehearsal.*

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Earthquakes in London was first performed in the Cottesloe Theatre at the National Theatre on 4 August 2010, in a co-production with Headlong Theatre. The cast was as follows:

Marina Tom	Lucy May Barker Gary Carr
Young Robert	Brian Ferguson
Grace / Receptionist / Jogger	Polly Frame
Simon / Roy	Tom Godwin
Colin	Tom Goodman-Hill
Carter	Michael Gould
Peter	Bryony Hannah
Businessman / Daniel / Student / Doctor Harris / Barman	Clive Hayward
Mrs Andrews	Anne Lacey
Supermarket Worker / Young Man / Tim	Syrus Lowe
Freya	Anna Madeley
Robert	Bill Paterson
Jasmine	Jessica Raine
Casey / Old Woman / Sally / Liberty	Maggie Service
Steve	Geoffrey Sireatfeild
Sarah	Lia Williams

All other parts played by members of the Company.

This version of *Earthquakes in London* was first performed at Theatre Royal Plymouth on 22 September 2011, in a Headlong Theatre and National Theatre co-production.

The cast was as follows:

Simon / Roy / WWII Officer / Polar Bear / Passer by 1	Ben Addis
Understudy / Dance Captain	Sam Archer
Peter / Mother	Helen Cripps
Tom	Kurt Egyiawan
Colin	Seán Gleeson

Marina / Mother / Understudy	Siubhan Harrison
Steve	John Hollingworth
Mrs Andrews	Maggie McCourt
Sarah	Tracy-Ann Oberman
Jasmine	Lucy Phelps
Supermarket Worker / Casey /	Nicola Sangster
Old Woman / Liberty / Mother	
Carter / Daniel / Police Officer /	
Dr Harris	Gyuri Sarossy
Robert	Paul Shelley
Grace / Receptionist / Mother /	Natalie Thomas
Jogger	
Young Robert / Business Man /	
Scammer / Bar Man / Dr Tim /	
Passer by 2	Joseph Thompson
Freya	Leah Whitaker

All other parts played by members of the Company.

Director Rupert Goold
 Set Designer Miriam Buether
 Costume Designer Katrina Lindsay
 Lighting Designer Howard Harrison
 Music Alex Baranowski
 Projection Designer Jon Driscoll
 Choreographer Scott Ambler
 Sound Designer Gregory Clarke
 Company Voice Work Jeannette Nelson

Project developed for Headlong by Ben Power

The creative team for the 2011 UK tour included:

Tour directed by Caroline Steinbeis
Associate Set Designer Lucy Sierra
Lighting Designer Tim Mitchell
Associate Projection Designer Emily Harding
Associate Projection Designer Paul Kenah
Associate Choreographer Steve Kirkham

Act One
 Proper Coffee

Act Two
 All The Mothers

Act Three
 Mad Bitch

Act Four
 Thomas Hood

Act Five
 Certain Destruction

The play is presented using as much set, props and costume as possible. The stage should overflow with scenery, sound, backdrops, lighting, projection, etc. Everything is represented. It is too much. The play is about excess, and we should feel that.

Scenes crash into each other impolitely. They overflow, overlap. The production should always seem at risk of descending into chaos but never actually do so.

(/) means the next speech begins at that point

(-) means the next line interrupts

(...) at the end of a speech means it trails off. On its own it indicates a pressure, expectation or desire to speak.

A line with no full stop at the end indicates that the next speech follows on immediately.

A speech with no written dialogue indicates a character deliberately remaining silent.

Blank space between speeches in the dialogue indicates a silence equal to the length of the space.

Characters

Grace
Freya
Steve
Jasmine
Tom
Colin
Sarah
Simon
Supermarket Worker
Peter
Attendant
Businessman
Robert
Mrs Andrews
Many Students
Many Swimmers
Carter
Daniel
Roy
Young Man
Fifteen Mothers with pushchairs
Old Woman
Second World War Officer
Receptionist
Tim
Maryna
Liberty
Emily
Usher
Police Officer
Commuters
Passer by 1
Passer by 2
Other passers by
Doctor Hattis
Nurse

Act One

Prologue

1968

Cambridge.

Black and white.

Robert Crannock is on a date with **Grace**, who is wearing a floral dress. They eat. **Robert** is awkward.

"2.525" is playing quietly in the background.

Robert I'm sorry if the letter was too forward.

Grace I liked the letter.

Robert I got carried away, I'm sorry.

Grace No.

Robert I didn't mean to sound strange.

Grace It wasn't strange. I liked it. Love letters in my pigeon-hole. Romantic.

What do you do **Robert**? I mean I know you're a postgraduate, but what exactly do you ... do.

Robert I'm doing a doctorate

Grace In?

Robert Atmospheric conditions on other planets.

Grace Other planets? Like aliens?

Robert Some of the work is to do with finding life yes.

Grace Like Star Trek?

Robert Well ... NASA are interested, so –

Grace You're joking?

Robert No.
 Grace NASA?
 Robert Yes.
 Grace Wow.
 Robert Yes.
 Grace Wow.
 Robert ...
 Grace So how do you know? If there's life?
 Robert Well, all life gives off excretions of some kind. Gases, minerals.
 Grace We all give off gases?
 Robert Yes.
 Grace Even girls?
 Robert And all these gases –
 Grace Have you / researched this?
 Robert These excretions, from all of these creatures, they go up into the atmosphere, and you can imagine globally they would make quite a difference to its composition. So it follows that if we could accurately measure the composition of gases in the atmosphere of a planet like Mars, we could tell whether there was life.
 Grace And?
 Robert What?
 Grace Is there?
 Robert We don't know.
 Grace Oh.
 Robert We haven't done it yet. Not enough funding.

Grace Right.
 Robert But as I say, NASA are interested.
She looks at him.
 Grace So all the time, every bit of life, animals, humans, everything, change the environment.
 Robert Yes. You are right now. The room is entirely different because you're in it.
 Grace You think?
 Robert Doesn't matter what I think. The atmosphere in this room is completely dependent on how much you move, whether you talk, if you've got a cold, how hot you are.
 Grace How hot I am?
 Robert Yes. Imagine if we all came in with a fever, the room would get much hotter, and then we'd get even hotter as a result, our fever would get worse and the room would become hotter in turn and so on and so on, upwards and upwards.
 Grace Hotter and hotter.
 Robert Exactly.
 Grace Sorry. Whittering on. Supposed to be a date. I like your dress.
 Grace No, Robert, you've raised a very important question.
 Robert Really?
 Grace Yes. How hot do you think I am?
 Robert How hot?
 Grace How. Hot.

Robert

Well ...

Oh.

You mean ...

Grace

It's 1968. It's the summer. We're young. We can do what we want.

Robert puts his hand on her forehead.

She smiles.

Robert

Above average.

She smiles, and puts her hand on his head.

Grace

Boiling.

So what happens now?

They look at each other.

'2525' plays – gets louder. Cross fade scene and music into –

Proper Coffee

2010

A kettle boils.

Freya's face isolated. Freya is singing along to a cover of '2525 Venice Beat' ft Tess Timony. She loves it.

She sings some more.

We see Freya. She is pregnant, wearing a man's shirt and making coffee in her kitchen. She has headphones on and dances. A television is on as well.

Everything is done in rhythm – coffee, kettle ... sugar ... eats a spoonful herself.

We see Steve in the shower. He hears her singing – bemused.

Steve

Freya?

Freya keeps on singing.

Steve

Freya!

Freya sings a bit more then takes a headphone out. The music is quieter.

What?

Steve What are you / singing?

Freya I'm making coffee.

Steve What?

Freya Coffee! Do you want some?

Steve Proper coffee?

Freya It's always proper coffee.

Steve What?

Freya It's always proper coffee, / no one drinks instant.

Steve What? I can't hear you! I'm in the shower! I can't hear you!

Freya dances. The music becomes background in Starbucks.

Tom enters and offers a coffee to Jasmine.

Tom Full fat latte, two brown sugars, cream on top.

Jasmine Do I know you?

Tom Thought I'd do the honours. Did I get it right?

Jasmine Don't know yet what does Rohypnol taste of?

She drinks a bit.

Tom It was Marxist Criticism. We used to get our coffees at the same time. I liked the look of you, remembered your order. I'm Tom.

Jasmine Yeah.

Tom You're Jasmine. I heard you dropped out.

Jasmine I had an argument with my lecturer.

Tom What about?

Jasmine Charles Dickens. Do you smoke?

Tom I can.

Jasmine Good boy.

Sarah appears, talking to Simon, her assistant.

Sarah There aren't any plants.

Jasmine Let's take this outside.

Sarah Department of climate change, massive office and nothing's green. It's ridiculous.

Simon It's on the list. And you need to put something in for Casey. She's leaving.

Sarah Who's Casey?

Simon By the wallchart? Under the window?

Sarah Why's she going? Pregnant?

Simon Redundant.

Sarah Oh.

Simon She's the chaff we talked about.

Sarah Right. Yes. Right.

Simon Smaller government. That's your policy.

Sarah Not *my* policy Simon.

Simon I'm afraid so, minister. What sort of plants do you want? You mean flowers?

Sarah Here's ten for Casey. No not flowers. Flowers are dead. We want some life round here. Get a cheese plant. They still have those?

Freya continues to make the coffee. Watches television at the same time.

Colin is in a supermarket and approaches a young assistant.

Colin Excuse me.

Sarah They had them in the eighties.

Colin I'm looking for a guava.

S. Worker A what?

Colin A guava.

S. Worker What's that?

Colin It's a vegetable.

S. Worker Right.

Colin Possibly a fruit.

S. Worker Vegetables and shit are over there.

Colin I'm sorry?

S. Worker Vegetables and fruit and all that are over there.

Colin I know but I've looked and I can't find it.

S. Worker Probably don't have it then.

Colin Probably.

S. Worker Yeah.

Colin Can you check?

S. Worker Chhh.

Supermarket Worker goes off to check. Still the music in the background. **Jasmine** and **Tom** are smoking outside.

Jasmine He's sat there opposite me, I said I'm not being funny but if you want two thousand words by Monday you can whistle, I have to work weekends, different for you Gary, fucking baby boomers, get your grant, got your degree then don't pay for your kids. So he says 'Do you have financial difficulties Jasmine?' and I'm like 'Gary. We all have financial difficulties, read the fucking papers'. Then he suddenly goes red, shouts that I'm 'thick as corrugated shit' whatever that means and says I only got in here because of who my sister is, so I lost it completely, threw a bookshelf at him.

Tom A bookshelf?

Jasmine It was *Bleak House* that got him in the eye, hardback so he had to go to hospital. They said I was a menace, attacking my lecturer with a weapon, I said something about the power of the written word and that was it. Out.

Tom You don't look like a menace.

Jasmine I am, Tom.

Supermarket Worker comes back.

S. Worker Is this it?

Jasmine I'm a natural fucking disaster.

Colin How should I know? I don't know what a guava is. You tell me.

S. Worker Yeah. This is it.

Colin You're sure?

S. Worker Yes.

Colin Positive? Because this is important. I want you to understand that if I get home and this isn't a guava I'm in big trouble. So it follows that if I get home and this isn't a guava you're in big trouble, yes?

He reads her badge

... Sue. You're in big trouble if this isn't a guava Sue. So.

You're sure?

S. Worker Candice said it was and she's good with fruit.

Colin Right, thanks.

Steve enters with his suitcase, just as **Freya**, dancing, throws his coffee across the kitchen. **Steve** jumps out the way. **Freya** takes her headphones off.

Freya Didn't mean to do that. Oops.

Steve Oops.

Steve smiles and grabs a cloth instantly to mop it up.

Freya I can make another.

Steve No, I have to go really, sorry ...

Freya Don't be sorry.
 Steve Sorry I'm going at all.
 Freya Don't be – we need work, money, especially now, in the current climate, the way things are, that's what you say.
 Steve And it's only three days so –
 Freya Exactly. It's only three days so –
 Steve And you'll call me if anything –
 Freya Yes I'll call you if anything but nothing will nothing does nothing happens you know how it is round here these days.
 Steve I meant the baby.
 Freya Oh right the baby, well of course / the baby
 Steve You've got the number of / the hospital.
 Freya There was a programme on TV they're detecting something in the ground.
 Steve / Freya?
 Freya They think something might – What? Yes I've got the number of the hospital. It's on the cupboard where you put it.
 Steve On the fridge.
 Freya On the fridge exactly. Are you sure you don't want any of this coffee? It's fair trade, kind of fruity, I like it.
 Steve I have to go – but you'll be alright?
 Freya The building might collapse while you're away.
 Steve Freya –
 Freya This is what I was trying to tell you. They said there's going to be an earthquake.

Steve There's not.
 Freya There is.
 Steve Not here.
 Freya Right here, yes, they've detected tremors. It was on television. Do you fancy my sister?
 Steve What?
 Freya Not Sarah, obviously. Obviously not her. The other one. Jasmine.
 Steve No – Freya where does this / come from?
 Freya Why not? She's pretty.
 Steve She's nineteen.
 Freya Exactly. Thin, good-looking, bet she's good in bed. Of course you like her, you've had that thought. I used to look like that when we first met, I found some photographs, but what happened? Look at me now, fat and red like a massive blood clot or something. No wonder you don't want sex with me anymore. You should give her a call I'm serious I really am.
They look at each other. He moves closer, hugs her.
 Steve I don't think you're a massive blood clot.
 Freya Or something, I'm definitely something.
 Steve I wanted sex with you last night as it happens.
 Freya I can't I can't not with this, it's like it's watching.
 Steve I love you.
He kisses her tummy.
 Steve You too. I'll call when I get in.

18 Earthquakes in London

Freya I'm a bit lost at the moment, Steve, really.

Don't go.

A moment.

Steve Just three days. That's all. It's not as bad as you think. Never is.

Freya Oh. Okay. Good.

He kisses her again and leaves. As the door shuts, Freya jumps and the walls shake a little. She's scared. As Tom and Jasmine talk, Freya looks around her, then produces a packet of cigarettes and lights one.

Tom So your sister's famous?

Jasmine My older sister is. Not in a good way. She's a politician. I didn't get in here because of my sister. I got in *despite* her, they *hate* her here.

Tom What does she do?

Jasmine When my mum died, my dad was a mess, so my sister looked after us but she was awful at it, really bad, because she's got absolutely no heart. Totally cold. She's made of metal, like the Terminator or something. But worse. She's like Terminator 3.

Sarah is giving a speech for her team.

Jasmine Yeah, she's Terminator 3.

Sarah Hello! Hi. We're so sorry to be seeing ... Casey ... go, leave. Yes. And although of course I absolutely believe our new ... policy of smaller government is the right one at this difficult time, it doesn't mean it's not a ... sadness ... when it impacts on someone personally. Casey's been fantastic as part of the ministerial team, a real laugh, ever since I've been here I've noticed that she's so ... *funny*. Anyway, Casey, we've had a whip round and got you this.

Sarah gives a gift bag to Casey. Casey looks inside.

Casey A coffee machine.

Sarah Yes.

Casey I've been here five years.

Sarah Well it's quite a good one I –

Casey I don't drink coffee.

Sarah You don't –

Casey Herbal tea.

Sarah Oh.

Casey It's always been herbal tea.

Sarah Right ... well ... someone hasn't done their research.

Casey Research? Didn't anybody *know*? Jesus. You have no idea. We don't need *less government*. Everything's getting worse, and you're cutting the support. It's what the Tories would do crisis or not, but I voted Lib Dem. I voted for you. And what good did it do?

She looks around at everyone and gives the machine back.

Put it on eBay. I'm leaving the country.

Sarah steps down, speaks to her aide.

Sarah Good idea. Get the car.

Simon You can't, you have a meeting in your office in three minutes.

Sarah My stomach's rumbling.

Simon Here. Egg salad. Tesco Express. You can eat it on the way back.

He gives her a horrible looking sandwich. She just stands for a moment. Exhausted. Freya watches scenes from a documentary about the planet. Tectonics plates. Storms and hurricanes.

20 Earthquakes in London

Are you . . . ?

Another moment.

Should I . . .

She looks up and snaps out of it.

Sarah What? Egg? Perfect.

Sarah *crams the sandwich into her mouth as she leaves.*

There's a knock on Freya's door, she goes to answer it.

Tom and Jasmine *are going back inside.*

Jasmine My sister's coming along tonight actually.

Tom To what?

Jasmine To what I do now. To my job. It's a bit political too. You could come along if you want. You'll be shocked. First time I've done it. It's *very* political Tom. Very in-your-face kind of political. You might not be able to cope. It might be all too – *political* for you. I've got a costume. So what do you think? Want to risk it?

Tom *smiles.*

Tom Yeah.

Freya *opens the door. It's Peter, a teenage boy with glasses in a grey hoodie.*

Peter Alright miss. You busy?

Freya Peter. / What are you –

Peter Is that whisky? You shouldn't be drinking if you're pregnant, we saw it on a video in Biology, Mr Greg showed it us yeah and it said if you drink your baby ends up disabled or something maybe it dies in you and they have to pull it out with tweezers. Can I come

Act One 21

in? I'm not doing very good. I want your advice.

How did you know where I live?

Went on the internet, put your name in, it's not difficult. Big bump you've got now. I need to talk. Can I come in?

I might get into trouble.

Nah you can't be a paedophile cos you're a woman and the hood's not cos I want to cut you it's cos it's raining, come on miss it's fucking biblical out here pardon my mouth used to talk didn't we? I liked it when we talked but you only come into school two days a week and not even that now. You're not busy clearly, you're watching TV. Is your husband in?

He's gone away.

His car's outside.

He got a taxi to the airport.

Yeah not supposed to fly any more though are you? How long's he gone for then?

Just a couple of days.

