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- Born: 13th June 1981
- Single
- Works as a physicist
- Lives in London
-

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Post

David H
9th April 2018
Fourth one!
I am trying to find a new perspective.

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Georges De Selves and 105 others



David H

2nd April 2018

To my friends, I hope to see you on my birthday on 13th June in my flat in London. Travel safe! Don't forget my presents! 🎁

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Celia Clark and 94 others



Queen Elizabeth

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I would be delighted to join your party my dear friend.



David H

14th March 2018

Today, Stephen Hawking is dead, surely he was the best scientist in our modern world.

Feeling so sad... R.I.P. Hawking.

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Queen Elizabeth and 62 others feeling sad



David H

15th November 2012

To Ossie: Thanks for your fashion advice. I bought a purple shirt which perfectly fits my complexion!

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Ossie Clark and 37 others



Ossie Clark

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David H and Celia Clark

I am very happy to help you for this kind of things but even without my advice you are always handsome. 😊



David H

22nd October 2009

Today is a unforgettable day for me! I've just received the Copley Medal from Queen Elizabeth.

Feeling happy! 😊

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Jean De Dinteville and 52 others

DESPERATELY SEEKING DAVID H.

CHARACTERS

Georges de Selves: a French ambassador at Henry VIII's court

Jean de Dinteville: a French ambassador at Henry VIII's court

John Wood: a farmer from rural America in the 1930s

Elizabeth Wood: his daughter

Ossie Clark: a British fashion designer from the 70s

Celia Clark: a British textile designer from the 70s, Ossie's wife

The Cat: the Clarks' cat

The Queen: Elizabeth II, Queen of England

David H.: a brilliant British scientist

SCENE 1

David's flat, in London, June 13th 2018. The living room is messy, some of the furniture is on the floor, sheets of paper are scattered everywhere, it looks as if someone has searched the room. A computer is lying open on the floor, the screen turned off. A frame is hung on the wall with abstract artwork and lettering. The room is completely silent, until 6 people and a cat appear out of thin air. They're all talking at the same time, and stop abruptly when they realise that there are other people in the room.

JOHN: (*appearing distraught*) Elizabeth, what's this? Who are these people? Ain't no one here looking like David!

ELIZABETH: Pa'! Don't be rude! They're his friends. If you'd listened to me and talked with them on the group conversation, you'd know them too. I'm glad to meet y'all in person! Forgive my dad, he ain't the most sociable man.

MR CLARK: Oh, it's fine. Time travel would make anyone grumpy. Hello everyone, nice to finally meet you in person!

MRS CLARK: Ossie, are you sure this is the right place? Where's David?

THE CAT: Meow!

MRS CLARK: Damn it, what is Percy doing here? I thought you'd locked him in the bedroom!

MR CLARK: First of all, his name is Blanche, not Percy. He must have gotten out somehow. In any case, this is definitely David's flat... It looks the same as it did the last time I visited.

MRS CLARK: Yeah, of course *you* would see that... But it doesn't change the fact that David isn't here.

MR CLARK: Oh come on, as if you hadn't been here already. Anyway, I'm sure David's fine, he's probably just in some other room... (*To the ambassadors*) Oh, my! Would you look at that! These clothes are marvelous! Just looking at them gives me ideas for the next fall collection... Something like a mix of different times, you know? Modernity and tradition mixed together... (*Walking up to Georges and leaning down to take a closer look at his coat*) Is this real fur? Can I touch it?

GEORGES: Erm, sure? 'tis made of vicuna wool - not that I think thou hast heard of it, it's extremely rare. The new world brought us absolute wonders, and this is one of them...

MR CLARK: Vicuna wool! God, you have no idea how happy I am to see something like this with my own two eyes. I can really picture a heavy sweater like this, with some large trousers... Not the same material, of course, that would be preposterous... Something bulky and thick, maybe experiment with colours?

MRS CLARK: Are you mad? Only a slim fit would complement something like this, and it would add a je-ne-sais-quoi to it, a bit avant-garde...

ELIZABETH: Um, excuse me? I ain't tryin' to take you away from... whatever conversation y'all are having, but I think there's somethin' else we should focus on. Where is David?

GEORGES: Late, I imagine?

JOHN: Well, that's it. Elizabeth, we're goin'! I didn't even want to come here, and now he's gonna bail on us? I ain't come here to wait.

ELIZABETH: Pa'!

JEAN: Thy father is right, young lady. I happen to have important things in mind, and although David is a good man, I couldn't stand to lose my focus on such childish things. I'm supposed to be beside Henry VIII, as when I'm not here he has a tendency to make some... questionable choices.

ELIZABETH: No, we can't go! There's clearly somethin' wrong here. I mean, didn't y'all see the state of this room? Plus, I ain't heard nothin' from David in a while. The last thing he posted was that picture of him with his new frame.

MR CLARK: Actually, you're right... We usually talk a lot, but David has been oddly silent recently. Plus, he's always been the tidy type - well, you know, most of the time anyway. This doesn't look like him.

JEAN: So... what shalt we do ?

GEORGES: Search the house, I assume? It might be that he is hiding.

ELIZABETH: Or maybe he's dead! Oh my god, what if he is? I'm not gonna be able to live with it! And what if...

JOHN: (*putting a hand on her shoulders*) Calm down, Elizabeth, ain't no use worryin' 'bout somethin' like this.

ELIZABETH: But Pa', look at this room ! Don't it look like someone came here before us?

MR CLARK: I mean, yeah, it looks like someone searched the house.

MRS CLARK:(*rolling her eyes*) I'm sure he's fine, Elizabeth, he's probably just busy preparing one of his annoying surprises...

MR CLARK: Celia, please, this is serious. We don't have time to be petty here. What about we split? We can cover more ground this way. You, um, Elizabeth? That's right? (*Elizabeth nods*) Come with me. We'll take a look at the bedroom, while Celia and your father go check in the kitchen.

