

108 Earthquakes in London

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 it was different.

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.

Robert

Sarah

Robert

Robert

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.

What work?

What?

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.

Marina, 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 Marina, and passes a group of men smoking outside, Freya steals one.

The man steals his cigarette back.

Freya walks down the road into the city, with Marina, 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.

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, haphsotch, 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. Marina 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.

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

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 go to the

moon, we fly, we build tunnels, 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 fucking my taxi. So.

He looks up.

Forty minutes, you're sure?

White noise.

Sarah has made breakfast in the kitchen.

Colin comes in.

Late night?

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?

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.

No.

Sarah

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

Colin

Just fun.

Sarah

Her vomit, 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

Tea! 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 fuck'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 –

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.
Fuck's sake.

Jasmine

...

Colin

So what do you think?

Jasmine

A divorce? Don't know.

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

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

Freyza?

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. A way with people.

Robert

This isn't the point Steve.

Steve

I think it is. The point. I really think it is. She'll break her arm whatever I try to do to prevent it. She'll run off with some boy or something, end up drunk in a field. But I

think 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

...

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. While noise grows.

Tom's phone rings.

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 –

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 Judgement Day.

Freya Peter . . . / shut up.

Peter Another one in 1931 originated in Yorkshire but made chimneys fall down in Clapham. The most recent was in 2008. They happen quite a lot. London's on a fault line, and built on clay, which makes it particularly susceptible.

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. If she was a tumour they'd cut her out.

She scratches at her stomach a bit.

Peter You still got my flower?

She has the flower stuck in her bag.

Freya Yeah. 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 How much do you get paid?

Liberty I'm sorry?

Jasmine It's probably not bad is it?

Liberty It's alright.

Jasmine shows through the changing room.

Jasmine Colin! You know how to get dressed right?

No reply.

I thought maybe I could do this.

Liberty What?

Jasmine Work here.

Liberty You?

Jasmine Yeah.

Liberty Okay.

Jasmine What?

Liberty You smell of drink.

Jasmine Yeah, I've got a bottle of Ouzo in my bag if you –

Liberty If you drink in the store I'll call security?

Jasmine Okay, okay.

Just . . . steady.

What's your name?

Liberty

Liberty.

Jasmine

That's the name of the shop I meant what's *your* name?

Liberty

It's my name as well.

Jasmine

Coincidence.

Liberty

Not really. I wanted to work here from when I was fourteen. I love this place. The people, the lighting. Nothing in the shop costs less than twenty pounds. Most items cost well over two hundred. 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. It did. They liked it. Then when I got the job, I applied to deed poll, so my bank details would match and everything. 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. I love it. And I love, I *love* my name.

Jasmine

What was your old name?

Liberty

Nicola.

Jasmine

I like Nicola.

Liberty

No, Nicola's shit. A shit name. 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 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 . . .

Sarah

I sat down with him and put forward my case.

Carter

You did.

Sarah

A total halt to expansion, guaranteed. No more runways, air traffic 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 got a wind turbine on his roof. Next week, we announce. It's over.

Shall we get some wine?

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?

Jasmine

You're a different person.

Liberty

How does it feel?

Colin

I didn't know clothes could fit this well.

Jasmine

How much does it come to? All of 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

Fuck me.

Jasmine Well that is the question, actually.

Liberty What do you think?

Liberty What about?

Jasmine Would you?

Liberty Oh.

Liberty looks at him.

When you first came in, I thought he was your dad.

One of those men you see in Weatherspoons who tend to smell of sweat.

But now he's all scrubbed up. You know what?

I might.

Jasmine Colin.

Credit card.

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

Tom

Sarah

Carter

Sarah

Carter

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. I'm on your side.

Tom

A total halt to expansion? I'm nowhere near your side.

We shouldn't be flying at all.

Ah, now, you see?

Carter

Let's quit while we're / ahead.

Sarah

Tom

No *expansion* still means thousands of flights every single day. You've all had your whole entire working 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 the fuck are you?

Polar Bear It's Rag week. Greenpeace.

Steve Can you just fucking / 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?

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.

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

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

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

Freya Right. So.

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

Peter
Miss –
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, so this is the moment, this is the moment when I . . . Peter out.

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

Mum, I've got something to tell you.

Freya just looks at her.

It's important.

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

We should go.

Freya follows Emily.

Jasmine and Colin are walking along the river.

Colin London looks different. I feel good. I could do anything.

Jasmine

Five.

Colin

Shut up.

Jasmine

Five girls so far, checking you out.

Colin

Why have I never done this?

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

Yeah. The South Bank. This way.

A woman walks past and checks Colin out.

Jasmine

Six.

Colin

Shut up.

Freya and Emily.

Freya

So . . . what are you into?

Emily

Football.

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 Right.

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

Emily It's not really like that.

Freya What do you mean?

Emily I'll finish school, get a job somewhere probably.

Freya Ambitions . . . ?

Emily No point is there? I mean there's nowhere to go. You don't understand. Look at you.

Freya For fuck's sake, Emily, what have I done?

Emily What have you done?

Freya Why are you being like this?

Emily Are you joking?

Freya Oh God. I'm a shit mother, aren't I?

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.

Emily Come on. We're nearly there.

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 It's there.

Steve Where?

Jogger There.

Steve Behind the car park, you mean?

Jogger No. That.

That's the theatre. It's modern.

Well . . . it used to be. Apparently.

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?

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?

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?

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, I don't –

Emily Look where we're standing. Waterloo Bridge.

Freya You mean –

You wanted them to see you. Mum, every year it gets worse for me. We've had two break ins so far this year, and you didn't pay the insurance so that's the computer gone. No one's got jobs. The street is dirty, next door's derelict, and there's a campsite in the park. They think there's going to a war soon somewhere in Europe because immigrants are pouring in with nowhere to go and starting to riot. Mum. I hate it. So do you. I'm in my room, under the covers, right now, 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 your hair?

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 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.

Sarah
What?

Steve
Freya . . .

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 Freya listen.

Freya It was a phenomenon of the time, the number of people who thought it wasn't worth it anymore. Thomas Hood wrote a poem about a homeless woman who threw herself off.

Police Officer You're not going to throw yourself off.
Freya One more Unfortunate,

Police Officer I want you to come back/ over the barrier.

Freya Weary of breath, Rashly impudent,

Police Officer Freya . . .

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:

Passer by 2 JUMP JUMP JUMP JUMP . . . !

Freya Past all dishonour,
Fuck fuck shit . . .

The crowd chants. Freya's phone is ringing. She answers it.

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.

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

Steve Clam 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!

Steve No, no.

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. Oh God oh God.

Emily.

It's breaking.

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