Bet you could do with the company then.

No.

Bet you could though.

Peter, you should go back to school.

No one visits you do they?

...

That's cos pregnant women are a bit of a pain. Sweaty and fat, stuck in the house, moaning and moaning, I don't think that

miss, but most people do that's why they don't visit. But I'm here.

I got you a flower.

He holds out a flower. She looks at him.

Freya

Thank you.

She takes the flower. He enters.

Sarah is having a meeting with **Carter** in her office. She offers him a biscuit.

Carter

Thank you. It's wonderful to meet you at last. Been a year. Thought I'd done something wrong.

Sarah

I've been very busy.

Carter

Well, better late than never. How are we doing?

Sarah

In two days time, after concluding my review, I recommend to the PM.

Carter

So I hear.

Sarah

And I thought you might want a heads up, to give you time to formulate a public response.

Carter

A heads up. Lovely. A response to what?

Sarah

We're nice people, Mr Carter.

Carter

I'm sure you are. Everyone's *nice* these days aren't they? Even me. I bought my son Adam a bike, for his birthday. Very expensive. He loved it. And what have you nice people got to offer us?

Sarah

I thought you might want to come on board with the decision now, rather than wasting time and effort fighting it.

Carter

The decision.

Sarah

Yes.

Another biscuit?

He looks at her.

Carter

Adam's learning quickly, he's six, he looked at his bike, and he said 'what's the bad news Dad?' He said you only buy me presents like this when there's bad news. He was right. His mother had run over the cat. This coalition government, whatever it is, you're supposed to be business friendly.

Sarah

We're very business / friendly, yes.

Carter

So what do you mean, what are we talking?

Sarah

The Heathrow decision played very well for us, the public didn't want that third runway, they were pleased we got in, and stopped it, so now I'll be recommending a complete halt to expansion.

Carter

Where?

Sarah

Everywhere.

Carter is surprised.

Carter

Look, Heathrow? Fine, I understand your position, you had to pull back, but it was assumed at the time, it was very strongly hoped, in fact, that in return, there would be balance.

Sarah

There isn't the need.

Carter

We let Heathrow go, but we get Birmingham, Edinburgh, London City instead – Belfast – that was understood.

Sarah

It can't be justified environmentally.

Carter

A few miles of concrete here and there, a couple of sheds, it's not the end of the world.

Have you talked to your colleagues, because I can't see this being very popular.

Sarah A definitive halt to expansion will make a huge impact.

Carter Only as a symbol.

Sarah A symbol exactly. We have to be seen to be doing all we can to lower carbon emissions. We want to set an example.

Carter looks at her.

Carter This is your big idea.

Sarah If you like.

Carter You're a symbol yourself really aren't you Sarah? Can I call you Sarah? Bet you never thought you'd be in power at all, but hung parliament, green credentials and a famous father –

Sarah My position in this government has nothing to do with my father.

Carter Everyone thinks it does.

Sarah Then everyone is wrong.

Carter Touched a nerve.

Sarah Not at all.

Carter You're upset.

Sarah Do I look upset?

Carter The way you rub your fingers together like that yes.

She's surprised for a second, but look back at him.

Sarah We're not short of airports. In two days I have a meeting and I will put the case very firmly. The Prime Minister will make a

decision, and that will be it. We'll announce next week.

Carter You look tired.

Sarah I work hard.

Carter I don't think it's work.

Carter takes a biscuit.

Before tomorrow, I'll change your mind.

Sarah Really?

He passes the biscuits across.

Carter Yes.

Biscuit?

Freya and Peter.

Peter I like your posters, you into Hitchcock?

Freya They're my husband's.

Peter And Grand Theft Auto. You play that a lot do you?

Freya That's his too.

I find it a bit violent myself. I don't think driving round killing people should be in computer games. There's one where you can rape a girl. That's a bit weird they allow that considering everything that's gone on. Coldplay album? Everyone's got a Coldplay album these days, saw them on TV at Glastonbury they were rather good. What's yours then?

Freya The books. I –

Peter What are you reading at the moment?

Freya Late Victorian poetry. Peter –

Peter

That sounds really incredibly boring. Can I sit down? / Are you going to give me a whisky? What's this?

Freya

Of course you can sit down. I don't know about a whisky –

Peter

Jees, you've been smoking as well, your baby's gonna be a scopoid by the time you're done. Fucking 'tato with what you're doing.

Freya

Peter, what do / you want?!

Peter

What's the programme?

Freya

They say there's going to be an earthquake.

Peter

Here?

Freya

My husband laughed as well but it's what they –

Peter

No they're right, it's true. There's going to be a massive tremor, the day after tomorrow, a huge seismic event, right in the capital. Things'll seem very different after that.

She looks at him. Shocked – how could he know?

My problem is I don't have any friends. Atomisation. It's very common in society today. Increasingly people use internet dating to make a connection and find companionship but I'm only fourteen so I prefer porn. I am allowed a whisky actually. It is legal. In the home. If you're fourteen. So.

Freya

I'm not going to give you whisky.

Peter

I think you should though. Then we can talk properly.

She considers.

Freya

Why not?

Freya goes to get Peter a drink. Peter sits down in the chair and relaxes as a Businessman on a plane, next to Steve, does the same.

Businessman

Remember when you could smoke?

Steve

What?

Businessman

Smoke. On planes.

Steve

I see the ashtrays in the toilets. But I don't ever remember ...

Businessman

Fifteen years ago, you could go to the smoking section and smoke, didn't do any harm, no more planes went down, less than now, it was long before, you know ... *terrorism* – maybe it's linked. Frustrated Arabs. All they want is a fag. Cos they can't drink can they? Could be linked. Joking of course. You going to Scotland on business is it?

Steve

No.

Businessman

Holiday then?

Steve

It's personal.

Businessman

Oh right, well. Keep your own.

Fair enough.

Up to you.

Steve

I told my wife it's business.

Businessman

Oh.

Steve

But it isn't.

Businessman

Ah.

Yes.

Well.

I know all about that.

Steve What?

Businessman That.

Steve No.

Businessman

Sometimes I'm in L.A. and I always let her know in advance, I say I won't, say it's not good for me, but I drop a cheeky email, turn up and we have the time of our lives. Keeps my marriage healthy. Keeps me trim she does. Carly.

Steve Carly?

Businessman

Twenty-seven. Blonde. Tits. You know. Tits. Twenty-seven. L.A. Sun. Tits. Blonde. Jesus. Says it all.

Why she goes for me I don't know, well I do, flash the money a bit, but life's short isn't it so you do what you have to, and my wife knows, sure she's done the same, my view is, if it keeps you trotting on, keeps you happy and the kids don't know then what's the harm? No you go for it mate. Full speed.

Steve It's not ...

Businessman

Sorry?

Steve It's not an affair.

Businessman

Oh. But you let me go on about ...

Steve I didn't feel I could stop you.

Businessman

Always do this. Always end up talking to strangers on planes. Must be nervous I suppose.

Steve You fly a lot?

Businessman

It's bad for you.

Steve Bad for you?

Businessman

Of course, the more you fly, the greater chance you'll be in a crash. It's not natural.

If God had meant us to fly, he'd have his own airline.

Runbling. Turbulence or possibly the sound of thunder.

The lights flash.

'There She Goes My Beautiful World' By Nick Cave and The Bad Seeds

Jasmine comes on dressed in branches and leaves.

She holds a sign which says 'The willful destruction of the rainforest'

She dances.

She slowly peels off leaves and branches.

Eventually she is left with leaves in the vital places, à la Adam and Eve.

She picks up a sign

'Originally, there were six million square miles of tropical rainforest'

Another sign

'Only a third is left'

She raises her eyebrows.

She peels the leaves off her breasts.

There are cheers from the crowd.

Flirty eyes.

She picks up another sign.

It says 'Don't leave the world naked'

As she goes, leaves fall from the ceiling.

Freya brings Peter his whisky then lights a cigarette.

Peter

Hmm. I'm enjoying this. This is good, really good whisky. Did you buy it?

Freya

Peter, if there's going to be an earthquake why aren't people scared?

Peter

I was in an earthquake once in Tokyo. Me and my parents were doing karaoke in this room –

Freya

Can you answer / my question please.

Peter

– and the floor started moving and the walls tilted, shook a bit but not like you imagine, everything just went ... drunk. Do you ever feel like that miss, stuck in this flat like you are, that the walls are moving and everything's becoming dangerous?

Freya

All the time.

Freya drinks the whisky.

But what can I do?

Tom and Jasmine are in a bar.

Tom

Never seen a stripper before.

Jasmine

It wasn't stripping.

Tom

This is a strip club.

Jasmine

It's burlesque.

Tom

You got your tits out.

Jasmine

You get your tits out in both yeah but in burlesque they're not the focus.

Tom

They were definitely the focus.

Jasmine

Well they're not supposed to be.

Tom

There's a man waving.

Colin appears and waves. He's still carrying a carrier bag with the shopping.

Jasmine

It's my sister's husband.

Tom

You invited your sister's husband?

Jasmine

I invited my sister. She said she'd come so I got *political*, thought she'd like it, but she texted at the last minute, said Colin was coming instead. Colin's been around since I was a kid, he was a banker, lost his job, now he's got time on his hands. Warning: He can be a bit –

Colin

Brought my shopping!

Jasmine

I can see that.

Colin

Bit weird. Well done!

Jasmine

You liked it?

Colin

You can really dance.

Jasmine

Yeah.

Colin

Haven't seen you perform since school.

Tom

And hasn't she grown?

Colin

Well ... I ... I suppose so.

Jasmine

This is Tom.

Colin

Oh right. Hello. Are you her latest ...

Tom

Latest?

Jasmine

Thanks Colin.

Tom

Her *latest*?

Colin

Squeeze.

Jasmine

Oh God.

Tom

We've only just met.

Colin

Well the night's young.

Jasmine

For fuck's sake.

An awkward pause.

Colin I thought you made a very good point actually Jasmine.

Tom There was a *point*?

Jasmine The signs?

Tom I wasn't really looking at the signs.

Colin The destruction of the rainforest.

Tom So that's why you were dressed as a bush.

Jasmine A tree.

Tom Certainly looked like a bush from where I was sitting.

Awkward.

Colin Do you want a drink either of you?

Jasmine No thanks Colin.

Tom Nah.

Colin Right.

Well. Great to ... see you. Jasmine.

I should probably be going ... got some milk ... needs the fridge, asap, don't want it to ...

Smell, but really ...

Well done.

Good work!

Jasmine Good to see you.

Colin Right.

Bye.

A pause. He goes.

Jasmine God.

Tom Actually I did read the signs.

Jasmine Really.

Tom Yeah, I'm quite into the environment. My family from before, they're Eritrean? and they -

Jasmine Er sorry to interrupt you but I've had enough of the environment, hear about it all the fucking time, I only did it for my sister and she didn't even turn up. I'll do a Nazi one next week probably. They love Nazis. Have you got any pills? You look like the sort of person that carries drugs around in their pocket.

Tom A sort of black person you mean?

Jasmine A sort of careless person I mean, who leaves their coat lying around.

She holds them up.

Found them earlier.

She opens the bag.

Shall I be mother?

Freya and Peter

Peter I'm spinning.

Freya I know what you mean. I don't see anyone for days, the walls start shaking, so I think about going out but it's all shouting and dirt, so I stay in, but then ... I've started singing, ever since I got back. When I sing I forget she's there.

Peter Got back from where? Can I have a cigarette?

Freya I don't know what to do.

Peter I didn't see anyone for three days once and got really paranoid my head was too big for

my body, but it's not, is it? Is it? Is it? Cos earlier Gary Franks said I looked weird, chased me out of school said I was special needs.

Freya You are special needs.

Peter Not in a bad way, not like those deaf kids you spend your time with.

Freya Don't say that.

Peter I can do an impression of a deaf person.

Freya No.

Peter I can, look, it's funny.

Freya Don't.

Peter *moves closer to Freya – threatening.*

Peter If you don't give me a cigarette I'll do an impression of a deaf person.

Freya No!

Don't

Here.

She throws him the cigarettes, Peter grabs them and stops. A throbbing beat has begun. Freya's in pain.

Peter I know cigarettes are supposed to be bad for you but apparently if you give up within five years you're pretty much back to normal and I'm very young so I think I'll be fine miss.

Freya In my head.

Peter Do you think that's right?

Miss?

Do you think I'm right about that?

Miss?

Miss?!

The sound of a plane in the distance.

A computer screen is projected.

Someone is writing.

Writing

'I feel that I would be right for the position of senior accounts manager as I am both strong ...

He deletes.

strong both as a team player and a leader.

Lights up on Colin, who is typing.

'... I have demonstrated this on many occasions, leading my team through many years of excellent service over the last ten years. Ten. Years ...'

The cursor goes to Google.

It types.

Student

Girls

Party

Pictures.

As images appear the stage becomes full of students dancing in mini-skirts, boys with their tops off, grinding up against each other. Dance music gets slowly louder. In the middle are Jasmine and Tom. Colin stands up, watching, wanting to be involved.

Freya is now faced away from Peter, leaning against a wall, a throbbing beat in her head.

Peter is trying to light the cigarette.

Peter

As you know, I don't really like being outside, around lots of other people, but do you remember what you said miss? I'd stabbed Luke Reynolds with a compass, and

got detention, and you said I couldn't just sit around feeling sorry for myself, I had to get off my arse and fucking do something. Find the good things.

Freya I don't think I used those words.

Peter You did use those words. You definitely said fucking do something. I found the honesty quite bracing. You're one of the only people in my life who tells me the truth.

Freya So you think I should get up and –

Peter I don't know, but what with the shaking

Freya I was imagining it, the walls can't –

Peter I didn't mean the walls.

Freya Oh.

Peter Your hands miss. Look.

Her hand is shaking.

You should pack a bag and get out and see what's going on. Find the good things. Before it's too late.

They look at each other. He lights the cigarette, smiles and relaxes. Freya leaves. Determined.

Colin *watches them dancing. Enjoys it. He then changes the track on iTunes to Coldplay – 'Viva La Vida'. The students cheer – enjoying the cheese.*

Sarah enters.

Sarah What's this?

Colin Coldplay

Sarah You bought a Coldplay album?

Colin In Tesco on the way home yeah.

Sarah That's the sort of thing boring middle-aged women do.

Colin Right.

Sarah You don't look like a boring middle-aged woman.

Colin You do.

Sarah's tired of the bickering.

Sarah Found anything yet?

Sarah goes into the kitchen where the shopping is laid out. Colin, very quietly sings at the computer.

Colin shouts through to the kitchen.

Colin You see this is the problem, that's always the first thing you ask, you get in and you don't kiss me, touch me, even look at me –

Sarah What's this?

Sarah is standing in the doorway holding a fruit.

Colin A guava.

Sarah No.

Colin Right.

Sarah Get the ingredients. That's all I asked. It's not a guava Colin, it's a plum. Find a job. That's the problem. Not me. Find a fucking job. I'll make a sandwich.

Sarah goes. Colin keeps on singing to himself, restrained and shy, watching the students dance.

Steve appears, trying to hide from the wind, and starts knocking on a door. Tom dances with Jasmine, they kiss passionately. Colin watches. Sarah makes a sandwich. Peter goes to the CDs and looks at them.

Sarah goes to bed. The door is opened by Mrs Andrews.

Mrs Andrews Yes?

Steve I'm here to see Mr Crannock.

Mrs Andrews Mr Crannock is in bed.

Steve I'm Steve Sullivan.

His daughter's husband?

Mrs Andrews sighs.

Mrs Andrews Is he expecting you?

Steve No.

Mrs Andrews ...

Steve Please. It's very cold.

*She lets him in. **Jasmine** and **Tom** dance. **Peter** chooses a CD and puts it on – the same Coldplay song. Listens. Mouths along. He likes it.*

*At the next chorus **Peter** sings loudly like a choirboy. **Colin** still very quietly.*

Freya appears with a bag, hat and coat, ready to go out.

Freya You can put the heating on if you like. The switch is in the hall,

Peter What are you doing?

Freya There's food in the fridge.

Peter I didn't mean you should go now. It's raining cats and dogs out there, and you're pregnant, you probably shouldn't even stand up for too long, it might fall out or something.

Freya You can stay here. You won't steal anything will you?

Peter Can I watch your DVD's?

Freya Yes.

Peter Even the eighteens?

Freya If you want.

Peter Can I drink your whisky and vodka?

Freya Whatever you like. You've got the place to yourself for a couple of days. Okay?

Peter Okay.

Freya Right.

Okay ...

Peter Are you going to be alright miss?

Freya She's kicking. Stop it!

The good things.

I can't stay here.

Freya opens the door and leaves.

Peter stands up and sings.

The students join in, singing the backing vocals.

Peter sings, the students dance, and **Colin** sits by his computer motionless and sad.

*Everyone sings as **Freya** walks off into the night.*

Lights fade.

Music in the dark.

Music fades.

End of Act One.

Act Two

Prologue

1973

Technicolour

Robert and two businessmen, Daniel and Roy. Roy is smoking.

Roy Good to see you. Have a seat.

Robert Thanks.

Roy How's the baby?

Robert Oh, you – ?

Roy Daniel mentioned there was a baby. A baby girl.

Robert Right, yes.

Daniel Wonderful.

Roy Wonderful. And your wife?

Robert Very happy obviously, well we both are.

Roy Very happy. You both are.

Daniel Perfect.

Roy Perfect. So. Robert. You're wondering why you're here? When does the main UK airline call in a Cambridge boffin like you? Well, our bods predict that in thirty years time they'll be thousands of planes in the sky, flying people all over the place, which makes us happy of course, because there's a lot of money to be made.

Robert Yes.

Roy But there are increasing concerns.