MRS CLARK: Hm, yes, *please* go to the bedroom with the lovely lady. I'm sure you'll have a grand time.

MR CLARK: Darling, please. We're the only ones that know this place, it makes sense. Georges and Jean, you can search this room, see if there's anything of interest here.

JEAN: Well, at least there shall be something interesting to do.

The Queen enters the scene, a huge bodyguard standing behind her. He has a glum expression and eyes each person in the room with distrust.

THE QUEEN: What happened here, where is David? Are you his friends?

MR CLARK: (*to Mrs Clark*) Is this...

MSR CLARK: (*whispering*) Oh my god, I think you're right! But she looks so... um, old. (*to the Queen*) Your- Your Majesty! We're David's friends; he invited us all here for his birthday. However, judging by his absence and the state of this room, it seems that he's not here, and might be in trouble. We were about to search the house, just in case we could find any answer to what happened to David.

THE QUEEN: Um, I see. And you're the people he met through his... travels, I assume?

MRS CLARK: That's right, your Majesty.

JEAN: (*quietly to Georges*) What do they mean, "Your Majesty"?

GEORGES: (*quietly*) Well, David did mention that the monarchy was still in place and that this day and age's Queen had been on the throne for a while... I don't think it would be outlandish to assume this is her. Though she does not look anything like her picture...

THE QUEEN: Right. Well, I must admit, never in my life had I ever thought I would be able to witness something like this. Seeing a room filled with people like you makes me realize just how much potential David's machine has, and just how many possibilities it opens...

MR CLARK: Well, Your Majesty, some of us are going to search the other rooms, but Georges and Jean are staying here. Maybe you can stay with them and discuss their time? I'm sure they won't mind, right?

GEORGES: (*curtsying*) Surely not. Meeting the kingdom's monarch is always an honour, and we would be happy to discuss anything Her Majesty might desire.

ELIZABETH: That's settled then! Let's go, we ain't got no time to lose.

John and Mrs Clark leave the stage to the right. Elizabeth and Mr Clark, followed by the cat, leave the stage to the left.

SCENE 2

David's bedroom. Mr Clark, Elizabeth and the cat enter the room.

MR CLARK: So, we're looking for anything that could give us clues. Papers, receipts, books, anything.

ELIZABETH: Yes, let's do that. I'll take a look at this shelf, look in the bedside table.

They look around the room. Elizabeth is searching between the books, while Mr Clark looks around David's bed.

ELIZABETH: It feels wrong, bein' here without David, don't ya think? I thought if I ever got to see his house, it'd be under different circumstances...

MR CLARK: (*looking under the pillow*) Well, I have to admit that this is quite different from the memories I have in this room. This place usually brings back some... *fun* memories.

ELIZABETH: (*looking between the pages of a book*) Oh, really?

MR CLARK: Well, I won't go into details, but let's just say that David and I had some good times in this room.

ELIZABETH: Oh, that's great. David and I also had some fun when he visited me, spent an entire night talkin' about literature and all. Ain't no one that interested in Jane Austen's books where I live, so it was pretty amazin'. Might've been that night that made me fall in love with him, now that I think of it.

MR CLARK: Oh, love, eh ? I guess David's making a habit of getting close with the people he meets during his travels.

ELIZABETH: (*looking up from her book*) A habit? What do you mean?

MR CLARK: (*realizing the misunderstanding*) Wait, did you... Elizabeth, when I said "fun times", I wasn't talking about a book club.

ELIZABETH: (*confused*) Then what did you - oh! Oh. Oh? Are you... you're sayin' that you and David had... *that* kind of relationship?

MR CLARK: (*going back to his research*) Why, yes, my dear! Well, I understand that you're from another time, but still. I hoped that David's friends would be a tad more open minded.

ELIZABETH: (*putting down her book and going up to Mr Clark*) No, I don't think you quite understand, mister. I had no idea David had friends like... that. I ain't tryin' to be rude, but be sure that Hell's coming 'round for you. There ain't nothing to save your soul when you corrupt other people like that.

MR CLARK: (*getting back up*) Wow, honey, I'm gonna have to stop you right there. Now you might be frustrated that David didn't want to pay attention to someone as boring as you, but stay assured that whatever happened between him and me was his choice as much as mine.

ELIZABETH: Now you better say sorry, because I ain't gonna put up with you for much longer. Now I ain't sure what you did to David, but he ain't one of *this* kind.

MR CLARK: (*speaking louder*) This kind?! This kind?! And what do you mean by...

The cat, who has been walking around the room since the beginning of the discussion, jumps on David's bedside table and pushes an ancient porcelain ornament off of it. It breaks loudly, and Elizabeth and Mr Clark jump at the noise.

THE CAT: Meow.

MR CLARK: Blanche! What did you do, you stupid cat! What did I tell you about... Wait, what is that?

He walks up to the broken pieces of the ornament and picks up a folded piece of paper from the debris. He unfolds it, and starts reading what is written on it.

ELIZABETH: What is it ?

MR CLARK: I think that's what we were looking for, actually...

ELIZABETH: What do you mean ?

MR CLARK: It's a riddle, I think. *(He reads from the piece of paper)*. "Two. I'm pretty sure you know what you're supposed to remem..." oh.

ELIZABETH: What? What does it say?

MR CLARK: Um, well, there's just the nickname he called me sometimes. So, you know. I guess this was meant for me?

ELIZABETH: Oh, great, of course. Well that's just grand, ain't it? So what, he's just gon' leave you secret messages now?

MR CLARK: No, that doesn't seem right. Like I said, I think that's a clue. The "two" at the beginning seems weird. Maybe there's a riddle for every one of us?

ELIZABETH: I mean, maybe. You know David so much better than me, don't ya?

MR CLARK: Oh please, Elizabeth, don't be like that. Listen, hate me as much as you want, but right now we need to find David. There might be more clues in this room, let's search a bit more. Does anything look odd, maybe?

