

146 Earthquakes in London

She slips.

Blackout.

The sound of destruction.

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 bags, 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

*A clean white space.**Freya is lying on a single white bed. Playing in the background on a screen is the animation we have just seen.**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 Excuse me.

Steve Yes?

Tim I'm Doctor Marcus.

Steve You're very young to be a doctor.

Tim I'm not looking after your wife.

Steve I didn't mean –

Tim No. You're right. You're lucky I'm not. She came into the hospital last night.

Steve They said.

Tim I was on duty. I got her trust, you know, we spoke. But then she saw me through the glass, I thought she couldn't hear but . . .

Steve What did you say?

Tim She can lip read.

Steve I know she can lip read, what did you say?

Tim Mad bitch. I said she was a mad bitch.

Steve I just wanted to say I'm sorry.

Steve Doctors talk like that all the time about their patients don't they?

Tim No, they . . . we have . . .

Yes.

Steve We say things like that about the patients all the time, yes.

Steve

Tim Can I do anything?

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.

2525

The music plays again. Grace enters.

Freya is sat on the edge of the bed.

Freya

So Dad brought 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.

Grace

You look better.

Freya

I feel better. So Dad, and Jasmine, and Sarah, eventually they'll all be here.

Grace

Eventually yes.

Freya

I want to have a look round. Have you got flying cars?

Grace

We don't need cars.

Freya

And robots.

Grace

You have no idea.

Freya

When can I see?

Grace

When you're well enough.

Freya

I'm fine, look.

Grace

We have some questions first.

Freya

What about?

Grace

Did you watch the film?

Freya

I'm surprised you still have films, surprised you couldn't download it into my head or something.

Grace

That is the greatest legend we have, and you're from precisely that time Freya. The date of your preservation is almost exactly

right for when Solomon came, and you were found in the river, in the right place. So to us, to all of us you are of vital historical importance.
So.

Did you ever meet her?

Did you ever hear Solomon speak?

Freya I don't know anything about Solomon.

Grace 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 Solomon?

Freya I . . . Solomon?

Grace Yes.

Freya Solomon. On the bridge.

Grace You remember?

Freya 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?

Grace Because 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.

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

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.

Colin

Do you like this suit?

Sarah

Yeah, I mean . . .

Colin

Honestly.

Sarah

. . .

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

are.

Colin

I love it. I really do.

It is absolutely, who I am.

It absolutely is.

Sarah

. . .

Sarah reaches to him.

He moves away.

Sarah

Do you 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?

Colin

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.

Sarah Jasmine's never been right about anything.

Colin . . .

Sarah What did she say?

Colin Things change.

They look at each other.

Freya and Grace. 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.

Grace 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 Oh.

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 be taller actually. We're all tall. Suppose it must've been Mum.

Robert No. Your mum was my height.

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

Sometimes when part of someone's brain has been damaged they become unable to see a distinction between their own particles and those around them. They can't see the edges of their body - where they stop and the world begins. They can instead see that we are part of a bigger system of atoms stretching backwards and forwards for billions of years, they understand instinctively that all we are just different recycled pieces of a bigger, older creature. We are simply earthquakes ourselves, wonderful irregularities in the evolving nature of the universe. We're a cycle. A 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. We all are.

When you fell into the river, Freya, you hit your head. You did some damage.

Freya

This isn't real.

Your brain is doing what it always does. Making sense of what it receives. The objective and the subjective. 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 rummages around, but there's nothing there.

Freya

Where is she?

Doctor Harris *is with Steve, who is holding the baby.*

Doctor Harris

You'll have about two hours, after we wake her up. And of course, when you tell her the situation, when you explain to her what's going to happen, it will be a shock, she may not believe you. She'll, struggle against it, but I'll be here to help, and give you whatever you need, to say goodbye.

Is that alright Steve?

Steve

Yes.

Doctor Harris

Are you sure about this? We don't have to wake her at all.

Steve

She'd want to see Emily. She'd want to know.

Doctor Harris

Alright then.

And what about the family? I know they're outside.

Steve

...

Doctor Harris

Will they want to be here?

Steve

Or would you rather it was just you?

Doctor Harris

A Nurse visits the family - Jasmine, Sarah and Robert.

A Nurse visits the family - Jasmine, Sarah and Robert.

Nurse

Would you like to go in now?

It's time.

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. Back to the bridge.

earth. Tell them all. Give the speech. Walk the

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.

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 injects Freya. She slowly wakes up. **Steve** kisses her. She starts to talk, rapidly, and then we see them break the news.

She can't believe it. Steve hugs her. She cries.

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. She puts it on the table.

Slowly, the hospital fades, Emily becomes brighter.

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. 2026

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 Dad's asleep so keep it quiet.

Tom What are you wearing?

Emily I found it in all my mum's stuff. Said I'd save it for my sixteenth birthday. I like the flowers.

Tom Alright but you can't wear those shoes.

Emily Tom, this is my thing, yeah? Just this once, I'm in charge.

Tom Yeah yeah.

Emily Maybe I should go barefoot . . .

She takes her shoes off.

Yeah. Definitely barefoot.

Tom Okay, look, I've been thinking and we should tell them what you're up to, if he wakes up and you're gone, he'll freak. Your aunt will kill me.

Emily

I've told them for years, over and over, when I'm sixteen, this is what happens, not my fault if they never believed me.

Right. I'm ready.

She puts the backpack on.

Tom Toothbrush?

Emily Yep.

Tom Map?

Emily Yep.

Tom Speech?

Emily All up here.

Tom smiles.

Emily How do I look?

Tom Emily Sullivan.

Magnificent.

She smiles.

He smiles too.

But please . . .

She looks at him, goes to the kitchen blackboard, and writes, in large letters.

'Gone to London'

She smiles and they leave.

Blackout.

Exit music:

'It's The End Of The World As We Know It' by REM.

End of Play.