Daniel Questions.

Roy Sorry?

Daniel Questions, I think Roy.

Roy Questions, exactly, about what the effect will be of all this air travel? With the emissions. Into the atmosphere.

Robert Right.

Roy People are starting to get worried.

Daniel Curious.

Roy People are starting to become *curious* about what burning all that fuel might do. To the world.

Daniel The environment.

Roy The *environment*. So we thought we'd get an expert in who could do a study.

Robert Look into your crystal ball and tell us what's going to happen. So what do you think? Is it possible?

Robert Well. We'd ... we'd need to model the world on a scale no one's done before. And ... well ... I don't want to be rude, but obviously you're hoping for a negative answer here aren't you?

Daniel No no.

Roy A what?

Daniel He means do we want him to get us the result which says these fumes are doing no harm at all? Should he fix it?

Roy Ah. No. Robert, you do your science and you tell us what you find.

Robert We won't interfere at all.

Daniel No interference.

Daniel None.

Robert Right.

Roy And this is only the first phase. If this project seems promising, we're authorised to commission further work, over the next ten years.

Robert Really?

Roy Absolutely. Because your results might not just be useful for us, but many similar organisations. The motor industry, oil companies. They would all be very interested in promising results.

Robert What do you mean promising?

Roy Results that seem to be useful.

Daniel Meaningful.

Roy Right. *Meaningful*. I need a coffee.

Robert Well I'm sure it's possible to achieve a certain clarity, but this is a very new subject, there's no real way of knowing how quantifiable in real terms the ...

Roy This would be the fee.

Robert Right.

He reads it.

That's ... Oh. Yes. That's good. I'm sure we could make a start with that.

Roy No. Robert.

That's not the budget.

The project will have a separate budget.

That's your fee.

That's for you. To keep.

Daniel

And remember there's potential for a good deal more of this to come. I would imagine someone like you, in your position, academic, young family. This could make a real difference.

Robert Yes.

Roy Why don't you take it away and have a good old think?

All The Mothers

The present.

Hampstead Heath – Early morning. Birdsong.

Freya is sat by the pond.

A number of male swimmers are in the ponds, swimming. They have similar swimming hats and swimming costumes. One by one they come and stand in the fresh morning air. Birds fly past, a clear blue sky.

Freya watches them for a while.

One of the swimmers starts to play ukulele.

Freya starts singing along to 'Deep Water' by Portishead. The first swimmer is surprised, but interested. Three other swimmers stand in a line and act as backing singers.

Freya

I'm drifting in deep waters
Alone with my self-doubting again

I try not to struggle this time
For I will weather the storm

Sarah gets to her desk, piled with papers. It's first thing, but she's exhausted – she sits down and makes a start.

Jasmine sits on the end of the bed, waits, upset.

I gotta remember
(Gotta remember)

Don't fight it
(Don't fight it)

Even if I

(Even if I
Don't like it)

(Don't like it)

Somehow turn me around
(Somehow turn me around)

No matter how far I drift

Deep waters

(Deep waters)

Won't scare me tonight

Sarah picks up the phone. Freya's phone rings. The swimmers look annoyed with Freya.

Tom appears, and Jasmine goes off with him.

The swimmers go off.

She answers.

Sarah

I missed your call.

Freya

I thought we could meet up?

Sarah

I can hear birds.

Freya

I'm on the heath.

Sarah

Hampstead Heath?

Freya

Yeah, by the ponds. I packed a bag, left early.

Sarah

You don't live anywhere near Hampstead Heath.

Freya

Very early. Apparently there's a view where you can see the whole city.

Sarah

Parliament Hill.

Freya

I think I'm looking for that. So are we going to meet then?

Sarah

I could do Thursday?

Freya

I meant today really.

Sarah

I'm busy Freya.

Freya

You're always busy Freya, but Steve's not here and I couldn't get hold of Jasmine, / so I thought we could –

Sarah

Don't ask Jasmine, you called Jasmine?

Freya

You have got time, I know you have.

A beautiful perfect woman dressed in black with black sunglasses, pushing a pram goes past.

Sarah

Get here, to the department, for one o'clock. We'll have twenty minutes. Well, ten. Come to the desk and tell them who you are.

Freya

Thanks.

Sarah

Right.

Sarah hangs up. The mother accidentally drops a leaflet from the pram. Freya picks it up and reads it.

Freya

A picnic, on Parliament Hill.

Perfect.

Excuse me.

Freya follows the woman, off through the Heath

Mr Crannock's House.

Steve is asleep on the sofa. Mrs Andrews clatters in, open the curtains.

Mrs Andrews

Are you not awake yet?

Steve wakes up.

How did you sleep?

Steve

How do you think?

Steve stands up in just his boxer shorts, woozy.

The sofa's too short, so I tried the floor, but there was a draught.

Mrs Andrews

Mr Sullivan ...

Steve

What?

Mrs Andrews

You're not at your best.

Steve

Oh.

He puts his jeans on. Then a t-shirt.

Isn't there a spare room?

Mrs Andrews

There's my room.

Steve

I'm sorry?

Mrs Andrews

If you'd called ahead, we could've made arrangements.

Steve

What do you mean?

Mrs Andrews

When your wife visited, I stayed at my sister's.

Steve

Oh – you ... Freya called ahead?

Mrs Andrews

Do you two not talk about these things? Now, Mr Crannock has got up and gone out. He starts very early, and won't be disturbed. You've never met I understand?

Steve

No.

Mrs Andrews

No, well if he trusts you you'll get a drink, if he likes you, he'll talk all night. He'll be back to the house later this afternoon, as will I.

Steve

What am I supposed to do until then? You've got no television, I didn't bring my computer, there's no reception on my phone.

Mrs Andrews

You'll have to occupy yourself I suppose.

Steve

With what?

Mrs Andrews looks at him.

Mrs Andrews

There's a radio.

Mrs Andrews goes.

Freya sees an Old Woman laying flowers at a war memorial. The Old Woman wears a coat and headscarf.

Freya

Excuse me.

Old Woman

Alright dear?

Freya

I like your flowers.

Old Woman Thank you dear.

The Old Woman smiles. They both look at the memorial.

Was it . . . your husband?

Old Woman Dunkirk.

Freya And you still miss him?

Old Woman I miss what went with him. How it was, when we were together.

Freya Did you have children?

Old Woman It was a different country then. England was made of wood and metal. Not plastic, like this. You know what I'm saying?

Freya No I –

Old Woman It had teacakes, cricket whites, cut grass. Yes? Blitz spirit, rooms full of smoke.

Freya Okay. Yeah I suppose it / must've been

Old Woman Short trousers, dinner jackets, tea dances.

Freya I always wanted to go to a –

Old Woman Devonshire cream, Coventry steel, the home guard, the muffin man, the post man, ladders in the kitchen, fires in the living room, the damp smell of gravel in outdoor toilets. You don't know what I'm talking about.

Freya No.

Old Woman That was our England. All gone now of course. Things move so fast. The cars, the internet. Yes we had children, but I never see them. Always got something better to do.

So instead, I come to the heath.

And wait.

Freya What for?

Old Woman The silver lining. Soon it'll all be over.

They look at the memorial.

Simon enters Sarah's office.

Simon Your sister's at the front desk.

Sarah Now?

Simon Now.

Sarah I said one o'clock.

Simon hands Sarah an envelope.

What's this?

Simon Not sure. It just arrived. What about your sister?

Sarah Send her up, and get me a Starbucks.

Simon Skinny?

Sarah No. Fat. Really fucking . . . fat.

Simon goes. Freya is with the Old Woman

Freya I'm looking I'm really looking for something good, happening now, but you're saying things are only getting worse.

Old Woman Religious intolerance, economic collapse, tsunamis, riots . . . it's the perfect conditions.

Freya I don't understand.

Old Woman Is it a boy?

Freya A girl.

Old Woman A little girl. Well. I hope she can fight.

A young man in a Second World War uniform comes on. He takes the Old Woman's arm and kisses her.

50 Earthquakes in London

Freya What?

Old Woman There's a gathering storm

He takes off her headscarf and she stands upright – a young couple from the 1940s.

Freya How do you know?

Old Woman Old people can predict the weather ...

The man opens an umbrella and it starts to rain.

You see?

Freya She can fight. I've felt her kicking.

Old Woman Haven't you got anyone to take you home?

Freya No. He's ...

Gone.

The Old Woman goes with her husband, just as a mother comes past with her pram. Freya goes off after her.

Jasmine enters Sarah's office with Tom.

Jasmine I've got a problem.

Sarah Where's Freya?

Jasmine Where she normally is, probably – at home, eating crisps.

Sarah Who's this?

Jasmine He's the problem.

Sarah Does he have a name?

Jasmine Tom.

Sarah takes them in for a second.

Sarah Okay. I'm going to look over my letters but I am listening.

Jasmine Last night, I was at a party.

Act Two 51

Sarah

Thought you were dancing last night.

Jasmine

After that. It was a porn star party, we all dressed as porn stars you know

Sarah

Not really.

Jasmine

And I went back with Tom. We fucked and stuff, and he was taking pictures on his phone I thought for fun yeah?

Sarah

Yep.

Jasmine

And then today this morning when I'm a bit morning-ey, just woken up, he tells me that his family in Africa are being affected by climate change and that you aren't doing anything so his family are going to die. Apparently you're making this big statement about 'airport expansion'.

Sarah

Next week, that's right.

Jasmine

So he says why don't we go and see your sister and get a commitment.

Sarah

And you said.

Jasmine

There's no way I could change her mind she doesn't listen to a word I say.

Sarah

Absolutely right.

Jasmine

But then he said he's only gone with me, he's only done any of it, so that he could blackmail you. He's part of some group or whatever. He says if he doesn't get an assurance, he'll send the pictures to the paper.

Sarah

What were they of?

Jasmine

The pictures? Drinking, puking. Us in his room fucking.

Sarah Nothing illegal?

Jasmine Nothing in the pictures.

Sarah Does he speak?

Tom This is happening, right now, to people like me, to my family. And if you don't believe me ...

He gets papers out of his bag.

Letters, photographs, measurements. Rainfall, crop growth, all from my family in Eritrea. Now, I realise you probably don't even know where Eritrea is but –

Sarah Borders in the west, in the south, and in the southeast ...

Tom Yeah okay, yeah, exactly, and they're struggling to –

Sarah The population's an estimated five million? The capital is – I assume you're going to tell me about the current and tangible effects of climate change on the agriculture, on the villages, your family.

Tom You're aware of all that.

Sarah That's sort of my job.

Tom Then it's worse. You know what's going on and you still allow runways and flight paths. You don't listen, we've raised petitions, spoken to our MPs, all you say is you 'appreciate our view', you 'encourage the debate' – but nothing happens.

Sarah You don't know what we're going to announce.

Tom I can guess.

Sarah You can guess absolutely you can have a wild stab in the dark but you don't *know*.

I want you to understand a couple of things Tom. Firstly my sister's a student. She has sex. So what? You think the public are going to be interested? *I'm* not interested.

Secondly, in this country you elect your government, and then we consult and make decisions based on what is right for the people. We take into account different factors – environmental, economic, social. It's complicated because we have to consider everything. Transport means investment. Investment means greater employment. Greater employment means less poverty, which presumably you're in favour of? That's why you have people like me, to make a *judgement*. So what are you doing, Tom? Blackmail? Of a democratically elected member of parliament?

Tom slams his papers on her desk.

Tom It's a protest.

Sarah Good. There. You've protested. It's over. Now delete the photos, get out of my office, stop wasting my time.

Tom Are you going to read all this?

Sarah I'm certainly going to file it.

Tom You can't dismiss me.

Sarah This isn't the student union Tom. We're the fucking government. Go away.

Tom turns to go. Jasmine turns as well.

Not you.

Tom *stares at Sarah for a moment. Then goes.*

Jasmine I only came here for your sake.

Sarah You didn't want your arse in the Daily Mail.

Jasmine Wouldn't be the first time.

Sarah What?

Jasmine When I run out of toilet paper the Daily Mail's just what I need.

Sarah You have absolutely no idea how hard I'm working, do you? How many meetings I have, the paperwork –

Jasmine Yeah, Colin said you're always here.

Sarah It's public office Jasmine. It's the most important thing in my life, I can't –

Jasmine He'll leave you.

Sarah What?

Jasmine Colin. Surprised he hasn't already.

Sarah

Jasmine

Sarah You have no idea.

Jasmine I know what men want. And I bet you're not giving it to him. Fucking ice woman, frosty the snowbitch think you're all big and clever power tights and shoulder pads, fucking Thatcher look at you. I'd have been better off with Dad probably.

Sarah Be careful Jasmine.

Jasmine He can't have been worse than you.

Sarah You've never met him.

Jasmine You've never let me.

Sarah

Let you? You're nineteen. He's a shit Jasmine, if you don't believe me, yes please give him a call instead. Or you could talk to some friends about all your problems – you never do that either do you? For some reason you never have friends to turn to. You ever wonder why you're always being fucked over like this?

Jasmine I'm not being –

Sarah Again and again I think you are, clearly you are, you ever thought why?

Jasmine You're jealous.

Sarah Jasmine, when you want to know, just ask. I've got a whole thing ready to go, I know exactly what your problem is.

Jasmine ...

Sarah You want to hear it?

Jasmine *is upset. Simon enters, interrupting.*

Simon One fat coffee.

Jasmine *goes. Simon gives the coffee to Sarah, as Sarah makes a phone call.*

Sarah Call John Carter. Tell him I got the letter, and I want to meet, this afternoon.

Simon You don't have time.

Sarah I'll make time.

Simon *goes. Freya is on Parliament Hill looking for mothers. She answers the call.*

Freya Do you know where Parliament Hill is?

Sarah I'm sorry?

Freya There's this big event, this afternoon. Why don't you come here?

Sarah Freya –

Freya A picnic. There's stalls, and a band. The sun's out. I'm going to buy some sandwiches. Ice cream.

Sarah Can you listen. I've had to move things around, I can't meet you anymore.

Freya You said you'd make time.

Sarah I know but things change and you're alright aren't you? Your ... picnic.

A Young Man, dirty and sweaty, runs up to Freya grabs her arm.

Young Man Please! Please. Please. Please.

Sarah Everything's just gone a bit mad here.

Young Man My kid. My kid's in trouble.

Freya Yeah, everything's gone a bit mad here too.

Sarah Got to go.

She hangs up.

Young Man He's in hospital, I've just found out, I need the bus fare to get down the road, I don't have any ... change ... I'm sorry, I'm really in a hurry. Shit. Shit.

Freya How old is he?

Young Man What?

Freya Your kid.

Young Man Seven. He fell over at school I think, I –

Freya And you dropped everything and ran.

Young Man Yeah –

She reaches in her pocket – pulls out the fiver.

Freya It's all I've got. I was going to get lunch.

Here.

She gives it to him.

Young Man Bless you love. Bless you.

The Young Man runs off, ecstatic.

Freya Good luck!

The sky gets darker.

Freya feels a sharp kick.

Freya Ow!

Clutches her stomach.

Jasmine is in the street, unhappy, in the rain. Tom is following her.

Jasmine It was basically rape.

Tom What?

Jasmine What you did. Bit like rape or something.

Tom No it wasn't, you had a good time. I didn't plan it like –

Jasmine So you took the pictures because –

Tom You took the pictures. You suggested it. I was just hoping to persuade you to talk to your sister, but then when you wouldn't and I had the pictures on my phone –

Jasmine No / no no

Tom I realised I could do something.

Jasmine Have you ever even been there?

Tom What?

Jasmine To ... You know.

Tom Eritrea.

Jasmine Yeah. You ever actually been there?

Tom I want to but I'd have to fly so –

Jasmine

Right so, your family? Shut up. Never met them. Are you sorry? What you did to me?

Tom

I tried three times to talk you about it instead, but you just shouted me down, get another drink, walk away. So no I'm not sorry, you didn't leave me a choice.

She pushes him away and storms off, leaving him in the street.

Mrs Andrews *is sorting through table cloths. Steve talks to her. The clock strikes four o'clock.*

Steve

How much longer is he going to be?

Mrs Andrews

He'll be home soon.

Steve

I could help if you like? With that?

Mrs Andrews

Go and stand over there.

Steve does as he's told.

Steve

You were here when my wife visited.

Mrs Andrews

In the day, yes.

Steve

What was she like?

Mrs Andrews

I don't know. She was polite, she was like a young lady. I hope you know better than me.

Beat.

Steve

They talked.

Mrs Andrews

All night I believe.

Steve

What about?

Mrs Andrews

You think I was in there listening? I stayed at my sister's.

A pause.

Steve

You know he hasn't seen his children in years.

Mrs Andrews

Aye.

Steve

You know why?

Mrs Andrews

I stay out of his business. You'd best talk to him. If you're sensible, and you might be, you might not be, I don't know, but if you are, you'll not cross him.

Steve

Why not?

Mrs Andrews takes a towel and begins unfolding it.

Mrs Andrews

Because, Mr Sullivan, while I'll admit you don't look stupid, whilst I'll concede you seem to have some kind of brain, you're no genius.

Steve

And he is?

Mrs Andrews

Yes.

Steve

A genius?

Mrs Andrews

Aye.

Steve

What does that even mean?

The door bursts open and Robert Crannock enters. A seventy-year-old man, in a raincoat, and holding a small wind turbine.

Robert

A person of extraordinary intellect and talent.

A person who has great influence over another. Take this.

He gives the turbine to Steve.

A wise man. A shaman. A prophet.

Mrs Andrews shuts the door and gives him the towel on cue.

Mrs Andrews

Mr Crannock.