ELIZABETH: I mean, that shiny thing ove' there looks a bit odd.

They walk up to a big, bright golden medal on the desk.

MR CLARK: Yeah, a bit tacky for his taste.

Elizabeth picks up the medal and examines it, before turning it around.

ELIZABETH: Oh, look, another paper! *(She reads)* "Five. Do you remember how much you were ready to pay, to be able to change the past? Rest assured: you are the last one." What does this mean? Quite threatenin'.

MR CLARK: I don't know what it means, but I'm sure it's important. Take the medal with you, we need to show this to the others!

They leave the room.

SCENE 3

John and Mrs. Clark are in the kitchen, each is standing on the other side of the room. After a long and awkward silence, Mrs. Clark starts talking.

MRS CLARK: To be quite frank here, I'm not that eager to find David.

JOHN: *(sighing)* Me neither. I ain't exactly got time to lose with this when I have my farm and my cows to look after. But, well, it ain't as if I had a choice. She won't leave 'til we find him.

MRS CLARK: *(half heartedly looking on the table and the floor)* "She"? Oh, you mean, your daughter.

JOHN: *(also looking around the room)* Yeah. She always becomes unreasonable when it comes to David. Keeps daydreaming about him and chatting away as if he had the sun shining out of his arse! David this, David that... It's drivin' me insane.

MRS CLARK: Yeah, tell me about it.

JOHN: *(rolling his eyes)* Oh come on, you ain't gonna tell me you also like him?

MRS CLARK: Oh no, Jesus, no. My husband is the one quite... smitten with David.

JOHN: Well, at least friendships are easier to break than love, right?

MRS CLARK: Oh, um, I don't think you understand... Although I'm quite sure feelings aren't at the forefront of their relationship, I'm also sure It's not just about friendship.

JOHN: (*abruptly stopping and looking at Mrs Clark*) Wait, what? You mean... David and your husband?

MRS CLARK: (*turning to him*) Um, yes ?

JOHN: Jesus Christ! Ain't that somethin' awful! How can you forgive him such a sin?

MRS CLARK: (*looking at John*) Well, maybe that's a bit dramatic...

JOHN: Dramatic?! Your husband's the worst kind a sinner, and all ya can say is that I'm bein' dramatic?

MRS CLARK: Well, I mean... Maybe with the people I talk to, it's a tad different... In the world of fashion, people can express themselves. Plus, times have changed, you know.

JOHN: Times might have changed, but God's word sure hasn't! That man gon' end up in hell! And you're just gon' stand there and take it? He's your husband!

MRS CLARK: Our couple has stopped being one a long time ago... Even when we got married, we'd already started growing apart, somehow. And other people noticed it : we were given a painting of us as a wedding gift, and yet we don't even look like we're even vaguely interested in each other. I mean, it's fine. We still care about each other, just... Not in the same way as before, I guess. And our work partnership has always worked fantastically well.

JOHN: I can't understand somethin' like this. I mean, when my wife... (*his voice breaks*)

MRS CLARK: Your ... wife? What happened to her?

JOHN: She just... She died of pneumonia, a few years back. She was my everythin'. Ain't nothin' in this world that can make me understand how someone would disrespect love the way your husband is doin', or how you can take it so well. I mean, that's why I'm so worried 'bout Elizabeth. David clearly doesn't care 'bout her the same way and... I've had my heart broken. I don't want her to go through this.

MRS CLARK: (*walking up to him and putting her hand on his shoulder*) I'm sure she'll be fine.

JOHN: (*pulling himself back together*) Well, if there's somethin' I know, it's that she'll feel better once we find David. We should keep searchin'.

They wander around the kitchen. Mrs Clark heads towards a cupboard and opens it to find cookbooks. She examines them, before picking one up the shelf.

MRS CLARK: Uh, that's odd. Why is Pride and Prejudice in the midst of all of these? (*She opens the book; a piece of paper falls out*) Oh! What's that?

JOHN: (*joining her and picking up the paper*) Pride and Prejudice, you say? Well ain't that funny, it's Elizabeth's favorite book. It also was her mother's, that's why she's called that... (*Reading the paper*) "One. I'm sure you remember, Lizzy... The year the girl you've always wanted to be was born." I don't... get it. Maybe this is for Elizabeth? No one ever called her Lizzy, but the paper's in her favourite book...

MRS CLARK: Well... that's weird. Do you think it might help us find David?

JOHN: Well, it's the only thing we got so far. Maybe the others found somethin' else that could make more sense?

MRS CLARK: Yes, it's definitely worth a shot. Come on, let's go.

They leave the room.

SCENE 4

THE QUEEN: So, tell me, how does this time machine affair works ? You all seem to know each other pretty well...

GEORGES: Yes, we do. David gave us all a device to contact him, one that would blend with our everyday lives. Smart man, that one. Jean's dagger looks completely normal, until you press a certain ornament. Elizabeth has a medallion, but I don't know what the Clarks have.

THE QUEEN: Elizabeth ? Oh, you mean, the young fair-haired lady who came with her father.

GEORGES: Yes, Thy Majesty, 'tis her.

THE QUEEN: We share the same first name, how delightful!

GEORGES: Well, how confusing that must be ! But, as I was saying. Those devices are also what allowed us to come here today. Something about "anchoring our devices to a certain location"... It's actually a very smart system, the way it all works, and very convenient, especially the platform from this day and age to connect it all together. I don't remember the name of it.

THE QUEEN: Let me guess. Facebook ?

GEORGES: Yes ! That's it!

THE QUEEN: Well, I'm glad to see David's inventions work this well ! I guess you are full with questions about the 21st century.

GEORGES: (*turning to the Queen*) Actually, yes, one. What are the relations with France like today? I really want to know if our negotiation efforts have been successful.

THE QUEEN: Oh, you don't have to worry about any of this, we're not at war, things are completely different from what they used to be. Things have been... complicated in the last century. Conflicts got worse, way worse, and as a consequence organisations were created in order to keep the peace between each nation. We think that these organisations are a way to bring the countries closer.

