

Her Face to the Sky

A Play in One Act

Written by Tam High Students:
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CHARACTERS: Locals

GRACE WILSON, a student, 17
SAM FLORIDA, a local bike commuter, 52
MICHAEL SMITH, a policeman, 40
PHOEBE JOHNSON, a photographer, 29
JOE LEVVY, a Bridge painter, 22

Tourists

AGNES, a mother, 52
MARY, a daughter, 26

SCENE 1

TIME: Sunset, Monday November 14, 2011
PLACE: Middle of the Golden Gate Bridge – the Bay side
AT RISE: Grace, center stage standing very still. Tourists moving slowly, a bike commuter ripping. Everything is on fire.

SILENCE.

Grace stands still - Waves and street sounds as the people move around Grace faster and faster.

MARY

Mom, stop.

AGNES

You know I only want the best for you.

MARY

This is the first time I've visited the Golden Gate Bridge, don't ruin it for me.

AGNES takes a picture.

MARY

Mom, you don't take a picture of a stranger.

AGNES

But honey, it's a real live bike commuter!

SAM

Tourists.

Stops his bike.

MARY

Sorry its our first time here.

AGNES

OOPS! But sunset on the Bridge. Beautiful!

AGNES and MARY move to a different space.

MICHAEL

Sir, you're biking on the wrong side of the bridge.

SAM

Sorry sir, I am trying to get home to my family. Its getting late and the other side is chaos because of construction.

MICHAEL

I'll let you go this time, but I'm going to ask you to walk the rest of the way.

PHOEBE has been on the side, taking down her equipment, struggling.

SAM

Here, let me help you with that.

PHOEBE

Scared and nervous

Thank you. No thanks. I got it.

JOE, the painter, slowly walks across the stage, going home after his shift has ended.

SAM

I was just trying to help.

AGNES grabs MARY's phone. Slowly arguments grow louder and overlap.

AGNES
Sorry! We're on vacation. Bye!

AGNES
Honey, just enjoy the view! Your generation...

MARY
MOM! What's your problem.
That's the first time I've talked to him in a week...

AGNES
When I was young, what I wanted than anything in the world was to be someone. Looking back I know that I was standing in my own way.

MARY
Mom...
Mom, YOU're in my way.

MICHAEL
Watch it!

JOE
S'cuse me, sorry.

GRACE
ENOUGH!

SILENCE. Everyone freezes. Stares at Grace.

Beat.

EARTHQUAKE: birds, Bridge creaks, growls (like a monster), human screams, drums.

MICHAEL
Calm down, tuck your head.

Getting louder...the ground shakes and pushes people off balance.

AGNES
Ahhhh! Help. What's going on?

MARY
Its an earthquake –

AGNES

Ahhh we're going to die –

MARY

I love you mom –

GRACE looks at AGNES and MARY longingly.

GRACE

Don't be ridiculous we're going to be fine.

SAM

My family!

They're all scared. A pole falls, a wire snap, screws get loosened. The camera falls from PHOEBE's hands. She dives for it towards the water through the deformed railing.

PHOEBE

My camera!

MICHAEL

Woa watch yourself.

GRACE yanks PHOEBE back from the edge as a grate falls and hits her. The earthquake stops.

PHOEBE

Thank you.

The bridge is broken. Bent and twisted. SILENCE.

Blackout.

END SCENE

SCENE 2

TIME: Minutes later

PLACE: Same

AT RISE: Firefighter sirens, everyone is dazed and broken down on the ground.

Grace's left arm and leg and face is injured. EVERYONE takes inventory of themselves. They sit

up. They look around to check everyone is OK. They stand up slowly, bodies are weak. They are afraid of after shocks.

MARY

I'm afraid.

AGNES

Honey, you're bleeding.

MARY

No Mom, I'm fine.

AGNES

Honey, I was talking about her.

MICHAEL

You need to go to the hospital. The doctors need to look at your body.

GRACE is in shock. Tries to form words but can't.

SAM

Where are your parents?

PHOEBE

We need to get out of here.

SAM takes out his phone.

SAM

DAG IT. No service.

SAM throws it

AGNES

Let me check mine... Nope.

*EVERYONE checks their phones.
They look up at the same time.*

MICHAEL

Lets get out of here...

GRACE

How...?

EVERYONE looks around and it hits them that they're stuck. AGNES screams. MICHAEL navigates around.

MICHAEL

There's no way out... A pole... too many things.
Blocking. Like a net. We have to climb out.

GRACE

I can't. Walk.

AGNES

Help!

PHOEBE

Help!

SAM

Help.