Steve

I'm sorry to just –

Robert

Shh. I've had the data, had that for a while, but now you're here in person, now I'm

looking at you ... you don't work too hard, that's clear, a sense of humour but nothing with edge. You used to be a sportsman. Cricket?

Steve
Football.

Robert
Football. Ha! But that's been dropped. Your shirt's a bit tight round the sides, you've put on weight recently. You like things to be simple. Fish fingers and chips. Don't like posh food. You're that sort of man. Yes? Chicken nuggets and pizza. Ketchup. Beans. Children's food. You haven't cut your fingernails properly, tells me you're self-employed. Yes? Good.

So? Me?

Come on *Steve*. Who am I? Am I what you expected?

Steve
You're lonely. But I knew that already.

Robert
Oooh. Killer. But no actually, not so lonely. Mrs Andrews keeps me company. She's a blessing. Problem is. She loves me.

Mrs Andrews

Robert
Those *eyes*. I tell her, Mrs Andrews, it's not you, it's your *age*. It's prohibitive. I know why you're here.

Steve
Good.

Robert
And I'm not interested, could've told you over the phone. Now this ...

Robert *pours himself a drink.*

Is a very fine single malt. Should I be drinking at my age, at this time in the afternoon, you're thinking? You're not a whiskey drinker are you Steve?

Steve
Not really.

Robert
Not really? You are or you're not. Where did you sleep?

Steve
On the sofa.

Robert
We don't have a spare bed do we?

Mrs Andrews
No.

Robert
Flirting! Look at her. There isn't a bed, there you have it, straight from the horse's mouth – no offence Mrs A – and you didn't call ahead, so it looks like you're on the sofa again tonight.

Steve
If we can just talk now I can get going, I don't –

Robert
I work hard, you can see this I work all day I've got things to do. I'm very busy.

Steve
I've come all the way here –

Robert
So make the most of it there's hotels – scenery. A loch nearby, a castle.

Steve
I'm here because of Freya.

Robert
I know Steve, *I know* why you're here.

Steve
She said this about you.

Robert
What?

Steve
That you get angry quickly.

Robert
She told me about you too.

Steve
Did she?

Robert
About the problems.

Steve
What problems?

Robert
Exactly.

Have you made up your mind?

Steve What about?

Robert Are you a drinker of whiskey?

Steve Alright.

Robert You are?

Steve Yeah, I'll have one.

Robert Good.

Steve

Robert Good boy. Better.

Doing better.

He pours one. Gives it to Steve.

There.

They drink.

Steve It's good.

Robert Mine is. You've got the cheap stuff.

It is late and overcast now. Dark. Windy.

Jasmine arrives at a bar. A Barman comes over.

Jasmine I want the strongest drink.

Barman I'm sorry?

Jasmine The most alcoholic drink you sell.

Barman Look, it's only five.

Jasmine Are you a clock?

Barman What?

Jasmine Cos you look like a barman, you work in a bar, but you're telling me the time. It's quite simple, I want to get as drunk as I can, as quickly as possible, so –

Barman Absinthe.

Jasmine Two please.

Barman One for you and one for ...

Jasmine The sheer hell of it. Come on ...

She reads his name badge.

Paul.

Paul! This is urgent.

I need to get off my face ...

Jasmine hits the bar suddenly.

Come on!

The Barman pours Jasmine her shot. Freya follows the two mothers to a picnic, listening to 'Happiness' by Goldfrapp. The sky is clouding over, getting darker.

Meanwhile, Carter is waiting in the street. Sarah approaches him, windswept, and unhappy.

Sarah I'm late I know. Long day. Where are we going?

Carter Don't you have an umbrella?

Sarah Clearly not.

Carter This way.

They go off, under his umbrella.

The group of mothers in black with black prams and sunglasses appear again. They dance and sing, holding their wrapped up babies, showing them to each other, drinking their coffee and ignoring Freya.

They sing and dance to 'Happiness' by Goldfrapp.

Freya watches them, and tries to take part.

After a while Freya takes a headphone out and speaks to them.

Freya Excuse me?

Mothers Yes?

Freya I'm here for the picnic.

The Mothers look her up and down. Smile in a fake way.

Mothers Not being funny but –

Freya Okay.

Mothers Yeah.

Freya My baby's kicking.

Mothers How sweet!

Freya Not in a good way.

Mothers Ahhhh.

Freya Do you worry about the future?

Mothers Not really.

Freya What might happen?

Mothers No.

Freya What might happen to your children?

Mothers Henry's very bright, he's already reading.

He'll go into hedge funds

Or a surgeon.

Something like that.

Freya How was the birth?

Mothers Natural.

Freya How do you manage with it all?

Mothers Easily.

Freya None of you got down about it?

None of you felt your child was a...

Mothers A?

Freya A mistake?

Mothers No. God. No.

Freya And what about people who are poorer than you?

Mothers We do what we can.

Freya Yes but –

Mothers Charity work. Every Thursday. Primrose Hill. We carbon offset holidays.

You know.

Freya But that's not enough, and if it's not enough, then what's the point.

Aaahhh!

She clutches her belly again. They look at her for a moment, more serious now, almost threatening. They stand, wielding their children, almost like weapons.

Freya (over singing) Call me an ambulance.

Please.

Please!

The singing continues.

Then they slowly encircle her.

She is scared but has nowhere to go.

The women throw the babies up in the air.

They explode into black powder, like soot or dust, that covers everyone, and is blown about by the wind.

The music continues as the women disappear. Freya falls to the floor, and the lights fade.

End of Act Two.

Act Three

Act Three 67

Prologue

1973

Roy, Daniel and Robert.

Roy and Daniel are looking through a few sheets of paper. **Roy** is smoking.

Robert

It's just a preliminary document. To give you some idea of the way it's going.

Roy

We understand what it is.

Robert

So you know where it's headed. I thought it would be good to get your ... views.

At this stage.

Roy

You think this is what will be in the final report.

Robert

The way it's going yes.

Roy

You can't imagine that they'll be any ... surprises.

Daniel

New factors.

Roy

New factors yes, still to come.

Robert

I can't see how there would be no.

Roy

Right. Can't see how there would be.

Daniel

Hmm.

Roy

Because the thing is, these aren't really the results we were expecting.

Daniel

They're not meaningful.

Roy

Meaningful.

Exactly.

What do they tell us?

Robert

Quite a lot actually. If you do this sort of work it's clear that releasing huge quantities of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere at such a high altitude will cause heat to be reflected rather than released, potentially causing rising temperatures and –

Roy

No.

Robert.

Hang on.

With respect.

All that you've just said, that tells you a lot. It tells *us* very little.

We wondered if there was any way you could make them *meaningful* to us.

Robert

If there was a way the report could focus on something that we can understand. Because if there was. A clearer *focus*.

This could be the start of a very fruitful relationship.

Robert

Yes but this is –

Roy

As we spoke about.

Robert

Right.

Perhaps it's a question of how you present it.

Perhaps it's as simple as that?

Robert

Or maybe you need some more resources.

Daniel

To see things clearly.

Is that what we're talking about?

Are we talking about resources?

Or should we discuss the fee?

Robert

It's not about money ...

Daniel Of course.

Daniel writes on a piece of paper.

He passes it across. **Robert** reads it.

I think you should keep going. There's six months before the final report. That's a long time. Anything could happen.

Mad Bitch

The evening. Dark.

Freya is at the reception of a hospital. She meets **Maryna**, a Polish cleaner, who is playing 'I Am Not A Robot' on a tinny radio.

Freya You have to help me.

Maryna Nie potrafie mowie po angielsku (I don't understand English).

Freya It's hurting. It's really – Ow!

A Receptionist comes over.

Maryna Jestem tulko sprazatacza, / idz ee znajdz lekarza (I'm just the cleaner, go / and talk to a doctor.)

Freya This is a hospital you have / to help me.

Receptionist Alright ...

Maryna She says it hurts.

Receptionist I can see that.

Maryna looks **Freya** in the eyes.

Maryna Po burzy zawsze slonce przychodzi (After the storm, the sun always comes).

Receptionist Thank you Maryna, I'll deal with it.

Maryna picks up her mop and watches.

Now what's your name?

Freya I'm not telling you my name.

Receptionist You can't be treated until we / have some information –

Freya I'm pregnant. You have to treat me.

Receptionist Let's just start with a / name, can you give me a

Freya

I pay my taxes, the whole point is you treat me so treat me I don't want to talk to you, where's the doctor?

Receptionist

You will see a doctor, I'm just trying to get some details. How / long have you been –

Freya

I'm not telling you anything, I don't like you, I'm in pain. It's kicking so hard. Ow!

Receptionist

How many weeks?

Freya

Receptionist How many weeks?

Freya

Let me in!

Dr Tim comes in.

Dr Tim

Is there a problem?

Maryna

I think you should let her in.

Jasmine is knocking on Colin's front door.

Colin

Alright!

As the receptionist takes Freya into the hospital, Maryna watches, then walks away.

A baby is crying somewhere. The rhythmic sound of a heart beat.

Colin answers the door.

Jasmine

I'm wet as fuck.

Colin

It's not a good time.

Jasmine

Can I come in or what?

Colin

What?

Jasmine

Funny.

She walks past him into the house.

Colin

She's not back till late.

Jasmine

Never is these days. She's got a reception till nine, then a late meeting, checked with her secretary, went over, had an argument today, so I know.

Colin

You went to her work?

Jasmine

I'm not interested in her anyway that's not why I'm here.

She looks at the house.

I hated it when you moved. That was my house. I loved that place. But this is so ... House and Garden. Yeah ... none of my mates are around got exams or whatever so I thought you'll be on your own and you could probably do with a laugh so I brought a bottle of tequila. And a split or two, or three.

Colin

I don't really smoke illegal drugs, it's sort of frowned on for –

Jasmine

You should.

Colin

For husbands of government ministers.

Jasmine

You should, given everything that's happened to you.

Colin

A drug habit? Right.

Jasmine

You lost your job.

Colin

I'll find something else.

Jasmine

To take?

Colin

A job.

Jasmine

You probably wanted kids but she's past it now.

Colin

Not really.

Jasmine

No she is, well past it, trust me.

Colin I mean we don't want kids.

Jasmine The house must feel empty, with you here, on your own all day.

She lights a cigarette.

Colin You can't smoke inside, you know that.

Jasmine She isn't here.

So. Why can't you get a job? Too old is it?

Colin In their terms, and I've never been one of the city boys really. Never done that stuff.

Jasmine What stuff?

Colin Cars, booze, coke.

Jasmine Strippers.

Colin Exactly. Strippers. God.

A moment.

And you're right, it's not been the easiest of months for her either, so she tends to take it out on ... well ...

Jasmine You.

Colin People.

Jasmine You. It's all got a bit bleak recently, hasn't it?

Colin Why are you here?

Jasmine I'm your fairy godmother.

She offers him a cigarette.

Colin I don't smoke.

Jasmine If you're gonna have a mid life crisis, better have a fucking good one. It won't kill you.

He takes one. She lights it.

She pours two shots of tequila.

Bad things are happening. Let's stick our heads in the sand.

They drink.

Sarah is in a restaurant with **Carter**.

Carter For me, a restaurant is never about who will be here, but who certainly won't. And there are a lot of people who certainly won't be here. The wine's excellent, the meat isn't local which in London is a good thing, the service is eight out of ten. The cheese. Well, the cheese is something to write home about. Dear mother I have just tasted the most delightful cambozolla –

She gives him the sheets of paper.

Oh.

Straight to business. Thank you.

Sarah Why don't you tell me what they are?

Carter Well. They are ... results. Of some tests. Photocopies of the originals I think. It's a preliminary report by Robert Crannock ... your father yes?

Sarah Why did you send them?

Carter Me?

No I didn't send them. I don't know anything about them.

The waiter comes over and pours some wine. Sarah drinks straight away.

Sarah Alright well, why might someone ...

Carter Why might someone have sent them?

Sarah Exactly, yes, let's *imagine*.

Carter Well these are signed by your father, the results of a project he did for the largest airline in the UK, oh hang on that's my company isn't it? Yes I remember this, a project over twenty years to investigate whether emissions from aircraft would have any lasting impact on the environment. Now this report seems to suggest that clearly, yes. Yes.

A huge impact.

These emissions would prove disastrous, for the world.

Sarah Right. That's what he thinks.

Carter But that wasn't his conclusion Sarah. Not at the time.

For twenty years, his public reports said the opposite. That burning fuel, and carbon emissions, would have little or *no effect*. It was one of the main factors in the expansion of the industry. So the question we ... sorry. Not me. The question you have to ask yourself is why would he do that? For twenty years.

When he knew the truth. Why would he lie?

Of course, everyone makes mistakes, we don't mind it took him twenty years to work it out, but if it were revealed that he knew *all the time* ... in green circles he's a god ... if this came out, his reputation would collapse.

And you're his daughter. Perhaps it would rub off on you.

I presume he was paid. I wonder how much?

Sarah smiles.

Sarah Yes.

Carter Yes?

Sarah You're right. The public should know. I'll give the report to the press in the morning.

Carter You will.

Sarah Absolutely. And thank you, because this is a lovely restaurant, the wine is delicious, and especially for this, because I think my father deserves whatever he gets.

Carter Really?

Sarah You should've done your research. I hate him.

I'm more than happy to disown him publicly. Any excuse.

So sorry, John – no more runways.

She drinks from the wine.

Carter I like the way you hold the glass. By the stem.

It's impressive. You're wasted.

Sarah Not yet.

Carter In politics, I meant.

Carter takes the papers off her:

You'll forgive the attempt? This sort of thing normally works on politicians. They get scared. Because most politicians are geeks, as you know Sarah. That's why they're so ugly.

The waiter arrives again.

But you.

You're not ugly at all. You're ... striking. Intelligent. So what are you doing?

What do you want?

Sarah What do I want?

Carter To eat.

Sarah Oh.

Carter I've done my best. It didn't work.

So, let's relax now, eat, drink.

Enjoy ourselves. Make a night of it.

Let's talk like men do.

The sound of a baby in the womb.

A young doctor, Tim, is standing with Freya.

Tim We've run all the tests. I'm pleased to say, it's perfectly healthy.

Freya I've been smoking. And drinking. I fell over in the bath.

Tim She's fine.

Freya Other mothers aren't like this.

Tim Women often go through many feelings, but when you give birth –

Freya You should get rid of it. The baby. Before it's too late. Ow!

Tim It's not possible.

Freya You do it all the time.

Tim Not in these circumstances. She's too advanced.

Freya If I was a cave woman, I could do it myself. Punch myself in the stomach.

Or wait till it was born and hide it or bury it or something. Maybe I will. I thought this was civilised. I thought I had rights.

Tim We are civilised. You do have rights. But at this stage, so does your daughter. Is someone picking you up?

Freya I'm on my own. There isn't anyone. I'm staying here. I need to stay here.

Tim We don't have room.

Freya Sign a piece of paper and it's done – what?

Tim What's really the matter?

Freya I keep on telling you, there's something wrong.

Tim Not with the baby?

Freya I was out all day, I saw so many people and none of them cared. Are you a good doctor?

Tim Are you a good patient?

Freya Good patients would tell you their names.

Tim I'm Tim.

Freya Hello.

Tim Hello Freya.

Freya Oh, you know.

Tim Found your wallet in your bag. Now all we need is an address.

Freya Good hands.

Tim Thanks.

Freya I bet you keep your girlfriend happy.

Tim Boyfriend actually.

Freya

Boyfriend right, I bet you wouldn't leave him by himself if he was having a baby.

Tim

Hard to say.

Freya

I'm not very happy at the moment. Brave face, but I'm struggling. You should let me stay.

Tim

Freya I can't unless you're in for a... Do you want to see her?

Freya

Who?

Tim

Your daughter.

Freya

No.

Tim

If you see her, you can stay the night. That's the deal.

Tim smiles.

Freya

You're just like my husband.

Tim

In what way?

Freya

He's always smiling too, like nothing's wrong.

She winces with pain.

Steve looks, very seriously, at Robert.

Steve

It's a nice house.

Robert

Jealous.

Steve

Not really.

Robert

Small flat you've got. She finds it claustrophobic.

Steve

Is that what she said?

Robert

What do you think? Is she happy? With the house? Is she happy? With you?

Steve

I'm sure she mentioned it.

Robert

Of course, but – I want you to be proud of it, Steve. I want you to declare it.

Steve

I'm a writer.

Robert

You're a writer. Good. OF

Steve

Books. Sort of trivia books.

Robert

Sort of trivia books. That's right. What sort of trivia books?

Steve

For the Christmas market mainly, they're like stocking fillers.

Robert

And what do they like, fill the stocking with. What are they called?

Steve

The latest one was 'Fifty Shit Things About Britain'.

Robert

Fifty Shit Things About Britain. Wow. Steve. Wow. That's what you think? That Britain's shit.

Steve

Yeah, nothing to be proud of really.

Robert

Well I don't know, there's always your book.

Steve

We're working on a sequel actually, for this year.

Robert

Another Fifty Shit Things About Britain?

Steve

Fifty Shitter Things About Britain.

Robert

They sell very well.

Steve

The first bought the flat.

Robert

This one's for Emily.

Robert Emily?

Steve ...

Robert Tell me some of your shit things.

Steve Look, this isn't the point, I'm not here to chat –

Robert Why not? Are you staying? Tonight?

Steve You said a hotel.

Robert There isn't one, and it's terrible anyway. Stay here.

Steve No.

Robert Why not? Scared?

Steve It doesn't feel right.

Robert What does that mean, 'doesn't feel right'?

Steve To stay under your roof.

Robert You don't know me.

Steve I know what you did to them.

Robert What I *did* to them. I didn't *do* anything. I said things. I told them the truth. *Did something*, sounds like you're implying I hit them.

Steve No.