JEAN: Aw, well that's too bad; I've always loved a bit of action. Plus, France would have won.

GEORGES: Jean, thou canst say that! 'tis very good news !

THE QUEEN: (*proudly*) Funny story, we even dug a tunnel under the sea which is called "the Channel Tunnel" between France and England.

GEORGES: What? How could thou do that? It's incredible! God, I can't believe the future will bring us such wonders... thou must be really close to France and the rest of Europe, art thou not?

THE QUEEN: (*with an ironic smile*) Well... It's a bit more complicated than that. There's this thing called Brexit that happened lately, but that's another story...

A silence.

JEAN: Well, I guess we should start looking for elements that could help us find out more about David's disappearance.

THE QUEEN: (*sitting down*) That's a great idea, let's do that. Jean, would you look on the desk right there, and Georges, you can have a look at the bookshelf.

JEA : (*looking at Georges a bit intimated*) Hum... Thy Majesty... Art thou...?

THE QUEEN: (*laughing quietly*) Well, I know what you're asking, but I have to be realistic. I'm not as young as I used to be, my dears, and my bones don't appreciate me standing for extended periods of time. I've done my bit in my youth, you know! You should have seen me during World War Two nursing people in the bombed streets of London... but those days are long gone.

JEAN: Yes, of course Thy Majesty, obviously, please, rest. (*He turns to Georges*). Let's search the room. As time passes, my worry keeps growing.

GEORGES: Yes, thou art right.

The ambassadors start searching the desk and the bookshelf. They search for a while under the Queen's calm gaze.

GEORGES: (*turning back to the others*) Look ! I found a note on this... device.

THE QUEEN: This device, as you call it, is a phone. We use it to communicate with each other. What's written on the note?

GEORGES: It looks like a message for someone, it's quite odd. (*Reading to the Queen*) "Three. No matter how much you pretend to hate me, you still find yourself calling for my help."

JEAN: What does it mean?

GEORGES: I don't know, it reminds me of the riddles we tell children.

THE QUEEN: Yes, you're right. How peculiar! The number at the beginning is quite strange too. Maybe there are two other notes around here?

JEAN: Yes... You're right... We should keep looking. Maybe the others also found some?

GEORGES: We'll ask them when they come back. For now, let's get back to searching.

SCENE 5

Mr. Clark, Elizabeth, Mrs. Clark and John join The Queen and the ambassadors in the living-room. Percy / Blanche arrives at a leisurely pace, stretching as he passes the door.

MR CLARK: So, did any of you find anything interesting ? We think we might have something.

THE CAT: Meow !

MR CLARK: Yes, Blanche, you're the one who found it.

MRS CLARK: *(under her breath)* It's Percy. And yeah, I'm sure you found something interesting with *Elizabeth*.

MR CLARK: Celia, I swear to God... Anyway, as I said, we found something.

JOHN: *(apart)* As if God would listen to *you*...

JEAN: *(stopping his search)* Really ? Good, really good... We also found something. It's a little vague, but it might help.

MRS CLARK: I think we all found something interesting, John and I found a note in one of the books in the kitchen.

GEORGES: Oh, thou also havest a note?

ELIZABETH: Hey, we also found notes ! That must mean we did it right!

GEORGES: Well, that's amazing! I'll read ours. It says: "Three. No matter how much you pretend to hate me, you still find yourself calling for my help." Please note the number at the beginning. It leads us to think that there are other notes.

MR CLARK: Well, you're right on that one. We found number two and five.

MRS CLARK: And we found number one ! I'll read it to you. We thought it might have been intended for Elizabeth, you'll see why. *(She reads)* "One. I'm sure you remember, Lizzy... The year the girl you've always wanted to be was born."

ELIZABETH: Oh, it must be for me ! David called me Lizzy, sometimes, to make fun of me. He knows how much I love *Pride and Prejudice*. But, wait... It was number one?

MRS CLARK: Um, yep, says it right there.

Mrs. Clark shows Elizabeth the paper, who smiles as soon as she sees it.

ELIZABETH: I'm... I'm number one!

MR CLARK: *(clearing his throat)* Yeah, well, we don't have time for that. The second one is addressed to me, and Elizabeth has the fifth one. Can you read it?

ELIZABETH: Oh, um, yes. 't was on the back of this medal, and it...

THE QUEEN: Oh ! That's the Copley Medal! It rewards the best scientists in the country.

ELIZABETH: Well, I'm not surprised. David has always been so smart... Anyway. It reads "Five. Do you remember how much you were ready to pay, to be able to change the past? Rest assured: you are the last one." It sounds very menacing, don't ya think? Da ya think... Da ya think David maybe killed someone?

JOHN: What'd I tell you! That man ain't trust-worthy!

MRS CLARK: Wow there, let's not get ahead of ourselves. I don't think this proves in any way that David is a murderer.

JEAN: David has always been a man of action. Maybe he had no choice.

GEORGES: Well, 'tis quite an extreme conjecture. I wouldn't go this far.

They all start arguing, before the Queen interrupts them.

THE QUEEN: Stop! Everyone, stop! This note was meant for me.

They all stare in shock. The Queen sighs, and stands up.

THE QUEEN: I'm the one that gave the medal to David. He was incredibly honoured to receive such a gift. After the ceremony, I... Well. I'd heard of his time machine. And I've seen... so, so many things. I knew the power such a thing would grant us. With something like this, we could change the past, save so many lives, stop wars even! So I made him an offer. He refused, of course, said it was too dangerous. This is obviously what he's referring to.

MR CLARK: Then... The answer to the riddle must be the price, right? And you, Elizabeth! Didn't your note ask for a year?

MRS CLARK: Um, yes. The year the girl she's always wanted to be was born, whatever that means.