MARY

Pull it together. We need to get out of here. We need
a plan before anything else happens.

PHOEBE

The bridge could cave in.

Agnes freaks out.

AGNES

Jimminycricket! We're so high up!

Beat. EVERYONE looks at Agnes.

MARY

Thanks Captain Obvious.

MICHAEL

This is Unit 24A, can you hear me? I repeat Can you
hear me? We have an injured female on the bridge.
Can you hear me? Darnit. No one can hear me. No
one can ever hear me. I don't even know... I'm a
police officer. I'm happy. I ride my bike, doin' my job.
Ahha. It's kinda fun, lookin' out for others. Yea. I'd
like to make a lot of money. I have to say, like a
million dollars, swimming in it...I'd buy a new house...

He laughs.

"You're under arrest!" I like saying it. 'Cuz som bad guys...horrible, it's terrible. I like the police Its like church music to me, my passion. "I have a dream..."

Laughs...

Happiness, success for my sons and daughter... to go to college, to see everything they would do. That's what I want.

SAM

That's great but we kinda have to focus on getting off this bridge right now.

PHOEBE

How 'bout walking down to the bike way. Yeah.... Oh dear, cars jammed, look! That one's flipped over. Oh no, there's a person.. those people... looks as scared as we do...

Turns, pale, steadies herself.

...my camera's with the sharks... I wanted to be able to wander, you know, in my own backyard and take pictures. I really loved the way the world looked through the lenses, so surreal. But at the same time I knew it was the world's truest look. Papa and Mama worked so hard and I knew that we didn't have enough money to afford a camera. I would sit and dream about it. But only dream. Imagine myself holding my very own camera, clicking the shutter. The noise of the click is so comforting to me. It's the sound of freezing time, capturing a moment. It's the sound of slowing down my chaotic life, and trying to live in the moment.

GRACE

What's happening to me?

SAM

I need to get to my family. What would they do without me? Save... Betty... run. RUN!

Tries to leave, climb.

MARY

Where do you think you are going? We need your help...

MICHAEL

The bridge is breaking... you don't even know...

MARY

That's why we should stick together We need to get this girl to the hospital. Honey, what's your name?

Holds her hand.

GRACE

Grace, my name is Grace. My body hurts.

MARY

Are you from around here?

GRACE

Yes, I live in the city. I came here to clear my head.

MICHAEL

Where's your mom and dad?

Shift.

GRACE

I'm by myself.

Feeling vulnerable.

MICHAEL

Ok Grace.

GRACE

Don't do it, don't do it.

In her own world.

SAM

Don't do what Grace?

GRACE

Don't hurt yourself...

AGNES

That's a good thing...

MICHAEL

You need a gurney, a stretcher, to take her to the hospital.

AGNES

We don't have a stretcher here!

MARY

Just make it out of your clothes. Your jacket...

PHOEBE

Oh, here, take it...

MARY

More. We need more. We need a rope...

PHOEBE

A belt...

MARY

My scarf...

GRACE

I want my purple blanket. I want my mom. Mom...

SAM

It's okay. You'll see your mom at the hospital.

GRACE

No, I wont.

SAM

Sure you will.

GRACE

What I want more than anything else in the world is a friend. I am not talking about a girl to gossip with. I definitely do not want to cover my face with a honey banana facial or explore the petty hows and whys of being a teenager with a bubbly girl sitting beside me and saying things like OMG and LOL. Almost as if I

don't deserve to hear the whole words. No, I need my mom. Someone real. Someone there. There for me.

Beat.

She's dead. I'm alone.

MARY

When I was 16 what I wanted more than anything was to have my father back. He had just died the year before and I missed him so much. It was the little things I missed like the way his eyes crinkled when he smiled or the way he'd take me driving in the open country roads. It was the way he'd throw his head back with each bellowing laugh. Or the way he'd push me down my little green sled in the wintertime. Most of all, it was his presence that I missed. The way that with one look, he'd know I was lying. I missed exploring the backcountry with him, winding through fields and climbing up hills. I missed the way he'd always tell me, "Do what you love". It was my father who inspired me to come to San Francisco. I want to make him proud.

GRACE

I wanna make my dad proud too.

SAM

He'll be at the hospital.

MARY

One hand. Two hands. A person has to be in the front.

MICHAEL

I got it.

Make sure she doesn't fall. A person needs to go backwards.

SAM

Sure thing.

MARY

A team. Pay special attention to her leg and her arm. Keep her face to the sky.

EVERYONE lifts GRACE. Faces to the sky. Saved.

Blackout.

END PLAY