Robert Or fucked them something like that. You're not implying something like that are you?

Steve Of course not.

Robert Then watch your fucking language.

Choose better words.

Stay. And we'll talk. We'll find the time. Later on. Yes?

Steve Okay.

Robert Good. Now, tell me why Britain's so shit.

Jasmine and Colin *have wine and are quite stoned.*

Jasmine

I feel so fucking aimless Colin, I want to go where I want, do what I like, spend money, I want to shout all the time. Cos it's bullshit, just everyone, isn't it? Pushing emails around, shall we meet? Shall we have a pre meet? How about Thursday? I'm busy Thursday, well how about we meet to work out when's good, let's pencil that in, fucking about on facebook, events, messages, profiles, pretending to have friends, and I don't mind but none of it's *achieving* anything, it's one big 'general meeting', just chatter, and when it all fucks up, which it will, just statistically, historically, when it all goes pear shaped, they'll be full of regrets. 'I should've slept with him, I should've gone there, done that while I had the chance'. And I never want regrets Colin so while I still can I'm gonna fuck some shit up.

Colin I've never done that.

Jasmine What?

Colin Fucking ... shit ... or ...

Jasmine Oh Colin.

Colin I've found for the sake of dignity it's better to stay away from the ... shit.

Jasmine We have to sort you out.

Colin *lets out a long strange depressing sigh.*

Sarah and Carter *in a bar – more relaxed now.*

Cocktails and a night time view over London.

Sarah

I have a fundamental belief in the role of government. I'm very clear about that.

Carter

Sarah, it's wonderful your clarity.

Sarah

And we're very different you and me.

Carter

Different in many ways, I'm not denying that, I'm simply saying that with your skills, contacts, your background, you don't know how much you're worth.

Sarah

I'm not interested in money.

Carter

A thousand a day, possibly more.

Sarah

It's not what motivates me.

Carter

I know I know, okay, but the improved quality of life that's something else. I spend my evenings with my children. Do you spend your evenings with your children?

Sarah

I don't have any children.

Carter

You don't have any children alright, do you see much of your husband?

Sarah

Enough.

Carter

Enough?

He smiles – you see?

Sarah

We're going through a ... thing at the moment it's not ... oh.

Carter

This is what I mean.

Sarah

Fuck. What am I doing? I'm telling you about my *marriage* why am I telling you about that? Jesus. Shut up Sarah.

Carter

We're just talking.

Sarah drinks her Mojito.

Sarah

But alright so quality of life, that's not a factor either, because there are important things you care about. I understand. Targets, limits, carbon trading, an international agreement. How's all that going by the way? Cos these days I don't hear so much about it.

There's a lot of momentum to get something done.

Carter

Momentum.

Sarah

Yes... I know I know alright.

Sarah grabs a waiter.

Can I get another Mojito?

He goes.

Carter

Come on Sarah, you like things to *happen*. You know really that the solution will lie in utilising the market. Technology and innovation.

Sarah

Carbon ingesting algae you mean?

Carter

Carbon –

Sarah

An orbiting umbrella.

Carter

Sarah, you're being / naughty.

Sarah

No no, my favourite – turning the moon into a huge solar panel.

Carter

That's kind of how innovation *works*. It's *new*? If people will pay, the world will change, fast. The internet existed for ten years, no one had it, but as soon as it could do adverts it went in every home.

Sarah

The environment is longer term, less quantifiable, without government incentivising industry there won't / be any commercial activity.

Carter

Sarah, *Sarah!* You could be doing so much more than incentivising. This is what I'm saying. There aren't many people around like you. If you were in business you could solve environmental issues right now, you could save lives and build economies and you could do it quickly. And then after work you'd go home to your big house, your happy husband, and do what you like. Concerts, painting, cooking.

Sarah

I used to like cooking.

Carter

What's your husband's name?

Sarah

Colin.

Carter

Colin? Right. Colin?

They both smile.

Right.

Sarah

He's an amazing man.

Carter

I'm sure he is.

Sarah

But when I come in these days he just looks at me.

Carter

Because you're killing yourself with this half-arsed government when you're capable of so much more. He knows it. I know it.

Sarah

Well ...

We'll have to wait and see.

Carter

Wait for what?

Sarah

The next election, see where we are.

Carter

That could be three years.

Sarah

Slowly slowly –

Carter

Why wait?

Sarah

You mean ...

Carter

Come to us in the new year.

Sarah

I thought we were talking theoretically.

Carter

No.

Sarah

You want me to work for you.

Carter

Well actually Sarah, if you came across, I would be working for you.

She looks at him.

Proper salary, resources, investment, whatever you want. An expense account. Leading the field. Clean up the industry, from the inside. You tell us what to do.

Sarah

This is an offer?

Carter

A great big offer. You get what you want.

Sarah

Yes.

Carter

And so do we.

They look at each other.

Sarah

You're a clever boy.

She drinks. This is the deal.

Carter

The things you could do Sarah. So much bigger than planes and runways.

Robert, Steve and Mrs Andrews are having dinner.

Robert

Did you fly here Steve?

Steve

I didn't have much choice.

Robert looks at him.

Robert

You haven't read my books have you?

Steve

I had a look today, while I was waiting.

Robert You had a *look*?

Steve A skim, yes.

Robert They aren't difficult, even Mrs Andrews managed them.

Steve Your books aren't why I'm here.

Robert Mrs Andrews, let me explain. Steve is worried about his wife. Now I haven't spoken to any of my daughters for twenty years. They don't like me, they're doing their own things – My eldest is the environment secretary. My youngest is at university. And Freya. What she does I don't know. She's pregnant, does that count?

Steve She's a teaching assistant.

Robert Yes, she helps deaf children or something, but quite strangely one evening, Steve got home and found his wife had gone. Where? Well he eventually discovered that she had got on a train and come up to Scotland, to talk to her dad. And yes. We spoke. You gave her fruit cake.

Mrs Andrews Aye.

Robert Very appropriate in retrospect, because after she got home, she wouldn't tell her husband what we spoke about. He knew where she'd been, but Freya refused to talk. She wouldn't even say why she went in the first place. I presume she's become unhappy. Confused.

Steve She hardly leaves the flat anymore, she cries at night.

Robert Right, so then even more strangely, Steve decides to fake a business trip and come and talk to me himself. Not realising of course

that if he needs to do that then there's much bigger issues at stake.

Steve Like what?

Robert Like not what I said to her.

Steve Okay.

Robert But why she won't talk to you. Why you're sneaking up here without telling her.

Steve I need to know what's happening.

Robert I'm in two minds as to what to say, Mrs Andrews. Steve's come all this way. But do I betray the trust of my daughter, and get involved or do I keep my mouth shut, for once?

They look at each other.

The problem is Steve, that it is, in fact, all about my books. If you want an answer, you'll have to understand some science. You'll have to listen. And it won't be humorous. It's very interesting, but there aren't any *laughs*. Can you deal with that?

Steve Go on.

Robert Everything in the planet is co-dependent. It exists in ever changing, ever evolving balance much like a gigantic organism itself. Did you get that far with the books?

Steve Yes / I did.

Robert Species live and die and evolve and the planet evolves too through cycles of hot and cold and responding to the demands of life, and life responds to the demands of the planet. But the problem is /

Mrs Andrews Global warming.

Robert

You see, there's a keen brain under all that - Global warming, yes. You know how that works. Of course you do. You've seen Blue Peter. And people draw their graphs, they show the rise in temperature, they show a small but steady rise, they say it can be limited, you know by how much?

Steve

A couple of degrees?

Robert

Two degrees yes, as long as we recycle, do you recycle Steve?

Steve

Yes.

Robert

And insulate our homes, I expect you've done that too.

Steve

Looked into it -

Robert

Of course you have I'm sure you've got a bag for life, and all that makes you feel better I know but it's a complete waste of time because the global climate has never been interested in two degree anything. If we look at geological records of historical climate change, the onset of the last ice age for instance, we see there is no steady climb, no year-by-year increase. There is in fact a relatively stable climate system, and then something happens, the system is stretched and in a moment, it collapses and changes, in hundreds not thousands of years. You understand?

Steve

...

Robert

Let's imagine this house is a planet. What regulates the climate?

Steve

The thermostat?

Robert

Mrs Andrews. When the house is too hot she opens windows, when it's too cold she

Steve

switches on the heating. She brings in new material to eat or drink, and she removes the waste when I'm done. She cleans the air and the ground and she regulates my life, don't you? We are symbiotic, she would not exist without me. I couldn't live without her.

Robert

Right.

But she's very unhappy at the moment Steve. Because when the population is doubled like this, her systems are stretched. The house gets hotter, quicker, food and drink are consumed at twice the rate, the floor is twice as dirty. She's under pressure, but is there a steady increase in her anger? Can you detect a slow rise in her temperament? No. She's stable, she's holding it together. But there will come a day, if you stay too long Steve, when the system's been stretched too far, and she'll snap. Suddenly she'll take away your sofa, she'll hide the food, leave the heating on, steal your phone and spit in your drink, she'll do everything in her power to remove the problem. To remove you. And she'll succeed Steve, you'll be gone, because she's stronger than any of us.

We were part of system, a relationship, and we abused it. The world will be fine in the end, and it knows what it wants. It wants to get rid of us.

Mrs Andrews

The end of humanity.

Steve looks at them.

Steve

Can we get back to Freya?

Robert

You don't believe me?

Steve

I don't see how it's relevant.

Robert The end of humanity not relevant?

Steve To what we're talking about, no.

Robert Mrs Andrews. He doesn't believe me.

You think I'm a strange old man.

A pause.

Robert *stands up, goes to Steve, grabs him.*

Robert Up.

Steve What?

Robert We're going.

Steve Where?

Robert The end of humanity. We're going to see it.

Jasmine and Colin *are smoking a spliff.*

Jasmine I'm not wearing underwear.

I never do.

Colin Uncomfortable.

Jasmine It makes life that bit more exciting. You should try it.

Colin I don't think it's the same with men.

Colin *stares. Fixed. Empty.*

Nothing for a moment.

Jasmine *looks at him.*

He's blank.

Jasmine Colin!

What's gonna change?

She pokes him.

Come on!!!

What's happening!?

She pokes him.

Pokes him again.

Keeps on poking him.

Poke poke.

He looks at her.

Then he stands up.

What?

What?

Have I pissed you off now?

Goes to the CD player. Picks a CD. Puts it on.

What are you doing?

The Arcade Fire – 'Rebellion (Lies)'. It plays.

What's this?

Colin Arcade Fire.

Jasmine Okay, yeah I remember them.

Colin *is standing moving a bit.*

Colin Freya gave it to me one Christmas.

Used to play it in the car.

Colin *starts to dance to it, very awkwardly. He knows the words, but is not used to moving his body.*

Jasmine Oh.

My.

God.

Colin You like it?

Jasmine Er ... I ...

Jasmine *is amazed.*

Colin dances.

Yeah.

Colin sings along, loudly now.

*'Sleeping is giving in,
no matter what the time is.
Sleeping is giving in,
so life those heavy eyelids.*

*People say that you'll die
faster than without water.
But we know it's just a lie,
scare your son, scare your daughter.'*

As he goes he grows in confidence, he starts to let go. There is a kind of beauty to it.

Jasmine is laughing and smoking.

Carter pays for the drinks at the bar.

Carter You look different Sarah.

Sarah What?

Carter You look younger.

Sarah smiles.

Colin dances with things in the room. Bashes around. Starts to go crazy. No ironic moves. He means it.

He pulls Jasmine up. Dances with her, sings to her. She can't believe it.

*'People say that your dreams
are the only things that save you.
Come on baby in our dreams,
we can live on misbehaviour.
Every time you close your eyes
Lies, lies!
Every time you close your eyes
Lies, lies!*

*Every time you close your eyes
Lies, lies!
Every time you close your eyes
Lies, lies!*

Every time you close your eyes.

Jasmine You're mental!

Colin *Every time you close your eyes.
Every time you close your eyes.
Every time you close your eyes.'*

He lets himself go completely.

Freya and Tim. *The music playing underneath.*

Freya She's not kicking anymore.
She seems happy. I think she likes you.

She smiles.

Maybe she could be a doctor, do something good.

He smiles.

Tim Back in a minute.

He goes out.

Carter and Sarah *are outside in the rain under an umbrella.*

Colin *People try and hide the night.
Underneath the covers.
People try and hide the lie.
Underneath the covers.*

*Come and hug your lovers
Underneath the covers.
Come and hug your lovers
Underneath the covers.*

*Hide it from your brothers.
Underneath the covers.
Come and hug your lovers
Underneath the covers.*

Carter There's a fifty. For the cab.

Sarah It won't be that much.

Carter Buy something for your husband.

Sarah smiles, gets in a cab and drives off through the city.

Colin continues to dance and mine along with the words.

Colin *'People say that you'll die
faster than without water;
but we know it's just a lie,
scare your son, scare your daughter;*

Jasmine is going as mad as he is. They dance close
*Scare your son, scare your daughter;
Scare your son, scare your daughter.'*

She kisses him suddenly.

He stops her. Stands back.

They look at each other as the music continues to play.

Jasmine sits. Relights the spliff.

Colin listens to the music a bit, then fades it down and switches it off.
We hear the sound of the storm outside.

Robert is walking with Steve up to a tree.

Robert There's a nest in this tree. Redwings,
beautiful patterning. They were the reason
I moved here. I found the birds, bought the
house nearby.

Steve I'm asking about / Freya.

Robert The birds were endangered and climate
change was the cause apparently. So I
thought, they will be my barometer. Like the
ravens in the tower, when they leave, it's
over. They said rising temperatures were
driving them elsewhere. What do you think?

Steve Doesn't feel warm right now.

Robert Well exactly, how could you know it was the
air temperature? If you want to understand
these things, you have to look at the entire
system, the mountains, the animals, the air,
the sea, it's infinitely complicated Steve, but
that's what I do, I sit in that shed and I try to
see the future.

Steve Just you and your shed.

Robert Every model suggests things are going to be
worse than anyone imagines. I've seen
something terrible,

Steve You're the only one who's noticed.

Robert People say they want the truth – facts, and
figures, but actually they want to be told it
can be avoided, with minimum effort. When
Neville Chamberlain came back from Hitler.
He said he had a peace treaty, said he could
trust this obviously evil man. Why did he
believe it? Why did *we* believe it? Because we
had to, or we'd be facing untold horrors.
Always Steve, faith will come before truth.
That's who we are.

Steve Freya's read your books, she knows what you
think, so why did she come all the way up
here?

Robert They all know what I think. Best way to
reduce the carbon footprint?

Steve What?

Robert No foot. You want to be green?

Steve Okay –

Robert Hold your breath. The planet can sustain about one billion people. We currently have six billion. So in the next hundred years it will balance the books. You understand?

Steve I don't –

Robert Five billion people wiped from the face of the earth in a single lifetime. Mass migration away from the equator, world wars, starvation ...

Steve And Freya –

Robert Freya came to ask my advice about children.

Steve And what did you say?

Robert You have to understand –

Steve What did you *say*?

Robert I told her that her child will regret she was ever born. Hate her mother for forcing her into a terrible world.

I told her to do whatever it takes.

I told her to kill it.

Steve looks at him. *Horried.*

Tim is operating the ultrasound on **Freya**.

We see a very blurred image. Of something. Faint sound of the womb.

Tim There. Can you see?

Freya No.

Tim Look.

Freya I can't see anything.

Steve and **Robert**.

Steve You told her to kill it.

Robert Yes.

Steve Emily.

Robert It's a / foetus.

Steve We're calling her Emily and I've no idea what's going to happen, but she's there, and growing, and she's my child too, not just Freya's, she's much more important than your theories ... your fucking birds.

Robert It's not just theory / it's

Steve You had no right. No right to say that to her.

Robert It's the truth.

Steve You listen! To me.

Robert The birds? You want to know about / the birds?

Steve For once, you listen. You had no right to say that to her. Do you understand?

Robert Steve!

Steve No –

Robert The birds had gone before I even moved in.

Steve moves away, to avoid hitting him.

Robert It's Weimar time, it's Cabaret, across the world. You feel it, we all do. We know there's nothing to be done, so we're dancing and drinking as fast as we can. The enemy is on its way, but it doesn't have guns and gas this time, it has wind and rain, storms and earthquakes.

Steve Just shut up. / Shut up.

Robert This isn't theory. This is *death*, this is *loss* and *pain*. Freya's not the first to suffer, and she won't be the last.

Steve She's beautiful and clever, but she's not strong, she came up here for help. She wanted her dad to make her feel better.

Robert Then she came to the wrong person.

Steve What did she do?
What did she do when you told her?

Robert The world as it is, a disgrace.
The world as it will be, unbearable.

Steve I have to get back. I couldn't get through to her at home. She's gone somewhere.

Robert You can't get back now.

Steve She might be killing my baby, so –

Steve leaves.

Robert She had to know the truth.
It's better it never lived.

Tim is still trying with the ultrasound.

Freya You aren't what you seem.

Tim I'm sorry?

Freya I saw you. Through the glass. Talking to the nurse. Ow! It's started again.

Tim I just need to find the ...

Freya I teach deaf children at school. Part of my job.

Tim Really?

Freya Means I lip read.

Tim Oh.

Freya Mad bitch.

Waste of time.
Then you both laughed.

Tim It was a joke.

Freya No. It's what you think. And it doesn't matter except I thought you were the good thing, you were the last glimmer.

And then you went out.

Aghh!

She hates you now.

On the screen is a very clear image of a foetus.

Tim I've had a long day. I'm sorry.
But look.
There she is.

Things'll seem better.
She'll make a difference, won't she?
When she's here.

Freya Yes.

She will.

She will make a difference.