ELIZABETH: But I don't know what that means ! I mean, my friend Margaret has a pretty nice life, I guess. Oh, and Helen just got married to a lovely man, a general in the army, ain't he nice! But I've never told David about any of this. There's no way he'd know about it.

GEORGES: Well, the Queen's note had something to do with the medal. Where did thou find this one?

MRS CLARK: Pride and Prejudice, actually! Quite an odd book to find in the kitchen.

ELIZABETH: Oh ! Then it all makes sense! It has to be 1813! It's when the book was first published. And, I mean, who wouldn't dream of finding a man like Mr Davi- Darcy. Mr Darcy.

JEAN: So, what, should we be looking for numbers ?

MRS CLARK: I mean, I guess... What did yours say again? Something about calling for help?

GEORGES: Yes, "no matter how much you pretend to hate me, you still find yourself calling for my help". We found it on the, um, talepone.

JEAN: Telephone, Georges.

GEORGES: Yes, right, that.

MRS CLARK: Oh, that sneaky bastard. Of course he would rub it in.

MR CLARK: What do you mean ?

MRS CLARK: I just... asked. For something. Tips about the 21st century fashion trends. Whatever. The thing he gave us to contact him was a phone. Well, a fake one, of course, but you still had to dial a certain number to make it work. It's probably that number we're looking for. 9584.

MR CLARK: You... asked about fashion trends in the future?

MRS CLARK: Well, I thought it could help us design the most revolutionary collection of all times! Anyway, not relevant. We have two numbers so far.

MR CLARK: Mine is 15 03 17.

MRS CLARK: How do you know?

MR CLARK: It was in a porcelain I almost knocked over the first time I, um, visited this place. The note says "I'm pretty sure you know what you're supposed to remember", with the nickname he called me sometimes. Not that hard to figure out. It's the date of my first visit here, in this century's time.

THE QUEEN: Then the last one is 25. That's the price I offered for the time machine.

MR CLARK: 25 thousand pounds?

THE QUEEN: 25 million pounds.

MR CLARK: Oh. Right.

JEAN: And... I imagine the numbers are about the order we should put the clues in.

GEORGES: Yes, yes... So, number one, 1813. Number two, 15 03 17. Third one, 9584. Fourth... Wait, did anyone find the fourth note?

They all look at each other and shake their head.

JOHN: It must still be in here. Let's look for it, it'll be quicker now that we know exactly what to look for.

They start looking frantically around the room. The cat slowly sits up from where he was sleeping and walks across the computer's keyboard, starting it up. Everyone looks up at the noise.

THE CAT: Meow.

JEAN: *(pulling out his dagger)* What was that?!

THE QUEEN: David's computer starting up. It was on standby, and the cat walking on the keyboard started it up.

The Queen walks up to the computer. It shows the Facebook post with David's selfie. A large painting is shown in the background, and the caption reads "Fourth one! I'm trying to find a new perspective."

THE QUEEN: That... that's it! The note must be hidden on the frame! *(She bends down to pet the cat.)* Well, aren't you a useful one!

Jean walks up to the painting and examines it.

JEAN: I'm not sure, it doesn't look like there's any note hidden on it. Might it be the lettering hiding a clue?

MR CLARK: I don't know, it just sounds like some basic words all over.

They all stare at it, perplexed. Elizabeth walks around it, before stopping abruptly.

ELIZABETH: Wait, yes, there is somethin'! Come to my place, one of the shapes is actually a number! You just have to look at it from the right angle, like David said!

GEORGES: *(going up to her)* Oh my God, thou art right! 'tis an anamorphic image, like the skull on the portrait thou ordered, Jean! 4... Is that a seven or a one?

ELIZABETH: *(squinting)* A seven, definitely.

GEORGES: Right. 47. So, that gives us... Wait, let me write it down. (*He takes a piece of paper lying around and a pen.*) 1813. 15 03 17. 9584. 47. And finally 25.

JOHN: I mean, that's fun, but where does that take us? What are we supposed to do? Add all of them?

GEORGES: (*looking very interested by the numbers*) No, no, of course not... There's an order, the order has to be important...

JEAN: (*also deep in thought*) Georges, art thou thinking what I'm thinking?

GEORGES: Oh, I don't know art thou thinking that this many numbers in the context we're in can probably be only one thing?

JEAN: I think I am.

JOHN: Okay, now you might know what this all means, but I ain't no intellectual, so please share with the class.

GEORGES: (*standing up and smiling to himself*) Well, John, 'tis actually quite simple. David is nowhere to be found. He left us these... clues, one might say, and the logical thought we're all sharing is that these clues lead to him. So, my friends, I think I can safely say that these are coordinates.

THE QUEEN: Oh my God, yes, it makes sense ! Quick, give me the computer.

They all gather around her as she starts typing.

JEAN: May I ask what thou art doing, Thy Majesty ?

THE QUEEN: Well, if these are coordinates, they must lead somewhere, right ? I think that the first two numbers should be the latitude, after all they're the longest, and the last three should be the longitude. (*She keeps typing*). Ah! There we go! It leads to a lake next to a town in Mexico... Loma Bonita?

MR CLARK: Oh, David told me about that once ! It's a sort of bunker under a lake. I know how to access it.

MRS CLARK: Um, yeah, I'm sure you do.

MR CLARK: Actually, Celia, I was interested in the locking mechanism for the studio. Anyway, I can get you in there.

ELIZABETH: But, wait, didn't you say it's in Mexico? But that's too far! We're in England! We don't have time to take the boat, how will we get there?

THE QUEEN: (*smiling*) Well, my dear, you'll be glad to learn that the Queen of England does have some... resources. (*She turns to her bodyguard*) Matthew, call the airport! We're going to Mexico.

SCENE 6

They are all sitting in a huge luxury car rushing to the airport. The bodyguard is driving, John next to him, and the rest are seated behind : the ambassadors and The Queen, then The Clarks and Elizabeth. The cat is sleeping on Mr Clark's lap. Elizabeth and the ambassadors are looking out the window in wonder.