The foetus is on the screen. Kicking.

Its mouth moves and we hear a small voice.

Foetus Mummy?

Freya It spoke.

Tim What?

Freya It moved its mouth.

Tim It's just –

Freya No. I lip read. It's speaking.

Foetus Mummy?

Mummy?

Help.

Help me.

*Sound of the womb getting louder and louder.
Sounds like an earthquake.*

100 Earthquakes in London

Mummy?

Shaking.

The foetus turns its head to face us and screams.

Blackout.

End of Act Three.

Interval.

Act Four

Prologue

1991

Robert is watching television in the dark, drunk.

A door opens onto a hall where bags are packed.

Sarah comes in.

Sarah

I've packed enough for a week, for all of us, but we'll have to come back for the rest at some point, if you're serious about all this. There's too much, there's all the baby things, the nappies, the sheets, the toys, the bottle, I mean I can't fit the cot in my car, we'll have to get a van or something. I don't know, if you're serious.

I don't know if you are serious but if you mean what you said, I'm going right now.

With you I tried.

What?

Everyone had said if you have a child you'll change, you'll know what to do, everything will fall into place, and so I went into the hospital on the day you were born and there was your mum sat in the bed, and she gave you to me, to hold, and I looked at you, and I waited.

For that moment when I would feel like a father.

The moment everyone spoke about, when I would love you, completely, above anything else. But it wasn't happening.

I looked over at your mum and she smiled. It had happened for her.

I looked down at you.

Still nothing.

So I looked up at your mum and smiled back, and right then, I started pretending. A few years later we had Freya, and Jasmine, and every moment, all the time, I wasn't a father. I never felt it.

But now she's gone, now your mother's dead, there's no reason to pretend. She was the one I loved. Just her. Yes. I'm serious.

Sarah What work?

Robert What?

Sarah You said you had work to do, that you needed to focus.

Robert I've got to *stop pretending*.

Sarah *looks at him. Very upset. Holding it in.*

Sarah So every time you've hugged me and talked to me at bedtime, and drove me to university –

Robert Yes.

Sarah All the hours we talked, all that was –

Robert You believed it at the time. That's what mattered.

A baby is crying.

Sarah I left Jasmine with Freya.

Coldly, Sarah goes over and kisses Robert.

Robert You look like your mother. That's what I can't deal with. You all look just like her.

Sarah *exits, leaving the door open.*

The baby cries.

Robert Don't have children. Don't ever bring me grandchildren.

He turns back into the room, facing away from the door.

We hear the ten-year-old Freya's voice.

Freya Daddy?

Robert Go away.

Freya I found this dress. I think it was Mum's. Can I have it? I like the flowers.

Robert Don't touch a thing.

Freya Daddy?

Robert Leave me alone.

Freya Daddy?

Robert No!

Freya I'm pregnant.

Robert *turns. Facing him is thirty-year-old Freya, pregnant, holding the dress.*

What do I do?

Growing sound of white noise again, like a rumble, maybe like water, building up into ...

Thomas Hood

Early in the morning.

Light just on Freya in her hospital bed. She gets out of bed fully dressed, and puts her bag on.

She puts her headphones in and presses play, and sets out.

Maryna, the Polish cleaner from before, sees Freya and starts singing 'I Am Not a Robot' by Marina and the Diamonds.

Freya leaves the hospital with Maryna, and passes a group of men smoking outside. Freya steals one.

The man steals his cigarette back.

Freya Oh.

Freya walks down the road into the city, with Maryna, and picking up some other commuters behind her. They walk with her, singing.

As Freya starts to become happier, the commuters stop and lift her up and around, as she sings.

They put her down and they run – into Covent Garden! Various street performers appear, including a robot performer, a juggler, a few tourists, and some kids. Freya plays with them all, hopscotch, eating fruit from a stall, dancing with a waiter.

Everyone dances. A marching band appears, some people dressed as animals. People on TV in shop windows joining in. Everything moving. Signs, shops, the sun!

Huge lights, glitter from the ceiling, or a newspaper seller throws her free papers in the air. Ushers dancing and singing in the audience.

Peter appears, looking for Freya. Everyone starts moving off, going about their normal boring business. Maryna goes home.

The newspaper seller clears up her papers, slightly confused and leaves.

Freya starts to text on her phone.

Freya is crying, and texting, she leans against a wall and sinks down to her knees. Peter taps her on the shoulder.

Peter Hello miss.

Freya Oh / no.

Peter Was that you singing?

Freya You're supposed to be at home.

Peter

I know but I got bored it's all box sets and nothing in your flat, led me to a complete feeling of apathy sat around like that, I see what you meant now, so I thought I'd come and find you, you don't mind do you? You look terrible. Not being rude but you look completely white. Like someone addicted to heroin. Or someone that's dead. What are you doing?

Dark clouds appear. White noise.

Freya Nothing. Leave me alone.

She gets up and walks off, still texting.

He waits for a moment, then follows her.

The white noise turns into radio in a cab office. Steve is arguing with Mrs Andrews.

Mrs Andrews Forty minutes

Steve No, I've been here all night, I'm not waiting any longer.

Mrs Andrews Well I'm sorry but they said the driver's on his way and a Ford Focus only goes so fast in this weather.

Steve Ford Focus? Jesus.

Mrs Andrews It's no bad thing you learn a lesson. You may be worried, you may want to get home but you can't beat nature. You can't hold back the tide.

Steve Well we can.

Mrs Andrews What?

Steve That's exactly what the Thames Barrier does. Stops the tide coming in. We build tunnels, we fly, we go to the moon, of course you can beat nature –

Steve *receives a text message. He reads it.*

We can do what we want, and right now I want my fucking taxi. So.

He looks up.

Forty minutes, you're sure?

White noise.

Sarah *has made breakfast in the kitchen.*

Colin *comes in.*

Sarah Late night?

Colin Can you not?

Sarah I made some tea.

She puts it on the side.

Colin Shouldn't you have gone by now?

Sarah I want to talk.

Colin I know I know, we made a mess, we'll tidy up. Don't worry, go.

Sarah I've made a decision.

Colin A decision?

Sarah I've had an offer.

Colin Right ... you're ...

Sarah I'm going to resign. Take a new job.

Colin Look, I've got a headache.

Sarah

In the commercial sector. I'll start in the new year.

I was. Wrong. Colin.

I'm sorry.

You come first.

Colin *smiles.*

What? That's funny?

Colin You're going to work for a company?

Sarah A multinational company, position on the board maybe. It pays well, the hours are better.

Colin You used to throw things.

Sarah I ... what?

Colin You used to throw things through windows.

Sarah I'm sorry Colin you're not making sense.

Colin You'd bunk off work, go into town and shout your lungs out. Protesting against whatever it was, I'd come and pick you up round the corner.

Sarah Well thankfully I've grown up so –

Colin Wearing those dresses, you used to get in the car, your face would be red with shouting, and your hair down, you'd have thrown something at some bank, or the police and you'd jump in the car and say drive – just drive, and we'd speed off, like a film, in my Volvo.

Sarah You hated all that.

Colin At least we argued about things that mattered.

Now you want to be on the board.

Sarah I thought you'd be pleased. I thought you'd at least talk to me about it.

Colin Look.

Sarah What?

Colin We hate each other.

Sarah I don't hate you.

They look at each other.

Colin It's Jasmine.

Sarah No.

She's been talking, making you like this, while I'm the one mopping up, dealing with her fucking ...

Colin Just fun.

Sarah Her *won't*, I take her to the doctor, pay her rent, credit cards and –

Colin It's not Jasmine.

A moment. Sarah picks up the tea, offers it.

Sarah Are you going to drink your tea?

Colin You should go. You'll be late.

Jasmine comes down, in her nightdress, smoking a cigarette.

Jasmine Teal Great.

She takes it off Sarah and drinks.

Sarah You can put that out Jasmine. You know not to smoke inside.

Jasmine I'm not smoking.

Sarah This is my house.

Jasmine Yeah, it looks like you.

Sarah What?

Jasmine Dated. Subsidence, dry rot. Cracks beginning to show. In desperate need of redecoration.

Sarah I've done everything for you and you're ...

Jasmine Do you know what comes before part B?

Sarah What?

Jasmine Part A!

Sarah For Christ's –

Jasmine Come on that was funny.

Sarah You're like Dad. Just like him.

Jasmine Wouldn't know would I?

Sarah Colin can we have a conversation ...

Jasmine We should take you shopping today Colin, find you some new clothes, sort you out, what do you think?

Sarah's phone gets a text message. She picks up the phone, looks at it, puts it in her pocket – looks at Colin.

Colin Good luck with your job.

Sarah goes, upset.

Jasmine We so got it on last night – alright, we didn't exactly get it on but you were a bit frisky for a minute or two – alright maybe you weren't a bit *frisky*, but your heart was going like bang bang bang, bang bang – alright maybe not bang bang bang but –

Colin I nearly told her I wanted a divorce.

Jasmine Oh.

Colin Just now.

Jasmine Because of us? Cos you're great Colin but I don't know if I want a proper relationship.

Colin Don't be stupid Jasmine.

I'm serious.

Jasmine ...

Colin So what do you think?

Jasmine A divorce? Don't know.

Jasmine's phone gets a text. She picks it up. Slurps.

Things change.

A hint of white noise. Jasmine reads her text.

Steve, tired and unshaven, comes into the living room and picks up his bag. Robert is there.

Robert Did you call her?

Steve She's texted. She wants to meet.

Robert Good, she wants to meet. Good.

Steve You're right she'll have a difficult life.

Robert Freya?

Steve Emily. She'll not have the things we had, maybe.

Robert That's right.

Steve The world could be terrible. It could be.

Robert Yes.

Steve But she'll be clever, like her mum, so that's good, and she'll have a practical attitude which comes from me. An intuition.

Robert This isn't the point Steve.

Steve I think it is. The point. I really think it is. Even if things do get difficult, really tough, like you said, the world'll be better with her in it. She'll add something special.

Robert Don't you think all fathers think this?

Steve No, not all fathers. No.

Robert ...

Steve And anyway this isn't the future, she's already there, thinking, learning. Sucking her thumb, listening.

Robert You like things simple. I understand. Fair enough. You don't want to think about it.

Robert laughs, sits down. The taxi beeps.

Do what you want. Not my problem anymore.

Steve picks up his bag, takes out a book and gives it to Robert.

Steve My book.

Robert Your book.

Steve There's something on page thirty-seven you'd recognise. It's about angry old men who think they're prophets and stand on street corners with signs, shouting at anyone who walks past.

Robert Fascinating.

Steve They want the world to end when they do.

Robert Really?

Steve And they smell.

Robert What?

Steve Because they're on their own, they smell, a bit, of piss.

Don't get up.

He leaves. Robert sits in the chair. White noise grows.

Tom's phone rings. He's in his underwear, just woken up.

Sarah has arrived at work, and is trying to get through.

Simon The PM says half an hour this morning but only if it's important.

Sarah Say it's vital.

Simon Are you sure?

Sarah Use that word when you tell him.

Simon /'Vital'.

Tom Hello?

Sarah Tom. This is the secretary of state for energy and climate change we spoke yesterday, you came to visit.

Tom How did you get my number?

Sarah I've been thinking about what you said and I wondered if you'd be around for lunch.

Tom Lunch?

Sarah Yes. Today. Somewhere nice.

Tom I've only just got up.

Sarah That's fine. Get dressed. You've got a tie?

Tom I'm a student.

Sarah I'll send a car. He'll bring a tie. Half twelve?

Tom How do you know where I live?

Sarah 44 Lonsdale Road.

Tom Yeah but –

Sarah Perfect. Half twelve. See you then.

She hangs up.

Simon Minister, what are you doing?

Sarah I'm cooking.

Freya is walking down the street followed by Peter, walking behind her.

Peter Did you walk all the way here?

Freya Yes.

Peter Like Dick Whittington?

Freya What?

Peter It's a pantomime.

Freya I know what it is. / Jesus.

Peter I saw Dick Whittington at the Hexagon in Reading.

Freya Peter –

Peter It had Les Dennis in it. It was a bit embarrassing all round I thought. But anyway in that he walks to London and becomes Mayor. Maybe you'll become Mayor.

Freya I've had enough. I want to stop.

Peter Or perhaps you're here because of the earthquake.

She stops.

It's supposed to happen today.

Freya I know, I know it's *supposed* to but –

Peter Right so when it does you'll need a sidekick. Dick Whittington had a cat, I can be the cat?

She turns away from him.

Freya I'm imagining you. The drink or the pills in hospital or some kind of paranoia, schizophrenia something like that, the blood rushing to my head.

Peter There's a long history of earthquakes in the capital. One in 1580 killed two people and

made everyone think that it was Judgment Day.

Freya Peter . . . / shut up.

Peter Another one in 1981 originated in Yorkshire but made chimneys fall down in Clapham. The most recent was in 2008. They happen quite a lot.

Freya You should be interested in girls or something.

Peter I am.

Freya I'm tired.

Peter I am interested in girls or / something.

Freya Why isn't there ever anywhere to sit down?

She sits down on the ground.

They say when you give birth, the pain is unbearable. That's why women forget. Your skin tears, there's blood and there's shit and you scream and it feels like you're going to die.

She scratches at her stomach a bit.

Peter You still got my flower?

She has the flower stuck in her bag.

Freya I like it.

Peter You should keep going miss.

Freya Why?

Peter I think you're nearly there.

That way.

Freya stands and carries on. Peter smiles and follows.

Liberty, on Carnaby Street.

Jasmine sits with a Liberty Girl, waiting for Colin.

Jasmine I'm not going to steal anything.

Liberty

Jasmine Do you have to wear all that make-up?

You must be depressed working in a shop like this, standing here all the time, you look really depressed.

Liberty This isn't just a shop.

Jasmine What?

Liberty This is Liberty.

Jasmine But how much do you get paid?

Liberty I'm sorry?

Jasmine It's probably not much is it?

Liberty What do you do?

Jasmine shouts through the changing room.

Jasmine Colin! You know how to get dressed right?

No reply.

You should break out, come with us, what's your name?

Liberty Liberty.

That's the name of the shop I meant. What's your name?

Liberty It's my name as well.

Jasmine Coincidence.

Not really. I wanted to work here from when I was fourteen. I love this place, the people, the lighting. Most items cost well over two hundred pounds. I used to come here for

hours and walk around and touch things. Then when I was eighteen I applied for the job. I put Liberty on the form, as my name. I thought it would get their attention. I was right. When I got the job, I applied to deed poll, so my bank details would match. I wear this amount of make up so my skin tone goes exactly with the colour of the walls? And you'll notice my clothes co-ordinate with the posters, and the sign outside.

Jasmine

Well, *Liberty*, that's brilliant but we're drinking Ouzo and you should blow this off, come and have a laugh with us.

Liberty

You and your dad?

Jasmine

He's not my dad. We're together, out on the town, we're going to have it, what do you think?

She looks at Liberty and smiles.

Liberty

No thanks.

Jasmine

Can't believe you're called Liberty. What was your old name?

Liberty

Nicola.

Jasmine

I like Nicola.

Liberty

Nicola's shit. Liberty's better. What's your name?

Jasmine

Jasmine.

Liberty

Who called you that? Your mum or something?

Jasmine

...

Liberty

Jasmine doesn't mean anything. Liberty's better.

It means freedom.

Sarah, Tom and Carter in a restaurant.

Carter How are you feeling today?

Sarah I'm feeling really good, thank you.

Carter Stronger constitution than the country you're running. Not many people can say that. Who's this?

Sarah This is Tom.

Tom Hi.

Carter Work experience?

Sarah Tom's a friend.

Carter Hi Tom. Nice tie.

Tom She said we were going somewhere posh.

Carter Posh? Here? No. This isn't posh.

Sarah I met Tom yesterday. He has family in Eritrea. Do you know where that is?

Carter There are so many countries aren't there? Africa or something probably? We don't fly there, I know that.

Tom The crops don't grow anymore. The temperature is rising year on year. The people, my family, they're getting to the point where either they move or they die.

Sarah Tom doesn't really approve of your plans.

Carter What are you doing Sarah?

Tom You think your suit looks really good don't you?

Carter It's not about what I think, actually, Tom, it's a fact. This suit is really impressive.

Sarah

Tom tried to blackmail me. He thought at the time Heathrow wasn't enough he heard I was due to make an announcement and he demanded a complete halt to air travel expansion. Now, I gave him hell because I don't like to be blackmailed. As you know, I told him I hadn't made up my mind.

Carter

Which turned out to be true.

Sarah

But speaking to my husband this morning, he mentioned how I used to throw things at the windows of large corporations like yours. As you know we're going through a difficult time at the moment but he seemed to think I was more attractive back then, and I could see what he meant.

Carter

Oh I get it, you're making a *point*, she's *using* you Tom. Well look, Africa's a pretty shit place to grow vegetables global warming or not, what with the sun and the desert and the *civil war*. Maybe your family should move, get away from it all on one of our nice big planes, or is that not the point you're making?

Sarah

I was reminded why I went into politics, Tom and I / aren't so different.

Carter

I know a fantastic therapist, Sarah, if that's what this is really / about.

Sarah

So I gave Tom a call, asked him to join us.

Carter

This thing with *teenagers* / it's *strange*

Sarah

Then I called the Prime Minister's office to bring forward the meeting.

Carter

The Prime Minister?

Sarah

I sat down with him and put forward my case.

Carter

You did.

Sarah

A total halt to expansion, guaranteed. No more runways, control, terminals, nothing, right across the country. I said he had to be firm, make a lasting decision. I told him a strong message on this would unite the government, and be popular with the country.

Carter

And what did he say?

Sarah

He's very green. He's got a wind turbine on his roof. Next week, we announce. It's over.