JEAN: We... We're reaching such high speed, 'tis unbelievabl ! Never have horse carriages been this efficient... And we're not even pulled by a horse! I feel dizzy just looking out the window.

GEORGES: Jean, please, thou can't be sick in this giant iron box ! The speed won't allow us to stop, and I do not wish to see such a horror.

THE QUEEN: Don't worry, we are almost there. But if you do end up being sick, there are some bags at your disposal just in front of you.

JEAN: (*looking very unwell*) Thank you, Thy Majesty.

JOHN: (*to Elizabeth*) Well, I prefer the cars in our century.

ELIZABETH: But Pa', ain't this one nice? It's so different from what we know!

JOHN: Yes, and it's too damn fast. I ain't feelin' safe.

ELIZABETH: Oh come on, Pa', can't you enjoy things for once? Look out the window, ain't it nice?

JOHN: (*smiling slightly at his daughter's amazement*) I guess so...

GEORGES: Jean, my friend, did thou... Art thou sure thou art not ill? Thy face seems quite pale.

JEAN: Do not worry, my friend, I'm perfectly- (*He abruptly stops and throws up.*)

ELIZABETH: Jesus !

MRS CLARK: Yuck, please don't get that bag near me!

THE CAT: (*woken up by the noise and jumping from Mr. Clark's lap*) Meow!

MRS CLARK: Percy, you damn cat, what are you doing? No, you stupid animal, don't tear at the leather seats!

MR CLARK: Celia, dear, for the last time, her name is Blanche! (*He picks up the cat and tries to calm it.*) Hey there, kitty, it's fine.

MRS CLARK: Why did you even take him with you?

MR CLARK: He really helped us find some clues, he deserves to come here! Plus, he's always liked David. (*To the cat, petting it.*) Yes you did, yes you did, kitty cat. (*To Jean*) Are you okay there?

JEAN: (*with a small voice*) Yes, yes, thank you.

ELIZABETH: (*bitterly to Mr Clark*) Thank God you're not the sick one, imagine how botherin' that'd be to kiss your lover!

MR CLARK: (*glaring at her but still petting the cat*) Oh come on, aren't you supposed to be gloating about being the first note?

MRS CLARK: (*smirking*) Oh, is that some jealousy I smell ? A taste of your own medicine won't hurt you, Ossie.

MR CLARK: Not the time, Celia.

THE QUEEN: We're almost there!

JOHN: And where are we going, exactly? Cause ain't no one who told us that.

THE QUEEN: Well, I was trying to think of a way to announce it to the ambassadors. Now, I know this will be a shock to you, but we're going to fly.

THE AMBASSADORS: *(at the same time, panicked)* What ?!

THE QUEEN: Don't worry, it's completely safe ! *(She sighs and says quietly to her bodyguard.)*
Matthew, be a dear, find a way to give them some sleeping drug before we take off.

SCENE 7

In an underground bunker. We can faintly hear water sounds above. All the characters are joined in front of a big metal door that leads to David's secret lab. The ambassadors are rubbing their eyes, as if they had just woken up.

The CAT: *(scratching the door)* Meow!

MR CLARK: Well, are we just going to stand there and let Blanche do the work ? Come on ! *(he knocks loudly on the door)*. David! Get out of here! Come on!

The door opens on a dishevelled David. He has a visible stubble, his hair is messy, his clothes look like they are a few days old.

DAVID: Hey! You found me! Not that I didn't think you could do it but, still, I'm impressed!

They all stand there in shocked silence for a few moments.

DAVID: Well come in, please! Don't stay outside!

They all shuffle in his bunker, still a bit awkward. Inside, papers are spread across a big table. Chairs are all around it. Neon tubes light the room in a bluish hue, all connected to a center point where a small device is plugged. It's the time machine. On David's desk, three screens show lines of code running down very quickly.

THE QUEEN: So, not that I want to seem rude, but are you going to explain what you're doing here?

DAVID: Oh, yes, yes, silly me. Anyway, sit down! This is a long story. (*They all sit on whatever chair they can find*). Right. So. It all started a few years ago. I was at a scientific seminar and there, I met Mark Zuckerberg. Long story short, for those of you who don't know who he is : the guy invented Facebook. And, you know, between inventors, we get along, so we became friends. That's when I told him about the time machine, which was also my biggest mistake. See, the thing is, Mark is hungry for power. Not money, he has enough of that, but he desperately wants to stay relevant. And now that Facebook is less fashionable than other social networks, well, he wanted something to put him back there. So he got an idea : if he came out with a time machine, surely, people would *never* stop talking about him, right ? And, I've got to hand it to him, he's right, anyone that would publicly come out with a time machine would go down in history. However, there was one slight issue with his plan : he didn't *have* the time machine, nor any way to build it. I'm not stupid, I would never give anyone the plans of the machine. So he had to get it from me, and knowing him, he wouldn't stop at anything. That's when the blackmail started. I didn't want to show the machine to the public, the only people who were aware of its existence were the British government, Mark, and you guys. I didn't trust it yet to be quite perfected. Mark knows this, and he threatened me to leak the information to the public. If he'd done that, I would have been forced to show demonstrations and such, which would definitely have been dangerous. I don't mind using it because it's just me and I perfectly know how it works, but it was obvious that it would be way too risky with more than just me.

JOHN: You're sayin' that, but ya don't mind when it's us using the machine? D'ya want us dead or somethin' ?

MRS CLARK: Yeah, that's true, you're not making yourself sound like the good guy here.

DAVID: Oh, no! It's not dangerous for you! It's actually a different mechanism with your machines. Don't ask, it's too complicated to explain, but it's about there being less variables and not needing to use promethium. Like I said, let's not go into details. So, where was I ? Right, he wanted to make the machine public. I refused, of course, but he started getting threatening towards people I know. I tried to get him to stop by giving him money, but he has so much of it already that it was completely useless.

MRS CLARK: When I think you're supposed to be a genius...

DAVID: Oh please Celia, cut the sarcasm.

ELIZABETH: But then, why didn't ya give him the machine? Ain't nothin' stopping you from sayin' he's the one that made it dangerous.

DAVID: I have integrity, Lizzy, and this is my pet project. I can't just let it go like that. Plus, this is about more than just public demonstrations. Those would have been dangerous, but Mark was going to market it for everyone, without trying to make it safe for the bigger public. There was no way I could agree and still be able to live with myself. So I did what I had to : I left. But I knew you were supposed to come for my birthday, and I couldn't call it off without Mark getting suspicious. See, that sneaky bastard could read all our conversations. I knew Facebook was doing some shady stuff with our private information, but I could never imagine... Anyway. So, yeah, I couldn't warn you. So I decided to leave you clues leading to me ! I wasn't going to leave you alone in the 21st century, and I wanted you to know the full story.

MRS CLARK: So... this is it? David, we thought you were in danger! We were worried! You absolute insensitive, self centered prick! Is this all a game to you? Do you have any idea how worried Elizabeth was? Or how...

DAVID: Celia, Celia, calm down. I know it wasn't the nicest thing I could have done, but I had no choice. This was the only way to protect everyone. Of course I know you were worried and, trust me, I'm flattered to see that you care, but it was the only thing I could do. Plus, I was actually in danger.

MRS CLARK: Oh, yeah, right, I bet you were.

DAVID: Who do you think searched my house? Mark's men did it! I didn't do it myself for fun! This represents months of organisation!

MRS CLARK: Wait, but how do you know your house was searched? Oh, right, cameras.

DAVID: Well don't be shocked, Celia! I have thousands of dollars' worth of stuff there; I'm not going to just leave it there unprotected.

JEAN: (*drawing his dagger out of its sheath*) My dagger shalt draw this Mark' blood!

GEORGES: (*trying to calm his friend down*): Come on, Jean, parley is always a better solution than violence.

While they are debating the right course of action, the Queen has discreetly pulled out her phone to type something before putting it back in her pocket. A few seconds later, a loud "DING" rings across the bunker and interrupts David.

DAVID: (*turning to the Queen*) Oh. I was right then. I must admit, I didn't think you would actually do it. You wound me, Your Majesty.

GEORGES: What is happening? I'm not certain I understand.

DAVID: (*still looking at the Queen*) Well, Georges, it turns out that my theory was right. Our Queen isn't as innocent as we thought.

THE QUEEN: W-what? This is slander!

DAVID: Oh please, don't pretend with me. I know you tried warning Mark that my hiding place is here. Sadly for you, I didn't win the Copley medal for nothing. Phone signals are blocked here, and I set up an alarm in case anyone tries to send out anything.

THE QUEEN: I...

DAVID: There's no need to justify yourself. I get it! You want to change the past. You think it's not fair. You would like England to restore its past glory, the British Empire! And because you knew Mark wanted the machine, you thought it best to work with him. He wants the glory, you want the machine, and everyone wins there. It's a good plan, I'll admit. But you know I can't let you do that.

THE QUEEN: I don't think you realise what you have here, David. There is such great potential with your machine, and you're throwing it away with, what, holiday trips to make new friends? Are you this blind to the power that's between your hands? I've seen the war, David, something you can't imagine at your age. I've seen bombs raining down the sky and lives crumble apart and so, so many deaths and pain that could be avoided with just a bit of your help! David, there is so, so much we could do, so many lives we could save, how can you just stand there and not use your power for the greater good ?

DAVID: *(suddenly angry and shouting)* Because I've already tried! *(His voice breaks.)* I've... already tried. *(He sighs and rubs his eyes, and he appears extremely tired, completely different to his previous cheerful self).* Do you really think I just stood there, once I had this? Of course I didn't! You've seen the war, you say? Well so have I ! Each and every single one of them! I've seen the worst of humanity, and tried to change it each time. And trust me when I say that things only got worse. Every time, every little thing I changed, it just got worse and worse and worse... When I say I saw the world burn, Your Majesty, it's not a euphemism. The only thing we can change is the future, not the past.

THE QUEEN: But...

DAVID: Enough! With all due respect, Your Majesty, I ask you to understand. Even... even if this machine could do anything to change the past for the better, it... It wouldn't be good. We are who we are because of what happened to us, and I would be terrified of seeing what would become of us all without that. And it might seem unfair to you, I get it, but you have to believe when I say that it is the only way we can approach this. Now, still on this topic, although to a different extent, I need to tell you all something else. It's the other thing that convinced me to lead you all here. *(He takes a deep breath.)* This is the last time we'll see each other.

ALL TOGETHER: What?

MR CLARK: David, what does this mean ?

ELIZABETH: *(with a shaky voice)* S-surely, ya don't mean it?

DAVID: I'm sorry, my friends, but this is nothing but the sad truth. The recent events have led me to realise that the time machine is just too dangerous, and that it will cause more harm than good. After you all go back to your time, I'll destroy the machine. Yours will be intact, but they won't work anymore. You can keep them as... souvenirs, I guess.

GEORGES: But... Why would thou do such a thing? This machine is a miracle of science! Destroying it would be such a huge loss... Can't there be some other way?

DAVID: No. I'm sorry.

ELIZABETH: *(with tears in her eyes)* But why do we have to go? David, please, let me stay. You know there ain't nothin' I'd love more than being here with you.

DAVID: I'm sorry, that's not something I can do. You all have lives out there, and disrupting them could have some very important consequences on the time continuum. Trust me, it's the best solution.

ELIZABETH: But I'm insignificant! The time continue - whatever it's called - ain't even gonna notice I'm gone!

DAVID: Elizabeth, that's not how it works. Any tiny change could change everything. I truly am sorry but... I can't risk it.

ELIZABETH: *(now sobbing and coming up to David to grab his hand)* David, please, no, you can't do this! Let me stay here! Please, David, please, you'll kill me!