Carter smiles at them.

In Liberty

Colin comes out from the dressing room. He's wearing a very expensive suit, shirt and tie, with new shoes. He's had a hair cut as well. He looks fantastic.

Jasmine

Wow.

Colin

Is it alright?

Liberty

How does it feel?

Colin

Not sure. How much is it?

Liberty gets out a calculator.

Liberty

Well, with the suit, the shoes, the tie, the shirt. The cufflinks, the vest, the care cover, you'll want that, the socks, the laces ...

Five thousand pounds and forty-four pence.

Colin

Oh my god.

Liberty

Perhaps your girlfriend would like something of her own?

Colin

She's not my girlfriend.

Liberty

She said she / was -

Colin Is that what you told her?

Jasmine No.

Colin Jasmine!

Jasmine Colin!

Colin She's my wife's sister.

Liberty Oh just your ... well ... that explains it then.

Jasmine What?

Liberty Why she's trying so hard.

A moment.

Anyway what do you think?

Shall we put it through?

Is it something you think you could own?

Sarah, Tom and Carter.

Carter Tom, do you have a computer?

Tom Yeah.

Carter Phone?

Tom Of course.

Carter You drive a car?

Tom And get to the point?

Carter All of them developed for profit. It's how we progress. But Sarah thinks we've reached the first moment in human existence where we have to stop, and go backwards. She thinks this moment is entirely different to anything that's ever happened.

Tom But the world is / different. It has limits.

Carter There will be more air travel Tom. Because people want it. People have the right. To be free, to make their own choices.

Tom

What's more important, a stag weekend in Amsterdam or the entire nation of Tuvalu sinking underwater? Six flights a year to a second home, or starving families in Eritrea?

Carter

I admire the passion Tom, and clearly you're a bright boy with huge potential but is this really what you want to do? You could come with me in a minute, I'll show you round the office, I'll pay your university fees, and before long you'll be eating in restaurants like this, with beautiful people and respect and all the resources you need to protect the people you love. Or, you could end up serving in restaurants like this, on the edge, struggling financially, a slow crawl to last place. Sarah's just made the wrong decision, there are so many women like her, lonely, past it, no children but she needs a project, so now we're all her fucking children, stupid and careless and in need of protection, and that's fine, she's nothing, she'll be forgotten, but it's not too late for you Tom, what do you think?

Sarah Tom's got what he wanted.

Tom What?

Sarah This is a good day for him.

Tom This isn't / what I wanted.

Sarah Like me, he just wants things to be fair.

Carter So you're not enjoying the restaurant Sarah? Or the bar last night? Your big house? / Nice holidays?

Sarah I'm not denying people their lifestyle but –
Tom Why / not?

Sarah

There has to be a balance between –

Carter

You should've seen the salary we offered her. And we never ask twice so –

Sarah

I'd rather eat my own shit than work for you.

Carter

Sort of thing you'd actually do. And anyway –

A bit of bread hits Carter.

What.

Tom

Shut the fuck up.

Thrown by Tom, who's standing up. Sarah smiles.

Sarah

Good shot.

He throws another bit at Sarah.

Sarah

Hey.

Tom

No.

We shouldn't be flying at all.

Carter

Ah, now, you see?

Sarah

Tom.

Tom

No *expansion* still means thousands of flights every single day. You've all had your whole lives to sort out the planet, and you've done precisely nothing. Now, according to the best scientists, we've got about five years left before it's too late, so you'll forgive me if I don't wait for the next *election*, you'll understand if I'm *impatient*. Because while you continue to have conversations like this, in London restaurants, in government lobbies and Notting Hill gardens, while you show off your little wind turbines, and while you're talking and talking, you're still doing absolutely fuck all. And meanwhile, the clock

is ticking, the ice caps are melting, people are dying and it's my generation who'll pay the price, long after you're both dead, so I think this is the turning point. Right now. I'm going to sleep with more sisters of elected politicians, I'm going to handcuff myself to railings, I'm going to attack police, issue bomb threats. Until something is done, something *real*, I'm going to add to the long and noble tradition of direct action.

He takes a plate and smashes it onto the floor.

There are children dying that shouldn't be dying. *Lifestyle?* Fuck your *lifestyle*.

He kicks over a chair.

Cunts. All of you. Are you embarrassed?

You should be.

Tom leaves. Carter smiles. Sarah drinks her wine.

A busker appears and starts playing.

Freya is now walking with Peter by the Houses of Parliament.

Freya

My dad says, in a few years, they'll look back, on the ruins of London, when the city's underwater, and the old people will say, do you remember walking down Oxford Street? The view from St Pauls? By that time there'll be heat waves, storms, even this earthquake might be caused by us they think. Something to do with ice sheets crashing into the sea. Decreasing amounts of sediment between the tectonic plates.

Peter
I think it's God.

Freya
What?

Peter
Don't you think if there is a God, he's pissed off? Like when you leave a mug in your

room too long and it grows into this rank horrible green pus. You throw it away when that happens don't you? You get a new one. Start again.

Steve is in Victoria station, a man in a polar bear costume approaches him. He is holding a bucket of money.

Steve I'm in a hurry.

Polar Bear I'm dying.

Steve Do you know where the tube is?

Polar Bear I know my whole habitat is disappearing down the tube, I know that.

Steve Right, excuse me.

Polar Bear Melting icebergs, whole eco-systems eradicated, maybe you could spare a few pounds?

Steve I don't have any change.

Polar Bear I'll do a dance.

Steve Can you get out of my way?

Polar Bear It's a good dance.

Steve Who are you?

The Polar Bear reveals his face.

Polar Bear It's Rag week. Greenpeace.

Steve Can you just / get out of the –

Polar Bear Cheer up, might never happen.

Steve struggles with the bear, pushes past and off.

A Young Man, dirty and sweaty runs up to **Freya** grabs her arm.

Young Man Please! Please.

Freya Oh. You ... How was –

Young Man

I'm sorry but my kid! My kid's in hospital, I've just found out, I need the bus fare to get down the road, I don't have any ... change ... I'm sorry, I'm really in a hurry, I'm really sorry. Shit. Shit.

Freya You asked me this yesterday.

Young Man What?

Freya About your kid. I gave you five pounds. You said exactly the same thing then.

Young Man Oh. Right, yeah yeah.

Freya You don't ... have a kid, do you?

The Young Man looks at her – of course he doesn't. He runs off – the **Polar Bear** leaves as well. A rumble.

Peter Depressing, isn't it?

Come on.

Freya looks at **Peter**.

Freya Peter. What's going on?

Peter What?

Freya You don't make sense, following me.

Peter I register very high on the autism spectrum.

It's the sort of thing I'd do.

You're not even that convincing. Shouldn't your voice have broken by now?

Yes, that's true, it should've broken by now.

Freya Right. So. Peter. What's going on?

Peter I think I have some kind of purpose. Maybe it's to do with the earthquake. Sometimes people imagine a figure who represents death, the bringer of bad news, a man who

will guide them from this life into the next. I could be Peter, at the gates of heaven.

Freya My version of death is a sullen fourteen-year-old boy with behavioural difficulties?

Peter He takes many forms.

Freya walks away, upset.

Peter Or I maybe I'm a herald.

Freya What am I supposed to do?

Peter Peter Rabbit. At the rabbit hole.

Freya I don't know why I'm here, or where I am, I don't want the baby –

Peter Miss –

Freya – but I can't get rid of it, my family hate me, not a single friend has called me all week.

Peter Miss –

Freya I'm a fuck up, a fuck up, on my own. A complete fucking MESS.

She looks at her belly.

I don't want you! Little fucking ...

She punches it.

Peter Miss! I can feel it.

Freya What?

Peter It's time.

Freya Peter, I've had enough!

Peter I'm a carrier signal.

Freya A what?

Peter Someone wants to talk to you and they're using me to get through.

This is the moment when ... The time has come. This is the moment.

Freya The moment?

Peter starts to remove his hoodie and his glasses.

Peter This is the moment when I ...

Who are you thinking of most?

The moment when I ...

Who do you think of all the time?

Freya I don't –

Peter Who are you thinking of right now?

Freya Emily.

Peter Emily, yes.

Peter lets his hair down.

Now revealed is a sixteen-year-old girl.

Emily Hello Mum.

A long pause.

They look at each other.

Freya starts to cry. Horrified. She backs away.

Emily Mum –

Freya I don't ... – Oh god ... you're all grown up. Oh god.

Emily looks upset.

Freya pulls herself together and tries to smile.

Freya Sorry.

Sorry.

Your hair.

It's a bit like mine.

Emily I've got dad's nose apparently.

Freya Yeah.

Emily His sense of direction too.

They look at each other.

Freya I look shit to you, probably.

Emily Well...

Freya reaches out and touches her on the arm.

What are you doing?

Freya Maybe we could, have a coffee. Do you like coffee?

Emily We don't have time.

Freya But that's what mums and daughters do. They have a coffee together. They talk. Don't have time before what?

Emily No, we should go.

Freya follows Emily.

Jasmine and Colin are walking along the river.

Jasmine Five.

Colin Shut up.

Jasmine Five girls so far, checking you out.

Colin Right.

Jasmine How many before today?

Colin When I was twenty a girl came up to me pinched my bum she obviously thought I looked good from behind but when she turned me round and saw my face she went urrrgh, and walked away.

Jasmine You've had a tough life haven't you?

Colin Fuck it.

Jasmine Exactly, you know where we're supposed to be going?

Colin The South Bank. This way.

A woman walks past and checks Colin out.

Jasmine Six.

Colin I

She chases after him.

Freya and Emily.

Freya What are you into?

Emily What?

Freya For fun. With your friends.

Emily I...

Freya ?

Emily Football.

Freya tries to smile.

Freya That's good.

Emily Mum I -

Freya Do you have a boyfriend?

Emily Am I gay you mean?

Freya No. I just.

Emily I play football so I must be gay.

Freya No. I didn't mean that.

Emily Yeah / okay.

Freya What do you want to do when you grow up?

Emily I'll finish school, get a job somewhere probably, I don't know.

Freya Ambitions ... ?

Emily No point is there? I mean there's nowhere to go. You don't understand. Look at you. Thought when you were younger you'd look better.

Freya What have I done? Why are you being like this?

Emily Are you joking?

Freya ...

Emily When you've been drinking, you sit on the sofa and apologise again and again. 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry *Emily*'. Then you fall asleep, spill it everywhere. I have to put you to bed.

Freya What about your dad?

Emily Dad left ages ago. Only see him Saturdays.

Come on.

Freya What?

Emily We don't want to be late.

Emily escorts **Freya** onwards.

Steve is on the South Bank.

A Jogger jogs past on the way to work.

Steve Excuse me.

She comes to a stop.

I'm ... meeting someone by the theatre, where's the ... theatre?

Jogger The theatre? I don't know.

Steve Oh, okay –

Jogger I don't go to the theatre.

Steve Okay – I just ...

Jogger Why would I go to the theatre?

Steve It doesn't matter.

Jogger It's just like TV. But more expensive. And further away.

Steve stops and waits.

Freya and **Emily** are walking along Waterloo Bridge.

Emily You know where they've put the London Eye now?

Freya No.

Emily Bath.

Freya Why?

Emily Good question. After the flooding it was going to go on tour but no one had the money so they had a public vote and Bath it was instead.

You ever been on it? The wheel. I read about Bath in a book once. Looked nice ...

Freya No.

They stop.

Emily So what have you done?

Freya What?

Emily What do you do? Day to day.

Freya I ... don't really ... I find it all quite ...

Emily You find it all too much.

Freya Yeah.

Emily You can't cope.

Freya I've never found it as easy as I think you're supposed to.

Emily is looking out at the view.

Have we stopped then?

Is this where you're taking me?

What am I supposed to do here?

Emily You've texted Dad haven't you?

Freya Yes but –

Emily And Jasmine, and Sarah.

Freya To meet me. I want to talk to them.

Emily Look where we're standing. Waterloo Bridge.

Freya ...

You wanted them to watch you. Mum, if you could see what's going to happen. The buildings and the parks are shanty towns. Immigrants everywhere, gambling and drinking, the streets – covered in shit, the air thick with smoke, there's disease and rationing, blackouts and curfews. Every morning when we fetch the water we have to queue for an hour, and at night you keep a knife by the side of your bed, just in case. I hate it. So do you. Everyone has given up. You're passed out on the chair, but I'm in the bed, under the covers, desperately trying to get a message to you. It's what you tell me. It's what you say you should've done, for both of us.

Freya I'm sorry, I've really been trying.

Emily It's not too late. Just step over the barrier.

Freya looks at her.

Then climbs over the barrier.

Get used to it. Breathe. I'm sat inside you. Warm and happy and I won't know anything about it. You have my entire support to throw yourself off. It's better you do. I promise.

Freya looks out.

Breathe. And then, imagine there's a step. Just step out. They say most people die of shock before they hit the water.

A few people gather around, at a distance to watch.

Emily stands amongst them, disappears in the crowd.

Freya Emily?

Passer by 1 Who is she?

Passer by 2 I don't know she just climbed over, but look at her.

Passer by 1 Yeah.

Freya Emily ... ?

Passer by 2 Just one of those women.

Passer by 1 / Yeah, god.

Freya Emily, please!

Passer by 1 Why does she keep on shouting?

Passer by 2 Who knows? Emily! Fuck! Sorry – shouldn't laugh. Has someone called the police?

Steve is on the South Bank.

Jasmine and Colin arrive.

Steve She texted you too?

Jasmine Yeah she didn't say you were coming though, could've left you to it.

Steve Colin, you look –

Colin Yeah.

Steve She's supposed to be here supposed to be here by now but –

Jasmine She gets distracted by bright colours. Don't worry, it's quite normal. She takes her time. Oh no.

Sarah *appears*.

Sarah Proper family gathering. Steve, she said you were away.

Steve I was.

Sarah She's texted everyone. What's happened to you?

Colin Right.

Jasmine Colin's got something / to tell you.

Sarah So where is she?

Steve I don't know.

Sarah Drags us all out here then doesn't show up herself, / pretty typical.

Steve I hoped she'd be waiting here, but –

Sarah What do you mean Colin's got something / to tell me?

Steve Has anyone spoken to her? Sorry. / Has anyone actually spoken to Freya?

Sarah Colin?

Colin Maybe we should –

Sarah I didn't take the job. You were right. I turned it down.

Jasmine He wants a divorce.

Sarah Oh ... you ... For fuck's sake Jasmine he buys a new jacket, you think he's having a

mid life crisis. He doesn't want a divorce, we're just –

Jasmine Ask him.

Sarah I'm not going to ask him.

Jasmine Ask him.

Colin I think perhaps we should ...

Sarah What? Should what?

Colin I think perhaps we should.

Steve Yes.

Steve Is that ...

Jasmine What?

Sarah We're, we're not going to talk about it here.

Jasmine You mean on / the –

Steve / Yeah.

Sarah In front of her and everyone else. We need to –

Colin Sarah.

Jasmine / fuck, fuck, shut up. *Shut up.*

Sarah I'm not doing this *now*.

Jasmine On the bridge.

They all look.

A crowd has gathered on the bridge – traffic passes. It is noisy. A Police Officer has arrived.

Freya

In 1844 Waterloo bridge was called the bridge of sighs, there were so many suicides.

Police Officer

I want you to stay calm.

Freya

Thomas Hood wrote a poem about a homeless woman who threw herself off.

Police Officer You're going to be alright.

Freya One more Unfortunate,

Police Officer Slowly come back/ over the barrier.

Freya Weary of breath, Rashly importunate,

Police Officer Help is / on its way.

Freya Gone to her death.

Passer by 2 / Come on. Fuck's sake, get on with it.

The crowd laughs.

Freya Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny

Rash and undutiful:

Freya's phone rings.

Passer by 2 JUMP JUMP JUMP JUMP ...!

Freya Fuck fuck shit ...

The crowd chants. Freya answers her phone.

Steve Baby, it's me. I'm here. I can see you.

Freya Steve ... I'm scared. But I can't ... They ...

*Freya cries. Someone in the crowd starts playing 'Jump' by Kris Kross.
The crowd chant.*

Steve Please. Climb / back down on to the road.

Freya Who was her mother? /
Had she a sister?

Steve Calm down, listen. / I'm on my way.

There is a rumbling drowning the rest of the noise. The ground shakes.

An earthquake. The bridge is moving.

Freya In she plunged boldly –
No matter / how coldly
The rough / river ran –

Steve Please don't. Freya. / I know what the
problem is.

Freya Cold inhumanity, / Burning insanity,

Steve Freya. Freya. It's okay. I understand.

The rumbling is loud now. The earth moving.

Freya Steve. I don't know what to do. I don't want
the baby, I really can't have a baby.

Steve We'll work it out –

Freya There's a noise. It's moving. Shaking. The
bridge. Everything's moving!

Steve Hold on and / just wait or

Freya I don't want to hold on – I can't wait
anymore – It's too late! This is important.
Where have you been! This is it!

The earthquake is very loud.

Freya Oh god oh god, it's the earthquake. Just like
they said.

I can't, I can't do anything.

Please please no.

Emily.

It's breaking.

I can't hold on! I ... I can't!

She slips.

Blackout.

The sound of destruction.

An earthquake.

End of Act Four.

Act Five

Prologue

As the noise fades, an animation plays.

We see blackboard animation that illustrates the story. The narrator is old and wise.

Narrator

It is said that in the old times, in the early years of the twenty-first century, mankind only thought of himself. The people would steal from the land and plunder the seas, they would kill the animals, tear out the minerals from the ground and poison the sky. And as the earth grew darker, the sun burnt brighter, and the sea began to rise, the people simply closed their eyes and drank, and danced, and attempted to ignore their certain destruction.