DAVID: *(dropping her hand and stepping away)* Lizzy, dear, I am truly sorry, but you know I can't. Plus, *(he looks at Mr Clark)*, you must know by now that I couldn't have ever been the man for you.

ELIZABETH: But, but, you put me first ! I was the first note, the number one! Ain't that for somethin' ?

DAVID: Elizabeth, you... The order of the notes didn't mean anything. It was just to fit the coordinates.

ELIZABETH: So this is it, then. Well. I should have guessed that whatever I thought happened didn't mean nothin'...

DAVID: Listen. I know this is hard, for all of us. But it has to be done. I reprogrammed your machine, you just have to press the button and... That'll be it.

They all stand in silence. The moment feels grave, and everyone looks a bit sombre.

JEAN: *(walking two steps towards David, his dagger still in hand)* Well, my friend, I am sure thy choice is the right one. Although I might not understand all the implications thou were talking about, I can recognise a man of worth, and thou art one, without a doubt. *(To the others)* It was a pleasure meeting you all, and while we won't meet again, ye are forever in my thoughts. Georges?

GEORGES: Thou hast spoken well, my friend, and I can only agree. We shall leave now, as I believe our time is due. We need to keep an eye on Henry VIII. Goodbye.

Jean grabs Georges' arm and presses the dagger. They both disappear.

JOHN: Elizabeth, I think we should go. We ain't got nothing to do here anymore. Come on.

Composing herself, Elizabeth turns to David one more time before grabbing her father's hand and pressing a secret mechanism in her medallion. They disappear. David turns to Mr. Clark, opens his mouth and closes it.

MRS CLARK: *(sighing)* Sure, I'll leave you two alone.

She and the Queen leave the room.

MR CLARK: So...

DAVID: Listen, I'm sorry. I didn't...

MR CLARK: Oh, it's fine, it's not as if... Well. I never expected us to get a happy-ever-after or anything like that, it just... Feels like some good times have come to an end, you know ?

DAVID: Yeah. I'm definitely... feeling that too. But, well. I couldn't keep ruining your marriage like that, could I ?

MR CLARK: *(laughing)* No, you couldn't. Plus, let's be honest, I've never been husband material.

DAVID: That's... quite the euphemism.

MR CLARK: Well, what can I say. I'm not going to start changing now, am I ?

David smiles and shakes his head. Mr. Clark goes up to him, kisses him and whispers something in his ear that makes them both laugh.

MR CLARK: *(stepping away)* Are you sure I can't stay ?

DAVID: Don't be stupid, you know you can't. Didn't you listen to my speech ? You have a life over there.

MR CLARK: You won't tell me how it goes, though. I don't know why I should want to go back if you're not going to advertise it.

DAVID: (*sighing*) I'm afraid you'll have to find that on your own. Plus, after our movie nights, you know I don't like to spoil endings.

MR CLARK: (*laughing*) True, true. Well! It's been fun, my friend. To the good times. Maybe we'll meet again, in another life... Who knows what the future holds, after all? (*He winks and turns to the door, speaking louder.*) Celia! It's time for us to go.

Mrs. Clark and the Queen come back to the room.

DAVID: Celia! It's been good knowing you.

MRS CLARK: I can't say the feeling is totally shared.

DAVID: Listen, I know I...

MRS CLARK: Oh, don't worry, it's not at you I'm mad. Anyway, we should go now.

MR CLARK: Right, yeah, you're right. Let's go.

MRS CLARK: Good, glad to see we're on the same page. Um, there's one tiny problem though. We don't *have* the phone with us.

DAVID: Oh, right, yours works differently. Don't know why I didn't give you one like the others, to be fair. (*He turns to his desk and types away on a strange-looking keyboard.*) There, all ready to go. Departure in 15 seconds.

MRS CLARK: Perfe - Percy! Dammit, come back here!

MR CLARK: Oh no, no! And it's Blanche, Celia! Oh come- kitty! Come here!

They both run after the cat in the room, still arguing about how to call it, and disappear right before grabbing it. The cat walks up to David and looks up to him.

THE CAT: Meow?

DAVID: *(bending down and picking up the cat from where it's rubbing against his legs)* Oh, you little weasel. You're stuck with me now, aren't you? Well you always did like me best... *(He turns to the Queen)*. Have anything to say?

THE QUEEN: I mean, I... I apologise. I let my emotions get the better of me.

DAVID: *(smiling)* I don't blame you. For anything. I do really understand why you did the things you did. I mean, I tried to change the past too!

THE QUEEN: What did you try to change ? I'm just... curious.

DAVID: You know, a war here and there, an assassination or two...

THE QUEEN: That's it? Nothing personal?

DAVID: Well, I did try to save Ossie's life but... That didn't really work. Anyway, like I said. All is forgiven.

THE QUEEN: I'll leave now. *(She turns to her bodyguard, still standing in silence behind her)*. We're going back home.

DAVID: As always, it was a pleasure meeting you, Your Majesty.

THE QUEEN: Likewise. And please, keep working on your inventions. I'm sure you'll make some great new ones.

DAVID: Always! After all, I can't stop serving the Queen of England.

David bows. The Queen has a small smile, before leaving the room with her bodyguard. Alone at last, David sighs, before turning to the cat.

DAVID: And there we go. That's the end of it.

THE CAT: Meow.

DAVID: Yes, you're right, you're right... There is one more thing I need to do.

THE CAT: Meow!

DAVID: Yes, yes, I'm doing it! It's not that easy, you know? *(He goes back to his keyboard and types quickly what seems like a complicated code. He grabs a lever, and hesitates for a few seconds. He looks at the machine, at the cat, and sighs. He closes his eyes and pulls it. The neon tubes lighting the room slowly turn off, making the room darker and darker. David sighs.)* Well. It's truly over now.

A silence. The scene is now pitch black. There's nothing for a few seconds, before a single sound rings across the stage.

THE CAT: Meow.

THE END