It was then, in mankind's greatest hour of need, that Solomon came. A young woman, accompanied only by one faithful companion, packed her bag, and came to the city of London. After three days, walking barefoot, she arrived on the bridge across the river, at the centre of the earth, and she spoke. Her words proclaimed the new enlightenment.

She was young, and so full of hope and truth that her speech, her words, the power and the light, was relayed, repeated, across the world, by radio, by television, by powerful rumour and written instruction to every man and woman on the planet and slowly slowly, the tide turned. People listened and people changed. Solomon spent the rest of her life travelling the world, walking a new path, showing us the future, a new way to live.

And the people of the world were happy. They were saved and they rejoiced.

The blackboard bleaches to white.

Certain Destruction

2525, or possibly a hospital.

A beeping sound.

A clean white space.

Freya is lying on a single white bed.

A Woman appears. She looks like Grace, and wears a white version of the floral dress from the Act One Prologue. She also wears a veil.

Grace

Freya.

Freya?

Freya wakes. Tries to sit up.

No, you don't need to move.

Freya

I was in the river.

Grace

You're safe now.

Freya

These aren't my clothes ...

Grace

How do you feel?

Freya

Where am I? Where is everyone?

Grace

It's just me. Try to focus. You've been asleep a very long time.

Freya

What do you mean?

Grace

You're in the future.

Freya

The future?

Grace

The year Twenty Five, Twenty Five.

Freya

You're joking.

Grace

You're alive. You're warm. You're safe. And now you're awake.

Have a drink.

Here.

A glass of water.

Freya takes it, and drinks.

Freya Who are you?

Grace I'm Grace.

Freya My mum was called Grace.

Grace Yes.

Freya But she died. There was nothing they could do. It was cancer.

Grace We don't have cancer any more.

Freya Good.

Grace We don't have diseases or pain, we don't have suffering or death, we have only peace. Peace and life.

Grace strokes Freya's hair.

Freya She used to stroke my head like that.

Can I ...

Freya removes Grace's veil.

Mum ...

Grace Hello Freya.

Freya Mum!

I was so scared! I didn't ... I didn't know what to do.

Freya hugs her and cries. Grace hugs her tight.

Grace You're safe.

You're safe now.

Hospital

Freya is in a hospital bed, on a ventilator; unconscious.

Steve is watching her.

He paces.

Tim enters.

Tim Mr Sullivan?

Steve Yes?

Tim I was the doctor who treated your wife. They said you had some questions.

Steve When she came in, didn't you think there was something wrong?

Tim She was worried about the baby but we tried to put her mind at rest, we let her stay in overnight, and then in the morning she checked herself out. We had no reason to think she would ... well.

Steve You just let her go.

Tim It was out assessment that she would be fine.

Steve Just let her walk out the door by herself.

Tim She said she didn't have anyone to collect her.

They look at each other.

Steve What do you think?

Tim I'm sorry -

Steve Does she have a chance?

Tim I'm sorry, it's not my department.

Steve I'm sure you've spoken to your colleagues before coming in here, you all *talk*, don't you? You wanted to know the situation before you confronted the husband. So you know the situation, what do you think?

Tim They're conducting some tests.

Steve But what do you think?

Tim

Steve If there isn't a chance, you should tell me. If there's nothing any of us can do anymore and we should all just give up, I'd rather know.

Tim I'm sure there's a chance.

Steve

Tim You might want to talk to her.

Steve Why? She's in a coma. Why would I talk to her?

Tim Some people find it helpful.

Steve ...

Tim Is there anything else I can do?

Steve Her family are outside. Can you ... make sure they have what they want, tell them what's going on, get them whatever they need.

And keep them out.

I don't want them coming in here.

Tim goes.

2525

The music plays again. Grace enters.

Freya is sat on the edge of the bed.

Freya

So - Dad bought into one of those cryogenic things and we've all been frozen at the point of death, you as well, revitalised only when medical science has the power to heal us.

Grace smiles.

Is that right?

Grace just looks at her.

Is that what's going on?

Grace

You look better.

Freya

I feel better. I want to have a look round. The future! Have you got flying cars?

Grace

We don't need cars.

Freya

And robots.

Grace

You have no idea.

Freya

When can I see?

When you're well enough.

Freya

I'm fine, look.

Grace

We have some questions first.

Freya

What about?

Grace

Freya, the date of your preservation is of vital historical significance. It is said, that this was the turning point. The moment you fell, the place it happened, Legend has it that it was from that place at that time that the speech was made. From the bridge. From that moment. The tide turned. The world became better, and better until we solved the problems. All the problems. And we survived.

So. Did you hear it? Did you hear the speech? Is that why you were there?

No. I don't know anything about it.

Freya

This is important, you were on the bridge, in that time.

Freya

Yes but –

Grace

Why were you on the bridge, if not to hear the Solomon's speech?

Freya

Solomon?

Grace

Yes.

Freya

Solomon on the bridge?

Grace

Solomon, the greatest woman in the world, she walked to London, stood at the centre of the earth and changed everything.

Freya

Solomon ... Mum. It's not Solomon. It's Sullivan.

Grace

What?

Freya

It's me. I walked all the way to the bridge, I stood in the centre of the earth.

Grace

But Freya ...

Freya

I'm Solomon. I changed the world.

Grace

Freya you can't be.

Freya

Yes! Why not?

GraceBecause you died.
And Solomon ...
Solomon lived.*Sarah and Colin are in the hospital café. Sarah brings back two coffees.***Sarah**

There.

Colin

Thanks.

*They drink.***Colin**

How are you?

*Sarah shrugs.**They drink.***Sarah**

Do you remember the jacket you wore at Suzie's party?

Colin

What?

Sarah

I just thought of it. You remember? It had shoulder pads.

Colin

Yes.

Sarah

It was far too big.

Colin

My lucky jacket.

Sarah

Well, that's what you used to call it –

Colin

Yeah.

Sarah

Lucky in what way exactly?

Colin

It got attention.

Sarah

You looked stupid.

Colin

Like I said, attention.

Sarah

Well ...

Colin

From the birds.

Sarah

Birds. Jesus.

Colin

Got your attention.

Sarah

You used to roll up the sleeves.

Colin

Nothing wrong with that, not in the eighties.

He rolls up the sleeves of his jacket.

See?

She smiles.

Good look.

He unrolls them.

Sarah Probably just ruined it.

Colin What?

Sarah That jacket.

Colin What do you mean?

Sarah Just ... that it ... looks expensive, you probably shouldn't –

Colin Not your problem now is it?

Sarah Colin ...

Colin What?

Sarah I was trying to –

Colin What?

Sarah

Colin We shouldn't talk about this now.

Sarah

When you lost your job yes I probably thought I should compensate in some way. I know things aren't like they were, I know I'm *different* these days. But I don't think it's too late.

I'll change.

Or something.

Do you like this suit?

Yeah, I mean ...

Honestly.

...

I don't think it's very ... It's not who you are.

I love it. I really do.

It is absolutely, who I am.

It absolutely is.

Colin

Sarah

Colin

Sarah

Colin

Sarah

...

Sarah *reaches to him.*

He moves away.

Sarah

Do you even like me?

I mean.

You say you've fallen out of love with me and

that's ... fine ... that's ...

You don't want to see me any more.

Colin

Sarah

But do you think I'm a nice person? Because, with what everyone's said. With Freya.

And what Jasmine says.

I don't have anyone else.

So this is kind of crucial.

Colin?

Do you like me?

You live in a million pound house with two cars. You're a Liberal Democrat minister in a Tory government. Then you tell me you want to join the board of a multinational airline. It's not that I don't like you Sarah. I hardly know you.

Jasmine was right.

Jasmine's never been right about anything.

...

What did she say?

Things change.

Colin

Sarah

Colin

Sarah

They look at each other.

2525. *Freya is on her feet now.*

Freya

Then ... then I have to go back and do what I was supposed to do.

Grace

Back? Freya you can't go back. That world crumbled to dust hundreds of years ago. This is all that exists now.

Freya

But I was supposed to say something. That's why Peter was there. And Emily, I wasn't supposed to fall, I was supposed to speak. The crowd was there, ready to listen, I was supposed to give them the message.

Grace

Freya come and sit down.

Freya

But I messed it up. There must be something you can do.

Grace

It's too late.

Freya

Mum!

Grace

Sit down!

Freya

No. I'm getting out. I've got to find someone who can help.

I ...

Oh.

Where's the door? There isn't a door.

Grace

No.

Freya

How do you get in and out?

Grace

Freya.

Freya

What?

Grace

You don't need to go anywhere. Everything's good here. Everything's perfect.

Freya

And where is everyone? You keep on saying we think this, and we're very interested, but

I've only seen you. There should be hundreds of people wanting to talk to me, I'm historically important remember.

I'm your closest relative and carer, of course I'm the one to look after you and if you give it time you'll -

Freya

There's something going on.

Grace

...

Freya

Please. Mum. Don't lie to me.

Grace looks at her.

I always knew when something was wrong.

Grace

Have you got a headache?

Freya

How did you know?

Grace

Sit down, with me, on the bed, and I'll explain.

Jasmine is in the waiting room.

Robert enters.

Jasmine

Er. This is a private room?

Robert

Really?

Jasmine

We've paid for it.

Robert

I'm sure you have.

Jasmine

Family only yeah?

She looks at him properly.

Oh. Shit. Shit.

Shit, didn't recognise you. Jesus. Seen pictures but they must be from a while back. You look ... old. Shame we haven't met before something like this, isn't it?

Robert You look ... really -

Jasmine What? Here you go, they said you like to answer back, okay yeah, I've been up all night, I'm not my best. What? I look like what?

Robert Like your mother.

Jasmine Do I?

Robert When she was your age.

She's floored.

Jasmine Yeah right well done. Good tactic. I look like my mum, put me off my - That must freak you out then. Sarah says Mum was never happy, often crying she said, looks like Freya got those genes.

Robert Look, I know there's a lot to talk / about but -

Jasmine And I got yours, apparently I've got a mouth on me reminds Sarah of you, yeah there's a fuck of a lot to talk about where do you want to start?

Robert This isn't the time.

Jasmine Never is, is it? Never is the fucking time by the sound of it.

Robert Jasmine -

Jasmine Such a lonely old fucking - look at you -

Robert You're not a teenager so -

Jasmine Actually I am.

Robert Can you stop -

Jasmine Technically I am? Nineteen, if you're counting, which you're probably not, so - stop what?

Robert Stop being so fucking petulant.

Jasmine Christ they said you got nasty quickly I thought they meant hours not minutes look at you, big red face.

Robert Sit down.

Jasmine I'm not the one getting angry Gandalf, you're shouting, I don't think you're allowed to do that I might call security.

Robert I hate planes. I'm shattered. Fine. You're nineteen. I'm seventy. Sit down, and shut up. What are you wearing?

Jasmine Whatever the fuck I want.

Robert You look like prostitute.

Jasmine You talk like this to everyone?

Robert Yes. You?

Jasmine Yes.

A moment of respect.

Robert Good.

He sits.

She reluctantly sits as well.

Jasmine Read your books.

Robert And?

Jasmine Bit dry.

He smiles.

You told her to get rid of it.

Robert I told her the truth yes.

Jasmine Probably regret that now.

A moment.

Robert I could do with a drink.

Jasmine takes a bottle out of her bag. Gives it to **Robert**.

What's this?

Jasmine Ouzo.

Robert Oh.

He drinks from the bottle. It's awful.

You want some?

She takes the bottle. Drinks. They continue to share it.

Robert I should've put my work first, from the beginning. That's what I regret.

Jasmine Even though Freya's nearly dead. Sarah's a fuck up, getting divorced.

And me... well... look. Even given all that?

Robert Because of all that exactly.

I should never have had any of you in the first place.

Jasmine So why have you come now?

Robert To say goodbye.

Jasmine She's not –

Robert Yes. From what I understand she doesn't have much of a chance.

Jasmine No fuck off you don't know if anything had happened Steve would've told us, you don't know shit. Fuck's sake. Thought you'd have big eyes actually. We've all got big eyes. Suppose it must've been Mum.

Robert Yes.

Jasmine

Right.

Robert

But she had your hair. Your hands.

Jasmine

What else?

Robert

...

Jasmine

What's in the bag?

Robert

One of your mother's dresses. Freya liked it, wanted it, years ago. I wouldn't let her. I thought maybe I could ...

Jasmine

Bit fucking late now.

Robert

You're not like the other two.

Jasmine

No. You would've liked me.

Robert

Yes.

I think I would.

Sarah enters

Sarah

You're here.

Robert

I am.

Sarah

You've met.

Robert

We have.

Jasmine

Where's Colin?

Sarah

Colin's gone.

As the next scene continues, Sarah sits with them and drinks the Ouzo.
2525.

Grace

When you fell in the river, Freya, you hit your head. You did some damage. And sometimes, when that happens, people become unable to see a distinction between their own particles and those around them. They can't see the edges of their body.

anymore – where they stop and the world begins. They can instead understand instinctively that we are all just different recycled pieces of a larger, older creature. We are simply earthquakes ourselves, wonderful irregularities in an evolving system. We die and the earth uses us for something new.

Young Robert enters, dressed in white, and wheels in a cot.

Yes Freya, this is the future, and I am your mother. But this is also the past and the present, and I am your father, your sisters, your friends, your husband, the table, the bed, the ground, we are everyone that is, was, and everything that will be. I'm nature all in one. So are you.

Freya This isn't real.

Grace Your brain is doing what it always does. Making sense of what it receives. Combining imagination, memory, information.

Freya I'm dreaming.

Grace You're on your way.

Freya Where?

Grace We're here to help you.

Young Robert Freya. Look.

The sound of a baby crying. Freya goes and looks in the cot. She picks up the baby.

Freya Emily.

Doctor Harris is with Steve, who sits on the bed.

Doctor Harris I'm sorry. Her condition is worsening.

Steve I...

Steve *doesn't know how to react.*

Doctor Harris It's a matter of when to say goodbye. It should be soon.

Steve Alright. Yes.

Doctor Harris Alright then.

And what about the family? I know they're outside.

Steve ...

Doctor Harris Will they want to be here?

Steve

Doctor Harris Or would you rather it was just you?

Steve Let them in.

The family goes through.

The Nurse sits in a chair, exhausted. Turns on the radio. Music plays.

A hymn.

2525

The worlds beginning to merge.

Freya frantic.

Freya Wake me up ... please.

Grace No.

Freya Please. I need to go back. I can't stay here. Emily's alive. I can hear her. She's calling for me.

Grace Freya. You can't.

Freya I made a mistake. I need to go back.

Tell them all. Give the speech. Walk the earth.

Grace No.

Freya You can't stop me. This isn't real. I need to wake up and tell them what's going to happen, or the world doesn't change. The world stays as it is!

Darling!

She puts Emily back in the cot.

I'm going to be with you. I'm going to wake up.

Freya goes to the bed, lies down and shuts her eyes.

Grace Freya. I'm sorry.

Freya Now!

Yes!

Now!

Grace It's over.

The music continues, the worlds blurring. The family gathered around the bed, Grace stood slightly apart.

We can't hear what's happening – the music plays.

Doctor Harris stands close by, **Steve** sits on the bed with **Freya**, holding **Emily**.

One by one the family say goodbye. Robert stands back and watches.

Steve gives **Emily** to **Sarah**, and then lifts **Freya** and hugs her, crying.

Some distance away... during this, Emily enters, sixteen, very different to how we saw her before. Bright, optimistic, intelligent.

She wears the floral dress worn by Grace in the Part One prologue. And she carries a back pack.

Epilogue

The kitchen of a large house in the west Oxfordshire countryside. Night. On the table there is food out.

It is sixteen years later.

Emily is packing food into a backpack.

Some of it doesn't fit. In the rearranging, we see a map, a torch.

A knock on the door.

Emily goes and opens it.

Tom enters, now thirty-five, a man, rather than a boy. He is dressed much better, ready for a long walk. He is sure of himself.

Emily Shhh – / Dad's asleep – you look nervous.

Tom You've barely left the town on your own before, you don't know what it's like.

Emily I've done my research.

Tom You should let me come with you.

She smiles. Touches his arm.

Emily I'll be fine.

Tom And what are you wearing?

Emily Do you like it? Before she died, Mum told Dad it was her favourite dress. Dad gave it to me this afternoon, for my birthday. I like the pattern. How about you? Did you get me a present?

Tom gives her a small bag.

Tom Papers, ID, map, new phone.

Emily Good.

Tom All in the bag, as ordered.

Emily Perfect. I'm thinking maybe I should go barefoot...

Tom It's a long way.

Emily It is, and people should notice.

She takes her shoes off.

Definitely barefoot.

Tom You'll call me if you get into trouble?

Emily There won't be trouble.

Tom There might be, maybe we should tell your dad what you're doing. If he wakes up and you're gone –

Emily When did you care what he thought?

Tom This is different.

Emily I've told them for years, over and over, when I'm sixteen, this is what happens. At dawn, I'll be on my way. Not my fault if they never believed me.

Tom At least leave a note –

Emily Right. Toothbrush, bag, towel.

She puts the backpack on.

Tom Speech?

Emily Don't need a speech. It's all up here ... Tom! I'm half your age and you look petrified.

Tom It's ridiculous.

Emily You know what I can do?

Tom Yes.

Emily And you trust me?

Tom Of course.

Emily Then smile. It'll be fine. Now, how do I look?

He looks at her, takes her in.

Tom Emily Sullivan.

Magnificent.

She smiles.

He smiles too.

She looks at him, goes to the kitchen blackboard, and writes, in large letters.

'Gone to London'

As she goes on her way, Steve finally lets go of Freya, and she dies.

Blackout.

End of Play.